

## Preface 2026 edition

The tarot is a symbolic picture of the relationship between spirit and matter. It is the giga-grandchild of DNA, its literal and symbolic ancestor, and an archetypal description of human personal and spiritual development. Spirit and matter are those ancient adversaries and lovers—opposed to each other yet they long for union. When we hold the place between matter and spirit, we walk the path of what Jung called individuation—becoming more of who we already are. By drawing closer to our own nature, we leave a unique legacy that endures beyond death and our name is written in the Book of life. The tarot can help with this—it's a dream that holds still.

The classic *The Maya Book of Life: Understanding the Xultun Tarot* has continued to draw interested readers over the 15 years since it was first published in 2011. Kahurangi Press has re-issued the first edition with a new title that better reflects its content and intent.

This new edition is not a major revision but there are additional brief sections on synchronicity, DNA, and readings, together with minor revisions, corrections and reformatting. As before, the minor arcana are not addressed due limitations of space. The major arcana of the tarot are the big picture of our development, the compass for our journey. The minor arcana are the local maps to help us find our way through the bush.

With the help of indigenous teachings and the analytical psychology of C G Jung we explore how the Xultun Tarot is different from other medieval and modern tarot decks. It was a gift given to Peter Balin by spirit, amplified by his artistic skill that brought the cards to life. It clearly reveals the profound archetypal patterns, teachings and symbolism held within all tarot decks: the Four Stages of individuation; the Three Paths of psychological development; the four archetypal Movements of the Book of Life, and how each card, dreams, awakens, makes love with, compensates, marries and completes each of the other cards. All woven together on the Loom of Time with the beauty of Maya culture and history.

Michael Owen  
—Waterberg, March 2026