

Stewart, A., 2016. *The Borghese Ares Revisited: New Evidence from the Agora and a Reconstruction of the Augustan Cult Group in the Temple of Ares*. *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, 85(3), 577-625.



Fig.1. The Borghese Ares.
Roman copy. Paris, Musée du
Louvre Ma 866. H. 2.12 m.
Photo G. Manusakis

Andrew Stewart's primary focus for the article is the Borghese Ares and the influences of other, pre-existing works on this Roman copy. Stewart spends a considerable amount of time pondering the setting in which the original Ares by Alkamenes, of which the Borghese Ares is based upon, would have resided and the influences upon that piece. Whilst, primarily, I do agree with the facts and ideas which Stewart raises, there are several elements of his analysis that I have identified which, due to my research into art and the depictions of gods in ancient Greece and Rome, I would see fit to elaborate on some of Stewart's points – supplying my own evidence to support such – both from an artistic route and from modern scholarship.

Stewart begins by laying out the history and identification of the Borghese Ares with reference to Winklemann and then the updated identification and analysis by Furtwängler and Conze in 1869 [Stewart. 2016. Pg.778, 580]. Whilst it stands that the Borghese is one of the Roman exact copies [Stewart. 2016. Pg.607], this marble replica has been neglected and is a copy of a now-lost bronze [Stewart. 2016. Pg.580]. The loss of such a bronze piece would make sense considering the repurposing or stealing of bronze pieces; frequently seen, especially when considering the classical period [Osborne. 2000. Pg.17; Sparkes. 2010. Pg.34]. Stewart begins the discussion concerning the ring/shackle which sits around the statue's right leg [Stewart. 2016. Pg.778-779]. This ring becomes part of a larger discussion on the reasoning for such an element [Stewart. 2016.

Pg.778, 580, 583-584, 589-590, 593, 595-596, 601]. The Furtwängler translation [8.296-299], which Stewart highlights, the revised and original E.V. Rieu translations [1991. 8.292-304], and Murray [8.290-300] translations of Homer's *Odyssey* refer to this immobilised Ares. The Furtwängler translation stands out as actually presenting this as a shackle; the Murray translation leaves this a little more ambiguous since there is the impression of a net here only. I find it presumptuous and curious that Stewart only employs one translation here, regardless of the age, especially since it is the translation of the person posing the theory. The original 1946 translation of *The Odyssey* by E.V. Rieu makes reference to a shackle [pg.132], but the initial capture is also a net [1946. pg.129-130; 1991. 359-360]. The Murray translation only refers to the net and "bonds," presumably still the netting crafted by Hephaestus [8.290-300, 355-365]. I would argue against Stewart's disregard and that having the chained ankle ring may serve more as a stylistic homage to Homer rather than a complete copy, as opposed to what Stewart is trying to convey through Furtwängler's ideas. My conclusion is rooted in something that Stewart later raises about the teachings of Phidias as a sculptor of metaphors and hidden meanings. Applying this logic, having this chained nature may serve as a linked idea [Stewart. 2016. Pg.613] – alongside other instances influencing Alkamene's work and the Borghese [Stewart. 2016. Pg.595].

To aid the identification of Ares in the Borghese sculpture, Stewart draws parallels between other sculptures. This includes two sculptures on the east side of the Parthenon and the addition of another votive relief [Stewart. 2016. Pg.578-579, 589-590, 592-593, 595]. All of this evidence is

linked by the presence of the shackle/ring which presents itself on these figures. On the Borghese statue, we have metal residue on his right leg and a hole angled down [Pg.578]. The Parthenon east pediment Ares contains three holes (2 above the ankle and one behind on the background) [Pg.589], the east pediment has signs of a break and holes [Pg.590]. Furthermore, there are several votive reliefs to Ares containing shackles or rings [Pg.592]. Concurring with Stewart, it is highly likely that all three of these depictions reference a shackled and chained Ares. The coincidence between the three presented as purposeful and reflects the imagery we commonly associate with Ares. There are several reasons for the shackling by scholars such as Gonzales [2004. Pg.40], which Stewart suggests [Stewart. 2016. Pg.595-596]. I concur with the final suggestion that the people viewed him as this powerful and dangerous force. He is good as an asset and he can be subdued with outside influence; anchoring the god and placing some sort of magic on him as in the *Iliad*, making him too weak to inflict harm [5.382-392]. The chain restraining him from walking off and forcing this service to the people element seems extreme, certainly to modern interpretation. However, when considering the danger that he was supposed to encapsulate in myth and the destruction he could wage, it seems necessary to enforce some restraint [Kostuch. 2011. Pg.41-42, 46].

Stewart mentions victory and chaining Ares to the ground to gain his favour, and his wingless state provides “everlasting protection,” [Stewart. 2016. Pg.578-579]. Whilst the meaning of having Ares physically bound to a polis in order to force protection of the god is already dubious, would it not here stand that this becomes problematic? Athenians viewing “victory as wingless,” as Stewart states, is a flawed ideology. To make this apparent, one could look at the sculpture by Paionios of Nike [fig.2]. The figure of Nike, encapsulating a similar meaning of victory in war as Ares, is not chained – the original piece was stationed upon a ten-meter pillar, with an impressive wingspan to match, she encapsulated victory in war whilst also being free [Woodford. 1986. Pg.150; Rodgers. 2012. Pg.90]. It can be purported that the reasoning for her freedom of movement within the statue is seen as a metaphorical reflection of the Athenians remaining free of their enemies – most notably the Persians [Byvanck-Quarles Van Ufford. 1972. Pg.111]. This directly contests the idea that Stewart suggests about wingless victory. However, I would agree that the chaining and forced aid element of Ares in sculpture may be due to the violent nature surrounding the god, which Stewart later speaks of on page 597, when discussing how he is a protector and also a destructive force. I do not concur with this wingless victory ideology; Victory is liberating.



Fig.2: Paionios on Mende, c.420 BCE, Nike -Winged Victory, H: 2.16m.

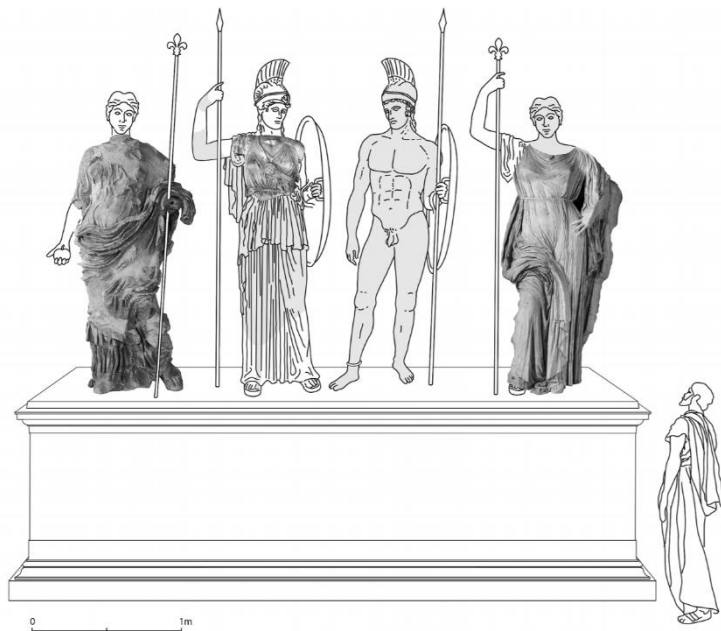


Fig 3: Reconstruction of the Augustan cult group in the Temple of Ares, Athens, with Aphrodite, Athena, Ares, and Aphrodite. Portions attested in copies are shown in grey. (In Stewart.2016. Pg.610.

The scholar does well to point out the treatment of Ares in Athens [Stewart. 2016. Pg.579, 583, 595-597, 602]. Whilst the god was notably popular in Sparta [Kostuch. 2011. Pg.43], Athens was not as fond of the god; Stewart flags this as one reason we have so few remaining pieces for him [Stewart. 2016. Pg.383]. It can be inferred that this treatment comes from Athens' less militaristic ideals – whilst Athena is a god of war, her particular brand of war is strategy and protection. Ares has this but also comes hand in hand with destruction [Stewart. 2016. Pg.597; Kostuch. 2011. Pg.41-42, 46; Hom. *Il.* 5.416-442]. This overlap of ideals is also what

solidifies the belief that the Agora temple held a duel honouring system for Athena and Ares, which Stewart makes mention as Alkamenes statue that Pausanias witnessed – “Near the statue of Demosthenes is a sanctuary of Ares, where are placed two images of Aphrodite, one of Ares made by Alkamenes, and one of Athena made by a Parian of the name of Locrus,” [Paus. 1.8.4]. That is not to say the possible other placements that Stewart references are not possible for the Borghese – since the statue was moved before its placement in the Agora temple [Stewart. 2016. Pg.601]. Each location that Stewart raises for the Borghese type statue – opposite the open-air temple of Poseidon, hill of Ares, court of Areopagus, or the Acropolis itself Stewart. 2016. Pg.596, 598] – all hold some sort of symbolic meaning and solidify this “protector” status that would have been beneficial for any polis to employ as a talisman or ward [Stewart. 2016. Pg.602; Kostuch. 2011. Pg.46]. The scholar never decides on placement for the original pre-Agora, but it could stand that it was at all of these at some point. The only placement I would disagree with, for Alkamene's, is the Pnyx since Pausanias is not recorded to have visited [Stewart. 2016. Pg.598]. It further stands that there was less reverence for Ares, considering our complete lack of the Alkamenes' statue – likely due to negligence and disrepair.

The latter half of the article mentions the mirroring of Ares and Athena within the Agora temple. The two Aphrodite sculptures aided this, balancing and complementing the other two god's ideals – integral to the duel honouring system of the temple [Fig.3]. Stewart makes a point of mentioning the teachings of Phidias – the original organiser of the Parthenon, later exiled [Plutarch. *Life of Pericles*. 13.4–9; Robertson. 1963. Pg.46] – instilled a relation of mirrors and metaphors upon the work of Alkamenes [Stewart. 2016. Pg.613]. This would account for why there are such strong artistic parallels between the Athena sculptures, the Alkamenes Ares, and, later, the Borghese Ares. I would like to note that the similarity of the Borghese and Alkamenes Ares may, in part, be due to Roman idealisation – they would have also had access to this information. I agree that the Roman copy would have remained mostly true to form – since it was important to remain true to the originals. However, we must also consider the contemporising of these Roman sculptures (discussed later), and how this is reflected in the Agora temple and the gods presented in it. Stewart finds the contemporising of a copy of the Athena statue suspicious [Stewart. 2016. Pg.607]. To contradict this, I would say that the addition of a head that strongly resembles that of Athena Parthenos draws an even clearer picture of Athena – the Athena Parthenos was such a well-known piece that most would be familiar with her face. Whilst this may have been a contemporary addition, but the face is unknown because we do not have the original surviving head. Herodotus references “the Acropolis is guarded by a great snake,” [Hdt. 8.41], so it is curious that the snake belt was omitted for a rope in the copy – it can be surmised that this is due to damage on the copy, removing this element, something Stewart fails to consider [Fig.4]. The addition of a head like the Athena Parthenos would serve as further beneficial if the original sculpture's head had been lost.



Fig 4: Anon, Statue of the goddess Allât. Roman copy, from the Temple of Allât in Palmyra. In Stewart. 2016. Pg.608.



Fig 5: Polykleitos, c.450-440 BCE. *Doryphoros* ("Spear Bearer"), also referred to as The Canon. Roman marble copy of Greek bronze. H: 212cm.

Mentioning the loss that we have faced due to time, making identification more difficult for modern scholars, is unfortunate but a near-constant. When it comes to original bronze pieces, we do not have many surviving specimens due to the repurposing of metals [Osborne. 2000. Pg.17; Sparkes. 2010. Pg.34]. Marble originals or copies are prone to damage and wear. Alongside this, surviving pieces are often completely whitewashed, or the paint has simply degraded over time, removing vibrant details [Hilloowala. 2000. Pg.53; Claridge. 2011. Pg.1, 3; Beard and Henderson. 2001. Pg.84-86]. This is true for many of the Ares pieces which Stewart uses as evidence throughout the article. One of the more interesting points of Stewart's article outlining loss is the right arm, left forearm, and supposed shield of the Borghese Ares [Stewart. 2016. Pg.585-586]. I agree that Ares is typically depicted with a shield, and we could infer that the Borghese Ares, holding a well-known spere, and could support the addition of a shield. Despite no surviving fragments of such, it is distinctly reminiscent of the Doryphoros. The piece by Polykleitos is similar but distinctly different in its identification. I propose that this could be a stylistic reflection to exemplify the peak male form [Osborne. 2000. Pg.142; Reid. 2012. Pg.282-283]. Moreover, a common epithet used for Ares is "shield-bearing warrior," [Hom. // 5.289]. There is enough supporting evidence – such as support holes in the upper thigh fragments [Stewart.2016. Pg.586] and

similarities to other pieces – which support the evidence of a shield once being a part of the Borghese Ares.

Furthering the theme of loss is the original helmet on the Borghese Ares, which Stewart brings up throughout his analysis [Stewart. 2016. Pg.584-586, 602, 607]. The helmet, modernised by the Romans, took on a more Attic style; rather than the original that Alkamenes put on his Ares sculpture. The original helmet, worn by the Alkamenes or Borghese, would likely have been stolen, lost, or broken in the move from its original setting to the temple, an aforementioned issue [Osborne. 2000. Pg.17; Sparkes. 2010. Pg.34]. Stewart suggests that the replacement helmet upon the Borghese could have been to give it a more contemporary feel and/or balance it against the Athena sculpture [Stewart. 2016. Pg.602; fig.3]. I would concur with both of these sentiments. They would have wanted to accommodate Athena, integral to Athens and also part of the joint temple, and giving this statue a more contemporary feel links it more solidly to the current time, setting, and beliefs. This becomes even more integral when we consider that the temple and Borghese Ares may have been completed for Gaius Caesar, heralded as the "New Ares," [Stewart. 2016. Pg.584, 601]. With art, you are attempting to leave an impression upon your audience, usually pertaining to the ideals of the time, which means that you want the sculptures to affect the audience [Stewart. 1994. Pg. 7, 11]. This would also account for why the statues of Ares, which Stewart highlights in his article (Parthenon and Alkamenes), are all *ephebes* (youths) [Stewart. 2016. Pg.598]. This is oft observed with classical period sculptures. Artists and sculptors are trying to instil the values within their piece on their audience. Emulating this, the audience will try to achieve *arete* (personal excellence) by basing themselves upon heroic figures or gods – they are not trying to become them, only emulate their values [Stewart. 1997. Pg.7; Kitto. 1971. Pg.60]. This raises why we view the Borghese Ares as

one of the Roman exact copies – it lies in the fact that we can distinguish that these period sensitive amendments from the original Greek it copies.

To conclude, Stewart's 2016 article on the identification of the Borghese Ares raises many points pertaining to the identity of Ares in myth and art – namely, the Athenian identification of such. The scholar raises important points about the depictions of Ares (mainly in dress and the ring/shackle), how loss has affected modern historian's ability to identify aspects of the ancient world, and how contemporaries and Roman copies have both advantages and drawback regarding stylistic or augmented ideals. The article also solidifies the Borghese Ares as a copy of the original sculpture of Alkamenes, which is now completely lost. Overall, Stewart comprises an article that correlates and organises all the current information on the Borghese Ares and its identification. However, I would hesitate to name this as a comprehensive or complete analysis. Some of his points are lacking in further thought on the reasoning for certain aspects. Stewart does well to accurately identify possibilities, but tends to shy away from a reasoning – something I have attempted to rectify. His underlying distrust of the Roman copies stunts his analysis and causes him to miss crucial elements, especially pertaining to loss and meaning. I fundamentally disagree with the "wingless victory" idea, due to Nike's depiction which contradicts this notion; rather I would see Ares as restrained danger and rage. Furthermore, although he does well to identify that Phidias influenced Alkamenes in the way he composes stories, he does not apply this to his analysis or realise that this may have further influenced the Borghese Ares. As such, to gain a more complete knowledge on sculpture, other pieces should be consulted in addition to Stewart's article.

Word Count: 2559

Bibliography

- Beard, M. & Henderson, J., 2001. *Classical art from Greece to Rome*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Byvanck-Quarles Van Ufford, L., 1972. W. DEONNA, *La Niké de Paionios de Mendé et le triangle sacré des monuments figurés* (Coll. Latomus, vol. 62). Bruxelles, Latomus, 1968. 320 p. Pr. frs. belges 350. *Mnemosyne*, 25(1), pp.110–112.
- Claridge, A., 2011. *Looking for Colour on Greek and Roman Sculpture*. *Journal of Art Historiography*, 5, pp.5-AC/1.
- Gonzales, M. P. 2004. *Cults and Sanctuaries of Ares and Enyalios: A Survey of the Literary, Epigraphic, and Archeological Evidence*. Greco, E., ed. 2010. Topograf. Berkeley: University of California.
- Hilloowala, R., 2000. *Anatomy and the Art of Archaic Greece*. *THE ANATOMICAL RECORD (NEW ANAT.)* 261:50–56.
- Kitto, H.D.F., 1971. *The Greeks*. Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd.
- Kostuch, L., 2011. *Pantes theoi, Polemos and Ares on the Battlefield. The Greek Concept of the War Deity*. *Symbolae Philologorum Posnaniensium*, 2011, nr XXI/1, s. 41-48.
- Osborne, R., 2000. *Classical Greece: Short Oxford History of Europe*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Reid, H., 2012. *Athletic Beauty in Classical Greece: A Philosophical View*. *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport: Sport and Aesthetics*, 39(2), pp.281–297.
- Robertson, M., 1963. *The Sculptures of the Parthenon. Greece & Rome*, 10, 46-60.
- Rodgers, N., 2012. *The Art and Architecture of Ancient Greece*. Leicestershire: Anness Publishing Ltd.
- Sparkes, B.A., 2010. "Il Freestanding Sculpture," *New Surveys in the Classics*. Cambridge University Press, 40, pp. 24–50.
- Stewart, A., 2016. *The Borghese Ares Revisited: New Evidence from the Agora and a Reconstruction of the Augustan Cult Group in the Temple of Ares*. *Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens*, 85(3), 577-625.
- Stewart, A.F. 1997. *Art, Desire, and the Body in Ancient Greece*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Woodford, S. 1988. *An Introduction to Greek Art*. Cornell University Press.

Ancient Sources

- Herodotus, *The Histories*. Aubrey de Sélincourt (trans.), 1954. London: Penguin Group.
- Homer, *The Iliad*. E.V. Rieu (trans), 1950. London: Penguin Group.
- Homer, *The Odyssey*. A.T. Murray(trans.), 1919. London: Harvard University Press.
- Homer, *The Odyssey*. E.V. Rieu (trans), 1946. London: Penguin Group.
- Homer, *The Odyssey*. E.V. Rieu (trans), 1991. London: Penguin Group.

Homer, *The Odyssey*. Furtwängler (trans.), 1893.

Pausanias, *Description of Greece*. W.H.S. Jones (trans.), 1918. London: Harvard University Press.

Plutarch, *Lives*. Bernadotte Perrin (trans.), 1914. London: Harvard University Press.

Images

Fig 1. The Borghese Ares. Roman copy. Paris, Musée du Louvre Ma 866. H. 2.12 m. Photo G. Manusakis

Fig 2: Paionios on Mende, c.420 BCE, Nike -Winged Victory, H: 2.16m. Original marble piece with several missing segments it was discovered in 1875 at Olympia, Museum of Classical Archeology Databases, Accessed:04/11/2020: <https://museum.classics.cam.ac.uk/collections/casts/nike-paionios>

Fig.3: Reconstruction of the Augustan cult group in the Temple of Ares, Athens, with Aphrodite (3), Athena (2), Ares (1), and Aphrodite (4). Portions attested in copies are shown in grey. Drawing E. Babnik; photos courtesy Agora Excavations. In Stewart. 2016. Pg.610.

Fig.4: Statue of the goddess Allât. Roman copy, from the Temple of Allât in Palmyra. Palmyra Archaeological Museum A138/75, B2302/8494. Photo courtesy M. Gawlikowski. In Stewart. 2016. Pg. 608.

Fig.5: Polykleitos, c.450-440 BCE. *Doryphoros* ("Spear Bearer"), also referred to as The Canon. Roman marble copy of Greek bronze. H: 212cm. Accessed 15/02/2021: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doryphoros#/media/File:Doryphoros_MAN_Napoli_Inv6011-2.jpg