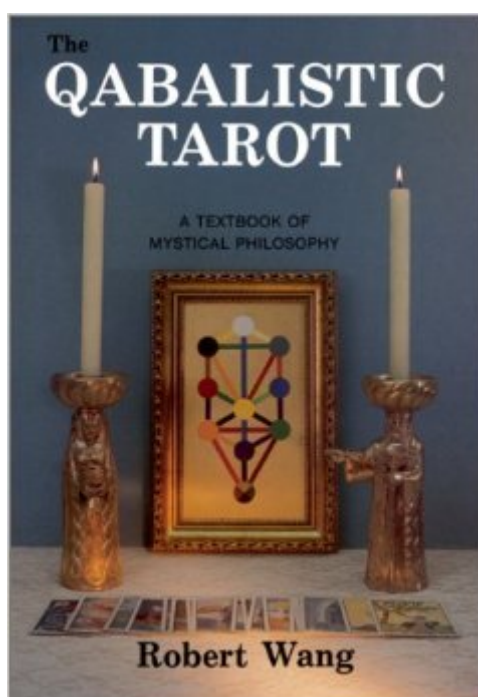


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# The Qabalistic Tarot



## Synopsis

NEW 2004 REVISED EDITION Hailed by reviewers as "a masterpiece," and as "the single most profound reference of its kind," The Qabalistic Tarot has become the standard in its field, a book essential to all students of Tarot symbolism. It is both a textbook and a sourcebook for the symbols of the Western Hermetic Qabalah, a corpus of mystical ideas which have, for centuries, exerted a powerful influence on the development of Western thought. Dr. Wang explains the Tarot as an externalization of a mystical system which has evolved from approximately the third century C.E. to our own time. He traces the development of Qabalistic ideas from the Neoplatonic through the Medieval, Renaissance, and Modern periods, systematically discussing each Sephira and Path on the Tree of Life. He uses the Tarot images as a point of visual reference, and provides a thorough explanation of the symbolic intricacies of the Paths. The Qabalistic Tarot is recommended as a comprehensive textbook for individual study or for the classroom. The first and only work based on the four major decks in use today, it is the ideal companion book for the Golden Dawn Tarot, the Thoth Tarot, the Rider-Waite Tarot, or the traditional Marseilles deck. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

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## Customer Reviews

This book is a masterpiece - it's very informative & researched (which make it contrast sharply with the many - too many - shallow formulative books published nowadays), and gives a wide and deep view of the tarot. Wang explains the tarot using the Qabala (especially the tree of life) and some

astrology, based on the Golden Dawn tradition, giving it a context and underpinning - the tarot is presented not as a collection of pictures, but as the structured tool that has a structure and ordered basis in western occult tradition. To illustrate his explanation, he compares the Tarot of Marseilles, his own Golden Dawn deck, Waite's Rider deck, and Crowley's Thoth deck. The book can be used as a guide for all of those decks, or as the best companion guide to the books that accompany them (e.g. the Pictorial Key to the Tarot or Book of Thoth). Though the book is not the easiest to read (and needs to be read more than once to be fully digested), the language is concise, the structure of material logical and clear, and is worth every cent of its price and every moment spent reading. The only complaint I have about this book is the poor binding - the pages are poorly glued at the back which made the pages break into four groups quickly. I wish a plastic binding back was used instead.

Without a doubt, this is the best book on the Qabalah, bar none. Notice how I spelled Qabalah: this book is from a Western Occult perspective, make no mistake. Wang explains the Qabalah better than anyone else I've ever read. His language is sometimes a little stiff, but remember this is a very difficult subject. Sometimes words fail the author who attempts to describe such sublime ideas. Wang is able to gently lead one into understanding, like the adept he is. Now, his Tarot deck leaves a LOT to be desired. I don't recommend that at all. But this book will become your favorite, of that I'm sure. And, it will become the only book you need to understand both the Qabalah, and the Tarot. Buy this book !!! If this subject interests you, you definitely NEED it.

This book is something of a rarity -- a genuinely advanced tarot text. Going far beyond mere divinatory meanings, it cogently puts the occult tarot together with its Qabalistic underpinnings. It is not an easy read, but the writing is engaging and lucid. Students of qabala will find it further illuminates this difficult subject (even if they don't have prior experience with the tarot), and tarot enthusiasts of any level will find much here to expand their knowledge and understanding of the cards.

I call this review "Constant Companion Qabalah" because I keep this book always near my desk. As a professional astrologer, VisionCoach and expert Tarot symbolist, I find this book the single most profound reference of its kind. It has been my constant companion since I first read it back in 1989. I have since read it at least three times from cover to cover and I refer to it constantly in the classes I teach. Robert Wang has thoroughly mastered the material. He has access to the secret doctrines of

the mystery schools such as The Order of the Golden Dawn. His approach is intellectually and practically balanced with a profound understanding of the spirituality and mystic wisdom of the Qabalah. This is a book that will stay with you at whatever level you meet it and meet you at whatever level you wish to take it to later. Perhaps it goes without saying, but a good working knowledge of astrology and Tarot is a real plus before cracking the spine of this one!

If I were to take a shot at summing this book up for those who've read much of the circuit already, it's reminiscent of a much more condensed version of Gareth Knight's *A Practical Guide To Qabalistic Symbolism*. The main difference is that rather than diving off quite as much into path working he gets more into the meanings and values of the particular planes in relationship to the pips for the ten sephira and also, as advertised, compares both these and the major trump to some of the better known late 19th and early 20th century decks in addition to the 18th century Marsailles; four decks shown pictorially with the BOTA deck referenced often making a fifth under analysis. What I found particularly helpful also was the information that he placed right before the talk on the major trump - ie. the description of the different ways that the ToL can be assessed in its qualities and dynamics. It might also be my most likely recommended starting book for someone who is coming it at the Hermetic Qabalah from the tarot side and wants to know more about the association. I'd offer this book as a critical addition to anyone's shelf who is attempting to really get their heads around the Golden Dawn system. As no book out there can really be exhaustively comprehensive I would prize this one just on how concise it is and how much great information it's able to condense at under 300 pages.

To totally understand the Qabalistic significance of the Tarot and their correspondences, this is the book. It compares Thoth, Rider-Wait, Golden Dawn and Marseilles decks. Going through each path on the Qabalah and describing its characteristics makes understanding the cards much easier. I have had this book since it first came out and I still refer to it to this day. If wanting to understand the Thoth deck, this book along with "Understanding Aleister Crowley's Thoth Tarot" by Lon Milo Duquette is a must, since they both very accurately explain the Qabalistic significance of the Tarot in very easy to understand terms. Its divinatory explanations are limited however and Wang uses excerpts from the "Golden Dawn" edited by Israel Regardie to cover this. From this part of the book it is a great jumping off point into other books that may supply more info in this area, but for the study of how the Tarot relates to the Qabalah, this book is unsurpassed.

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