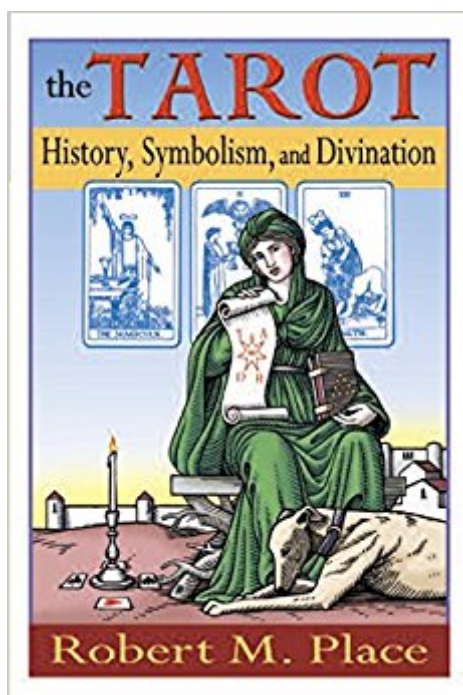


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The Tarot: History, Symbolism, And Divination



Synopsis

The Tarot is one of the few books that cuts through conventional misperceptions to explore the Tarot deck as it really developed in the Middle Ages and Renaissance Europe-not, as some would suggest, in the far reaches of Egyptian antiquity. Mining the Hermetic, alchemical, and Neoplatonic influences behind the evolution of the deck, author Robert M. Place provides a historically grounded and compelling portrait of the Tarot's true origins, without overlooking the deck's mystical dimensions. Indeed, Place uncommonly weds reliable historiography with a practical understanding of the intuitive help and divinatory guidance that the cards can bring. He presents techniques that offer new and valuable ways to read and interpret the cards. Based on a simple three-card spread, Place's approach can be used by either the seasoned practitioner or the new inquirer.Â Â

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Starred Review This may be the best book ever written on that deck of cards decorated with mysterious images called the tarot. Dozens of books provide sketchy information on the cards' history and evolution before turning more discursive on how to interpret them. Place inverts that formula. Well-researched, entertainingly written chapters begin the book with information on where the tarot comes from and how it gained so much prominence as a tool for divination. Far from developing from deeply magical sources, as many have claimed, the tarot was originally just a deck of cards used for playing games. Even at the start, however, those games included some fortune-telling. Over the course of centuries, the cards' lore was enriched by thoughtful practitioners

who added cards, elaborated their meanings, and connected their imagery to mythology and dreams. At the beginning of the twentieth century, an inspired young artist, Pamela Smith, drew upon her occult training and her own visions to create the now classic Rider-Waite deck. In a comprehensively researched and passionately argued chapter, Place restores Smith to her rightful position as the genius behind the deck. That Place also offers excellent guidance to actually reading the cards makes the book that much more appealing, as a how-to as well as a why-bother. Patricia Monaghan

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Robert M. Place, an internationally recognized artist, illustrator, and teacher, has designed and codesigned some of the most acclaimed Tarot decks of our time, including The Alchemical Tarot and Tarot of the Saints.

Many people here in the review sections have claimed that it's boring or it's like a textbook, but I think that's the point it really gives you the knowledge you need to be informed of where your cards came from and the history behind them. I suggest this book to every tarot user know where your cards came from and your connection will deepen. As for the book itself it's a slow read at times but I really like that he comes back to things from the previous chapters so I don't forget things that I had just learned.

Great book for reference, explains the historical reasons why the card is that card and correspondents. This book and Wen's The Holistic Tarot really are all one needs to be a great reader. I have taught using these books and a good RWS Deck.

Necessary in any studies to learn the history of Tarot. You will not be disappointed. Well written and organized. One of the best books on the subject!

Robert Place is an amazing artist and writer. His knowledge of tarot is so deep! His alchemical insights are very deep. It helps keep you centered and widens your personal journey.

Absolutely fascinating history! Robert Place is a wealth of Tarot information and his decks are fantastic! His section on divination and actually reading the cards is interesting but should be taken with a pinch of salt and definitely substituted with Brigit Esselmont, Benbell Wen, Rachel Pollack, etc.

Robert Place is a highly educated, intelligent and easy-to-understand authority regarding the tarot. Although his theories seem limited in some ways, he has a talent in explaining the history of the cards in a way that is unforgettable. Recommended reading.

This book is seconded only by *Mystical Origins of the Tarot*, by Paul Huson. However, they aren't really in competition, each filling in gaps in the other. I recommend both.

this book offers great insight into the real history of tarot cards both in general and with respect to the imagery of specific cards themselves.

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