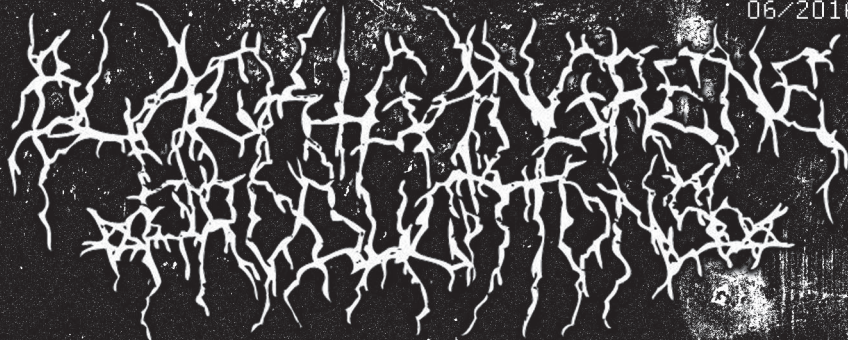


06/2016



Abysmal Despair #1

This newsletter holds the intent to portray an insight of Black Gangrene's activity through the contact with bands that collaborate directly with the label or that at least share the same overview of the Black Metal underground.

This issue holds the freezing shores evoked by Ventos, the vicious ceremonies of hate spewed by Obskuritatem and Mons Veneris, plus a unity of past and present granted by a discussion with Wlad Drakkstein having Vermyapre Kommando as the grim background. Adding to the interviews, we examine and detail the new releases from the aforementioned acts, showcasing Black Gangrene's epic but disturbing present momentum, one which praises the art of audible rawness, 'words and omens for human blight and misery.

INTERVIEWS :

Obskuritatem
Mons Veneris
Vermyapre Kommando
Ventos

& REVIEWS

www.blackgangrene.com



Sarajevo, the city of thousand graves, is also the cloister for the Black Plague Circle from where emerges Obskuritatem. Raw Black Metal and ambient/noise that sickens the air and brings turmoil to the stillness of mundane life.

- Misery, Death, Inhumanity. All these meandered the streets of Bosnia and Herzegovina for years. Are the ghosts of your country's past present when composing for Obskuritatem?

I feel like I am being haunted by the ghosts and demons of my own past, not someone else's... So I personally think that one can definitely feel a presence of something not from this world (at least, not the material world known to humans) while listening to Obskuritatem! I am just a mediator of those Dark Forces and I have to feed this Beast to keep myself alive.

- How does the music and the words manifest themselves on Obskuritatem's releases? Is improvisation important on how the final result is carved?

Words and music manifests on their own way and improvisation plays a huge role in process of making music, not only for Obskuritatem, but to most of the music I do, be it me alone or with other individuals... As speaking of Obskuritatem, early stuff was more improvised while new material is more structured, which again, happens naturally, on its own. I have no control over the Beast...



- What inspires Obskuritatem aesthetically?

Aesthetically Obskuritatem is inspired by inevitable Death which awaits us all... I perceive this world through the eyes of disgusted old man waiting this all to END!

- The most watchful devotees of the Black Metal underground have witnessed the rise of a strong Bosnian scene in the last few years. What do you highlight as the best this circle has to offer at the moment?

- Our circle have never been stronger and we are about to unleash Plague upon this pathetic existence... but since we do not seek admiration from those who INFECTED the seeds of this Black Art with their bullshit... Only those with the True Fire burning inside their hearts will appreciate it! What Black Metal is for the most nowadays "bands" is what makes us sick! BLACK METAL WILL NEVER DIE!!!

MONS VENERIS

"...AND THUS SPEAK THE BEAST"

Mons Veneris is one of the most disturbing, insidious, spiteful acts in the Portuguese Black Metal scene.

Although the statements, the lyrics and all the music released could speak for themselves we decided to briefly disclose some thoughts from the profound and tangled darkness.



- After 12 years of continuous dedication and intense activity of releases, what keeps motivating Mons Veneris?

The exploration of the essence of Darkness through sound as well as a multitude of concepts like the dycotomy of (mutual) ascent / descent, mystic experiences in the dream worlds and abstract approaches of un/existence beyond the carnal-flesh-material, as we know it. Satan is the whole destructive and creative force: the one providing the tools for Mons Veneris to do what it does.

- These releases surfacing through Black Gangrene were private, limited or just not distributed?

I've mentioned this before in other interviews in the past. Usually I've never seen them as private but limited in their nature. They weren't for people to reach them in an easy manner, but it wasn't for people not to have as well. Seems like things changed and they are not limited anymore, since now anyone can acquire them through Black Gangrene (or even Altare, I'd say). Anyone who wants to have them enough, will get them from Black Gangrene for a regular price, as they will always be on print (as they were originally just xerox artworks on dubbed tapes), so the advice would be not getting them from other places.

- Mons Veneris' sound wanders between putrid stenchd raw Black Metal and a ritualistic approach of ambient darkness. Do you see both courses as different from each other or are they an indivisible part of what you want to attain?

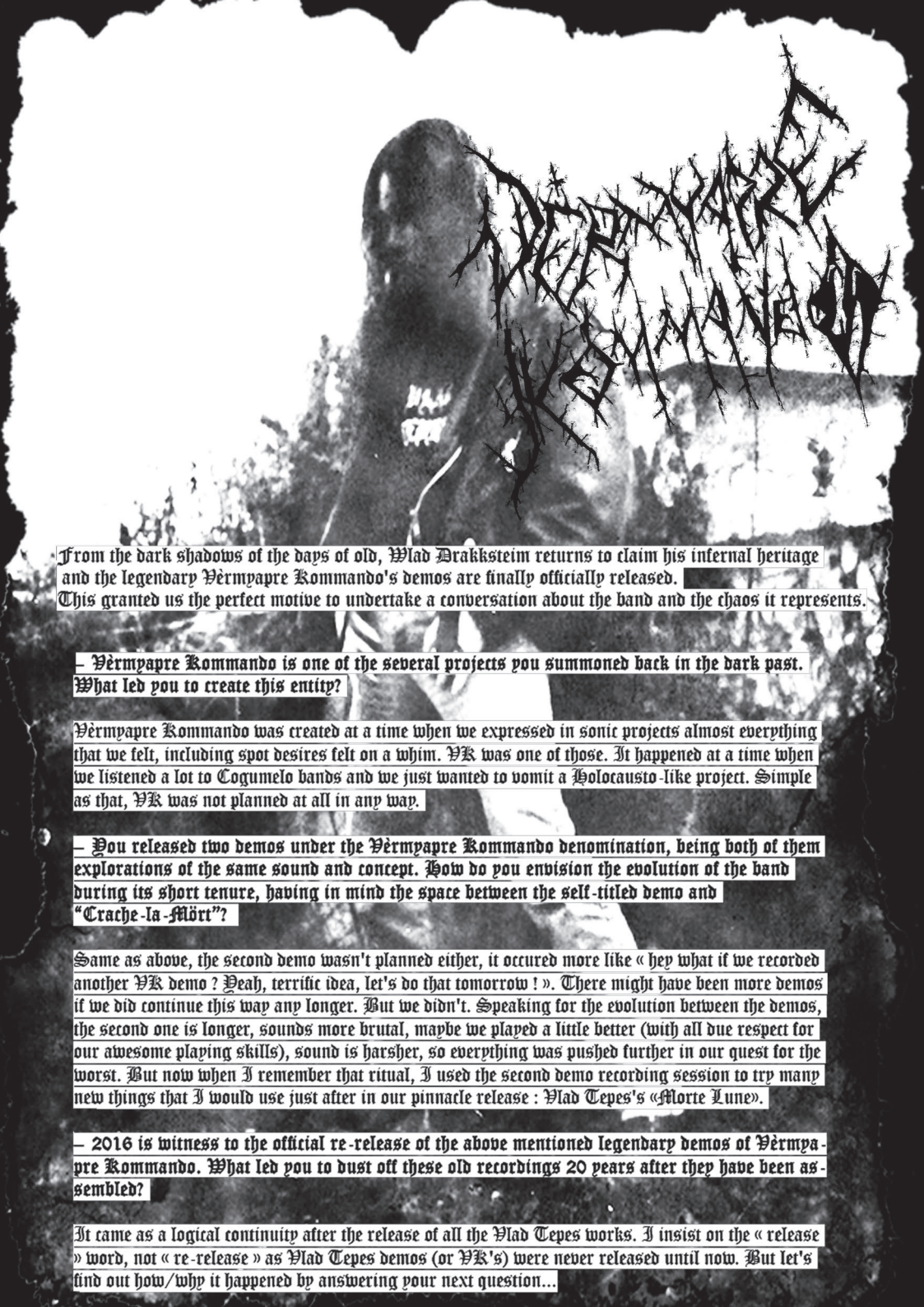
They are different parts of the very same body of work... that is what matter: the whole body. Other than that they are details (where The Devil resides, by the way) but in no way the Ambient or Black "Metal" are to be seen as distinct parts, even when a release fully explores one or another: it is Mons Veneris! Though such a separation was required to refine a sound that would combine all of the elements of the whole body of work.

- Does the Underground scene become a limitation at some point or it is the strength in the way of spreading the message?

I think that is always a matter of personal choice. Some underground bands stink and some bands on the verge between underground and mainstream can properly manage without stopping being themselves or losing their identity. Black Metal will always be subterranean in nature for it will hold always deeper understandings of life and death that music on the big industry can't pass... they do pass Darkness on, but for the ignorant spirits to live... not to perceive!

Abé Sathanás!

XXI-V-MMXVI A.S.



From the dark shadows of the days of old, Vlad Drakksteim returns to claim his infernal heritage and the legendary Vermypape Kommando's demos are finally officially released. This granted us the perfect motive to undertake a conversation about the band and the chaos it represents.

- Vermypape Kommando is one of the several projects you summoned back in the dark past. What led you to create this entity?

Vermypape Kommando was created at a time when we expressed in sonic projects almost everything that we felt, including spot desires felt on a whim. VK was one of those. It happened at a time when we listened a lot to Cogumelo bands and we just wanted to vomit a Holocausto-like project. Simple as that, VK was not planned at all in any way.

- You released two demos under the Vermypape Kommando denomination, being both of them explorations of the same sound and concept. How do you envision the evolution of the band during its short tenure, having in mind the space between the self-titled demo and "Crache-la-Mörrt"?

Same as above, the second demo wasn't planned either, it occurred more like « hey what if we recorded another VK demo? Yeah, terrific idea, let's do that tomorrow! ». There might have been more demos if we did continue this way any longer. But we didn't. Speaking for the evolution between the demos, the second one is longer, sounds more brutal, maybe we played a little better (with all due respect for our awesome playing skills), sound is harsher, so everything was pushed further in our quest for the worst. But now when I remember that ritual, I used the second demo recording session to try many new things that I would use just after in our pinnacle release: Vlad Tepes's « Morte Lune ».

- 2016 is witness to the official re-release of the above mentioned legendary demos of Vermypape Kommando. What led you to dust off these old recordings 20 years after they have been assembled?

It came as a logical continuity after the release of all the Vlad Tepes works. I insist on the « release » word, not « re-release » as Vlad Tepes demos (or VK's) were never released until now. But let's find out how/why it happened by answering your next question...

- Since the mid 90s, the world has changed in many, many ways. The phenomena in file sharing and selling platforms like ebay and discogs and the ever-growing modernization in technology have had an impact even in the deepest dominions of the underground. Looking back to the grand legacy of Les Légions Noires and more specifically the lawless way the circle's releases have been treated, do you feel the need to take control of your creations and the way they should be delivered to the outside realm?

- All that did grow in an era when a majority of people think that they can own everything for nothing, that everything is their due, that they don't have to work or sweat or bleed a bit to earn what they deserve. Today's people don't deserve, they don't respect, they just take as everything is so easy; virtual prism make things virtually appear easy and people behave like never they would do in real life. That led to the hi-scale piracy we suffered for years, to free music on the internet, free Art in general, to the expense of the artists. You must know that we never wanted our music to be spread (except for 3 spot limited and well-known releases) how it happened despite our wish. After many years it became unbearable and I had to stem all that shit and take back control on all that works that were left uncultivated for years. That led to the Vlad Tepes and now to the VK releases.

I must add that there's no fatality about what happened. It happened because I let it happen, just wanting to be left alone in peace with myself, but I guess that the people who craved for us (for our Art -thank to them- or for the money they could get on our back) won as all that unrespectful shit made me come back.

So yes, I took back control and cleansing of free VT/VK music on the internet is on its way, bootleggers must watch their asses as they have a sight aiming at them constantly now.

An addice for the other artists: again, there's no fatality, just what you deserve. I hear many people crying about the old days, but survival is in adaptation, as Vlad Tepes, as the Black Legions, the old days are gone and won't ever come back, so adapt and evolve. As Artists, one of our goal should be to re-educate people to like what is valuable and to respect it for what it is, make things valuable and unique, uncompromising. An example: look at all the great bands of the 70/80's that are true icons, soon, they'll all be gone but what/who will take their place? There's nothing valuable left but an instant consumption of junk that feed the uncultivated masses of people, waiting their end without any sense in life...

- Besides paralel markets of music and digital formats, many things have changed on the way artists and specifically labels deliver the music to the public. Some say there's a resurgence of vinyl and cassette, others that there's an overcrowding of analog formats that only benefit the above mentioned paralel market and a overspeculation on sales. What do you feel is/are the proper path(s) to release Black Metal on an underground level and how do you think these ways have changed over the last 20/25 years?

Underground is a relic of the past too. Black Metal (or what is called Black Metal nowadays, that's not the same) is liked/listened by a limited amount of people that can have access to it as they want as, again, free music is still widely existing. On another level, there are the people who like to have their record in hand no matter the format. For them, it is important to provide something that is worth their crave. The record must be available to them in enough quantities or the bootleggers will take the place with shitty CD-r.

I'm perfectly conscious that it's quite the contrary that we did 20 years ago with given and by the same quite limited tape copies, but, keep in mind that internet didn't exist at the time and nobody would have given a fuck about us, for what we cared.

I don't think there's a perfect way to release something today. Anyone can release a 66 copies vinyl, but who will care? What's the point?

- Both Vèrmpapre Kommando's demos showcase a very raw, impulsive and intense form of Black Metal. What can you tell us about the band's songwriting? Did improvisation weighed in the process of creation?

Pesss, that was totally improvised, both demos in the same way. We recorded them in two few hours rituals. Before recording a piece, we, with Vorlok, found two or three riffs: « ok, I'll play that and that. Ok, I'll try that and that with the drums. » And the songs were done. That's it. We said us « possessed by the Demons of Metal »! But frankly, you can hear that it's improvised, listen to a track like « Maniac Division », you can hear when I lose my drum stick and unleash a bass solo to fill the hole... About the sound, everything was overdubbed and reverberated at maximum load.

- In light of your several projects from the past, in what ways Vèrmpapre Kommando a different beast, both sonically and conceptually?

We can compare it to Vlad Tepes for what concerns me: Vlad Tepes pieces were fully written and arranged, they had lyrics and the music was deeply fueled by my darkest and vivid feelings of that time. VK is just a burst, nothing was written, arrangement was very limited and there was no lyric, some kind of demonic possession. What else...

- From a lyrical point of view, Death have always been Vèrmpapre Kommando's prime mover. However, a closer look showcases not only a spiritual approach to the Hooded One but also an exploration of themes more connected to extreme forms of suffering, torment and pain. What can you tell us about Vèrmpapre Kommando's aesthetics?

From a lyrical point of view, you can only base yourself on the track titles as there's no lyrics. Most of the time they mean nothing, are deformed french words or are linked to some shitty or funny life anecdotes such as us having a very bad flu with a lot of fever (Fihbeurhr Attack) or Mephynach driving his old Citroën GS break car (G.S. Kommand). The track « Juden ? » was about what was told to you when you were unlucky 70 years ago (still true today), everyone know what would happen to you when you were told that question word. It has a mirror track on the second demo called « Human ? » about the question that will be asked to you in the future and you'll be in trouble, everyone in the same bag of self-extinction! About the aesthetics, we did chose something reminding Holocausto i.e. barb wires, blockhaus and some WW2 nostalgic imagery. We also played the Brazilian posers on the pictures with thick hair on the face, thrash metal blue jeans and up-sleeves fringes perfectos: that is Cult, assholes!

- 20 years after the demos were recorded, what do you feel when you listen to them? Is there anything you would change?

I still want to kick some ass when I listen to them, turn on the slap machine! But no, nothing, I would change nothing. Such an instantaneous burst couldn't be tweaked.

For a long time I was bothered by the snare sound vs closed hi-hat sound on the beginning of « Black War Legions Metal » as it gave me the impression that the drum beat was played upside down, breaking the rhythm I wanted to render for that riff. A thing that I don't regret is to have left the bass drum pedal chain ungreased and creaky. You can hear that grating torture sound all along the demo...

- Since the 90s, Black Metal has suffered many changes on different levels. Mainstream agendas, fusions with different musical styles, copprat plagues with no end in sight, many things happened on these last decades. Dwelbing again on the past from a current perspective, what are your thoughts on the Black Metal scene and the way it has shifted from the days you and Vorlok recorded Vèrmpapre Kommando and « Crache-la-Mort » until the very present? Are there any present artists/bands that you look upon with admiration?

I have to admit that my view on the BM scene and the Metal scene in general stopped in 1994/95, I don't know nothing and don't care about what happened after that. For example people sometimes look at me with big eyes when I tell them that I never listened to Darkthrone's « Transylvanian Hunger » still today; it seems that it is a classic?! Then you know where my Metal culture stopped as I plunged in a funnel where only our Art would substist out of the world's pollution.

To answer your last question, yes, there are many artist that I admire and respect today but I won't tell who they are to let them blossom in their own Darkness (they will recognize themselves if they read those lines). I still love my old classics and don't search any new music as finding a gem nowadays is harder and harder, but sometimes it can fall onto me and thrill me, but it is very, very unusual.

- Heading towards the future, can we expect new music from Vèrmpapre Kommando? Is the re-release of these demos an isolated event, or are you intending to dwelbe on other projects' vaults?

The release of the two Vèrmpapre Kommando demos with you and Drakkar is a page of the past that turns as I have now finished the work that I began few years ago: settle the past. Vlad Tepes is gone and won't ever come back. I now have a full virgin page in front of me... But the burst concept of VK is an uncontrollable concept, who knows what can happen with such an unstable matter? As for other projects, I still have the unreleased Vèrmbdrèb and why wouldn't I give a heir to VT? Time will tell...

Thanks,
Vlad



Of misery and anguish, Ventos storms in and drag us to the abyss with razor-sharp gashes of Black Metal filled with atmosphere and enthrallment.

A journey throughout the coldest of brazilian's breeze.

Back in 1995, in the midst of the Black Metal furnace that were the Black Legions, Vlad and Vorlok Drakkstein decided to take another step into the abyss, summoning a new entity of pure hate and naming it Vermypape Kommando.

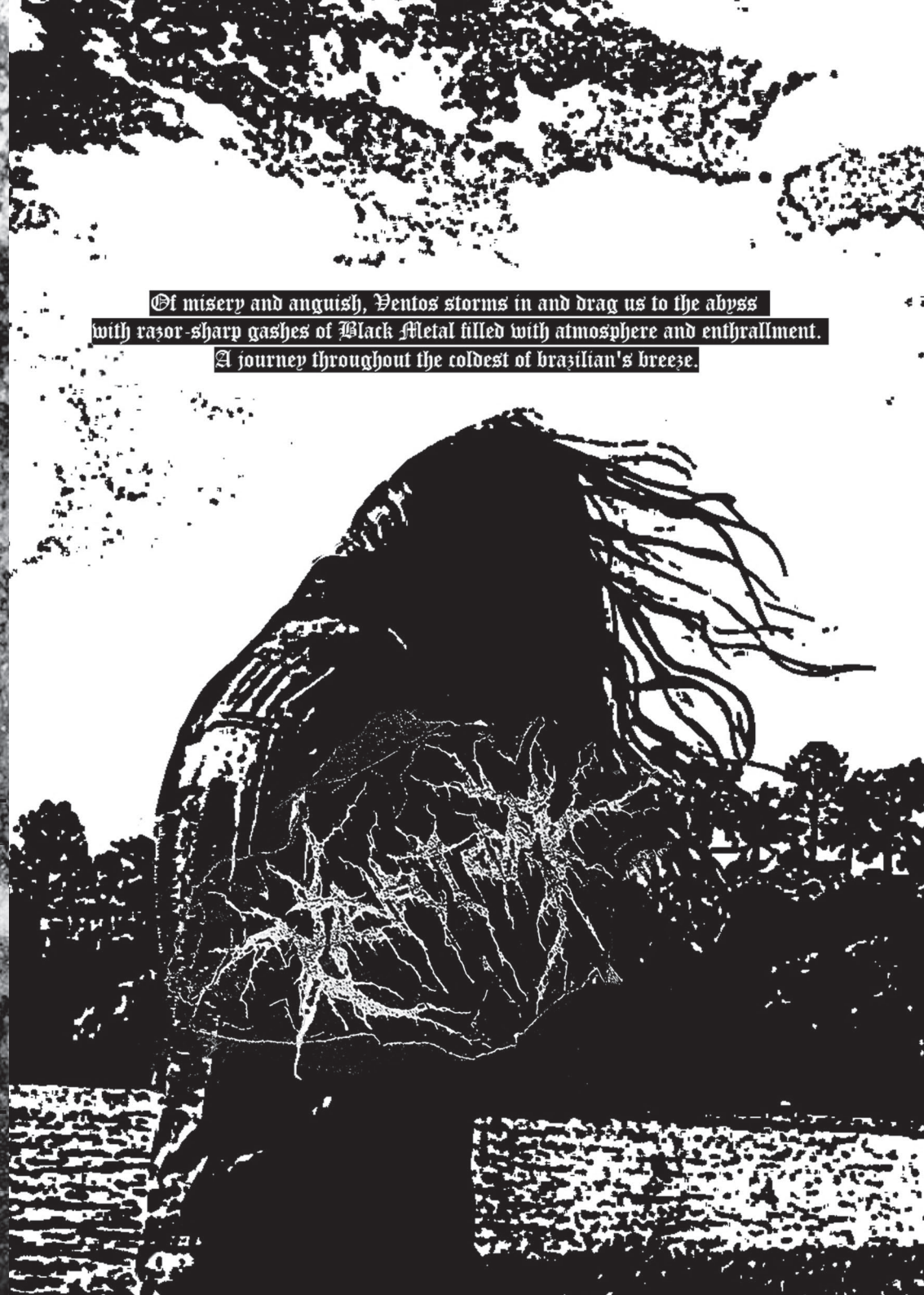
After 20 years, two demos, and every possible way of mistreating Art by everyone other than the individuals involved on this project, Vlad decides to take control of what should have never been taken away from them. These last few years saw Vlad Tepes being released on vinyl with full approval on all related matters by Vlad himself. As for 2016, Vermypape Kommando's demos receive the same treatment, on a pure underground spirit from the dark past: cassette releases, signed by WD, on a true underground Black Metal label, Black Sangrene Productions.

A burst of spat out hatred emerges right from the first moments of "KriegMetal", the tone is set for the self-titled demo. Belligerent rusty riffs, chaotic drums and reverbe-filled insane vocals blend together in full on improvised rituals. There's no overthought, no contemplation for pleasantries, only true devotion to the Black Metal filthiness of the late 80s and early 90s.

On Crache-la-Mört, Vlad and Vorlok bring the impromptu atmosphere of the first demo sessions and take it to the next level of raw energy and abrasive wickedness. All the elements of the first release are boosted on its path to sonic grimness. The band sounds untamed, yet more in command of their skills, with ruthless songs bearing an incisive riffing that sounds even sharper than on the first demo. The overall sound is wilder, and there's a feeling of imminent disintegration that pollutes the air.

The future is uncertain for Vermypape Kommando, yet the blood with which these recordings were carbed is pretty much alive. What lies here is, most of all, a page from the past which is boldly written by the hand of its creator.

Limited to 50 copies, these releases signify much more than the sum of its parts. They are a sign of respect and reverence for true underground Black Metal, in all its personality and individuality, ones which Black Sangrene is proud and honored to glorify.





- Ventos is a somewhat recent horde in the underground. What led you to summon this entity and how do you envision its evolution since the first demo?

Although recently released, Ventos is a project that has already existed for some time. There are still tracks recorded years ago that have never come out and probably never will.

There is nothing mystical or surprising in the creation of Ventos... I mean, Ventos is just me in essence, reflecting my gray soul through my limited musical abilities.

- The lyrics are all written in your mother tongue. How important it is for you communicate your soul on this language instead of the more commonly used english?

First of all I am from Brazil and I think it's important that I write in Portuguese. In addition to respecting the language, writing in my mother tongue allows me a greater liberty of creation, facilitates expression and the construction of rhyme, which would be lost if translated.

- Death and Misanthropy. The black veil of Ventos crawls around these topics on your releases so far. How would you describe the concept behind this band and how has it progressed from its inception to the current moment?

Basically, a cult of the night, its mysteries and its unfathomable emptiness that unfolds its different faces every moment... In other words, Ventos is my vision—abstract or not—and representation of my world. Everything in Ventos has progressed naturally. If this ever ceases to be the case there will be no reason to continue.

- Ventos' sonic mantras reveal a detachment from mundane life matters and a total devotion to pitch black darkness. How would you define the music of Ventos and the way it builds from its first glimpses into a full-shaped creation?

Crude, raw, direct, and decadent... I could use a lot of terms and it is not easy for me define my own music, but those are the first words that come to my mind.

Everything is quite simple, just one guitar, bass, drums, and vocals. First, I record the drums with or without some structure in mind, and after that I write the rest of the song for the other instruments.



Hailing from Brazil, Ventos depicts its visions of Death and Isolation on a new demo tape, simply entitled "II". Containing five tracks, this demo is a continuation of the approach explored by this obscure horde on its first demo ("Fragmentos da Noite"), this time with an even colder and distant sound, maintaining the raw, rehearsal quality to the overall sound.

A glance at the artwork reveals a black & white xeroxed "ugliness", magnified by the overall detachment and inhumanity present in the lyrics, cries and moans of torment expelled on the band's mother tongue, an element that gives the music a definitive personal and invocative feeling.

For those following the Terror Noturno label's output - from which Ventos shares its vision and overall concept - and also the Black Gangrene releases over the years - "II" presents itself as an essential demo of intense, haunting Black Metal.

Emerging from the deepest depths of the portuguese Underground, Degredo unveil in 2016 its first demo "Aos Que Caminham Na Noite". Comprised of six tracks, this cassette sees the portuguese horde guiding us through desolate landscapes, alienated of human life, where cries of ancestral wisdom are evoked on their mother tongue.

From its first minutes until the very end, Degredo takes us on a journey where light is no more, a sound as dark and it can get, with an approach to Black Metal reminiscent of the ancient past, nor only of this sacred vessel of the Black Arts, but also of the ghosts that roam on its lyrics.

Degredo prefers to drag its corpse in sheer darkness, and where information lacks on mundane and feeble aspects as the identity of its band members, it certainly is fulfilled on the lyrical content, printed on the tape's inner sleeve, a complement to the ritualized sounds and poignant artwork.

Proudly released by Black Gangrene, this demo tape is a testament to the label's devotion to pure underground Black Metal, and a certain evidence of might from the portuguese Black Metal underground.



Part of the Black Plague Circle, Obskuritatem is one of the pivotal hordes that emerged from Bosnia and Herzegovina in the last few years. After a set of demos and split releases, this project unveils three new tracks under the title "Vampiriska Kakofonija". Sonically and aesthetically, this demo is a continuation of what Obskuritatem have been executing so far: very raw, hideous Black Metal with an intense aura of cheer bleakness and discomfort, blended with purging Noise deviations that only contribute to the overall atmosphere of dread and decay. The artwork blends itself in perfection along with the ritualistic sounds on this tape. On display, the mesmerizing sight of the Vampyr consumes with exquisite terror the soul of the feeble living humans before feasting upon its blood. Confined to 50 hand-numbered cassettes, "Vampiriska Kakofonija" is a testament to a band and the mind frame of the Black Plague Circle, a manifestation of genuine, unadulterated devotion to pure Black Metal essence.