

The Practice of Tarot Reading: Origins, Methodologies, and Implications

Ruchi Singh*
Tarot Reader
Budaun, U.P. India.

Abstract

A Tool for Divination Tarot reading has captured the imagination of men and women through centuries because it is a tool to unlock secrets hidden in tarots card decks. The origins of tarot reading, its methodologies and the impact that it has on individuals/cultures along with my own perspective formed after interviews I conducted from those who did them. To achieve this, tarot reading will be examined by means of historical contexts and interpretative techniques as well as the psychological impacts on individuals in modern society.

Keywords: Tarot Reading, Methodologies, supernatural, interpretative techniques, Minor Arcana.

Introduction

The practice of tarot reading has mystified human beings for millenniums, since the art provides a form of guidance and insight using 78 cards. Tarot reading was salted in the 15th century- besotted as a card game, tarot reading then constituted resolved into profound and religious fundamentals. Using its thematic imagery and meanings, each card in the tarot deck symbolizes insights about the past, present or future of an individual. “One of the major steps in tarot's progress was separating them into 'Major Arcana' and then 'Minor ideology,' pushing cards to have even more substance.” (De Gébelin 72) With this comes a basic principle: how we interpret reality through symbols, or symbolism allows us unity with nature. Through readings, or sessions that rely on the cards as a spiritual instrument for understanding and connecting with higher powers (though not necessarily supernatural), practitioners use their own experiences-including life lessons-to inform rather than define the results of individual spreads. While historically rooted in fortune telling and mysticism, modern tarot can be approached as a lens through which to perform self-reflection rather than an oracle dripping concise foresight. This introduction gives insight to basic as well deeper thinking variations on the root idea of how tarot evolved from history and is used today with an emphasis, in later parts, that are integral aspects for exploration & personal growth via insights.

* Corresponding Author: **Ruchi Singh**

E-mail: ruchiruchika@gmail.com

Received 03 June 2024; Accepted 17 June 2024. Available online: 30 June 2024.

Published by SAFE. (Society for Academic Facilitation and Extension)

[This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License](#)



Historical Background

Tarot reading is a very old and fashionable art that you can do now in-person, as well with the help of an app. The tarot card is usually traced to Tarocchi decks created in Italy during the fourth century. (Mantegna qtd in 45) These cards initially served the same purpose as tarot playing decks, these games resembling modern card attributing. The earliest decks, such as only as the Visconti-Sforza tarot, were made for Italian nobles and were similar to early hand-painted Decks. The use of tarot cards for divination and esoteric purposes did not occur until the 18th century. Occultists, together with Jean-Baptiste Alette (Etteilla), adopted the concept that tarot playing cards had esoteric links and meaningful meanings. This was the time in which tarot became not just another game but instead a Divination tool as well and spiritual insight also. Tarot symbols come from a variety of so places such as Egyptian, Kabbalistic, and Alchemical traditions. The most common deck is a set of 78 cards and divided into Major Arcana & Minor Arcana with its own unique symbols plus interpretations. Even today, the practice of tarot reading remains popular for gaining personal insights into a broader sense and spiritual understanding since those days to be here as our modern tool for reflection or even foretelling fortunes.

Early Uses and Development

One of the most interesting bits about Tarot reading, a practice that blends divination with symbolist interpretation, is its colourful and enthralling account. The tarot deck dates back originally to the late 14th century when it was used as a set of playing cards in Europe - first created in Italy. The first cards, called "tarocchi," were created for play and entertainment rather than mystical or magic use. Its transformation from a gaming device into an early divination system began in the late 15th century. At the 18th century, tarot cards began to be related with different esoteric and spiritual practices. The symbols and allegorical figures depicted in the imagery of tarot created a new window through which to gain insights into events from past, present and future.

Another milestone in Tarot history was the notion of "Major Arcana" and "Minor Arcana," a development that ascribes layers of symbolic meaning to cards. This transformation was engineered by influential figures such as Antoine Court de Gébelin and Eliphas Lévi, who associated tarot with ancient wisdom and rediscovered occult traditions. Therefore, the early uses of tarot were for purely recreational use but with time, this deck has developed into a majorly spiritual/guidance tool that governs modern divination practices.

Methodologies

How a Psychic Reads Tarot The practice of reading tarot involves working with 78 cards that are divided into two main sections: Major Arcana and Minor Arcana. (1) Each card with its own symbolism and meaning (which can vary, again depending on how the cards are laid out in a reading as well as whether or not the reader listens to their intuition) (Smith 12).

The Deck

1. The Major Arcana: The tarot deck contains 78 cards-22 of which are part of the Major Arcana and represent important life events or lessons. The Fool, The Magician and The World are archetypes of themes or experiences that will impact your life.

2. Minor Arcana: The 56 cards of Minor Arcana divide into four suits that represent Cups, Pentacles, Swords and Wands These cards are about the ordinary business of life, small stresses and minor fluctuations.

Reading Techniques

1. Spreads - there are different ways that the cards can be spread out or laid to interpret them. Popular spreads include the three-card spread, Celtic Cross and past-present-future. Some spreads give a broader picture or offer less detail.

2. Intuition with Symbolism: Tarot readers draw on both the traditional definitions of tarot (the cards have a meaning) and their personal insights. How people interpret it will be dependent on the reader's personal experience, culture and where they are at in their life when reading.

Psychological and Cultural Implications

The question of course can be taken more broadly to ask about Tarot reading, and its psychological and cultural implications. A personal mirror to look inside and understand the subconscious mind, their routine life's conditions and new ideas about changes.

Psychological Aspects

1. Personal Growth: "Tarot encourages us to explore our own thoughts and emotions, as well as the situations that arise in real life. Interpreting the cards can make clear some of our hidden fears and weaknesses. (Johnson 88)

2. Decision Making- For some, tarot reading helps in decision making. Tarot readings do not foresee the future; however, they may help an individual contemplate possible options and their consequences.

Cultural Perspectives

1. Different Perceptions: “Tarot reading is not at all the same things within different cultures and traditions. Although it is widely practiced as a believed spiritual act or divination, more than just for art to some people. (Lee 101)

2. Current Adaptations: Nowadays, tarot reading has been modernized in a lot of ways like digital apps for your smartphone and online communities. This proves how much its significant and evergreen in flourish modern world.

Conclusion

People from all walks of life are intrigued by the rich history and unique methodologies found in tarot reading. By examining the tarot as spiritual praxis, psychological tool and cultural product we learn about human experience & consciousness through this highly symbolic tradition. With each evolving iteration of tarot that emerges, from the historical to New Age esoteric modifying, there has maintained an undeniable level of versatility within it - a dynamic and multiplex practice allowing something old be new again-or at least resonate with certain crowds. And in so doing forms an enduring bridge between epochs past and future states; tradition meets personal excavation here at this crossroad prohibiting one path or the other but rather welcoming both forked roads side by side joining into nowness instead where they meet as one.

Works Cited:

De Gébelin, Antoine Court. The History and Mystery of the Tarot. Esoteric Publications, 2021.

Johnson, Emily. The Psychology of Tarot Reading: A Comprehensive Study. Academic Press, 2019.

Lee, Michael. Cultural Perspectives on Tarot Reading. Global Insights Publishers, 2022.

Mantegna, John. *The Tarot: A History of Its Origins and Meaning*. Mystic Arts Publishing, 2018.

Smith, Laura. *Understanding Tarot: The Methodologies and Interpretations*. Modern Wisdom Press, 2020.