

Gli altri cinque e la donna alchimista si occuparono in maniera sporadica, completamente marginale o non si occuparono affatto di alchimia quindi sono non alchimisti, quasi alchimisti o semialchimisti e per alcuni, inoltre, è anche incerta la nazionalità croata.

L'approccio New Age presente nell'opera *Hrvatski alkemičari tijekom stoljeća* non è convincente dal punto di vista dell'alchimia e manipolato dall'aspetto etnico (croato), brulicante di nebbie esoteriche, ombre astrologiche, misteri cristiani, spettri gnostici, oscurità ermetiche, finzioni storiche, interpretazioni superficiali e spiegazioni tendenziose. Nel complesso, il libro è un risultato pseudoscientifico del New Age, storicamente arbitrario e scientificamente infondato.

Science and the New Age. Pseudo-Pula's alchemists in Croatian New Age transmutation into gold: about the book *Croatian Alchemists through the Centuries* by Snježana Paušek-Baždar

Abstract

In the Middle Age and the Early Modern Times alchemy (transmutation into gold or *chrysopoeia*) was a widespread art and a popular craft of creating artificial gold. Because if failed to produce any practical results it shifted from the initial experimental practice (proto-chemistry) ever more to mysticism and spirituality. In Snježana Paušek-Baždar's *Croatian Alchemists through the Centuries* alchemy is seen almost exclusively from this supernatural and super-sensory point of view, ignoring the history of natural sciences, and especially chemistry. Cited sources and the preference for Christian mysticism and esotericism clearly reveal the author's unscientific approach to alchemy, one that is best suited for the pro-Western syncretic and eclectic social movement (and ideology) of improvised merging of the various incomparable beliefs, orientations, cosmic teachings and contemporary sciences, the *New Age* and the plethora of deriving pseudosciences, where modern alchemy appears to have found its home.

Nine alchemists are represented in this highly acclaimed (both from the public and Croatian scientific community) book *Croatian Alchemists through the Centuries*: Barbara of Cilli, Daniel Justinopolitanus, Pietro Buono, John the Cleric, Frederik Grisogono, Giulio Camillo Delminio, Giovanni Bratti, Ivan Leopold Payer and Ignjat Martinović. Critical, scientific and historical analysis of these alleged Croatian alchemists determined that none of them deserve the epithet 'Croatian Alchemist': they either were not alchemists in the true sense of the word, or do not belong to the Croatian ethnical corps. According to Paušek-Baždar, three of them were from Pula (Daniel Justinopolitanus, Pietro Buono and Giovanni Bratti), which is a historical fabrication since only Pietro Buono spent a short time in Pula. Moreover their ethnic affiliation was certainly not Croatian. The other five men and one woman may have sporadically dabbled in alchemy, so they can, at best, be considered quasi- or semi-alchemists. Again, the Croatian nationality of than a some of these is rather questionable.

The New Age approach of *Croatian Alchemists Through the Centuries* is alchemically unconvincing and ethnically (Croatian) manipulative, full of esoteric mists, astrological shadows, Christian mysteries, gnostic spectres, hermetic gloom, historical fictions, superficial interpretations, and tendentious explanations. In conclusion, the book is a historically arbitrary and scientifically unfounded *New Age*, pseudo-science.