Mornië Utúlië - Czarna Aura (2015)

1 Wśród Grobów 5:54 2 Bez Wiary 7:36 3 Niepokój 5:45 4 W Lustrzanym Odbiciu 6:15 5 Bliskość Upadku 5:27 6 Zwątpienie 9:16 7 Nadchodzi Noc 1:30 Bartek Brożek - Vocals, Guitar, Keyboards

Mornië Utúlië is a fairly new solo black metal project from Poland and "Czarna Aura" is its second full-length album. It's tough and raw, and bristling with energy and aggression yet it's also suffused with a deep melancholy. Although all the lyrics are in Polish, titles like "Niepokój" ("Anxiety"), "Zwątpienie" ("Doubt") and "Wśród Grobów" ("Among the Tombs") suggest the project's themes might include anxiety and confusion about one's life purpose and direction, the bleakness of existence and the hopelessness of it all.

The production behind the vocals, guitars and percussion might sound primitive but the background synthesiser tone wash seems cold, clear and well-rounded so the combination of cool bleak ambience and blocked-nose BM aggression must be deliberate. At least the album has a very distinct sound. While the first couple of tracks feature noisy guitar riffs and melodies against rapid blast-beat action, and are standard raw BM ferocity, as the album develops it starts to emphasise slower, doomier music with a more varied percussion and plaintive piano melodies. At this point "Czarna Aura" starts to become interesting so if listeners can hang on through the first two songs, they'll find more varied music with more instruments other than just guitars and percussion being used. Track 4 features a doomy introduction and while the rest of the track returns to familiar blast-beat frenzy, constant guitar noise blur and synth wash, there is also a death metal influence and beneath the bass an ominous crumbly texture. Piano becomes prominent later on in the album and second-last track "Zwątpienie" ("Doubt") seems to sum up everything that's come before it with a complex structure mixing up angry and intense blast-beat BM fire, plaintive piano melodies, field recordings and a second voice of pure soprano singing a passage of sorrow.

While the black metal element is dominant throughout the album, other details suggest that Mornië Utúlië might expand into even more ambient BM with elements drawn from other metal and non-metal genres. I certainly hope that this will be so on future recordings. Though "Czarna Aura" is not bad and a lot of thought and care have been put into its recording, the album needs some extra spark, some real fire and vital force. The songs are very busy and earnest, everything is in constant motion and working hard - but it all seems to need something extra to lift it right up. Perhaps if the album had eased back a bit, allowed an extra track or an interlude of just pure ambient music somewhere, and was not so busy technically, Mornië Utúlië man Bartek Brozek could have focused his efforts on getting the music to really flow with energy.
---NausikaDalazBlindaz, metal-archives.com

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