

What does eris mean

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In Homer's Iliad, Eris is called (allegorically?) the "sister" of Ares.⁴ However, according to Hesiod's Theogony, Eris is the daughter of Nyx (Night), being among the many children Nyx produced without a partner. These siblings of Eris include personifications¹² like Eris¹² of several "loathsome" (stygeros) things, such as Moros ("Doom"), Thanatos ("Death"), the Moirai ("Fates"), Nemesis ("Indignation"), Apate ("Deceit"), and Geras ("Old Age").⁵

In the middle was Fear, made of adamant, unspeakable, glaring backward with eyes shining like fire. His mouth was full of white teeth, terrible, dreadful; and over his grim forehead flew terrible Strife, preparing for the battle-rout of men--cruel one, she took away the mind and sense of any men who waged open war against Zeus' son [Heracles].

And the Trojans were urged on by Ares, and the Achaeans by flashing-eyed Athene, and Terror, and Rout, and Strife who rages incessantly, sister and comrade of man-slaying Ares; she first rears her crest only a little, but then her head is fixed in the heavens while her feet tread on earth. She it was who now cast evil strife into their midst as she went through the throng, making the groanings of men to increase.

She also appears in this "rouser of armies" role in Book 5,⁸¹ and again in Book 11, where Zeus sends Eris to rouse the Greek army by shouting:⁸²

Her lust for bloodshed is insatiable. Later in Book 11, she is the last of the gods to leave the battlefield, rejoicing as she watches the fighting she has roused.⁸³ While in Book 5, she is described as raging unceasingly.⁸⁴

Hesiod also associates Eris with war. In his Works and Days, he says that she "fosters evil war and conflict".⁸⁵ And in his Theogony, has the Hysminai (Battles) and the Machai (Wars) as her children.⁸⁶

In addition to the Eris who was the daughter of Nyx (Night), Hesiod, in his Works and Days, mentions another Eris. He contrasts the two: the former being "blameworthy" who "fosters evil war and conflict", the latter worthy of "praise", have been created by Zeus to foster beneficial competition:⁸⁷

From the later part of fifth-century BC, the upper section of a red-figure calyx krater depicts Eris with Themis facing each other, apparently in animated discussion, while the lower section depicts the Judgement of Paris, confirming Eris' role in the events as told in the Cypria.⁹⁹

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