

CODEX EMPIRE - KINGSEVIL

An antique codex in which all the viruses of post-modern music are already contained, this is the **Mahk Rumbae's Codex Empire** project, a versatile musician that we already learned to know thanks to his works signed as **Ghost Actor, Konstruktivist, Oppenheimer MKII, Mitra mitra**, just to name some.

What Mahk makes here, demonstrating his great capacity of songwriting, is to take those codexes and decode them, in order to make them communicate with each other: techno, post-industrial and rhythmic noise are the main elements here, and this mix of sonic languages, above all thanks to his style, generate the sensation that he tries to create a formula that certainly isn't new (just think about several cross-genres projects that are moving themselves in the same direction, let's think also about **Ancient Methods** or at the last **Geistform** EP, to cite the most recent examples), a formula that the musician succeeds in synthesizing better than the others, and, in particular, what is successful in **Kingsevil** is the variety of the compositions, that don't follow fixed schemes – they couldn't have them – as Mahk, in those years, has demonstrated us that he hasn't any.

A strong dark techno song such as *Slate to marble* is completely different, for its approach, from the title track or from *Savage dispensary*. This first song is the perfect score for the night walks across the infinite metropolitan outskirts, more than for the listening in a trendy dancefloor, as this song is designed to sound "rough" in its development, but, above all, in its sounds: it really seems to listen to the sounds generated by the process that transforms the rough slate into a pure marble, an hammer that keep on hitting dull, wrapped up by a soft but penetrating blanket of fog, a blanket listenable into the whole EP. This beat, therefore, voluntarily almost unpleasant, doesn't want to show the result, but the process, the loop, adorned by sour, dystopic and post-acid elements. This is also the song with which Codex Empire has been presented by means of a video loaded on YouTube and created by **the29nov films**, that has interpreted Rumbae's music throughout symbolic-dystopic linkages close to the Dada approach, as well as artworks particularly rich of antique codexes. Definitely a clever as well as good interpretation.

Afterwards, the title track arrives, that changes the EP direction towards a new generation rhythmic noise, always characterized by a particularly dark mood and by a very beautiful cacophonic pause put almost at the end of the song. It's a inhuman and alienating assault that, in its sounds, evoke the sounds coming from factories during the worktime, but, differently from the "live" effect searched by a musician such as **Swarm Intelligence**, here is understandable how the artist abstracts that rough sound and elaborates it, while **Simon Hayes** takes it directly, and the effect is to be *inside the factory*. In this case, it could be called a clever sampling, therefore, but always a sampling, as here it's more oriented to the dancefloor. However, the genre's trademarks are all listenable here: there's the rhythmic cycle always balanced between post-industrial and tribal rhythmic, as well as there are the stabbing and dissonant sounds. Here could be recognized an approach similar to that of **Sonar**, but more danceable and ritual.

Savage dispensary is, as the title says, a savage (but always organized) dispensary of different rhythmic, sounds and approaches, certainly the more various and complex song of the EP, however being perfectly danceable. Here it could be found, once again, the tarantulated rhythmic evoking the african primordial ritual, as well as the 4 / 4 more strongly techno pulses, and, in general, a '90s taste for unpredictable rhythms and rhythmic pauses almost influenced by breakbeat music.

The final *Select observations in English bodies* closes the circle going back to a deep techno, but more defined in its scheme if we think at the previous two songs. Also here the typical dark mood of the work and the touchable suffocating fog are present. The main *quid* of this minimalist song is the try to make techno and rhythmic noise cross themselves, as the dull rhythmic industrial rhythm perfectly marry the typical techno 4 / 4 rhythm.

As already said in other interesting **Aufnahme+Wiedergabe** reviews, also here the same discourse has to be made. Rumbae demonstrates himself once again to be a versatile and clever composer, as well as the label demonstrates itself clever and free from unuseful stylistic schemes, although the obscure, dystopic and oppressing (but also Decadent) mood is common to all the releases of this very good german label. Kingsevil is a very good release for an artist of which we've already known the enormous skills, that here are once again confirmed.

Score: 9

Label: Aufnahme+Wiedergabe

Author: Alessandro "Flux" Violante

Website: <http://fluxproject.altervista.org/codex-empire-kingsevil>