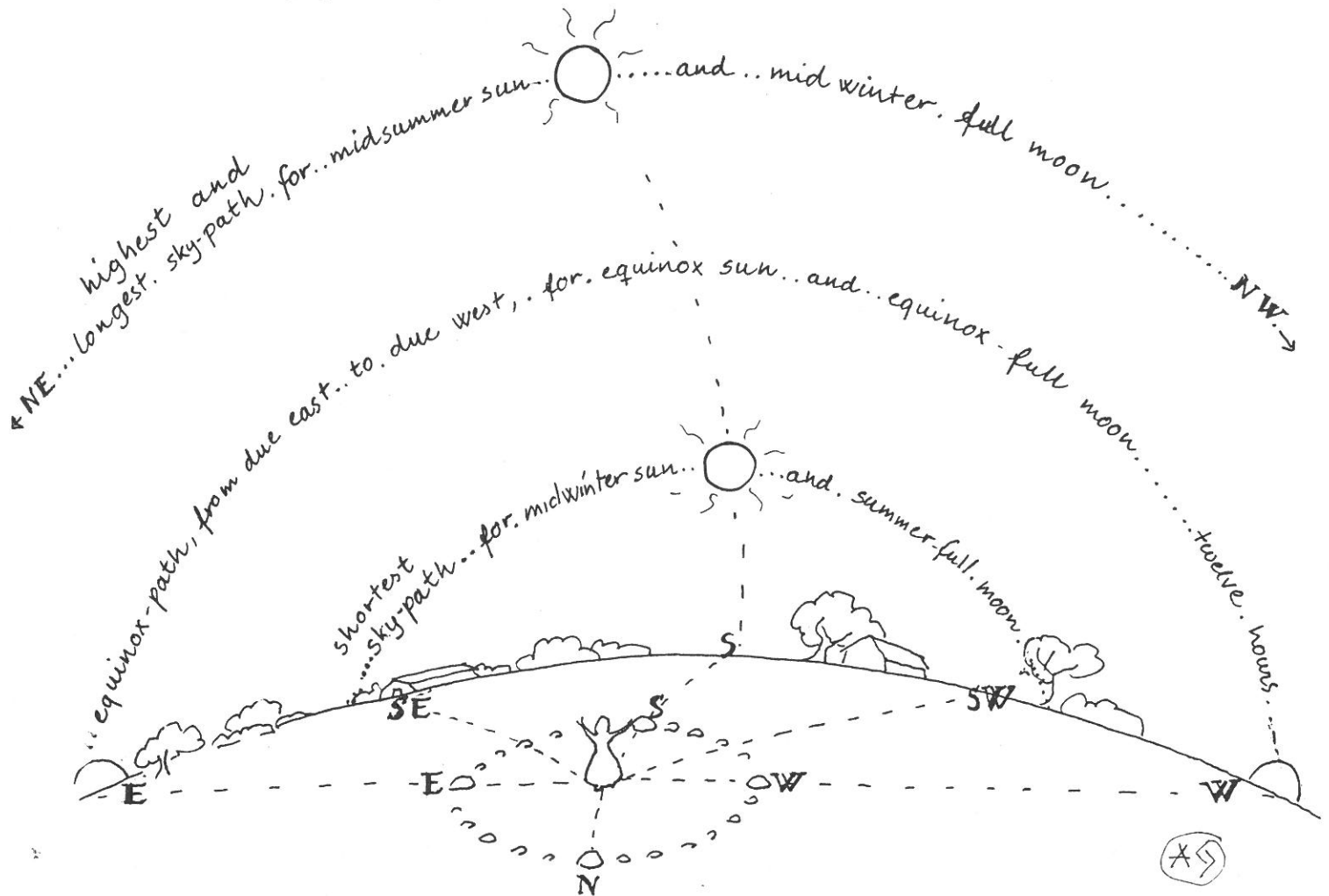


SUN AND MOON'S JOURNEY ACROSS THE SKY.

Both Sun, Moon and the planets always rise around the east, reach their highest in the south, and set around west. They always travel in sun-wise (deosil) direction, riding on that path or arc in the sky, which we call the Zodiac.

The tilted axis of the Earth gives us seasons, and this tilt also makes the sky-path swing rhythmically from a very high arc to a low and short arc. Therefore we will some times see Moon and Sun sail way up in the sky, other times low over the horizon.



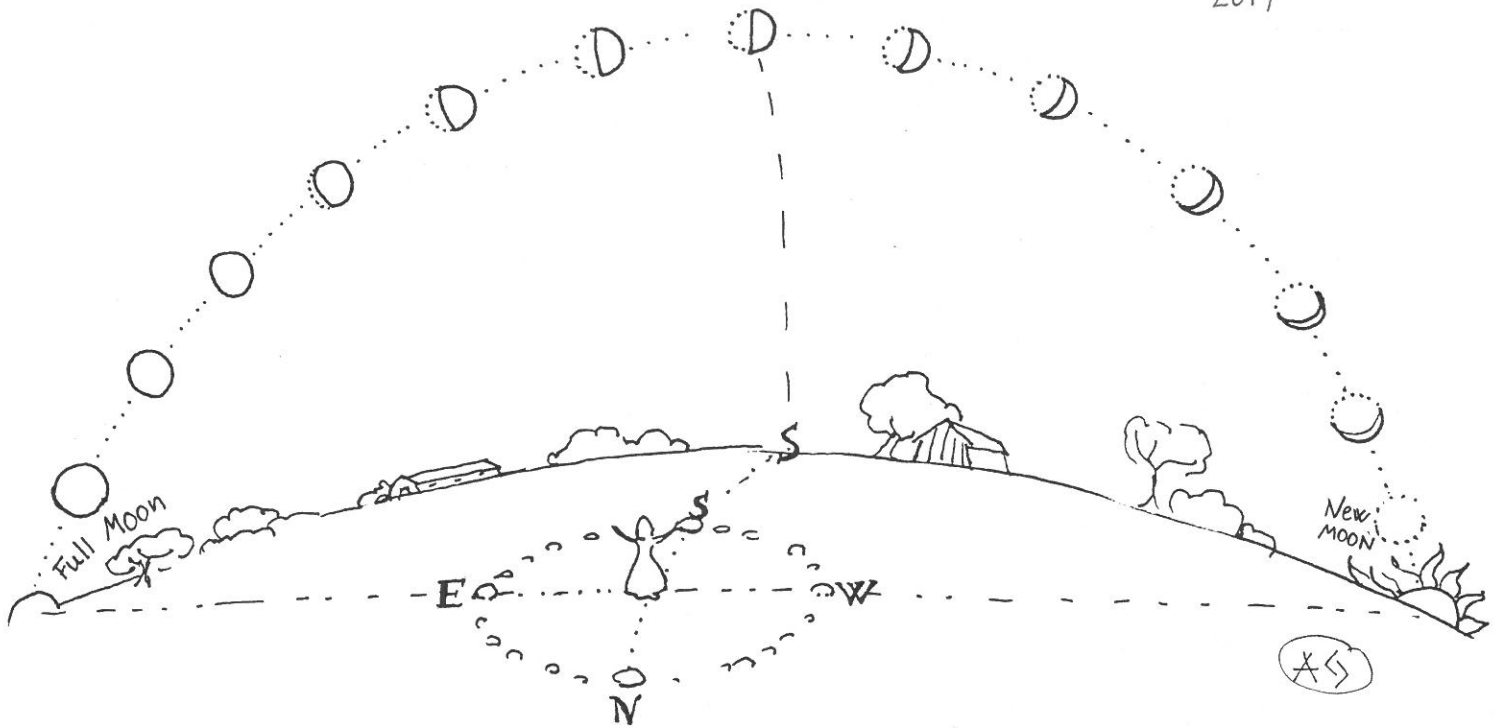
This drawing shows how the Sun swings from the high path to the low path and back again. This takes a year. During this time Sun travels through all the 12 star signs and back to the same position in the Zodiac. The Moon uses 27 1/2 days for the same journey (the Moon's star-cycle). Remember now how the cycle from new moon to new moon took 29 1/2 days (its sun-cycle). The interplay between the 27 1/2 day cycle and the 29 1/2 day cycle means that different phases of the Moon reach the high path during the different seasons. The drawing shows this seasonal cycle for the Full Moon.

The descriptions on these pages is the very basics of the ancient Moon lore that once was everybody's knowledge. It is meant as a help to start studying with the Moon itself throughout the year. Go out and find the sky-path, start noticing the directions. The pattern of Moon's coming and going is not unpredictable, but it does take some involvement to grasp. In the beginning your mind will sometimes go tilt just when you think you've understood the Moon's dance. But keep up your Moon-apprenticeship, and one night the Moon will also become your clock, your compass, and literally help you find your way. It will ground and deepen your experience of the Moon's mystery and enchantment. I would be happy if you will then pass the knowledge on.

MOON CYCLES

THE PHASES OF THE MOON

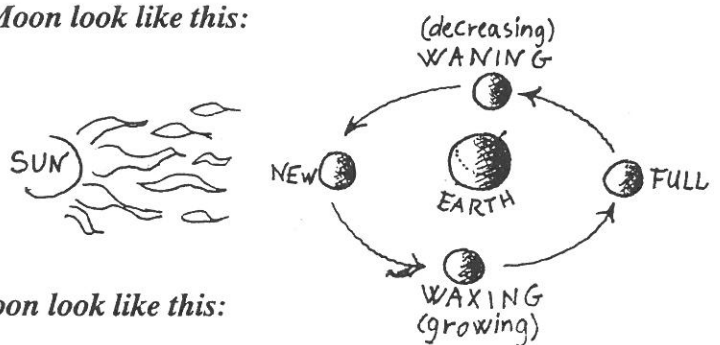
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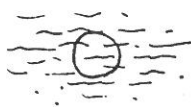
Here you see where you can find the Moon in the sky in relation to the setting Sun. The drawing shows the first 15 days after the new moon. Count the days from right to left (counter sun-wise, or widdershins). A sun-day is 24 hours. A moon-day is about 25 hours. So every day the Moon falls further behind the Sun, that is to the left, and the distance between Sun and Moon grows and grows until full moon. On that night the Full Moon rises in the east at the same time as the Sun sets in the west – they are directly across from each other. For the next two weeks, as the Moon wanes, you must imagine the drawing mirrored: the Sun rises in the east with the Moon moving closer for every day.

Seen from Space the phases (or faces) of the Moon look like this:

At new moon time Sun, Moon and Earth are placed in a straight line in space. From new moon the Moon uses 29 1/2 days to circle around the Earth to the same position in relation to the Sun, and then it is new moon again.



Seen from the Earth the four phases of the Moon look like this:



new moon
in the south
together w. Sun
at mid-day



waxing
half moon
in the south
at sun-set



full moon
in the south
at mid-night



waning
half moon
in the south
at sun-rise

During a complete moonth you can find the Moon just as much in the day-sky as the night-sky.