



INVITATION TO ERIS

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Invitation to Eris

In the summer of 2020, it's clear the world is in the midst of momentous change of unknown scale.

Astrologers see that cycles upon ever larger cycles are turning, signifying powerful global endings and beginnings. Jupiter and Saturn are putting big punctuation marks on Pluto's long transit through Capricorn, with each beginning a new cycle with the planet of Death and Rebirth. On the Winter Solstice, Jupiter and Saturn meet in the first degree of Aquarius to end and begin new 20, 200, and 800-year cycles. These are outer planet meetings of the first magnitude.

What about Eris, who's in the thick of these outer planet configurations? Eris is so new to our awareness that astrologers have barely begun to understand this dwarf planet who dwells in the Kuiper Belt and beyond. As the seismic shifts unfold, more astrologers are acknowledging that Eris is part of the pattern, but as of yet, not many of us.

Yet Pluto will square Eris five times in 2020 and 2021. This is the waning square of a synodic cycle that began in 1756 with a single conjunction at 17 Sagittarius.

What about Eris?

Strife and **Chaos** are the names by which Eris is most known. It's clear that 2020 brings an abundance of both. Another less discussed descriptor is **The Uninvited**. It's ironic that Eris hasn't been invited by most astrologers to the celestial party in 2020.

In the Greek myth which Eris is best known for, she's furious because she's not been invited to a wedding feast being attended by all the other gods and goddesses. Zeus doesn't invite Strife to the party, although she *is* family—she's his own daughter. In revenge for this slight, Eris pulls a prank on the pantheon that leads to the Trojan War.

The Buddha said, *'When the student is ready, the teacher appears'*. The transpersonal planets are seen as teachers and guides to the realms beyond the limitations of Ego. Eris has appeared at a critical time in human history; what is she teaching us? There's an opportunity to see the old Greek archetype with fresh eyes. The sooner we understand why Eris has shown up, the clearer insight we will gain into the celestial calculus of 2020.

Pluto squaring Eris the Uninvited is sharply illuminating humanity's crisis of marginalization and estrangement. Those Uninvited who've stood outside the party demand the gates be torn down, asserting their inclusion within humanity.

The Invited people—the privileged—must acknowledge the parts of themselves they've disregarded in separating themselves from such “undesirables.” It's hard to see and acknowledge one's inner bias or dominance traits. But if unacknowledged, this energy will just keep causing trouble. **Inclusion** is a powerful Erisian practice, within and without.

Astronomy Informs Astrology

Leaving her out is understandable because Eris is an unfamiliar archetype to astrologers.

The dwarf planet was first identified by computer at 19 Aries, in trine to Pluto in Sag. She appeared to human eyes by telescope in January 2005 and was named on September 13, 2006.

Astronomically, Eris and Pluto have a dynamic relationship:

- Eris' discovery created a new ordering of planets by astronomers. She was the cause of Pluto's change of category to dwarf planet, seen by some as a demotion. Pluto is the forerunner of all the distant dwarf planets. As Sovereign of the Unconscious, Pluto becomes the link to all the trans Neptunian objects coming into our awareness and the key to their place in consciousness. You have to go through Pluto.
- Eris and Pluto are almost exactly the same size, challenging each other for largest dwarf planet. At first Eris was thought to be larger; most recent measurements give Pluto the edge.
- Though twice as from the Sun than Pluto at aphelion (furthest point from the Sun), Eris' orbit at perihelion (closest point to the Sun) comes within Pluto's orbit. By the extremes of her orbit, Eris carries a galactic note and plants it within the deep Plutonian unconsciousness of human experience.

Eris is transpersonal, *very* transpersonal; extremely distant from the Sun with a periodicity of 557 years.

Her egg-shaped orbit reaches far out toward the galaxy, tilting at a much sharper oblique to the solar system's plane than that of the rest of the planets, much more so than even Pluto. Eris does not dwell in the plane of the Solar System we inhabit with the other planets, as her galactic perspective tilts sharply.

This eccentric orbit means Eris spends varying lengths of time in the signs. Eris stays less than 20 years each in Cancer, Leo and Virgo. She stays the longest—about 120 years-- in tropical Aries where she is now, at the widest, most distant part of her orbit.

Since her discovery, Eris has been within the constellation Cetus the Whale and is currently near the star Baiten Kaitos--the Belly of the Whale, or the Sea Monster. She's connecting collective human Unconsciousness with the Jonah experience.

<https://www.constellationsofwords.com/stars/BatenKaitos.html>

Considering how distant and how oblique to the plane of the solar system Eris is, perhaps she and other KNO objects represent a new order of transpersonal interpretation: beyond transpersonal, much more trans than personal--possibly even *metapersonal*, referencing the possibility of a more galactic or universal consciousness within the collective psyche.

We Are All in This Together

It's important to realize that Eris first entered Aries in 1922 (a couple years after women's suffrage in the US) and will remain there until 2044. All the Pluto generations now alive--except the oldest of Pluto in Cancer folks--have this placement, and so will everyone born until 2044.

Aries' fierce Warrior energy challenges the ability to clearly perceive the pure Eris archetype, since she is herself a battle goddess. The archetypes blur. But the fact is that Eris in Aries is universally present within the collective human experience at this time in history.

Eris is now being squared by the gathering of Jupiter, Saturn and Pluto in Capricorn. The gathering in Capricorn is a very rare event. Even more rare is that the Capricorn congregation is squaring Eris!

There's exquisite timing with the retrograde cycle of Mars in Aries in 2020. Mars conjuncts Eris three times later this year: twice while squaring Jupiter/Pluto, and during the height of the campaign season for the US Presidential Election.

Eris in the celestial mix represents the chaos and inner strife we're feeling. Already it feels hostile and Mars will likely intensify that sentiment. You don't have to be an astrologer to predict the possibility of violence relating to the US election.

Eris also represents the powerful awareness of social injustice being brought forward and empowered by the square from Pluto. Social injustice, and the denial that social injustice exists, will continue to be central to the election and these times.

The 3rd conjunction of Mars to Eris takes place at the same time as Mars's third square to Pluto, two days after the December Solstice--when Jupiter meets Saturn at 0 Aquarius. Those just-past energies are present in the Jupiter-Saturn seed being born. The tensions we're feeling won't ease up next year. The Pluto-Eris squares next year will keep the pressure on as Pluto returns to its natal position in the US chart.

A couple of Eris dates to ponder:

- When Columbus "discovered" America on October 12, 1492, Eris was at 23 degrees 16 minutes of Aries. The entire New World of colonization, genocide, and slavery launched that day is having its Eris return.
- The chart of the US Total Solar Eclipse of April 8, 2024 in the spring of the next US election year, has Mercury retrograde exactly conjunct Eris at 25 Aries within 3 minutes of arc. This suggests that by 2024, after the Pluto-Eris squares and the US Pluto return, whatever Eris signifies to humanity will be on the global mind

Who Started the Trojan War?

Greek Eris is a warrior or battle goddess, twin sister of Ares (Mars) and daughter of Zeus, the king of the Olympian gods. In the 21st century, I imagine her fierce nature as gender nonconforming, and feel that Eris is especially connected with LGBTQ+ people as well as with all marginalized groups in society.

Eris was known to rage in battle, crazed with blood lust--much like Kali of the Hindu pantheon. She likes to provoke trouble, she can be unpleasant to be around, therefore was not asked to the pantheon's party.

Standing outside the celebration, she tosses a golden apple inscribed "to the fairest" over the fence. The three most prominent goddesses--Aphrodite, Hera, and Athena--start arguing about who's most gorgeous. Bribery ensues to influence Paris of Troy, a mortal man chosen to decide among them. Aphrodite wins him over by promising the hand of the famously beautiful Helen. But Helen is already married to Menelaus, the King of Sparta. She's kidnapped by Paris and taken to Troy, and so the war begins.

But did Eris start the Trojan War, or was it the unkindness and never-ending rivalry, greed, and deceit of the entitled pantheon? If only they had invited her....

Are there mythic parallels to our time as racism, entitlement, and environmental degradation lead us toward fragmentation and destruction? Has Eris, with her Strife and Chaos, come to trip up the pantheon of our time?

The Dark Goddess

In earlier myth, prior to the patriarchal Greeks, Eris was the daughter of the Night Goddess, Nyx. She's an archetype of the Dark Goddess, representing the wild noncompliant feminine so thoroughly suppressed in the last 2500 years. The Dark Goddess returns with Eris in Aries to reclaim her place at the table at this time in human history when patriarchy is being deconstructed. Perhaps she's doing away altogether with the dualistic/binary absolutes of masculine and feminine.

There are other symbols of the astrological Dark Goddess—Black Moon Lilith and Pluto, when seen as Kali or as Ereshkigal the Sumerian queen of the Underworld. But Eris is the one with the most galactic reach and right now, she's in hard dialogue with Pluto.

With Pluto's transit through Capricorn, the mindset of patriarchal culture has become revealed as an imminent danger to the planet. Eris is here to help illuminate and challenge the old patterns Pluto has churned up. The Pluto/Eris square pulls the rug from under those patterns with ferocious vigor.

Many astrologers interpret Eris as rage, vindictiveness, a war-crazed berserker--she is mad Chaos. Rage is clearly increasing in portions of humanity; tension is high across the board.

Vindictive trolls stir and stoke the fury, triggering chaos. Eris with Pluto, Saturn, and Jupiter sounds a crashing chord in the celestial symphony.

But, is perceiving Eris simply as Chaos gaslighting the Goddess?

Eris in Aries for Everyone

Eris first entered Aries in 1922 and will ingress into Taurus in 2044. Eris in Aries is bringing about the collective arising of the Individual, oxymoronic as that sounds. Aries is the archetypal “I am”, the impulse to be one’s own person. Aries explores the power of personal agency, to be in charge of one’s own actions and fight for one’s purpose. “Don’t tell me what to do!” says Aries. Perhaps these days, this translates into the defiance not to wear masks or be vaccinated, claiming the prerogative to have guns, or claiming the right to express one’s gender identity.

The era since the 1920’s the development of individuality within human beings has increased greatly. More and wider education have awakened many to their agency. As the individual has come into greater prominence, so have the Uninvited: women, people of color, indigenous people, queer folk, differently abled people.

During the 20th and 21st centuries many battles for human rights have been fought by marginalized people who’ve been collectively brutalized for centuries. The 1960’s witnessed the lengthy battle of the Uninvited intensify with the help of the Uranus-Pluto conjunction in Virgo, the sign of the Virgin Priestess.

The Uranus-Neptune conjunction in 1993-- in square to Eris--reshaped our individual ability to connect to the wider world. Shortly Eris’ actual appearance to humanity in 2006 came the iPhone and individualism has accelerated, helped by Uranus’ transit in Aries, conjunct Eris in 2016-2017 as Donald Trump became President.

In 2020 the Uninvited are rising in solidarity as Pluto squares Eris. The Already Invited continue to obstruct and resist, but the great wave of individuals focusing their agency for transformation will continue to roll in.

As individuality has increased, so has extreme defensiveness and selfishness—the Aries shadow. With greater individuality comes a sense of entitlement: we want what we want, when we want it, and that means now! There is decreased tolerance for authority and power over.

The Consequence of Individualism

It’s becoming apparent that **speciesism**--the centering of humans as superior to all other forms of life on earth--has emerged as the ultimate threat to human existence. We could call it *human-racism*. In our seeking to be individuals and claim our agency, we left home and forgot about Mama. We came to see Mother Earth as an object to be used, and have forgotten our Mother and her family of Life on this planet, our only home. The consequences of disinventing Mom will be severe. The devastation of climate change will be her final word on the subject.

At the same time, many people are now asking themselves what it is to exercise the power of agency responsibly. There's a growing awareness of the universal importance of one's own agency. If Eris is galactic energy, or metapersonal energy, then her wisdom must include the universal.

What can I do, myself, in the world right now? Is to be my own whole Self the most useful thing and what does that even mean? Is there something I can own in myself that lifts the awareness of the whole? What innate gifts can I offer for the good of the planet?

On the journey to recognizing ourselves as empowered individuals, perhaps we must go through the harsh experience of being existentially alone, of Unbelonging, in order to awaken.

To invite Eris means to acknowledge that the time of the culture born of colonial dominance is coming to an end. We are in the midst of intense strife and chaos, and through it we're asked to become conscious, inclusive human beings, responsible to the whole. Inviting Eris to the party means to invite and welcome all of humanity, especially those whose difference makes us uncomfortable. Inviting Eris means re-inviting our Mother the Earth.

Marginalization is the old way; awareness of interconnectedness is the new one. The force of the personal will is giving way to the inclusive power of the personal will for the collective. This is a great turning time for humanity, and with Aries wisdom, we must be all-in.

Resources:

1. <https://www.theoi.com/Daimon/Eris.html>
2. Eris: Archetype of Shadows, Crisis, and Awakening at the Completion of the Mayan Calendar, e-book by Laura Walker published in 2007
3. article by Nick Anthony Fiorenza <https://www.lunarplanner.com/asteroids-dwarfplanets/Eris.html>
4. Gratitude to my friend, transformational astrologer and guide Cassandra Leoncini, who stresses the wisdom of setting a place at the table for the Uninvited Guest in her telling of the Eris myth. twoeaglesastrology.com