

STYLE and CAD/CAM

A way of practising for the factory of the future?

Felice Ragazzo, designer

Roma

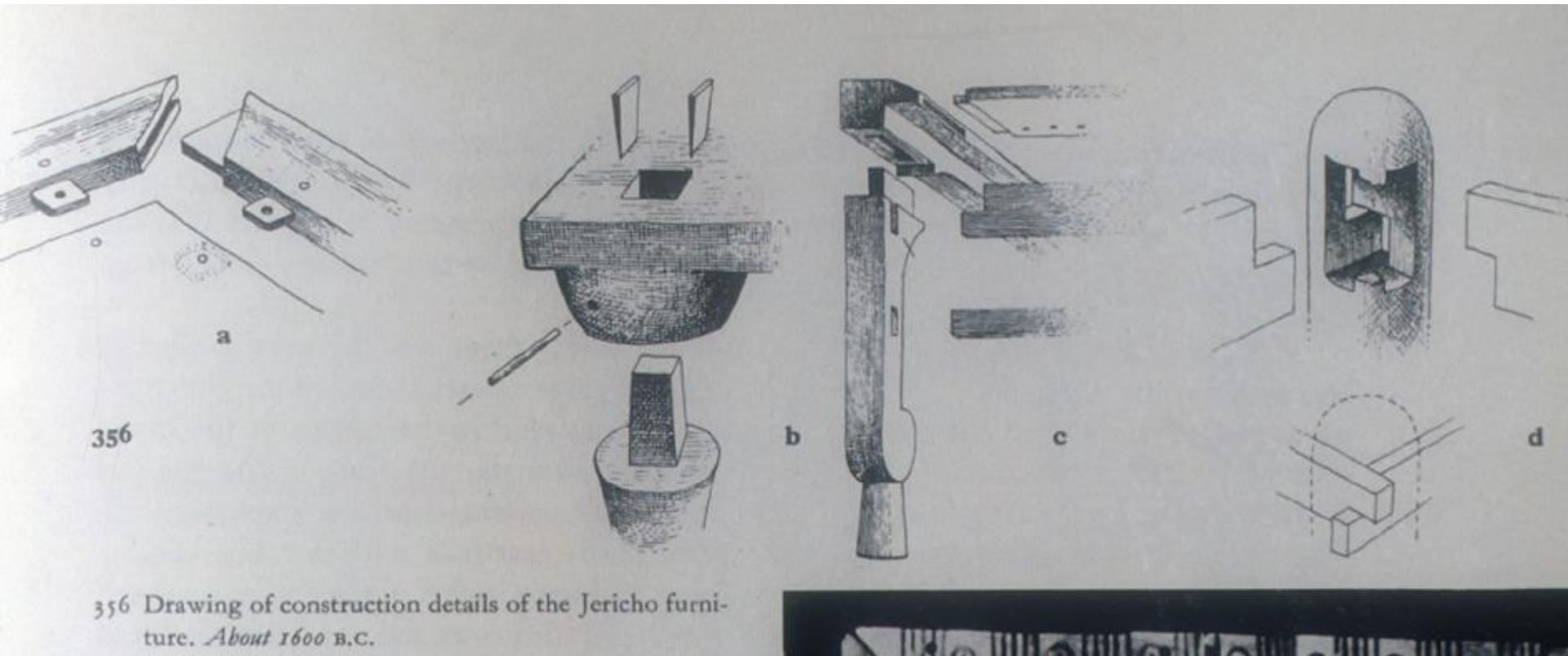
I intend to expose a theory that is rather simple and concrete, but since the common sense seems to elude its premises, I will not find it strange if they appear paradoxical.

The theory consists in considering the industry of **furniture in style** as a virtuous laboratory presently operating for the **factory of the future** and for a **new era of design**.

Let's take a look at the basics:

- the **style** requires the elements of the piece of furniture to be characterized by a peculiar **formal complexity**, especially in its decorations;
- before the advent of mechanization, such complexity technically depended on **manual ability**.

Brief historical examples:



Constructive details of furniture. Gerico, about 1600 B.C. It is already possible to recognize marks of nowadays method. We can assume elementary techniques.

Ante litteram design: details of Borromini's library in San Carlino alle Quattro Fontane - Rome.



It is an archetype which is philologically and organically connected to the present production.

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The figurative variety of wooden details, Palazzo Farnese - Rome.



A frame of mind leaning toward classical inspiration combined with pre-contemporary techniques.

In the Prime Minister room alone we find 10.000 palmettes, 10.000 lilies, 10.000 acanthus *girali*, hundreds of meters of lathed astragals.



Palmettes, lilies, *girali*, astragals, ...

An enormous amount of work in XVI and XVII century's Rome.

The sublime resides in the floral decorative details



P. Farnese – Rome. Writing desk.
The figurative profusion of the angular articulation transforms the technical complexity of the junction. Nature, artifice, references to the classical world.

P. Farnese – Rome. Flower basket hanging to the floor.
Technical symbiosis between woodturning, gouge and plastering. The scratching on the gouges look like scannings of a round milling cutter.

The masterly *intaglio* of Renaissance - **Coro di S. Agostino,**



Pesaro.

Now that production processes are **mechanized** and **computerized**:

- furniture in style - **as a framework** - gets more and more assimilated to the furniture of other categories,
- decorations - **which are formally complex** - can be easily realized through CAD/CAM systems, improving their **technological potentialities**.

Very often, though, technology offers shortcuts:



A **fake-authentic** resin cast of a shelf, realized with a **silicon rubber** mould and then processed as imitation wood. **The snares provided by chemistry.**

However, the use of CNC is by now a consolidated praxis.

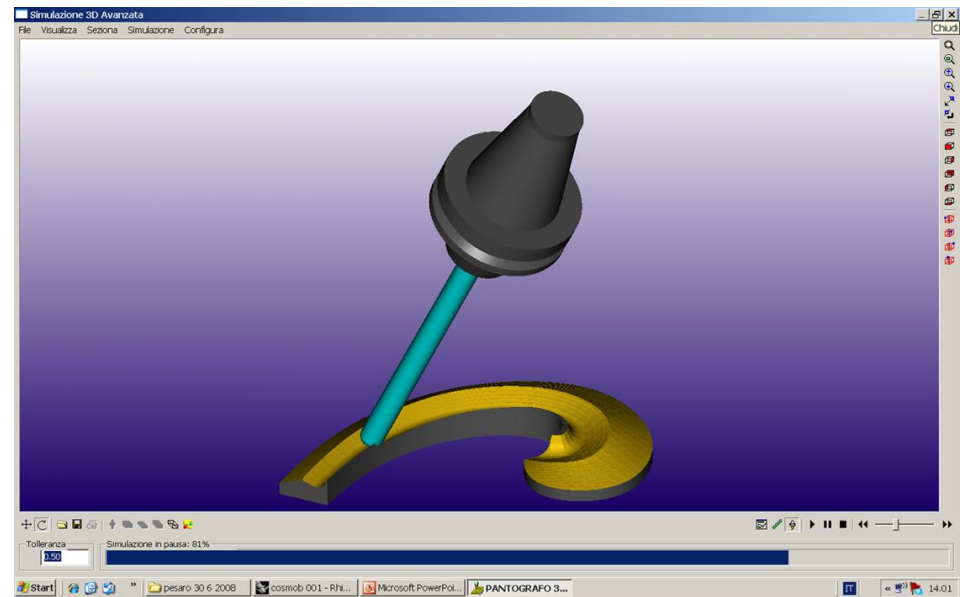
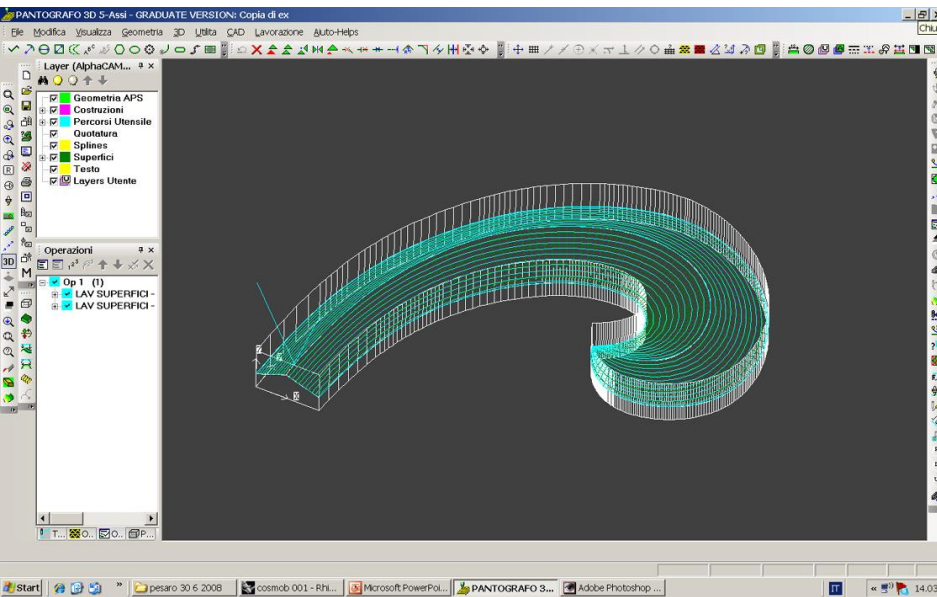
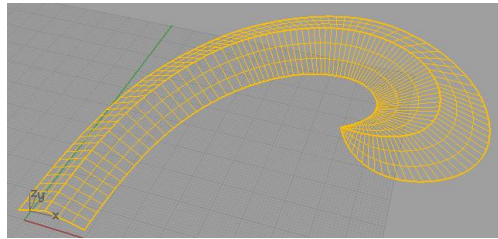
But the point is: **at which level of complexity are CAD/CAM technologies used today?**

It is well-known how they are used at a low technological standard, much under their real capability.

And, strangely enough, precisely with the furniture in style the technological standard - generally carried out - is tried to the limit, depending on the objective formal complexity of its details.

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A petal of lilies by way of example...



CAD and CNC as a replacement for pencil, gouge and mallet (and silicon mould). New semblances for the past.

How can we interpret this phenomenon?

We will try to do it this way:

The present praxis, in a multitude of companies that are scattered all over the world, actually constitutes a **widespread laboratory** in which to experience (consciously?) a use of advanced technical equipments like CNC's which is **geometrically more sophisticated.**

Who will benefit from such an advantage?

Notwithstanding the style ...

a new era of design which will predictably be born from the ashes of the present one, and which - in terms of a new and unexplored figurative frame of mind - will be favoured by the creative potential, which will be workable thanks to the technological advance.