

Crossing the Zero Degree Aries Threshold

by Brian Clark

Spring as a Metaphor

The Absolute Unknowable Appears as Spring

Rumi

The theme for University Astrology's virtual summit on March 22-23, 2025 is *The New Fire and Air Era*, referencing the outer planetary ingresses into fire and air.

What has captured my attention are the movements across the 0-degree Aries point, initiated by the North Node in January. Zero degrees Aries in the Northern Hemisphere marks the beginning of Spring, a time-honoured image of renewal and regeneration. My imagination was stirred by 0° Aries, the Vernal Point, not as a sign, but as a symbol of an archetypal Spring. As the gateway to the sacred circle of the zodiac, it is as if a threshold is being crossed.

It has been suggested that in primordial times, ancients believed the world was created at the Vernal Equinox. It was as if Spring was a ceremonial marker for being in the flow of time. When spring arrived, the world was renewed and revitalized. Myths told us of the Vernal return – in Mesopotamia, the god Tammuz was reborn, like other vegetational gods such as Attis and Adonis; in Greece, Persephone returned from the Underworld into Demeter's arms and the fields rejoiced – it was a time of renewal and fertility.

This year this point is triggered. First, the Lunar Nodes crossed the 0° Aries point in January 2025. The North Node at 0° Aries highlights the Draconic Zodiac, referencing yet another nodal portal in this moment. The Draconic zodiac begins as the North Node is on the Vernal point, aligning the nodal and equinox axes, an image of a realignment, renewal and redirection of the soul's path, collectively and purposefully. Neptune and Saturn navigate back and forth over this point in the coming year, forging their new cycle at 0°45 in February 2026. Venus and Mercury also have three passes direct and retrograde across this point in close proximity, ferrying Saturn and Neptune across the threshold. The table at the end of the article highlights these passages.

While the Vernal Equinox point is an astronomically-constructed point, it is also an ancient and embedded image of nature, both human and animal; therefore, is both a primordial instinct and an intuitive archetype. Nature knows the Vernal point, maybe not on a calendar, but in its DNA. Ancient cultures marked this occasion with rituals and ceremonies, aeons before the ingress of the Sun into Aries became the commencement of the astrological year and the ceremonial gateway to the zodiac. The Vernal Equinox signalled the return of vitality to the land and the reawakening of divine forces; a time of great celebration, with feasting, fires, and communal gatherings held at sacred sites. Bonfires were lit to drive away evil spirits and to purify the land for the coming growing season.

It seems to me that somewhere deep in our primordial selves, in our indigeneity, in our nature, there is a vernal mechanism that knows the coming of spring . But this is not just a literal and temporal perception of a seasonal change; it is an astrological metaphor of return to a season, an aeon, an era.

We recognize this new season is imminent through a psychospiritual awareness of emergent archetypal energies; ancient gods, our contemporary archetypes, make their presence known in times of transition and return. As humans, we have a capacity to reflect and respect primordial knowing and indigenous wisdom through our myths, images, stories and feelings, through our inner seasons. What spring are we returning to? How can we celebrate spring as a season of psychospiritual renewal, tending to the inner gardens of our humanity.

0-Aries as a Portal to the Sacred Circle of Animals

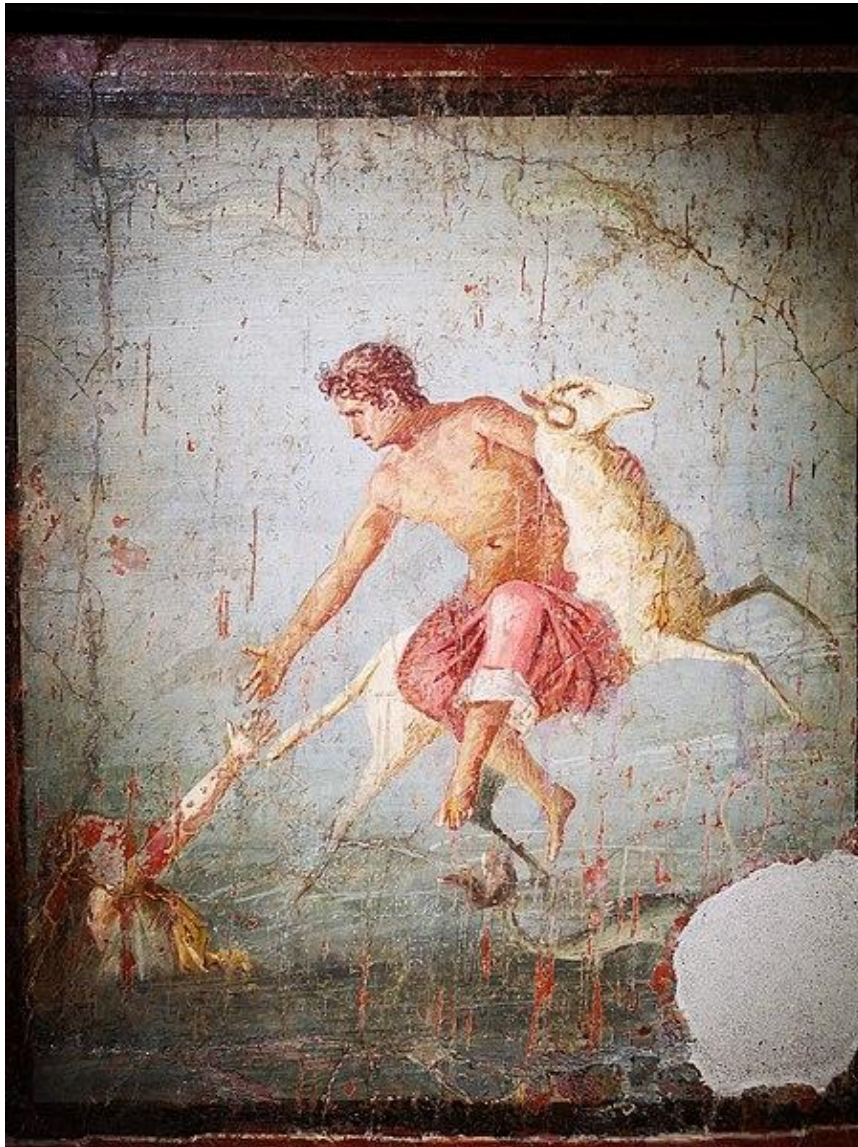
This outward spring and garden are a reflection of the inward garden.

Rumi

Since the Hellenistic period, Aries has been the leading sign of a seasonally-fixed Zodiac rendering the Vernal equinox as the ceremonial gateway to the sacred circle of the zodiac. Ptolemy (ca. 2nd C, CE) confirms Aries as the zodiacal gateway.¹ But of import here, is that millennia before the measuring of the sky, there was a knowing and celebration of this primordial time, a return, a rebirth; therefore, even though 0-degrees Aries may be a constructed point, it enters astrological consideration already infused with timeless images of renewal,

revitalization, resurrection and ceremonial beginnings. This image underpins Aries as the gateway to the zodiac, a time of renaissance, restoration and return to the spring of one's being.... 0° Aries is an astronomical node, but also an astrological metaphor of regeneration, rebirth and the return of light.

Aries was the spring of the divine Golden Ram and Nature's newborn lamb, the beginning of a new era, a new generation, a new creation.



Pompeii Fresco - *Phrixus and Helle and the Golden Ram*

The first and last degrees of any sign are critical, but the passageway between late Pisces and early Aries is especially significant as it marks the sacred gateway to the beginning of the zodiac. In 2025 the North Node, Saturn and Neptune cross the cusp. Saturn and Neptune linger here until 2026.

On the Threshold

the time for the passing of a threshold is at hand

Joseph Campbell

Saturn and Neptune oversee the quantitative and qualitative nature of time. The subjective quality of threshold time may feel melancholic, as if boundaries are being dismissed or falling apart, as if we have lost control and stability, even direction; perhaps feelings of remorse for the times of apathy, of disconnection, not being involved. Yet, entangled in these feelings of uncertainty and dissolution are keys to how the future can be imagined and sustained. The 'other' world of Neptune and the 'real' world of Saturn, the spiritual and the material, are moving towards each other.

The process of change is always slower than we might envisage or desire, but as Saturn and Neptune cross the zodiacal threshold, the urge to structure and struggle for the reforms our soul needs and aspires to is awakened. Boundary walls that segregate, restrict and control can either collapse or harden. Aries is wild, born free, independent, yet heroic.

Like any threshold crossing, we are being confronted with fear of the unknown. What if we demask, lift the veil to find that what has been presented as real, factual, authentic and valid is just a phantom? A ghost of times past? Saturn is consequence, but what if not questioning, believing we are right, following the organization and their directives is a spell induced by apathy, a trance, sleep-walking. What then are the consequences for us?

Can Neptune in Aries break the enchantment of power, fame and money, currently the top values of our times? Aries is courage. Apathy is not. Aries is not static. Regret is. Aries is confrontational. Disconnection is not. By fastening our oxygen mask and attending to self first, we are then able to help the children.

As Ptolemy said "Spring, too, like the first age of animal life, is soft and tender."² The 0° Aries new growth is fighting for it is life, its survival, and needs care and assistance. It is time to light the ceremonial fires of life, the fires of imagination, of possibility, of passion which promote the integrity of self. Aries is the quickening – the movement of life growing inside of us. Aries is the call to action, the will to live, the pulsing of life, the creative Breath.³

Crossing the threshold, as Joseph Campbell points out, requires encouragement; it takes courage to be launched into the unknown. But the “usual person” he says “is more than content, he is even proud, to remain within the indicated bounds, and popular belief gives him every reason to fear so much as the first step into the unexplored.”⁴ This is a collective mesmerized by the anxiety of the unknown, and captivated by the fear of loss, yet ironically, these are archetypal initiations for all human beings.

Threshold crossings are dangerous. Joseph Campbell suggests the threshold guardians are not always benign. Yet, in a deeper way they encourage us to strengthen our heart and be led by courage, a value and virtue of Aries.⁵ Campbell encourages us:

The adventure is always and everywhere a passage beyond the veil of the known into the unknown; the powers that watch at the boundary are dangerous; to deal with them is risky; yet for anyone with competence and courage the danger fades.⁶

Why bother with the adventure in a world that remains blind, ignorant and valueless? Because as Campbell says: ‘then the work of representing eternity in time, and perceiving in time eternity, cannot be avoided.’⁷ The Saturn-Neptune rejoining in Aries is yet another call to infusing divine values in temporal time. We are called to do the work. Richard Tarnas expresses the potentiality of this complex, especially poignant as the mythological adversaries cross the 0-degree Aries point and begin their new cycle.

In perhaps its most admirable form, the Saturn-Neptune complex appears to be associated with the courage to face a hard and often tragic reality without illusion and still remain true to the ideals and dreams of a better world. Instead of provoking despair or passivity, the painful gap between the ideal and the real inspires one to undertake whatever sustained labour is necessary to transform the resistant structures of the world (political, economic, religious, philosophical) in service of one’s highest spiritual intuitions.⁸

Our ability to attend to the call is to be engaged in the moment – to attend to the lack of beauty, to show up, to be involved, to be present to the nature around us, to be communal. When we make a difference in our

world, we make a difference in the world out there. Our little world is a microcosm of the larger world – our *micro cosmos* – our little universe – is intimately interconnected to the wider universe. Taking time to assist others, whether human, animal or plant life, does not take time away from us, as in these moments of interconnectivity, we enter the flow of eternal time. *In these moments time will not be taken away.* Aries power, as Dane Rudhyar suggests “is not an individual person who is at work, but humanity -Man.”⁹

We can find refuge from outer turmoil by attending to the soul. The collective may not take advantage of this, but as individuals we can take care of soul in ways that open us to what we are here to do. This in itself changes the world. Astrology reminds and reconnects us to the larger picture of this time as we stand on the *threshold* that leads us through to the new cycle of Saturn and Neptune. And a new era.

How will you cross the threshold through this sacred passageway?

Our Personal Aries Point (AP)

If one ever becomes famous or makes a significant impact on society outside one's circle of friends and associates, it is through symbols that relate to the Aries Point.

Robert Hand

Ptolemy promoted the 0° Aries horoscope as a chart to forecast the year ahead. Therefore, a chart cast for the vernal ingress as the Sun entered Aries became a map of the year. Not all astrologers agree; some suggest 0° Capricorn as the inauguration of the year. However, the Vernal Ingress chart remains widely used in mundane astrology for forecasting. 2025 and 2026 are of great interest due to the clustering of planets, especially Saturn and Neptune, at this point.

In natal horoscopes 0° Aries is referred to as the Aries Point (AP). This point is also inclusive of the Libran equinox and two solstices as well; therefore, 0-degrees of *all cardinal signs* are included in the AP classification. 0° of the Cardinal Cross is akin to a transitional part of the horoscope.

This point in the natal chart was of interest to Alfred Witte and the Uranian school of astrology in the 1920s and 30s. Noel Tyl in *Synthesis and Counselling in Astrology* speaks convincingly about this point in

astrological practice. Robert Hand wrote that he found the Aries point 'extremely useful'. He says:

...the Aries Point represents the most impersonal but also the widest social contacts: one's relationship to the larger world around one. Hence it is associated with fame and greater social significance.¹⁰

The consensus seems to be that the AP is like a portal to the outer world, nodal points on the wheel of life, linking the individual with the collective. Planets, angles, or midpoints conjunct the AP are like threshold dwellers, images that can activate our contribution and interaction with the outside world, perhaps even be celebrated for this participation. The AP is like a bridge between one's private and public world. The image of the AP as a portal on the zodiacal wheel is consistent with the celebration of the equinoxes and solstices, nodal points on the seasons of life. The North Node's crossing of this threshold followed by Neptune and Saturn highlights this point collectively and personally, linking our personal actions with collective and communal change.

Take some time to reflect on where 0° Aries is in your chart. What house does the AP occupy - if using Whole Signs, what house cusp does the AP conjoin? Reflect on this environment as the location where there may be an opening between your activity in this area and the impact it makes on the world around you. Is this an area of your life where you make a difference? Reflect back to January 2025 - what comes to mind as you reflect on the North Node's transit across this point of your horoscope.

Are there any planets or angles conjunct, opposite or square 0° Aries within a few degrees (use up to 4° orb) - if so, how might these energies and directions of your life be motivated to renew, revitalize and regenerate your world and the community around you. Imagine how this energy may be consistent with your and your community's need for change.

This area of your chart is now highlighted as Saturn and Neptune cross this threshold. Reflect on the profound image of their new cycle beginning in this area of your horoscope. What threshold in this area of your life are you crossing? What are you on the verge of? Celebrate the metaphor of Spring in this area of your life, as well as in your community and the world at large.

In Honour of Mars

*...blessed god, give me the courage
To stand my ground within the safe laws of peace*

The Homeric Hymn to Ares,
translated by Jules Cashford

As ruler of Aries, Mars must not be forgotten. Although this is the first mention of the Roman god of Agri-culture, I have held him in mind throughout as an archetypal image of this threshold crossing and as god of the vernal point of Aries.

As the ruler of the 0° Aries threshold we may become anxious about his impulsivity, his change of mind, his ill-thought through actions. Reflecting on our actions or non-actions, our responses and rages, our desires and activities encourages us to meet this archetypal energy within ourselves, not out there. And then we also have the opportunity and occasion to meet Mars's courage and heroic determination to contest what is of value and humanly possible.

In the astrological arena, Mars entered this year retrograde, then opposed Pluto. Metaphorically he has strengthened his position internally. As Mars would say, "it's up to me *and* you".



Roman Flora, an allegory of Spring

Crossing the Threshold
Activity near the 0 Aries point (between 26♁ - 4♈)
Jan 11, 2025 to May 25, 2025

UT Date 2025	Planetary Phenomena	Zodiacal Degree
Jan 11	True North Node at 0 Aries <i>note: the true North Node plateaus at 27♁ for much of Feb, all Mar and half of Apr.</i>	0♈00
Feb 1	Venus conjunct Neptune	27♁59
Feb 1	Venus conjunct North Node	28♁09
Feb 4	Venus enters Aries	0♈00
Feb 7	Neptune conjunct North Node	28♁09
Mar 1	Mercury conjunct North Node	27♁24
Mar 2	Mercury conjunct Neptune	28♁57
Mar 3	Mercury enters Aries	0♈00
Mar 17	Sun conjunct North Node	27♁23
Mar 19	Sun conjunct Neptune	29♁36
Mar 20	Sun enters Aries (Northern Vernal equinox)	0♈00
Mar 23	Sun conjunct Venus (Inferior Conjunction)	2♈39
Mar 24	Sun conjunct Mercury (Inferior Conjunction)	4♈24
Mar 27	Venus Retrogrades across 0 Aries	0♈00
Mar 27	Venus ♁ conjunct Neptune	29♁53
Mar 30	Mercury Retrogrades across 0 Aries	0♈00
Mar 30	Mercury ♁ conjunct Neptune	29♁59
Mar 30	Neptune ingresses into Aries	0♈00
Apr 1	Venus ♁ conjunct North Node	27♁21
Apr 4	Mercury ♁ conjunct North Node	27♁17
Apr 11	Mercury conjunct North Node	27♁23
Apr 16	Mercury enters Aries	0♈00
Apr 17	Mercury conjunct Neptune	0♈38
Apr 21	Saturn conjunct the North Node	26♁50
Apr 24	Venus conjunct North Node	26♁54
Apr 25	Venus conjunct Saturn	27♁13
Apr 30	Venus enters Aries	0♈00
May 2	Venus conjuncts Neptune	1♈08
May 25	Saturn ingresses into Aries	0♈00

Endnotes

¹ See Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, I.12, translated JM Ashmand, Symbols & Signs, CA: 1976, p. 21. This passage highlights Aries as initiating the zodiac:

The beginning of the whole zodiacal circle (which in its nature as a circle can have no other beginning, nor end, capable of being determined) is therefore assumed to be the sign of Aries, which commences at the Vernal equinox. Since the moisture of spring forms a primary beginning in the zodiac, analogous to the beginning of all animal life; which I, in its first age of existence, abounds principally in moisture: the spring, too, like the first age of animal life, is soft and tender; it is therefore suitable placed at the opening of the year, and is followed by the other seasons in appropriate succession.

² As above

³ Dane Rudhyar, *The Pulse of Life*, Shambala, Berkeley, CA: 1972, p.35.

⁴ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Bollingen Series XVIII, Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ: 1968, p.78.

⁵ See Brian Clark, "Vices and Virtues: Character Features and Flaws of the Zodiacal Types", p.4. www.astrosynthesis.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/zodiac-types-vices-and-virtues-character-features-flaws.pdf

⁶ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 82.

⁷ Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, p. 218.

⁸ Richard Tarnas, *Cosmos and Psyche*, Penguin, New York: NY: 2006, p. 477.

⁹ Dane Rudhyar, *The Pulse of Life*, p. 35.

¹⁰ Robert Hand, *Horoscope Symbols*, Whitford Press, West Chester, PA: 1981, p.92.

