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Culturally Digital, Digitally Cultural
Towards a Digital Cultural Heritage?

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Abstract   The focus of this paper is to try to show how we can speak of 'digital heritage' by giving some directions according to the peculiar nature of digital physis. The key aspect that drives the considerations on digital heritage can be pinpointed in the main difference between this and the traditional CH: the lack of materiality. However, digital heritage neither can be considered as a form of ICH, for lack of the traditional and historic dimension; nevertheless, what the 2003 UNESCO Convention says is a feasible way to speak on this matter. The hope of this paper is to offer some standpoints from which start to analyse the peculiar form of internet culture, a content that is emerging in, for and from the web and that might pour in the physical world.

Summary   1 Introduction. – 2 A Brief History. – 3 Can Information Have Culture? – 4 Culture In/Of the Web. – 5 Dark Side of the Net. – 6 Conclusion.

Keywords   Digital heritage. Digital culture. ICH.

1   Introduction

It is a recurrent joke, on image boards, forums and chat, that when future archaeologists or alien scholars will discover the last remnants of our age they will describe our society as one of deep veneration to cats – thanks to YouTube videos. A joke no doubt, but with some truth in it: social networks and Internet at large are flooded with apparently useless pictures and videos of 'cute kittens' doing 'cute stuff'. It is by itself an indication of a certain need that emerged in our time: that of sharing *digitally*, for all to see, elements of our life that we consider important in some way. It is an element peculiar to that contemporary everyday element that Luciano Floridi, one of the most important scholars of the digital phenomenon, defined 'Onlife' (Floridi 2015), and that is best described by our ability to interconnect with every other 'human'. The tendency to connect with other is something that we had since the beginning of our (brief) sojourn on this wandering space rock. But Information Technologies, the Fourth Industrial Revolution, magnified our being ζῷον πολιτικόν to a bigger extent.

   Who does not have any kind of connection with the digital world? Who, nowadays, in our westernized society, can say to be 'off the grid'? Yes,

social networks still allow people not to connect to them – which is a good thing. But even in the alphanumerical shape of a simple social identification number, like any kind of identity card or healthcare number, we are part of a strange, numerical and apparently immaterial world, where our beings are fractured into data for easier storage and management. Even the least connected of us is part of an interconnected society that grows larger and larger. In a certain sense, we see an advanced development stage of that 'noosphere' father Teilhard de Chardin (1964) foresaw in his studies, something akin to Floridi's 'infosphere' (2009): the collective consciousness of the 'human' is creating an interwoven structure that does not put itself on top of the existing society but merges with it. The role of 'new technologies' and the speed by which these are developed and spread prompted many philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists, and other scholars to reflect on a crucial problem: our human nature. This has sparked a heated debate on whether we can consider ourselves still part of humanity or if we are going towards a post-human future. While it is an interesting issue per se, and can be read in the direction of a New Humanism (Marcato 2017, 350-357) rather than an escape from the 'human', this paper is only partially related to this debate. What will be argued, here, is a contemporary theoretical challenge that I believe will be crucial in order to understand our relationship with the very technology we developed. The first draft of this paper was presented at November 2015's CESTUDIR Conference on the 'Cultural Heritage. Scenarios 2015' and tried to underline an issue rarely discussed in these specific terms: that of *digital cultural heritage*.

With this expression, I don't want to indicate the digitalization of existing CH, but the chance that the digital dimension of our lives can have the seeds – or even buds already – of something that we can identify as a CH *per se*, something produced in, for and from the Fourth Revolution, something the 'human onlife' can give to our reality as a whole. It is not an issue that can have a clear answer, a precise theorization. We can describe empirical phenomena we see, but we cannot fully grasp what is constantly moving, what we are living and experiencing with mind structures still related to past worldviews. But one of the best idea of philosophy is that of a discipline not adequate to find answers: it can only clarify questions and find what is the real question from which to start to inquire reality – and ourselves. This paper will then try to clarify what are the elements that might allow, one day, to speak about a digital CH. It is important to state that the focus of this paper will not be to provide a strict definition of 'culture' related to the digital. The debate on the very meaning of the world 'culture' is a much-frequented topic in the humanities and to venture in it would mean losing the direction towards which this paper has been written. Rather than limiting the sense of 'culture' here presented to a somewhat honorific term focused on some of the most refined assets

of Human production through the ages, its sense can and will be understood mainly in the perspective of CH in order to propose the starting point of an ongoing research. Nevertheless, for reasons that will become manifest in part 3, a good normative definition of the world 'culture' to which adhere for the first steps of this paper can be the one proposed by Richerson and Boyd (2005, 5). According to them, culture is "information capable of affecting individuals behaviour that they acquire from other members of their species through teaching, imitation, and other forms of social transmission".

2   A Brief History

With the words 'culture' and 'digital', contemporary studies on the subject usually want to point out the digitalization of an already existing culture in the form of images, texts, music, video or 'virtual tours'. Piracy and intellectual property damage are also an issue in these kind of studies, since the digital revolution brought forth a number of different ways to illegally copy and distribute cultural products. From the big music labels and movie companies to the single deviantart user that sees its freely distributed creative work stolen and sold for profit, it is something that encompasses a number of different situations. Legal and illegal fruition, open or restricted access are only a few of the various options available to those who want to dabble in the digital cultural production – options that defy the 'traditional' way to comprehend culture production and fruition.

These are questions and issues cardinal for the relationship between culture and the world of Information Technologies. We can safely say that everything started with the '60s hacker ethics, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (Levy 1984; Pekka 2001): the proposal of a modern society where information is freely distributed, where technology can be accessed by everyone and a lot of idealistic processes that, unfortunately, were not a bright example of self-fulfilling prophecy. Nevertheless, what were the dreams of those first pioneers of information society are now formalized in the Creative Commons licenses. Thanks to those, the possibility of open-access reached a kind of 'stable' reality that prompted father Antonio Spadaro to describe Wikipedia both as a "cathedral of information" and a "babel tower" (Spadaro 2005), and Linux as a "constantly self-writing Bible" (Spadaro 2010). If we approach this evolution of the culture in the age of information from a philosophical perspective, a number of critical points comes to the surface. These are similar to Benjamin's reflection on immateriality and synchronicity of the work of art (Benjamin 2013). Due to its nature, a work of art that uses the digital to be known to beneficiaries far away sees its nature mixed with that of the means by which it is known. The apparent lack of uniqueness of an artistic piece if conceived in

the traditional sense that saw the birth of Warhol's pop-art, in the digital dimension more often than not becomes a betrayal of what *open access* wants to be, both in its ideal and its fulfilment.

Let's see the issue from a more colloquial understanding of the concept of culture. A piece of art created with a physical (or musical) medium is always enjoyed primarily through that medium. When digital media are involved, they are merely the medium through which the art piece is experienced. If I experience a painting by standing in front of it, my experience is direct; whereas if I experience it through a VR-enhanced medium, or an Augmented Reality system, I see it through that medium. It might be enhanced, maybe even presence-like, but it is still an experience of art through a medium - not so different, from a theoretical perspective, from what I could have experienced through a video, or a picture.

The same can be said if we shift from art *per se* and we take a broader perspective. A piece of CH can be experienced 'live' and through different media, from videos to books. Aikanã people paint their bodies, Claude Lévi-Strauss sees them and writes about them in *Tristes tropiques* and anthropology scholars see this element of their culture. Now a quick Google Image search can show hundreds of pictures of their body painting styles: again, the digital is a medium.

But can we consider the digital not only as a medium but something from which and in which peculiar forms of culture are born and find development *before* they are communicated?

Is there some form of digital cultural 'heritage', and not the mere passing of information Richerson and Boyd mentioned in their definition of culture?

Since its mass diffusion in the general population, Internet had forum, websites, boards, newsgroups and the like. Points of contact between users, digital places where those who inhabited the first virtual landscapes were filled by netizen culture's first examples. In these places, those who dabbled in the Web created codes and contents according to the rules that these nodes provided. Much like in the 'meat world', who spent time in these places acquired peculiarities proper of that places. With the astonishing speed of technological evolution, the web and its citizen evolved: boards became newsletters, newsletters became instant messaging programs. From the personal computers up to smartphones, what can be found on the net moved from the first ASCII art to the latest trending meme. But even if the main factor for the success of an 'expression of the web' is quantity over quality, that is, how many 'likes' and 'shares' it attracted, there are some kind of contents that stand out amidst the magmatic mayhem that is the sea of data in the Web. Those who conceive the Net not only as a medium to stay in touch with distant relatives or to participate mindlessly in the last social network trend but as a way to express fully their Human nature, have the chance to create something

more. What seems to be a cyberpunk utopia is, in fact, a well-known theoretical and philosophical mind experience. Pierre Levy (1997) presented the notion of *collective intelligence* in order to show how digital 'life' can create notions and concepts, feelings and ideas capable of being shared among those who participate of it. A decade after that, Clay Shirky's cognitive surplus wanted to show how the 'free time' spent in the net is a well-defined reserve of potentiality that can help every aspect of Human research and development (Shirky 2010).

Web's very nature allows those that want to provide interesting content to do so - and to earn a living with it. YouTube, deviantart, Patreon, Kickstarter, multimedia narrative, image boards are only few of the different ways that a 'content creator', that is someone who presents its work to Internet's audience, can use to push forward its creation. The cardinal dimension of these platforms, if we take into account the economic aspect, is no longer the mere producer-consumer dialectic but that of *interactivity*: content creators and spectators are in an interrelation similar to that established *temporibus illis* between patron and artist in the Renaissance. To summarize the mechanisms of these platforms: a content creator proposes its work, and if it is considered valid the public pays for it. If the result is commendable, or at least meets the patrons' desires, the funding is granted or extended, according to the differences between platforms. Between content creators and spectators, the relation bonds can be direct, establishing a community instead of an economic system. All of them speak, discuss, propose, interacts; the creator keeps authorial and artistic decision, but welcomes what comes from its community. Slowly (for internet standard, obviously) the sense of community grows stronger - up to the point that a shared system of cultural reference is established.

I am not referring to the bonds that can be identified in a primitive tribe or a well-defined ethnic minority or modern subculture. What I'm speaking about are cultural forms that without Internet *would have never been born*. They are established in the Web and its peculiarities of synchronicity, ubiquity and interrelation, in these are born and thanks to these they are spread. Contemporary society feels their influence well beyond the mere everyday aesthetic dimension; they mix with contemporaneity, with everydayness, but are easily discerned. Recognized, but not separated. And, most of all, go well over any boundary of space, time, culture. A culture that is born on the Web, on the Internet - and I stress 'born', since a lot can be forged and manufactured by spin-doctors and 'social media gurus' - is not confined by that. A single cultural piece made by a content creator can be experienced and appreciated by spectators on the opposite sides of the world.

And this is a very interesting point when, with an interdisciplinary castling move, we take into account the CH rights. UNESCO, in its 2001 Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity, in the very first article states that "culture takes diverse forms across time and space. This diversity is

embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind. Source of exchange, innovation and creativity, cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature". Further down the declaration, article 8 states that "particular attention must be paid to the diversity of the supply of creative work, to due recognition of the rights of authors and artists and to the specificity of cultural goods and services which, as vectors of identity, values and meaning, must not be treated as mere commodities or consumer goods". Now, a cultural good, a cultural piece of work, even a work of art, when it is fully that and not conceived as a consumer good carries with itself a big or small freckle of the creator's living and identity – be it a single artist or a heritage community. It has been a focus of discussion exactly what constitutes an 'heritage community', and to what extent the physical and immaterial manifestations of the spirit of the Human are considered fully 'culture'. It has been and still is, as usually it is in these kind of Human inquiries, a matter of conventions. But can we see something like that in the communities and the productions that arise from the web, in this Fourth Revolution of Information? Or, to formulate the question in a more direct expression, can we properly speak of CH in the digital, a world where 'information' is the matter on which everything stands? I believe this is a question we have to approach, rather than try to answer. We are dealing with a phenomenon too liquid to have the chance, now that we are living it, to be answered correctly – or even critically. This is why I want to propose the question of digital CH and digital HCs not from an historic point of view or a legal framework, but as a philosophical problem, one that might start socio-anthropological inquires in order to have a better clarification. But as every voyage begins with a decision to depart, every inquiry start with a question.

3   Can Information Have Culture?

The most important step to take in order to understand this question is to clarify first that this is not an issue related to media but to something that is more intimately connected with the digital dimension *per se*, and secondly what we mean when we speak about information in the digital dimension – thus expanding the definition of 'culture' that was given in the Introduction. Usually, this word is used as an abstract term for every kind of data, from texts to images to audio. Using the word 'information' in this way means to infer to it a quantitative meaning, useful to deal with Big Data or with more traditional IT issues. But it carries a broader meaning: information is also the 'data' inside our genome, for example, or the content of a phrase. We can safely assume two ways to conceive the term 'information'. The first sees the term 'information' as a wide container for every meaning

that can be somehow conveyed through a medium. This way to conceive information shows culture to be both media and meaning conveyed: culture can push forth information about communities that created it and it can be the content of a medium. But this mechanism of transmission enhances the risk to see culture transformed into a consumer good to be exchanged and shared. We often see superficial attempts to convey cultural elements in the digital, be it budget websites or programs or smartphone apps, that fails to be effective. If a cultural content is not different, in its transmission, to a spam e-mail, then information is a medium on which we should act to allow culture to be safeguarded and preserved. In this direction moves the necessary and highly valuable attempt at a *digitalization* of existing culture to safeguard it from its loss - be it at the hands of time or during war-torn moments of our civilization. Thanks to the help of contemporary information technology, it might happen to have a Palmira site re-vitalized and experienced one day. What was destroyed by fundamentalist iconoclastic fury might live again, albeit in a different form. But this paper's main goal is not to endorse digitalization of existing culture to preserve it, nor the restoration of now gone cultural elements thanks to computing power. These are worthy goals, deserving to be endorsed, but to stress the already outlined question the goal here is different. As a matter of fact, philosophically speaking, this is the point where the differences between traditional culture and digital content start to blur. It all revolves around the second way to conceive the term 'information'. As Floridi's *Philosophy of Information* argues, this term can convey a stronger ontological sense than its (not denied, but enhanced) dimension of media and meaning conveyed (Floridi 2012, 10-17). Information can be conceived as the ground on which digital ecosystems grows and expand. If with that word we mean something theoretically stronger and ontologically defined, then 'information' is no longer medium or meaning conveyed but environment, *milieu*, framework in which culture grows and expands. One could even say that, due to the all-pervading nature of internet and wireless connection, digital is now immaterial part of that bioregion where, according to Panikkar, "men and gods have residence" (2001, 38); or that we now live in a constant interrelation with a wired version of Teilhard de Chardin's noosphere (1964). In our contemporaneity, we live and die tied to Information, and those who were born in a world with Google are already in their teens. For a considerable number of countries this means that the future generations will have a concept of immateriality different from that traditionally defined in contemporary ruler's and intellectual's mindset, for which digital's immateriality will be more *essential* than material forms (Hayles 1999, 19). Furthermore, the speed on which these changes happens is such that we cannot legitimately say how future generations will relate to the cultural production of their age - or ours, for what matters. This is another point in favour of digitalization of CH; but must be borne in mind when approaching the issue of a CH

that might be digital *per se*. The reason for such a warning is that CH that might emerge from the digital is not material in its original status; it might become so only in a second stage. Artists create digitally, with the help of proper programs and tools, their work of art. Only in a later moment 3D printing, HQ digital prints and the like transpose in the physical dimension what starts as a series of bytes. It might be said that the digital cannot exist without the physical supports that allows it to actually *exist*, but as has been argued, the nature of digital being (or *digisein*) resides in that hybrid nature of partial existence (Kim 2001). Those works of art exist thanks to a *relation* between themselves, their meaning, their media and the Human dimension that gives them value - a relation that, in the digital, becomes *interactivity*. And to reiterate a crucial point of the present argument, what is born from the digital without interaction is a mere consumeristic good, unidirectional presentation from producer to consumer. A sizable number of digital goods are of this kind: just think of the endless YouTube videos specifically created to cash thanks to that platform's monetization mechanism, or the so-called 'viral' commercial campaigns that to a trained eye and a critical mind are exposed in their venality. Here lies the difference: mono-directional relation versus conscious mutual interaction - or, in a word proposed by Panikkar, *inter-in-dependence*, that is the, mutual correlation of every shard of a whole (Panikkar 2012, 358-359).

Where 'traditional' CH sees this *inter-in-dependence* in the physical due to the constant re-enactment of said heritage, even when it is immaterial, the chance to see a digital CH must be conscious of its lack of materiality. In other words, to summarize the last paragraph's point, materiality's role in the digital falls on the shoulders of *relation* between users. Communities build their own cultural products, and have been since the net was born. If this will become a proper CH it remains to be seen; the chance is here, but not if it is ignored. But to limit the issue on art would be easy - after all, aesthetic disciplines already have the tools and native mindset to approach such changes in their field. This paper wants, again, to bring the problem on a wider scale, on culture at large. Thus, the questions: can Information have culture? And what are the peculiarities of this possible CH? I think we can say that what we are seeing now is only Fourth Revolution's latest act. We still have to see where this will bring us, as Humans and part of the world. With such a widespread diffusion of internet and informatics, Human sees its immaterial face changing in that mirror itself built not more than twenty-five years ago.

Immateriality is then a crucial point in inquiring about the chance of a digital CH. And I believe the 2003 UNESCO Convention, while focusing on the traditional ICH, can help in establishing the theoretical framework needed to understand the question that prompted this paper. The following points will try to give some indications on this, without providing a definite question for something that is intrinsically liquid and dynamic.

4   Culture In/Of the Web

One of the focus of the 2003 UNESCO Convention was to establish an operational definition of ICH to proceed on its purposes and goals. ICH, to be defined so, must have the following tracts according to art. 2(1): 1) intergenerational transmission, 2) re-enactment by communities and groups in response to their environment, 3) be a signal of communal and individual sociocultural belonging, 4) it must promote cultural diversity and human creativity, 5) must respect basic human rights and sustainable development for its country or countries.

According to these tracts, it appears obvious that the chance of digital CH cannot be considered fully part of ICH. But through these points we can have a starting ground from which develop an understanding for the question at hand. Theoretically speaking they can give the backbone for the comprehension of how the empirical phenomenon of Internet generated content's impact on our society can be considered a new form of CH - albeit more liquid, instable, and harder to comprehend.

Let's start by dealing with the obvious: intergenerational transmission does not nor will ever happen in the traditional sense. Digital culture is thirty years old. Only now we can see the first generations born with Internet already fully available, and we might say that we are not dealing well with the phenomenon. The global aging of ruling classes affects both the understanding of digital native's mindset and the law-making process. The speed at which the change happens it's like Hammurabi and Guttenberg would have been only one generation apart. But now the first gamers are in their forties, the first Web-dwellers have married, the first content creators have children. Who was a young IT specialist during Silicon Valley's golden age is now a family man, and who grew up with analog modems sometimes find hard to relate with the internet of things. In some years, those who were born with broadband connection will be adults, and those who always lived with wireless will start high school. The mental framework is already different in these two population groups, just imagine the differences with their analogical forefathers. Who will remember, twenty years from now, that the 'save' icon comes from the first Floppy Disks? But, then, even now someone still invokes the 1990's Godwin's Law, also called *reductio ad hitlerum*. Humorous but true rhetoric formula first formulated by Leo Strauss (1976, 42-43) and then given an Internet life by Mike Godwin (1994) according to which the longer an internet thread goes, higher are the chances that Hitler or Nazi are mentioned, it is a recurrent truth in some most politicized comments sections. Furthermore, some late '80s memes are still around and returns when someone from Internet's 'old guard' reacts to new content with old ones. They resurface and are took up again by younger generations of users, finding new life in a cycle of forgetfulness and renewal.

I might present a lengthy list of these occurrence, but it would be just a catalogue, a collection of examples. But do return, they do come back - and sometimes, they just never go away and are somehow re-enacted continuously by users of both young and old generations. Just think about the classic smiley face: ':)'. The simplest of all icons in the digital expression, a colon and a closing bracket that looks like a sideway smile. For all its pervasiveness, we have a precise date on which it was created - or better, born: 12 September, *Annus Domini* 1982. Its father, Scott Falham, originally created it to help the transmission of humour in the first discussion groups in the Web.[1] The original thread presents a rather interesting account on what really happened during that golden age of primitive Internet diffusion and how politely creative were those pioneers.[2] That spirit is still present in some forums, but for the larger part of the Web the situation, as will be said in the last paragraph, is rather saddening. The continued use of that smiley can nevertheless be considered more as an element of, shall we say, how our written language is gaining a more ideographic format - but this is another question, that does not pertain to this paper. In order to better express how the re-enactment of digital CH might be considered a more structured example is in order. The last Star Wars movie, Episode VIII, marked the return of a traditional science-fiction saga - and a resurgence of new and old fan base. Since its announcement, an old still frame of the third movie (1989) of a famous character and his catchphrase ('It's a trap!') saw a massive increase of its usage - already well-established. Old fan already knew its meaning, new fans rediscover it, and all participate of its usage in the Net with full knowledge of its history. We have, here, some kind of *re-enactment* - albeit of that peculiar form that memes already have.

But memes and smileys are not the only kind of digital culture; they are just the ones more easily exploited by profit seeking and converted into commercials. Narratives, novels, design styles, artwork, image elaboration; but also, ways to play a game or even approaches to life as a whole. Each one of these can be more or less encompassing, more or less shared by communities that establish themselves online, and from their online dimension they take their *raison d'etre* offline. To make another example, in the last years a new video category appeared on YouTube: 'gameplays'. It consists mainly in the *youtuber* playing videogames, maybe with some curios element like the speaking tone or the different approaches to games. A considerable number of these are simple entertainment for the watchers, not much different from a movie, or a theatre, or a football match in case of e-Sports gameplays. Not much of these can be defined as 'culture'; sub-

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1 http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~sef/sefSmiley.htm.

2 http://www.cs.cmu.edu/~sef/Orig-Smiley.htm.

culture maybe yes, but hardly part of the digital CH. But some of them, in relation to particularly deep and elaborate videogames, have developed a peculiar way of proposing their gameplay. They go beyond the mere act of playing a game, maybe funny; they approach aesthetics, philosophy, social messages, narration stiles, references. What they propose is a cultural content. They approach videogames not as a mere ludic instrument that might take from other arts to propose its own. What this approach underline is the paramount peculiarity of videogames as digital cultural products: the interactivity. Interaction between player/spectator is cardinal not only for their nature but also for the chance that they have in order to be fully considered Multimedia Interactive Operas. This interactive dimension of the videogame seep through YouTube videos to the spectators and create a sense of belonging. These communities of video gamers follow the content creator and their videos in adopting a different approach to the game. Different interpretations, different way of playing the same game and most of all the sharing of their impression and strategies cooperate in building a universe that might go over the original programmer's intent. Furthermore, players start to recognize themselves as part of a bigger community that shares the same values and approaches - or spectrum of approaches (Horde or Alliance, Blue Sentinel or Darkwraith, Hardcore, Casual or Conscious gamers and so on).

The almost endless possibility to access various sources of digital contents gives a new point of view on the promotion of diversity and creativity. This stems from the level of interaction that the Fourth Revolution allowed between digital denizens. Content creators interact with their spectators directly on a higher level than professionals from the more traditional media like cinema and television - with hilariously negative consequences when said media try to enter in the new digital field, as already said. That of webcomics is an equally interesting phenomenon. Not only a story's success or lack thereof but also its very development often depends from the constant interaction with readers. Readers that came from various cultural, national and religious backgrounds and that participate not only in the reading but also, to a certain extent, in its creation. Thanks to the rising of crowd funding platforms like Patreon and Kickstarter, this kind of support and interaction materialize an economic dimension for the creators that might arrive to gain an income from their activity in the Web. Thus, an Australian youtuber like Vaatividya interacts with European users and receive funding from American spectators, or an Italian cartoonist like Simone Albrigi started his career while in Japan. But I believe best example of these last two points, that is, how to conceive videogames, communities, interaction between spectators and content creator, and the rising of a different culture, is Italian youtuber Sabaku no Maiku. Since the first videos he declared that his ideal of community would be a cultural change towards a more conscious approach to videogames as interactive art - and he still stands behind this ideal.

5   Dark Side of the Net

But if the most noticeable difference between the chance of digital CH and ICH is through human right's issues, broadly understood. On one side, we have the chance to share and communicate without limits of space and time: this gives contemporary netizens the chance to explore different cultures and ideas. But, as Umberto Eco recently said, 'internet gave voice to stupid people'. It is what I call the 'dark side of the Net'. It is something very distant from being the bogeyman that the attempt at a web governance are trying to control. It can be that crusades against actual and real problems of Internet, like cyberbullying, discriminations, hoaxes etcetera, fails because they tend to forget that even the digital is made and lived by and for the 'human'. But the same virtues that animate the digital can give birth to its worst flaws. The immediacy of information and discourses and the chance for everybody to let their voice heard mean that every opinion can be heard. Freedom of speech transforms into freedom to insult, hoaxes and anti-scientific movements gains power and resonance, and even a small number of voices can raise so much ado about nothing that government bodies follow their complaints. It is something almost self-evident if we consider the comment sections I mentioned briefly: those cannot be considered some form of culture in any way. They are no more than a claque for a political or social ideology, that must be examined and (in a way) respected but without confounding what is a more or less controlled discontent container with a proper element for culture. There might be a high number of examples in this fifth point too, as studies have shown that is a phenomenon strictly tied with how phenomena peculiar to television are now spreading on social networks (Mintz 2002). I will limit myself to only a case: the so-called *Men's Right Movement*, a mindset lately on the rise. According to this way of thinking, feminist movement's conquests in civil rights, from the right to vote to abortion, from the fight for equal opportunities to birth control programs, are nothing more than a way to repress, control, and subdue male sex. Those who follow this mindset are usually characterized by an unusually high verbal violence tendency and they operate discrimination and personal attacks towards those who identify as their 'enemies'. These attacks and violent tendencies are limited to the Web, usually, and are almost never brought on directly - but can create heavy discomfort to the targets that will see their personal information divulged and privacy shattered. I believe this is the higher problem that we can face when approaching the issue of a digital CH: what we can see is only the start of something different. For now, we have the same errors - amplified beyond space and time limits, with a resonance that pervades all the Web. But there are glimpses of a different landscape, at the end of the trolls' lair.

6   Conclusion

This paper started by forwarding a question: can we talk about a digital CH, a proper cultural dimension that pertains to the Fourth Revolution *per se*? In all fairness, an unambiguous answer to this question cannot be expressed - yet. The speed is such that maybe the next generations will be able to identify correctly what are now the first sprouting buds of something that we cannot even imagine. But these radical seeds are nevertheless harbingers of problems that we face now. In order to examine these issues, the difference between information as medium and meaning transmitted and information as ontologically defined has been laid out. This last concept of information is the one that can help the understanding of digital CH: an information ontologically defined by interrelation and interaction between users and an environment where space and time are no longer restrictive qualities. It is here that digital culture is born and it is here that its first buds are present; but crowd funding platforms, narrative newsgroups, video gaming communities still cannot be example of a proper digital culture and digital heritage. This is why this paper tried to express five cardinal points of discussion on which a philosophical analysis of the question can be grounded in its first steps. Points of discussion born from the 2003 UNESCO Convention, the first clear formulation of a CH that is not limited to materiality, like the digital. It does not want to be nor it can never be, now, a proper answer to the question; it is only a proposal, the first lineaments of a larger argument. But approaching this issue, this argument, must be a critic and conscious effort, far from being influenced by technophobic thought or plastic and silicon utopias. It is a continued effort, but that nevertheless it must be done; maybe, one day, the future archaeologists will look at our attempts to understand what we are living now and laugh at our naivety. Or maybe, they will appreciate what we tried to do to proceed on our human path.

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