IYARRI AT THE INTERFACE: THE ORIGINS OF ARES

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INTRODUCTION

In this paper, I will examine the idea that there might be a connection between Greek Ares, and Luwian Iyarri, and explore the consequences that such a connection might have for our understanding of how the cults and identity of Ares developed. I will begin by giving a concise survey of the many theories that have been proposed regarding the etymology of Ares, including those which link the names of Ares and Iyarri on linguistic grounds. I will then discuss whether sufficient significant similarities can be found between the functions, identities, and iconographies of Ares and Iyarri to suggest some kind of connection between the two gods. I will argue that Ares, in his Classical and pre-Classical incarnations, and Iyarri were not war-gods in the same sense of ‘war-god’, that their shared role as divine guarantors of oaths is not significant, that their iconographies were dissimilar, and that while both were destructive gods, they utilised distinctly different modes of destruction. I will therefore proceed to argue that Iyarri did not significantly influence the early development of Ares. Following this, I will investigate the possibility that the cults and identity of Iyarri influenced the development of cults of Ares in Anatolia.

Most, but not all, of the evidence here is from the second and third centuries AD. I will discuss the various arguments that have been made in favour of the view that Ares in Anatolia is somehow different from Ares in Greece, and that this difference is rooted in the influence of local warrior-gods. I will argue that significant local variation can be found in the cult of Ares in both Anatolia and mainland Greece, and that this ‘difference’ is largely illusory, but that there was a greater trend towards local prominence and a role as protector of both cities and individuals in battle in many Anatolian cults. I will conclude by arguing that this trend may be due in part to the influence of Roman Mars, but that the appearance in Anatolia of direct female counterparts to, or even manifestations of,
Ares may be rooted in the influence of Iyarri, or a similar local Anatolian deity.

1. The Origins of Ares: Etymologies and Iyarri

The origin of the name of the god Ares has been a subject of speculation and debate since Plato. The first of the etymologies suggested for Ares in the *Etymologium Magnum* is a derivation from the feminine noun ἀρή, which is generally translated as ‘bane’ or ‘ruin’, and which is glossed by the *Etymologium Magnum* as the harm, βλάβη, that comes from war. This etymology has been embraced by a series of modern scholars, from P. Kretschmer in his influential 1921 *Glotta* article, through P. Chantraine in 1968, to M.P. Gonzales in 2005, although R. Beekes has recently expressed a certain degree of scepticism. The word ἀρή is not well attested outside Early Greek Hexameter Poetry, possibly appearing once in Aeschylus’ *Suppliant Women*, if the scholiast understands the line correctly. That Ares and ἀρή were connected does seem almost certain, but the implications of this connection are less clear. Ares may derive from ἀρή, but it is not completely impossible that ἀρή derives from Ares, or that both were independently derived from the same root. The disappearance of ἀρή from the post-Homeric lexicon may be a result of increasing metonymic and metaphorical use of Ares, and this usage was not necessarily connected to the origins of his name.

It is likely that Ares received cult well before the composition of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Ares, as a-re, appears within several Mycenaean personal names, with examples appearing at Thebes, Mycenae, Pylos, and Knossos. Many of these names, as J. Gulizio has observed, appear

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6 Cf. Ventris/Chadwick 1956: 125; Aura Jorro 1985: 96–98; Ilievsky 1999: 306–307; Rougemont 2005: 332; García Ramón 2011: 231. The theophoric nature of most of the names that contain a-re is debated, but the dedication of oil to a-re discussed below, and the apparent use of Ares as an epithet for Hermes in PY.Tn.316 (regarding which,