



History of the Occult Tarot

By Michael Dummett, Ronald Decker

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When the Tarot pack was invented in Italy in the early 15th century, it was simply a pack of cards, used for playing games. Esoteric interpretations of the pack date from late eighteenth-century France, and were confined to that country for a hundred years. Now the cards are used throughout the Western world and not only for fortune telling. For real believers, the cards are a key to secret knowledge of the meaning of life.

Practiced by secret groups such as the Order of the Golden Dawn, by magi such as Aleister Crowley - the 'Great Beast', and by psychics such as Dion Fortune, the occult interpretation of the Tarot pack is a worldwide phenomenon with countless devotees. The roots of the whole modern Tarot mystique lie in theories propagated by the occultists studied in this fascinating history.

Tarot occultism is a significant part of modern social history. The first part of the story was told in *A Wicked Pack of Cards*, which traced its origins in France. In *The History of the Occult Tarot* the authors bring the story up to date, following its progress in other countries, especially Britain and the United States.

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About the Author

Michael Dummett was Professor of Logic at Oxford 1979-1992, and is the author of *The Game of Tarot* (1980) and other books on Tarot cards and games, as well as books on philosophy and voting theory.

Ronald Decker is an art historian and curator of a notable collection of antique cards at the United States Playing-Card Company, Cincinnati, Ohio.

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