

## JEAN BAPTISTE VAN MOER (1819-1884), IMAGES OF DIOCLETIAN'S PALACE

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*Jean Baptiste van Moer was a respected Belgian painter of architecture, interiors, and landscapes. Until recently, the only Van Moer oil painting depicting Split that we knew of was the view of the Peristyle with the sphinx in focus – oil on panel, today in the Archaeological Museum in Split. At several recent auctions, at which Van Moer's paintings frequently appear, the author noticed a number of paintings for which there are preparatory drawings kept in the National Library in Zagreb. Among them, two oil paintings stand out for their artistic and documentary value. They depict previously unknown details of the northern side of the Peristyle of Diocletian's Palace. The veduta of the south-eastern part of the Peristyle (painted in 1860) is particularly important because it is the only one to show the polychromatic effect on the remarkable bell tower of the Cathedral of St Domnius. This important original effect was stripped away entirely during the reconstruction works in 1885-1908.*

**Key words:** *Jean Baptiste van Moer (1819-1884), Diocletian's Palace in Split, the bell tower of Split's cathedral, Rudolf von Alt (1812-1905), Ivan Buratti (the district governor of Split)*

Jean Baptiste van Moer was a respected Belgian painter of architecture, interiors and landscapes. He was known especially for his vedute of the old Brussels (which had disappeared before his very eyes), painted in the 1870s, which are today displayed in the Hôtel de Ville and in the Musée de la Ville de Bruxelles.

Two large collections of drawings and sketches are of particular importance for Croatian art history. The majority of these images are records of the artist's travels, which he created in 1858, mainly in Split and its surrounds. They are kept in the Split Ethnographic Museum's holdings, and in the National and University Library in Zagreb.<sup>1</sup>

### JEAN BAPTISTE VAN MOER – A “JEUNE ARTISTE BIEN ORGANISÉ”

The beginnings of Van Moer's career as an artist are documented by his entries in the Brussels Triennial Art Exhibition. As early as 1842, he had distinguished himself at the Exhibition with a veduta of the ruins of the Cistercian abbey of Villers-en-Brabant. He received the triennial prize for his painting of the procession around the Gothic basilica of St Martin in the Flemish Brabant city of Halle (1845, Museum Halle). This image contains all of the significant characteristics of Van Moer's brush, which was focused on recording details in a photographically precise way. With such extremely

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<sup>1</sup> D. KEČKEMET, Crteži Splita i okolice Jana Baptista van Moera iz 1858., *Kulturna baština*, 15, Split, 1984, pp. 102-111; B. VOJNOVIĆ-TRAŽIVUK, *Skice Jana Baptista van Moera u Etnografskom muzeju Split (katalog izložbe)*, Split, 2002.



Fig. 1. Jean Baptiste van Moer, Môle et restes du palais de Dioclétien à Spalato; effet de matin, 1870. sign. 'B. Van Moer' (lower right). Oil on canvas, 66 x 121.9 cm (private coll.)

reliable documentary vedute and landscapes, Van Moer quickly rose to prominence.<sup>2</sup> The precision of his realism, which enhances every detail of the subject, viewing it from the most picturesque angle and in the best light, is illustrated well by the beautiful painting of Split's Riva, which was based on a drawing or drawings made in 1858.<sup>3</sup> The veduta, with its slightly dramatized perspective, reminds us that J. B. van Moer was a diligent student of François Bossuet, who from 1832 all the way up to 1876 taught perspective at the Brussels Academy, and who was himself well-known for the carefully constructed perspective in his own paintings. In order to achieve an enchanting, peaceful dream-like effect, as well as the sense of airiness and the depth of the landscape, Van Moer manipulates the veduta by excluding a part of the massive, indistinct lazaretto, which should be visible in the foreground, to the left. The minutely described details of the architecture are amalgamated with imaginary elements, creating an enchanting *capriccio*. In focus, in the centre of the image, he placed the Port Health Authority building, but he depicted it as a kind of loggia and smaller in volume, while behind it he imagined a picturesque three-storey building which, however, bears some of the characteristic elements of the Port Health Authority (erected in 1824 based on a design by Vicko Andrić, and demolished in April 1875). The method behind his *capricci* will be discussed later in this article.

<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, an 1854 painting showing him in his atelier (on display at the Hermitage museum in St Petersburg) suggests that he was at that time painting primarily marinas and ships in storms. He set up this first atelier in the attic of the house belonging to his father, who was a woodworker. Two later paintings of Van Moer's atelier – one from 1855, and particularly the one from 1880 – show him as an established artist, who had been decorated with a range of awards and medals. In the third image, we see him in his spacious studio, surrounded by a kind of illustrated journal – the vedute he painted based on the studies he made on his many travels, or which he created in his hometown.

<sup>3</sup> The image is signed, but not dated. As we shall see later, Van Moer displayed it in Antwerp in 1870, and kept it in his studio until his death. It was sold for £ 33,600 at Bonhams in London, at an auction on September 26, 2007. My attempt to convince the city administration at the time to buy it was fruitless, despite the fact that it was a particularly fitting time for such a purchase, as works were underway to reshape the Split waterfront. (Prior to this auction, the painting was last put up for sale in 1959, by the Galerie Wimmer in Munich.)



Fig. 2. *Jean Baptiste van Moer, View of the Riva degli Schiavoni and the Doge's Palace Venice*



Fig. 3. *Jean Baptiste van Moer, Drawing showing the houses along the southern side of Diocletian's Palace in Split, with the lazaretto on the other side. One of the studies for the painting of the Split waterfront (1870)*



Fig. 4. *A photograph of the same motif (c. 1905)<sup>4</sup>*

By painting this motif, Van Moer practiced a perspective scheme that he also used on several other occasions, for instance while painting the beautiful veduta of the Riva degli Schiavoni and the Doge's Palace. The method of drawing a perspective grid that Van Moer clearly used regularly can be seen in several drawings from the National Library. It can also be seen in the preparatory drawing for the painting of Split's Riva.

At the 1848 exhibition he drew attention as a "jeune artiste bien organisé". He was praised by the Belgian ambassador in Paris, Lehon, whose home was adorned with works by Van Moer. At the

<sup>4</sup>G. BORČIĆ, *Povijest pisana svjetlom I*, Split 2013, p. 395.

1855 *Exposition universelle*, which was held at the Jardins des Champs-Élysées in Paris, his landscapes caught the attention of the Belgian king Leopold II, and the British queen Victoria. Leopold would later commission a monumental vedute of Venice for the Palais Royal de Bruxelles (1867–1868), that is for the Château de Ciergnon (1875). Queen Victoria, meanwhile, promptly ordered several watercolours, such as the two paintings that she had made to document the appearance of the living room and bedroom at the Château of Saint-Cloud west of Paris.<sup>5</sup>

Van Moer, who has remained a bachelor for his entire life, retained a lasting emotional connection with Brussels up until his death on December 6, 1884. He also travelled constantly – to France (in particular to Normandy, the Rhine and Moselle lowlands, the Ardennes, Burgundy and the Pyrenees), Italy (he always returned to Venice), Dalmatia, Germany, Egypt, Syria, Spain and Portugal.<sup>6</sup>

Van Moer's drawings in the collections of the Split Ethnographic Museum and the National Library in Zagreb were largely conceived of as studies for oil-on-canvas paintings, which he planned to paint in his atelier in Brussels. Of the twenty-one drawings in the National Library, eight depict scenes connected with Diocletian's Palace, seven of which are of relatively large dimensions (c. 45x60 cm). They are drawn in pencil on brown paper (DE CANSON FRÈRES),<sup>7</sup> with sepia shading, and some of them are watercolours. As we shall see, most (possibly all) of them served as studies for oil on canvas paintings of the same motifs. The small sketches were probably a kind of didaskalia of those images, created in the atelier, where there was greater peace and concentration. In the majority of these images we find smaller or more significant objections that for the most part relate to the colours of certain parts of the image. Van Moer's detailed approach to the recording and painting of his motifs was in keeping with his equally detailed studies of the area itself, which was also understood to include the right time of day. In other words, J.-B. Van Moer was not like so many of the travellers of his time who enjoyed the benefits of the Austrian Lloyd ships that – as his contemporary John Mason Neale said – “run with such extreme regularity between Trieste and Cattaro, and usually stay during such a very convenient time at the principal cities *en route*, that nothing is more agreeable than to avail oneself of their system.”<sup>8</sup>

Judging by the number of drawings he made in Split and its surrounds, Van Moer must have spent part of the spring and the beginning of the summer of 1858 here (certainly May and June). It is interesting, however, that the oil-on-canvas paintings depicting scenes from Split – and we have seen five so far – are dated from 1860 to 1878. We cannot know the reasons behind this. Perhaps *un rappel sentimental* that came in waves? A response to some external challenge, such as the appearance of paintings by other artists depicting scenes from Split and Diocletian's Palace? In those years, around 1873, for instance, two Danish painters, Christian Frederik Emil Eckardt and Johan Peter Kornbeck, stayed in Split. We do not know whether they were here together or came separately, but they clearly took with them enough artistic observations to produce a range of paintings over the years. Eck-

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<sup>5</sup> Queen Victoria and Prince Albert's state visit to Paris was meant to celebrate the military alliance between France and Britain during the Crimean War. The chambers belonging to Empress Eugénie and Emperor Napoleon III, located in this castle, had been specially furnished for this visit, under the supervision and according to the eclectic taste of Empress Eugénie. The castle was later destroyed in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, and Van Moer's watercolours are thus valuable records of the appearance of its interiors. More: <https://www.rct.uk/collection/themes/exhibitions/queen-victoria-in-paris/compton-verney/queen-victorias-sitting-room-at-saint-cloud>

<sup>6</sup> *Benezit Dictionary of Artists*, s.v.

<sup>7</sup> A famous French royal manufacturer of paper, established in 1557. Ingres, Maillol, Degas, Matisse, Léger, Chagall and Picasso used their paper, and in some cases artists could request paper made to recipes that suited their particular needs.

<sup>8</sup> JOHN MASON NEALE, *Notes, Ecclesiastical and Picturesque, on Dalmatia, Croatia, Istria, Styria, with a visit to Montenegro*, London, 1861, p. 112. A few years earlier, William Frederick Wingfield (WILLIAM FREDERICK WINGFIELD, *A Tour in Dalmatia, Albania, and Montenegro*, London, 1859, p. 87) writes: *Amongst the advantages to the tourist of making the voyage of Dalmatia in Lloyd's boats is that, passing over the same ground twice in going and returning, he pays a double visit to the towns of most interest, and can thus reserve what he has not time to see properly for his return.*

ardt, as far as we have been able to determine for the moment, produced them in a period ranging from 1873 and 1874 to 1893, and Kornbeck from 1873 to 1876.<sup>9</sup>

### THE PAINTING OF THE SPHINX ON THE PERISTYLE, A GIFT FOR COUNT BURATTI

Until recently, the only Van Moer oil painting depicting Split that we knew of was of the Peristyle with the sphinx in focus – oil on panel, today in the Archaeological Museum in Split. In 1873, Van Moer dedicated the picture to Count Ivan Buratti, the district administrator in Split at the time that the artist was staying in the city (he later moved to Zagreb). Buratti proudly had “this excellent piece by the esteemed Belgian Van Moer Jean Baptiste from Brussels” publicly displayed at the National Museum in Zagreb at the end of that year, that is the beginning of 1874.<sup>10</sup> As a “man of the world” (whose wife held a famous salon in a palace in Zagreb; he travelled with her, and met, for instance, Franz Liszt in Rome and formed a close relationship), Buratti must have been a friendly host during our artist’s stay in Split, if Van Moer repaid him with such a beautiful painting.<sup>11</sup>



Fig. 5. Jean Baptiste van Moer, *The Peristyle of Diocletian's Palace in Split, 1873*. Signature and dedication bottom right: *M.r le C. te Buratti / JB. Van Moer / 1873*. Oil on panel, 59 x 47.6 cm. *The Archaeological Museum in Split*

<sup>9</sup> An exhibition dedicated J. P. Kornbeck will be held in the winter of 2020 at the Split City Museum, a project I am working on with Anne Hansen Haslund from the National Museum in Copenhagen.

<sup>10</sup> The news was conveyed by the *Narodni list* (Zadar, 7. 1. 1874, year XIII, no. 2, p. 2), and *Vienac* (Zagreb, 21. 3. 1874, no. 12, p. 191). According to Kečkemet (D. KEČKEMET, *op. cit.* /n. 1/, p. 104.), Dr. Buratti left the painting to the Archaeological Museum in his will. It was collected on December 20, 1920 by the Archaeological Museum in Zagreb from Buratti's heir, Oskar Berger Waldenegg. See: A. DUPLANČIĆ - R. TOMIĆ, *Zbirka slika Arheološkog muzeja u Splitu*, Split, 2004, pp. 17-18, 118.

<sup>11</sup> On the interesting figure of Count Buratti Sokčić (Imotski, 1825 – Vienna, 1918), the Viennese doctor of law, see the article by Anđelka Stipčević-Despotović in HBL, as well as: Ž. IVANJEK, *Obitelj Vranyczany, parobrod kulturne povijesti i umjetnosti*, in: *Veličanstveni Vranyczanyjevi (Exhibition Catalogue)*, (ed.) Marina Bagarić, Zagreb, 2016, pp. 299-312. As a high school student in Zadar, Buratti collected folk proverbs, translated folk poems into Italian for Nicolò Tommaseo. The writer thanked him in the book *Canti popolari ilirici*, noting: “the enthusiastic young man, fifteen years of age, contributed greatly, and with thoughtful attention to this work”. In 1854 he was appointed district administrator in Split, and in 1860 the government placed him at the head of the Dalmatian politicians who were negotiating the question of the unification of Dalmatia and Croatia. When the Viennese court subsequently gave way to the Autonomists, the almighty mayor of Split Antonio Bajamonti, a passionate Autonomist, replaced Buratti in 1861. He was transferred to Trieste. Dissatisfied with the position of an advisor to the governor, he retired that same year. He was married to Countess Klotilda, born “Baroness” Vranyczany-Dobrinović (who eventually separated from him “as in any case I have ceased to maintain a marital union with him over the years”). In Zadar in earlier years he had been a patron to the young painters Josip Voltolini and Ivan Skvarčina, the sculptor Ivan Rendić, and he supported a range of public institutions and foundations with his own money. From 1856 to 1859 he led the research into the routes of ancient water systems and the archaeological dig around the Golden Gate, donating his own funds to the cause. The restoration of the Golden Gate of Diocletian's Palace was an extremely important archaeological, as well as an archaeological-urbanistic undertaking. More: D. KEČKEMET, *Vicko Andrić – arhitekt i konzervator 1793-1866*, Split, 1993; J. VRANDEČIĆ, *Dalmatinski autonomistički pokret u XIX. stoljeću*, Zagreb, 2002, p. 106.



Fig. 6. Caricature of Jean Baptiste van Moer, in a lithograph by F. V. J. Rops. *Uylenspiegel*, no. 13, 26 April 1857. Los Angeles County Museum of Art



Fig. 7. *Ivan Skvarčina*, Portrait of Count Ivan Buratti, in a lithograph by Eduard Kaiser

The motif attracted numerous artists both before and after Van Moer. The sphinx of Tuthmosis III in the corner of the Peristyle, in front of Diocletian's mausoleum, was an important part of the local imagery. It was also a powerful literary motif in the works of numerous travel writers, a distinctive "trigger" in the kaleidoscope of metaphorical images conjured by meditations on the fate of the authoritarian Roman architecture eroded through the growth of the mediaeval city. In the majority of depictions, below the sphinx of the Peristyle, picturesque figures of Morlachs can be seen (for instance, in paintings by Ch.-L. Clérisseau, L-F. Cassas, A. Barač, Van Moer...) sleeping, smoking or working, with their mundane tasks in stark contrast to its supposedly eternal nature.

The three manuscripts that Van Moer brought back from his trip to Egypt and Syria in 1880, along with drawings and watercolours, reveal the manner in which he travelled and recorded his impressions, day after day.<sup>12</sup> In these manuscripts, he describes his experiences, anthropological and natural history observations and colourful anecdotes, which contain hints at his homoerotic tendencies.

<sup>12</sup> They are kept at the Royal Library (Albertina) in Brussels under the title *Voyage en Orient*. He left Brussels for Egypt in mid-December 1880 in the company of two young men, Prince Henri de Mérode de Westerloo and Count Auguste d'Ursel, at the invitation of Henri's father. (Upon his return, Van Moer would present the Count with a painting, and the Countess an Egyptian statue, as an expression of gratitude.) They were granted a private audience with Pope Leo XIII on Christmas Day, and they then set sail for Alexandria from Naples. In Luxor they were joined by two friends of Archduke Rudolf of Austria, F. de Lobkowitz and F. Czernin. After studying several locations in Egypt, Van Moer left his companions, probably due to his fragile health. The group continued to Baalbek without him. Van Moer left the Levant on the 10th of May, returning home via Marseille. Of his paintings, only a few are in public collections. Thus far, not one of the nine pictures showing the ruins of the pharaohs, nor the veduta of Jerusalem, which are mentioned in his will, have been found. A. RAMMANT-PEETERS, *Palmen en Tempels. Fotografie in Egypte in de XIXe eeuw / La Photographie en Egypte au XIXe siècle / 19th-century Photography in Egypt*, Leuven, 1994. Chapter: *Voyages on Orient 1880-1881. An unknown travelstory by Jean-Baptiste van Moer*, p. 256.



Fig. 8. Jean Baptiste van Moer, The Peristyle of Diocletian's Palace in Split, dated 1860, oil on panel, 32,5 x 43 cm (private coll.)

### THE VEDUTE OF THE NORTHERN SIDE OF THE PERISTYLE

In his seminal article on Van Moer, Duško Kečkemet writes that, given the number of drawings Van Moer made of Split, it would be unusual if Van Moer hadn't created an oil painting, proposing that "even today, there is some painting of Split by Van Moer in Belgium, drawn in 1858, and later reproduced in oil on canvas".<sup>13</sup> And indeed, at several recent auctions, at which Van Moer's paintings frequently appear, we noticed a number of paintings which share clear similarities to the preserved drawings. Among them, two oil paintings stand out for their artistic and documentary value. They depict a previously unknown corner of the northern side of the Peristyle, which shall be discussed later in this article. The paintings are significant because they show this space – the *sancta sanctorum* of Diocletian's Palace – prior to the rage for purification that began in the second half of the 19th century. The veduta of the south-eastern part of the Peristyle – painted in 1860 – is particularly important because it is the only one to show the polychromatic effect on the renowned bell tower of the Cathedral of St Domnius.<sup>14</sup>

Of course, the architectural changes that took place on the Peristyle were documented in a range of earlier paintings, watercolours, drawings and *capricci*, for instance in the work of Clérisseau (dated 1757, at the time of R. Adam's research trip to Split), or Cassas (1782), or R. Von Alt (1841), and

<sup>13</sup> D. KEČKEMET, *op. cit.* (n. 1), p. 105.

<sup>14</sup> The painting was purchased at auction in the Dorotheum in Vienna, on the 16th of April 2008.



Fig. 9. *Rudolf von Alt*, *The Peristyle of Diocletian's Palace – Cathedral Square in Split, 1841*.  
*The Albertina, Vienna*

so on. Let us compare, for instance, the placing of the figures in the paintings of the Peristyle by Rudolf von Alt (the “Canaletto of Vienna”) and Van Moer (the “Canaletto of Brussels”). Von Alt divides the surface of the Peristyle into zones with precision: the Biedermeieresque figures in front of the café are standing as if in contrast to the figures wearing the costumes of the common folk. Van Moer is drawn to scenes of the everyday life of the street, groups of people wearing folk costumes, and immediately sketching a fleeting motif. The entire Peristyle is, to him, a stage on which people pose in folk costumes, as though they are frozen in a long-exposure photograph. The association is not coincidental. The Musée de la Ville in Brussels recently purchased a number of daguerreotypes featuring images of Luxor, Cairo and Venice, which once belonged to Van Moer.<sup>15</sup> Of course, many 19th-century painters readily used photographs while preparing their paintings. It is not at all unusual in the case of J.-B. Van Moer, given his efforts to record the details of the motifs he intended to paint as precisely as possible. We might postulate – very cautiously – that he took the photographs himself, although it is more likely that he purchased daguerreotypes wherever they were available. However, this would in no way decrease the aesthetic pleasure this painting, with its soft colours, offers us. The contours of the architecture are softened by the ultramarine of the sky, upon which

<sup>15</sup> A. RAMMANT-PEETERS, *Palmen en Tempels. Fotografie in Egypte in de XIXe eeuw / La Photographie en Egypte au XIXe siècle / 19th-century Photography in Egypt*, Leuven, 1994. Chapter: Voyages on Orient 1880-1881. An unknown travelstory by Jean-Baptiste van Moer.

the rays of the afternoon sun will soon chase away the last of the small clouds. It is as though there is purple in every colour on the entire colour scale, from the white above the portal to the Church of St Barbara in the foreground, to the silky grey in the Protiron's pediment. The contrasts in the light and the coloured shadows create an atmosphere of almost spiritual airiness, which was attained without idealisation. We must understand that his contemporaries saw the Peristyle in exactly the same way as Van Moer. Everything – to paraphrase the general evaluation of his paintings made by a contemporary critic – *is created in a manner equally faithful, and which entirely agrees, not with some manner chosen by the painter, but with nature itself, and the exceptional variety of the views that he aimed to depict*.<sup>16</sup> For us today, already accustomed to the recently cleaned white Peristyle, following the recent restoration work, this image seems like a work of magical Biedermeier realism.

But we are describing the painting because of the bell tower it depicts. The bell tower of the cathedral in Split emerged out of an unusual dialogue between pagan antiquity and the Christian medieval Split, rising above the fluid arcades of the Peristyle. Incorporated into medieval houses, these arcades were better preserved than any other part of the Palace, perpetuating the exceptional regularity of the space, which over the course of centuries became a picturesque cathedral square.

The bell tower in Split is unique among the cathedral bell towers of Dalmatia because of its stylistic coherence, without the dissonant elements that we might expect from a structure built over the course of three hundred years.

Today it is almost unbelievable that this bell tower was constructed in a city that had never had a population greater than 5000 inhabitants. In comparison to the pride of the locals, which was to be expected, foreign writers generally expressed ambivalence to the bell tower. On the one hand, they appreciated the originality of its architectural concept, with the bell tower rising up between the Peristyle and the Emperor's mausoleum. On the other hand, they also saw it as an alien structure that had been forcibly placed in the heart of the ancient Palace. Nevertheless, they all felt that its vocabulary, syntax, and grammar emulated the most characteristic forms of the Peristyle and Golden Gate, pairing well, in a paradoxical manner, with the Roman architecture.

The bell tower of Split's cathedral underwent radical restoration (in fact, it would be more accurate to say that it was reconstructed) around the turn of the 20th century. The designs for the restoration of the bell tower were drawn up by the Viennese architect Alois Hauser, and after his death Emil Förster oversaw the project. The loggia at the top of the bell tower underwent a significant change at this time: instead of the six-sided Renaissance loggia, a Neo-Romanesque one was created – in keeping with the idea of stylistic unity of the entire structure. In this reconstruction the stone of the original bell tower was largely replaced. Instead of blocks of Brač limestone, "collected" from the ruins of the Palace itself, walls dotted with marble and porphyry, and hundreds of spolia, stone from a quarry on Korčula (*Oskorušica*, near Žrnovo) was used for the reconstruction. This quarry was famous for its beautiful white limestone, which was malleable, had a high shine, was extremely resistant to the elements, and was easy to work with. In any event, during the reconstruction – which went on for twenty six years (1882-1908) – in addition to the spolia, the larger part of the blocks of marble and porphyry (red and green) was removed. These were the elements that created, based on all the evidence, the deliberate colourist play on the bell tower.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Alphonse Wauters in: *Biographie Nationale*, which was published by the Académie royale des sciences, des lettres et des beaux-arts de Belgique, vol. 15, Brussels, 1899. s.v.

<sup>17</sup>I have written several works on the significance of Split's cathedral, the most original medieval structure in Dalmatia. In particular, I discussed the effect of its original polychromatic appearance in: J. Belamarić, Tracking Colour. The polychrome stone sculpture of 13th century in Trogir and Split, in: *Polychrome Steinskulptur des 13. Jahrhunderts*, Beiträge zur Tagung des Naumburg Kollegs vom 13. bis 15. Oktober 2011 in Naumburg/Saale, Hrsg. Von Thomas Danzl, Christoph Herm und Annemarie Huhn, Verlag Gunter Oettel – Gorlitz und Zittau, 2012, pp. 21-30.

On the first floor, where for reasons of statics the nucleus of the wall has to be solid, the pillars and firm corner pylons with the deep arcades create a powerful shadow, enhanced by the vividness of colour of the columns as against the patina taken on by the nucleus of the wall behind them. The ground floor preserves only part of the original colour effect achieved with glowing breccias, marble and limestone. In fact, of the possible logic with which this marble – mainly reutilised spolia – was incorporated, probably according to certain patterns of decorative sculpting, we cannot know anything more than is given to us by this oil painting of Van Moer. In all of the arches on the first floor of the bell tower there was, for instance, symmetrical alternation of red and green marble stones. I think we can indeed trust Van Moer's depiction, given the well-known scrupulosity with which this painter approached the preparation of details concerning the colouristic narrative in the marking of such paintings. The columns in various colours also provided an interesting and clearly desired colouristic effect. The aforementioned painting by Von Alt is, in this respect, less detailed, although it too depicts the face of the bell tower with precision. We can but regret the fact that both paintings are framed in such a way that they omit the upper parts of the bell tower.<sup>18</sup>

Van Moer also painted a veduta of the north-eastern part of the Peristyle, featuring the same colonnade as in the previous painting, but now on the opposite side, seen from the Protiron. The centre of the image once more features the cathedral's ground floor and the first floors of the bell tower, with additional information about its condition in 1858. This painting confirms the veracity of everything in the previous image in terms of colourist effects on the bell tower. Despite everything, we must maintain a certain level of caution, and keep in mind Van Moer's inclination towards highlighting and enhancing the picturesque aspects of his motifs. For instance, in the painting of the south-eastern side of the Peristyle, the facades of the two churches in the foreground are depicted more vividly, in a colourist sense, than they were in reality. Photographs from the period show that they were both derelict and covered in layers of grime, so it is not unusual that Van Moer "reanimated" them with a rosy patina that was supposed to represent the atmosphere of an early May evening on the dilapidated cathedral square. The portals (which were made of Brač limestone) are depicted as though they were made of Florentine *pietra serena*. But it would be possible to put together an entire *chrestomatia* of historical descriptions of the Peristyle and the surrounding buildings, from the Renaissance to the end of the 19th century, in order to see the extent to which the local limestone was frequently and enthusiastically perceived as marble of varying provenance. Nevertheless, in

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<sup>18</sup> Both local and foreign writers were most often ambivalent towards the bell tower of the cathedral. They understood the boldness and genius of its architectural concept, rising up between the Peristyle and the Emperor's mausoleum. On the other hand, they also note its disparity with the original space in the heart of Diocletian's Palace. To mention just a few of Van Moer's contemporaries, we will draw attention to the words of Archibald Paton: *The campanile, which is at the same time a sort of propylon to the edifice, is (maugre some lions and griffins in the lowest taste of the Lower Empire), the lightest and airiest thing imagination can conceive, and transcends in elegance every other similar edifice in Italy ... an admirable effort of native ingenuity, but interferes with the classic character of the vicinity (Highlands And Islands Of The Adriatic: Including Dalmatia, Croatia, And The Southern Provinces Of The Austrian Empire, London 1849, pp. 239-240).* – Or, a few years after, John Mason Neale: *... its campanile, of 173 feet in height, is one of the noblest erections of the kind that I ever yet saw ... : square, of five stages, with a later octagonal head ; the tradition is that the latter supplied the place of two stages overthrown in a storm. No words can give an idea of the exquisite system of panel-shafting from apex to lowest stage; the shafts, usually speaking, circular, with square baser and Corinthianising caps. The lower stage, which I do not reckon in the six, is of solid masonry, only pierced by the ascent to the door. (Ecclesiastical and Picturesque, on Dalmatia, Croatia, Istria, Styria, with a visit to Montenegro, London 1861, p. 150)* – Or, a little later, Edward Freeman, who visited Split in 1875 and then again a few more times, and his reflection on Diocletian's mausoleum, converted into a church – *which must always have been nearly the smallest, and quite the darkest, metropolitan church in Christendom; but that it is so is part of the wonder of the place [... and ...] the vast bell-tower rising to the sky, as if to mock the art of those whose mightiest works might still seem only to grovel upon earth. (Sketches from the Subject and Neighbour Lands of Venice, London 1881).*



Fig. 10. *Jean Baptiste Van Moer, The Peristyle of Diocletian's Palace in Split, dated 1878, oil on panel, 86 x 122 cm (private coll.)*

looking at the information that Van Moer offers us for an ideal reconstruction of the original polychromatic scheme of the first floor of the Gothic bell tower (which probably dates to the 1280s), we have confidence in him. This is confirmed by the consistency in the two paintings, created eighteen years apart; the comparison with Von Alt's earlier painting; and finally, the remains of the colourist play with fragments of marble that we can still see on the ground floor of the bell tower.

Although both paintings once more show that those who argued that, given their factographic scrupulousness, Van Moer's paintings could be used to reconstruct all of the architecture they depict, the difference in their interior atmosphere reflects the lapse of time between their creation. While the light in the first is characteristic, unified Biedermeier light, pierced by the glow of each architectural element and the folk costumes – which are first-rate ethnographic records – in the second, painted 18 years later, the light (although it is morning light) became more like an agent that would



Fig. 11. *Ćiril Metod Iveković: The Peristyle of Diocletian's Palace. Photomechanical reproduction of photograph in platinotype. Published in the atlas: Dalmatiens Architektur und Plastik, Vienna 1910–1914, vol. VI–VIII*

be used to dramatize the depth of the perspective; the Peristyle had aged even more. Our artist, described by his biographer Alphonse Wauters as *d'un caractère très réservé et taciturne*, doubtlessly changed just as much.<sup>19</sup>

In contrast to the previous image, which was painted in 1860 (for which we have not, unfortunately, found the original sketch), this image was painted in 1878, twenty years after Van Moer's stay in Split. The preparatory drawing has been preserved, and shows just how much diligence Van Moer employed when studying every detail of his subject, noting the plasticity of the architecture and the depth of the space with his skilful drawing.

Nowhere is the "Al Tempio" café, which was built into the colonnade of the Peristyle, documented in such detail as in Van Moer's painting, not even in the photographs taken after the 1860s; particularly not from this angle, with the winding exterior staircases which led from the southern side to the upper storey, and with the little fence and sunshade made from wooden beams and curtains on the ground floor.<sup>20</sup> The churches of St Barbara (demolished in 1922) and St Roch are depicted using the foreshortening technique.<sup>21</sup> Beyond them, in the right corner of the square we can see a house that was fully renovated at the end of the 19th century. It seems that J. B. van Moer was the only witness who shows us how this corner of the Peristyle looked prior to the renovation of that house, which was destroyed during the Allied bombing of Split in 1944.<sup>22</sup>

On the left side, we can see a house which was purchased by the Brajević family in 1889. Soon after, they added onto the house and changed its appearance. It seems that, once again, this might be the only image depicting this part of the Peristyle. From 1833 to 1886, the ground floor was occupied by the Volpi pharmacy.

Of the figures that can be seen on the preparatory drawing for this painting, the man sleeping on the stone bench in front of the Protiron is particularly interesting, as well as the two beggars resting on the steps of the cathedral. On a block of stone in front of the Protiron are the words: SPALATO, 18th May 1858.

We can mention two drawings only in passing: *The Mausoleum and the Cathedral Bell Tower*, in a somewhat forced perspective view from the garden of the old bishop's palace, and the drawing *The Gates of the Vestibule* which, based on the evidence, was likewise meant as a study for a painting.

## THE PAINTINGS OF SPLIT BY J. B. VAN MOER THAT HAVE YET TO BE FOUND

The *Catalogue des tableaux, études, aquarelles, croquis, délaissés par feu J.-B. Van Moer* (Brussels, 1885) has been preserved. It contains an exhaustive list of all the artworks that, exactly one year after the artist's death, ended up at an exhibition held on the 7th and 8th of December 1885, and immediately after this at auction.<sup>23</sup> Van Moer's friend Alphonse Wauters created the list. We thus learn that the

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<sup>19</sup> *He never married, and left behind only nephews and nieces. He lived alone and dined at a restaurant, after which he spent the majority of the day working. He communicated with a limited number of people. He was good, helpful, and he was always reliable in his work. At the beginning of his career he encountered hardships that brought him sorrow, and pushed him further towards a life of isolation. He frequently showed himself to be more sensitive than necessary, his dignity wounded, which writers and artists frequently come across in their careers. This pain deepened towards the end of his life, due to the loneliness that he eventually shut himself up in.* A. WAUTERS, *op. cit.* (n. 16), 1899. s.v.

<sup>20</sup> The café opened in 1805. It closed in 1880, when it was demolished prior to work starting on the restoration of the cathedral's bell tower.

<sup>21</sup> More about these churches: J. Belamarić, Transformacije splitskog Peristila tijekom 13. stoljeća, u: J. BELAMARIĆ, Transformacije splitskog Peristila tijekom 13. stoljeća, u: *Mapping urban changes = Mapiranje urbanih promjena: [Collected Papers from the International Conference held in Dubrovnik, Croatia, 20-22 September 2017]*, (ed.) Ana Plosnić Škarić, Zagreb, 2017, p. 100.

<sup>22</sup> A modern building was constructed in its place, with work beginning in 1961.

<sup>23</sup> Van Moer's friend, doctor Casse, the founder of thalassotherapy in Middelkerke, had a grave with an obelisk made for him at the Cimitière d'Ixelles in Brussels.

aforementioned painting of the Riva (the full title of which is *Môle et restes du palais de Dioclétien à Spalato; effet de matin*) was exhibited in Antwerp in 1870. The atmosphere, the blue opal glow of a Dalmatian May morning, seems to make this one of Van Moer's most beautiful paintings, so it is not surprising that it is the only one of so many that received a kind of description in its title.

He exhibited *Place du temple à Spalato* (the painting of the Peristyle looking southeast that we have described here) in Brussels in 1860, together with another painting that showed the Venetian lazaretto on the city waterfront (*Caravane au marché de Spalato*).<sup>24</sup>

He also exhibited the Peristyle (*Arcades de la place du temple à Spalato*) at an exhibition in Antwerp in 1861. Given that the painting of the north-eastern side of the Peristyle is dated 1878, it is clear that this should be some earlier version.

The preserved drawings might perhaps allow us to hazard a guess as to what the painting *Ruines romaines à Spalato*, exhibited in 1866 in Brussels, might have represented. But it would be of particular significance were we to find the veduta of Split (*Vue de Spalato en Dalmatie*) that he exhibited in 1871 in Ghent, for which we can find no match among the preserved drawings.

This same catalogue mentions a whole 35 views of Split (AQUARELLES DESSINS & CROQUIS EN FEUILLES) – *Monuments de Spalato, en Dalmatie, et sites de Spalato et des environs*, of which there are – 5 grandes feuilles avec une foule de croquis. In addition, there is mention of 50 drawings, largely watercolours showing figures and Dalmatian folk costumes (*personnages et costumes de Dalmatie*).

In one section of the Catalogue, there is also a list of framed watercolours, which originated, based on all the evidence, in Split itself. Another view of the Peristyle is mentioned, and from the long list of completed paintings and studies, we learn that there were another nine pictures of Split. Some of the titles are truly intriguing: there were another two Peristyles (*Place du Temple à Spalato*, of which one is dated 1878, which could indeed refer to the painting of the north-eastern side of the Peristyle described above). Judging by the preserved drawings and pictures of the Peristyle – to which we should add several lost pictures of this space, as we shall see later – Van Moer clearly studied it in detail. But it would be of particular interest to us to one day uncover *La même vue avec une procession religieuse*, a painting of the cathedral square enlivened by a religious procession.

The title *Marché aux grains à Spalato* might perhaps refer to an oil painting depicting the eastern wall of Diocletian's Palace and the houses that were built along it, above the Silver Gate, which was opened up later, and the Dominican monastery on the opposite side. The painting appeared on the market about twenty years ago, and we also have a detailed drawing made for it (now in the National and University Library in Zagreb), which allows us to learn something more of the method that Van Moer used to construct his paintings in his atelier on the basis of the observations he made on site. The sombre building that housed the first Archaeological Museum, up against the eastern wall of the Palace, in the foreground of the drawing, was not picturesque enough for Van Moer, and so he removed it, and in its place "pushed in" a set of ordinary houses that he had discovered by the north-eastern tower of the Palace.<sup>25</sup>

The elements of *capriccio* can be seen, particularly in the view of the gate façade, where he added a monumental portal with a slightly pointed arch (perhaps reminiscent of Van Moer's paintings of Seville and the Alhambra).

The other paintings listed are *Portique et restes d'un monument romain à Spalato* (1867) and *Ruines du palais de Dioclétien à Spalato*. The title *Le Sphinx sur la place du Temple à Spalato*, meanwhile, might suggest that Van Moer created a version of the picture that he presented to Ivan Buratti in 1873 for himself, as painters often do.

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<sup>24</sup> More drawings showing the lazaretto, its exterior and courtyards, might suggest what kind of picture this might have been.

<sup>25</sup> It is interesting that of the numerous photographs documenting the appearance of the eastern wall of Diocletian's Palace, not one was taken from the angle that Van Moer chose for his painting.



Fig. 12. Jean Baptiste van Moer, *The Houses Along the Eastern Wall of Diocletian's Palace in Split*, Oil on Canvas, 69.8 x 101 cm

Finally, given the changes that the interior of Split's cathedral underwent after the restorations/reconstructions post-1875, it would be wonderful if we were to one day find the two pictures that the Catalogue of Van Moer's posthumous exhibition/auction lists under the titles *Intérieur du temple à Spalato* and *Intérieur de la sacristie du temple à Spalato*.

All in all, if we have here succeeded in expanding the list of known paintings of Split by Van Moer to five oils on canvas and panel,<sup>26</sup> this Catalogue points to the fact that in the artist's atelier alone there would have been sixteen pictures. To this we should also add the unconfirmed number of Dalmatian (largely of Split) motifs among the remaining 118 "studies in oil" (*Cent dix-huit études à l'huile: vues de Belgique, France, Prusse. Venise, Dalmatie, Orient et quelques fantaisies*).

From this entire collection of paintings put up for auction in early January 1885, the mayor M. Buls purchased the watercolours and drawings depicting old Brussels for the Brussels City Museum. J. B. van Moer earned particular fame for them. Buls' famous predecessor, the mayor Jules Anspach, who (as a kind of Haussmann of Brussels) undertook a substantial modernisation programme for the city, entrusted Van Moer with the task of documenting those parts of Brussels that were fated to be removed, and with painting 15 large paintings for his office at the City Hall. He could not have found a better artist for this task. Not only did Van Moer undertake this task with enthusiasm, he also constructed a model in his atelier (which took up an entire floor of his house at the edge of Leopold Park) of the mayor's foyer at a 1:1 scale, so that the paintings and their perspective effects could be as harmonious as possible with the entirety of that interior.

Moer's friend Alphonse Wauters delivered a general, but by no means exaggerated evaluation of all the paintings exhibited at the Galerie Saint-Luc (Rue de la finance 10-12) in Brussels, at what was a kind of posthumous retrospective with 332 works on display. *We can say that Van Moer was a*

<sup>26</sup>All three paintings of the Peristyle that have been preserved were oil on panel.



Fig. 13. *Jean Baptiste van Moer*, Drawing showing the houses along the eastern wall of Diocletian's Palace in Split

*true, purebred Fleming. Even at first glance, his neat compositions offer pleasure, and his skilfully dispersed colours are warm and harmonious. Time, which is so deadly for hasty and disorderly works, only improves his, softening the masterly tonality of the colours.*<sup>27</sup>

### THE SPLIT LEGACY OF THE FLEMISH PAINTER J.-B. VAN MOER

The goal of this short discussion was to highlight several unknown aspects of the Peristyle's appearance in the mid-19th century, a space that over the course of two centuries in many respects lost part of its original historical stratigraphy.

His painterly observations, recorded in numerous drawings and watercolours during his stay in Split in the spring and early summer of 1858, to which he returned during the next twenty years in the solitude of his atelier in Brussels, are an induction into the small constellation of European researchers, who with a great deal of knowledge and sensibility studied and described Dalmatian monuments, geography, customs, and costumes of this province on the edge of European civilisation. It was precisely in this period that Dalmatia ceased, little by little, to be the European *terra incognita*, uncovering new perspectives within the Habsburg Commonwealth, as well as hinting at its future development. Van Moer's opus is not yet well-known enough. This short essay has, we hope, highlighted the value of his paintings, and not only in terms of their documentary value for understanding the environments that he depicted, and which have in the meantime been inexorably transformed. It has also opened up a hope, we are certain, that in the near future some works from the range of paintings of Split, the titles of which we now know, will be uncovered. We can assume that some of these paintings can be found in private collections even today, and that they will eventually resurface, either in a broader overview of Van Moer's work, or at some exhibition or auction.

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<sup>27</sup> *Catalogue des tableaux, études, aquarelles, croquis, délaissés par feu J.-B. Van Moer*, Bruxelles, 1885.

## Jean Baptiste van Moer (1819.-1884.) – slike Peristila Dioklecijanove palače

Jean Baptiste van Moer bio je cijenjeni belgijski slikar arhitekture, krajolika i enterijera, poznat osobito po vedutama starog (pred njegovim očima iščezloga) Bruxellesa naslikanih 1870-ih, koje su danas izložene u Hôtel de ville i u zbirka Musée de la ville de Bruxelles. Premda je ostao trajno afektivno vezan za Bruxelles sve do smrti 6. prosinca 1884. godine, ostavši najpouzdanijim slikarskim kroničarem toga doba, nalazimo ga stalno i na putovanjima u Francusku (posebno u Normandiju, dolinu Rajne, Moselle, Ardene, Burgundiju i Pireneje), Italiju (uvijek ponovno u Veneciju), Dalmaciju, Njemačku, Egipat, Siriju, Španjolsku i Portugal. Za hrvatsku povijest umjetnosti važne su dvije zamašne zbirke crteža i skica, većinom putopisnog karaktera, koje je izradio 1858. godine, mahom u Splitu i okolici. Čuvaju se u fondovima splitskoga Etnografskog muzeja i u Nacionalnoj i sveučilišnoj knjižnici (NSK) u Zagrebu.

Vedutama i krajolicima izrazite dokumentarne pouzdanosti brzo je izašao na glas. Precioznost kojom tetoši svaku podrobnost motiva, obuhvaćenog pogledom iz najslikovitijeg kuta i pod najboljim svjetlom, lijepo pokazuje krasna slika splitske Rive koja je nastala prema crtežu, ili crtežima, načinjenim 1858. godine. Veduta pomalo dramtizirane perspektive podsjeća nas da je Van Moer bio odličan učenik François Bossueta, koji je od 1832. sve do 1876. godine podučavao perspektivu na Akademiji u Bruxellesu, a i sâm bio prepoznat po izvrsnosti u prikazivanju perspektive na svojim slikama. Da postigne draž i spokoj sanjarenja, te dojam prozračnosti i dubinu krajolika, Van Moer manipulira vedutom tako što ne slika dio golemog bloka lazareta, bezličnog izgleda, koji bi se morao vidjeti s lijeve strane u prednjem planu. Podrobno opisani detalji konkretne arhitekture amalgamiraju se s domišljenim elementima stvarajući privlačan *capriccio*.

Van Moerovi crteži u zbirka splitskoga Etnografskog muzeja i u Nacionalnoj i sveučilišnoj knjižnici u Zagrebu većinom su bili zamišljeni kao preparativne studije za ulja na platnu koja je planirao naslikati u svom ateljeu u Bruxellesu. Od dvadeset i jednog crteža u Nacionalnoj i sveučilišnoj knjižnici osam ih sadrži prikaze vezane uz Dioklecijanovu palaču, od kojih je sedam relativno većih dimenzija. Poslužili su (možda svi) za izvedbu slika istoga motiva u ulju na platnu. Na većini nalazimo manje ili opsežnije primjedbe koje se ponajviše odnose na boje za pojedine dijelove slike.

Donedavna nam je od Van Moerovih ulja s prikazom splitskih motiva bio poznat tek Peristil sa sfigom u fokusu – danas u splitskom Arheološkom muzeju. Na nekoliko recentnih aukcija, na kojima se Van Moerove slike regularno pojavljuju, uočili smo pak nekoliko slika za koje nalazimo izravne paralele u sačuvanim crtežima. Među njima se slikarskom i dokumentarnom vrijednošću ističu dva ulja koja pokazuju dosad dijelom nepoznate kuteve prikazivanja sjeverne strane Peristila – prije purifikatorskog bijesa započetog u drugoj polovini 19. stoljeća.

Osobito je važna veduta jugoistočnog dijela Peristila, naslikana 1860. godine (odnedavna u privatnoj zbirci u Zagrebu), jer jedina pokazuje polikromiju glasovita zvonika katedrale Sv. Dujma. Zvonik splitske katedrale radikalno je restauriran (bilo bi zapravo ispravnije reći da je rekonstruiran) na razmeđu 19. i 20. stoljeća. U toj rekonstrukciji najvećim dijelom je zamijenjena i kamena građa zvonika. Umjesto blokova i kvadera bračkoga vapnenca, “ubranog” iz ruševina same Palače, zidova prošaranih mramorom i porfirom i stotinama spolija, u rekonstrukciji se koristio kamen iz jednoga korčulanskog kamenoloma (Oskorušica blizu Žrnova), poznatog po mekom vapnencu krasne bjeline, visoka sjaja, a izuzetne otpornosti na atmosferilije, te osobito podatnog za klesarsku obradu. Bilo kako bilo, tijekom rekonstrukcije – koja je trajala dvadeset i šest godina (1882.-1908.) – zajedno sa svim spolijima uklonjen je najveći dio mramornih te porfirnih (crvenih i zelenih) blokova koji su tvorili, po svemu sudeći, promišljenu kolorističku igru. Sudeći po Van Moerovoj slici, u svim lukovima prvog kata zvonika bili su, na primjer, simetrično pravilno ugrađeni mramorni kameno-vi crvene boje. Zanimljiv i očito promišljen koloristički efekt pružali su i stupovi različitih boja.

Van Moer je naslikao i vedutu sjeveroistočne strane Peristila, dakle iste kolonade koju smo vidjeli na prethodnoj slici, ali sada sa suprotne strane, iz protirona. U jezgri slike opet je prizemlje i prvi kat

zvonika katedrale, s nadopunom podataka o njegovu stanju 1858. godine. Sačuvan je preparativni crtež koji pokazuje s kolikom je pomnjom Van Moer proučavao svaku pojedinost svojih motiva, vještim crtežom naznačujući plasticitet arhitekture i dubinu prostora.

Samo usputno možemo spomenuti i crteže *Mauzoleja i zvonika katedrale*, u ponešto forsiranom perspektivnom pogledu iz vrta stare biskupije, te crtež *Vrata Vestibula* koji je, po svemu sudeći, trebao također poslužiti za izradu slike.

Međutim, sačuvao nam se *Catalogue des tableaux, études, aquarelles, croquis, délaissés par feu J.-B. Van Moer* (Bruxelles, 1885.) s iscrpnim popisom umjetnina koje su točno godinu dana po slikarevoj smrti završile na izložbi održanoj 7. i 8. prosinca 1885. godine, te odmah potom na dražbi. Doznajemo tako da je slika Rive (zacijelo se na nju odnosi naslov *Môle et restes du palais de Dioclétien à Spalato; effet de matin*) bila izložena 1870. godine u Antwerpenu.

*Place du temple à Spalato* (ovdje opisana slika Peristila u pogledu prema jugoistoku) izlagao je 1860. godine u Bruxellesu, zajedno s jednom drugom slikom koja je prikazivala mletački lazaret na gradskoj obali (*Caravane au marché de Spalato*).

Motiv Peristila (*Arcades de la place du temple à Spalato*) izložio je i na izložbi u Antwerpenu 1861. godine. Budući da je slika sjeveroistočne strane Peristila datirana s 1878. godinom, očito je da bi ova trebala biti neka ranija varijanta.

Sačuvani crteži pomažu nam naslutiti što je mogla predstavljati slika *Ruines romaines à Spalato*, izložena 1866. u Bruxellesu. Ali, osobito bi bilo značajno jednom pronaći vedutu Splita (*Vue de Spalato en Dalmatie*) koju je izlagao 1871. godine u Gandu, za koju ne nalazimo korelat među sačuvanim crtežima.

Isti Katalog spominje čak trideset i pet prikaza sa splitskim motivima – *Monuments de Spalato, en Dalmatie, et sites de Spalato et des environs* – od čega pet *grandes feuilles avec une foule de croquis*. Povrh toga se navodi i pedeset crteža, ponajviše akvarela s prikazima osoba i dalmatinskih nošnji (*personnages et costumes de Dalmatie*).

U zasebnoj rubrici Kataloga navode se i uokvireni akvareli, nastali po svemu sudeći u samom Splitu. Spominje se tu još jedan prikaz Peristila, a iz dugog popisa dovršenih slika i studija doznajemo da je postojalo još devet slika s motivima Splita. Posebno bi nam bilo zanimljivo jednom otkriti *La même vue avec une procession religieuse*, dakle sliku katedralnog trga animiranog svečanom vjerskom procesijom.

Naslov *Marché aux grains à Spalato* bi se možda mogao odnositi na ulje s prikazom istočnog zida Dioklecijanove palače s prislonjenim kućama, poviše kasnije otvorenih Srebrnih vrata i dominikanskog samostana preko puta. Slika se prije dvadesetak godina pojavila na tržištu, a za nju imamo i podrobno razrađen crtež (u Nacionalnoj i sveučilišnoj knjižnici u Zagrebu) koji omogućava da doznamo nešto više o metodi kojom je Van Moer gradio slike u atelijeru temeljem terenskih opservacija. Sumorna prizemna zgrada prvog Arheološkog muzeja, prislonjena na istočni zid Palače, u prednjem planu crteža, nije mu izgledala dovoljno slikovito, pa ju je uklonio, a na njezino mjesto "dogurao" sklop pučkih kuća koji nalazi prigraden zidinama uz sjeveroistočnu kulu Palače. Elementi *capriccia* uočavaju se posebno u pogledu kule s monumentalnim portalom blago zašiljena luka (možda kao reminiscencija na Van Moerove slike Sevilje i Alhambre).

Navode se još *Portique et restes d'un monument romain à Spalato* (iz 1867. godine) i *Ruines du palais de Dioclétien à Spalato*. Naslov *Le Sphinx sur la place du Temple à Spalato* mogao bi pak sugerirati da je Van Moer napravio za sebe inačicu slike koju je 1873. godine poklonio Ivanu Burattiju.

Konačno, s obzirom na izmjene koje je interijer splitske katedrale doživio nakon restauracije/rekonstrukcije iz 1875. godine, bilo bi divno kada bismo jednom mogli pronaći dvije slike koje Katalog posthumne izložbe/dražbe navodi pod naslovima *Intérieur du temple à Spalato*, te *Intérieur de la sacristie du temple à Spalato*.

Sve u svemu, ako smo ovdje popis Van Moerovih danas poznatih slika s motivima Splita mogli proširiti na pet ulja na platnu i drvu, ovaj Katalog upozorava da ih je bilo šesnaest samo u slikarevu

ateljieru. A tomu treba pribrojiti i neutvrđeni broj dalmatinskih (zacijelo pretežno splitskih) motiva između sto i osamnaest preostalih “studija u ulju” (*Cent dix-huit études à l’huile: vues de Belgique, France, Prusse. Venise, Dalmatie, Orient et quelques fantaisies*).

Ova rasprava imala je za cilj pokazati nekoliko nepoznatih aspekata izgleda Peristila sredinom 1800-ih godina, prostora koji je tijekom protekla dva stoljeća u mnogome izgubio dio izvorne povijesne stratigrafije. Njegove slikarske opservacije zabilježene brojnim crtežima i akvarelima tijekom boravka u Splitu u proljeće i rano ljeto 1858. godine, a kojima se vraćao tijekom sljedećih dvadesetak godina u samoći svog atelijera u Bruxellesu, uvrštavaju ga u malu galaksiju europskih istraživača koji su s mnogo znanja i senzibiliteta istraživali i opisivali dalmatinske spomenike, geografiju, običaje i nošnje te provincije na rubu europske civilizacije. Ona je baš u to doba, malo po malo, prestajala biti europska *terra incognita*, otkrivajući nove perspektive unutar habsburškog *Commonwealtha*, kao i slutnje svoga budućeg razvoja. Van Moerov opus još je nedovoljno poznat. Ovaj kratki esej ukazao je, nadamo se, na vrijednosti koje njegove slike imaju, i to ne samo u pogledu njihova dokumentarnog značaja za poznavanje ambijenata koje je prikazivao, a koji su u međuvremenu neumitno transformirani. Možemo pretpostaviti da se neke od tih slika, kojima sada znamo i naslove, i danas nalaze u privatnim zbirkama, te da će se eventualno jednom pojaviti ili u nekom širem osvrtu na Van Moerovo djelo, ili na nekoj prigodnoj izložbi ili dražbi.

**Ključne riječi:** *Jean Baptiste van Moer (1819.-1884.), Dioklecijanova palača u Splitu, zvonik splitske katedrale, Rudolf von Alt (1812.-1905.), Ivan Buratti (splitski okružni upravitelj)*