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Irrigating the desert: water management, agricultural practices, and social complexity in Southern Turkmenistan during the Bronze Age
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Curriculum Vitae

Roberto Arciero (Maddaloni, 1984) grew up in Capua, southern Italy. After spending a school year as an exchange student in Honduras (Central America) during his high school period, he moved to northern Italy and obtained a bachelor's degree in Ancient History from Alma Mater Studiorum - University of Bologna. During his undergraduate studies, Roberto spent a semester at the National University of Ireland – Maynooth through the Erasmus program. He then completed a two-year master's degree in Archaeology at Bologna University, graduating cum laude, with a dissertation that explored the role of honey and dates in North Africa and West Asia during prehistoric periods. Concurrently, he participated in numerous excavations and field schools in Italy, Greece, Oman, Eritrea, and Central Asia region (Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), where he developed a keen interest in the archaeology of this latter region.

After an internship at the Italian Cultural Institute of the Italian Embassy in Stockholm (Sweden), and two years working in contract archaeology in Italy, Roberto moved to Leiden University (The Netherlands). There, he began his Ph.D. at the Faculty of Archaeology under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Bleda Düring and Prof. Dr. Peter Akkermans. His dissertation examines the role and transformation of agricultural practices and water management in the Murghab alluvial fan (southern Turkmenistan) during the Bronze Age. He presented his research at numerous conferences across Europe and Central Asia, also as a guest speaker. He co-authored six articles and wrote several pieces for popular magazines. Over the period 2017-2021, he was also employed as a teaching assistant at the Faculty of Archaeology, where he designed and taught tutorials for various first-year bachelor courses and was employed as lecturer for one third-year bachelor course.

During his Ph.D., Roberto secured fieldwork research grants from the National Geographic Society, Leiden University Fund (LUF), and the Asian Modernities and Traditions Grant (Leiden University). He also received conference and travel grants from the Leiden University Fund (LUF), the European Association of Archaeologists, the Netherlands Institute for the Near East (NINO), and the Society for the Exploration of EurAsia. Additionally, he worked on a project from ISMEO — The International

Association for Mediterranean and Oriental Studies, digitizing and georeferencing ancient maps and aerial photos of the Murghab region.

In the past two years, Roberto has also developed an interest in Contemporary Archaeology. He recently (2023) co-authored a multidisciplinary grant proposal (RESPIRE Project), funded by the National Geographic Society under the Meridian Grant. In this project, he is responsible for the archaeological component, investigating plastic debris as contemporary material culture from three case study beaches on Lampedusa Island (Italy). The preliminary results of this project were presented at the European Association of Archaeologists Conference in Rome in August 2024.