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Creating capitals: The rationale, construction, and function of the imperial capitals of Assyria

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Curriculum Vitae

Aris Politopoulos (Athens, 1989) grew up in Glyfada, Athens, and went to High School in the 2nd Public High School of Glyfada. In 2007 he began his BA studies at the Department of History and Archaeology of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. There he specialized in archaeology, with a particular focus on the Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean and the Mycenaean World. He participated in a number of excavation projects of the University of Athens and the University of Crete.

In February 2012 he moved to the Netherlands to study Near Eastern archaeology as a master student at the Faculty of Archaeology of Leiden University. For his MA research he explored the transition from the Mitanni to the Middle Assyrian empire which resulted in his thesis: *From Mitanni to Middle Assyrians: Changes in Settlement Patterns and Agriculture in the Land of Hanigalbat*.

In 2013 Aris began his PhD trajectory under the supervision of Prof.dr. Peter Akkermans and Dr. Bleda Düring. His dissertation focuses on phenomenon of capital creation in antiquity through a systematic investigation of the imperial capitals of Assyria. He presented his results at several international conferences.

During his PhD studies, Aris co-founded the VALUE Foundation, which explores the intersection of video games and archaeology. As a member of VALUE, he has published several edited volumes, articles, reviews, and blogs on archaeology and video games. He has also organized two international conferences on video games and archaeology, several sessions and roundtables in large international conferences, and a series of public outreach events reconstructing the Dutch Limes in the popular video game *Minecraft*.

In 2019, together with Prof.dr. Sybille Lammes and Dr. Angus Mol, he was awarded the first Snouck-Hurgronje grant, offered by the Leiden University Funds, for the project *The Past-at-Play Lab* (2020-2021). The project is hosted at the Leiden University Centre for Arts in Society. As a post-doctoral researcher, Aris is investigating play in antiquity through the study of ancient board games of the Near East.

Aris is also employed as a lecturer at the Faculty of Archaeology, Leiden University, where he teaches archaeology of the ancient Near East. He was nominated by for the Leiden Remote Teaching Prize of 2020, where he was one of the top three candidates out of more than 200 nominees.