



## Call for Papers – “Lumina” IX (2025)

### ***Arcana mundi. Elements of “Alien” Knowledge Between Secret and Tradition***

Although the term ‘esotericism’ as such has a rather recent history, the notion of a secret and/or initiatory knowledge has a long and established history; esoteric tensions, having come to be separate from the strictly religious and sapiential context, have contributed to shaping different fields, from literature to the arts, and even politics. In the various phases of Western history, in fact, almost an ‘arcane’ semantics can be detected that is parallel and alternative to the so-called rationalist one, and yet equally necessary—and complementary—for the explanation of historical and cultural phenomena. As an ample, variegated repository, esotericism has been linguistically productive, having incorporated, modified, and reinterpreted definitions and etimologies (such as the ones referring to ‘magus’ or to ‘gnosis’) and offered literature an endless array of themes. On the other hand, one of its constitutive components, magic, has had a popular counterpart, also bearing exoteric traits, that has manifested itself in practices and rituals intended to influence natural laws. Such traditional magic, a collective phenomenon and a mode of controlling social dangers, diseases, and death, is a reservoir of alternative knowledge rooted in religious sentiment and in an irrational element bridled and made less disturbing in everyday life. These phenomena, in turn, can be studied in reference to their originary sources and their subsequent reception.

For its IX volume, “*Lumina. Rivista di Linguistica storica e di Letteratura comparata*” welcomes paper proposals regarding the following fields of research, or themes that bear a general relevance to the abovementioned topic:

- initiatory religious knowledge in the different historical traditions and variations;
- the impact of magical thinking and of esoteric themes on literary tradition (fables, weird narrative, fantastic realism, science fiction, etc.);
- mystical-esoteric language in literary, artistic, political, and philosophical-speculative contexts;
- analyses of magical texts in ancient traditions;
- comparative aspects of magical practices from an anthropological and linguistic perspective;
- survivals of magic in the contemporary world as a continuation of uninterrupted traditions.

Each proposal must be sent to the editorial staff by April 30, 2025 as a brief abstract (max 250 words), along with the author's full name, a very short bio-bibliographic note, as well as an indication of the language in which they would want to write the paper, using the following address: [rivistalumina@gmail.com](mailto:rivistalumina@gmail.com).

The authors whose proposals are accepted by the Editors will be notified by May 6, 2025; the papers must peremptorily be turned in by August 31, 2025. The authors will be sent a preemptively-set template in which to write their papers, along with the related editorial standards. Use of the template and of the editorial standards is mandatory. The Editors reserve the right to reject any contributions that do not comply with the standards. All papers will undergo the peer review procedure; then, should the assessment be positive, they might be sent back to the authors for the needed changes. At any rate, the ultimate decision whether to publish a paper or not rests with the Editors alone.