"CHARTER OF PIETRELCINA"
on Digital Cultural Heritage Education

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Antecedents

The latest worldwide debates, researches and studies on the cultural value of the new digital entities produced in the contemporary Digital Era aimed at providing with an identity the new Digital Cultural Heritage, as defined by the EU in Art. 2 of the *Conclusions of the European Council of May 21, 2014, related to cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe (2014/C 183/08)*[1].

By 2015, its foundation year, the network Digital Cultural Heritage Education School, Arts and Humanities - ***#DiCultHer*** has adopted these international instances and has sparked a deep debate between its member institutions: universities, schools, cultural institutions, associations, people. In particular, the network has given voice to youths and teachers, in order to identify digital, digitization and digitalization in their authentic role of *cultural facies* of the contemporary era and to promote a *digital cultural renaissance*, a new "**Megale Hellas**" able to receive the extraordinary cultural and historical heritage of Southern Italy and Southern Europe and, in the spirit of the Faro Convention, reshape it through the creativity of its youth and the involvement of «cultural heritage communities».

Such reflections have produced conceptual proposals aimed at reawakening in the youth an awareness of the importance of ***re-possessing their own cultural heritage in a participated way***, starting over precisely from the recognition of **the value of digital culture**. The proposals have been disseminated and enriched within the framework of several projects realized by the DiCultHer network, together and in synergy with the scientific, educational and territorial communities of different Italian regions, especially in Southern Italy.

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1   https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A52014 XG0614%2808%29

Digital Ventotene Manifesto

In this perspective, the **"*Manifesto Ventotene Digitale*"**[2], written in 2017 for the **European Year of Culture (2018)**, has marked a further moment of reflection involving various Italian scientific and educational communities in a wide discussions on the *Safeguarding and enhancing Europe's intangible cultural heritage* Proposal, formulated on April 22, 2016 at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe[3]. The *Manifesto* synthesizes **the challenges and actions** related to Research, Higher Education and School Education in the field of *Digital Humanities (DH)* and in the domain of the new *Digital Cultural Heritage (DCH)*, **which must be focused on the "European Culture Project" as "common good" and as crucial device of social cohesion**:

- co-creating a system of knowledge and informed digital competencies, able to ensure the conservation, sustainability, valorisation, promotion and presentation of the new *Digital Cultural Heritage* and its ample, interactive, participated and informed fruition.
- Developing *Digital Culture* as an expression of the *Cultural Heritage* in which we have to recognize the ecosystem of the methods, processes, phenomena and single or complex resources that identify the new *Digital Cultural Heritage*, whose essence, expression and witness lie in the possibility to transfer and reproduce over space and time the digital entities which testify, categorize and qualify the history and existence of contemporary communities in their social, cultural and economic contexts.

The leading message the network identified itself evolving into the *#DiCultHer* project was **Starting over from culture as sharing practice and as common good**. Not just a slogan, but a necessary prerequisite for **a sustainable social, cultural and economic growth** that the network has resumed and re-launched in Europe as well, thus extending the goals that have underwritten its programmes and actions in our Country ever since the beginning, in order to re-design the perspective of interventions towards the ***reinforcing of European identity and of its social development in life, work and in the sharing*** of common goals.

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2   https://www.diculther.it/blog/2017/03/24/il-manifesto-ventotene-digitale/

3   https://www.diculther.it/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Contributi-della-Scuola-DiCultHer.pdf

These goals are materializing in the increasing awareness that recognising the value of digital, digitization and digitalization as cultural heritage, which enables the processes of identity reconstruction, civic education, participation and promotion of intercultural dialogue, is the best stimulus for development, and it is a strategic resource *de facto* and *de jure* integrated into the evolutionary processes of knowledge.

In this perspective, and in order to reach a provisional definition of what *Digital Cultural* Heritage is, the DiCultHer network launched a further **European public Consultation for the Definition, Identification and Formalization of Digital Cultural Heritage[4]**, starting from the following definition: *"DCH is the ecosystem of either born-digital or digitalized processes, entities, virtual phenomena which, having been validated and certified, are transferable, reusable, relevant, readable, reliable and resilient over space and time and which constitute evidence, demonstration and significant expression of the evolutionary processes identifying and connoting each community, socio-cultural context, simple or complex ecosystem of the Digital Era, thus assuming the function of historical memory and source of knowledge for future generations."*

The entities that should identify and be part of it have been identified and classified on three levels:
- ***Born Digital Heritage:*** born-digital entities whose representations record processes, methods and techniques employed by contemporary communities for their co-creation and which must be safeguarded, re-used and preserved over time as potential historical memory and source of knowledge for future generations;
- ***Digital FOR Cultural Heritage:*** digitization processes, methods and techniques aimed at the co-creation of digital entities whose representations reproduce the tangible and intangible cultural heritage, integrating into their content images and descriptive metadata (digital libraries, virtual museums, demo-ethno-anthropological databases, etc.);
- ***Digital AS Cultural Heritage:*** digital entities produced by the digitization and digitalization of tangible and intangible entities (including cultural ones), whose representations record approaches, processes, methods and techniques identifying their evolution over time, and which must be safeguarded, re-used, preserved, and valorised as potential historical memory and source of knowledge for future generations.

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4   https://form.jotformeu.com/81546663684367

Cultural Heritage and social inclusion

Talking about the valorisation and fruition of Cultural Heritage, it is worth underlining that social inclusion actually takes place only when **a cultural setting becomes an educational setting**, i.e. when all social categories (different ages, cultural levels, social and economic strata) manage to interact with it in a proactive way and develop knowledge and competencies. Cultural heritage is indeed always closely connected to the territory where it is located and it is an expression and representation of the tangible, intangible, and today also digital creations of the communities inhabiting it. However, there are still several contexts in which non-native social groups, such as refugees and first- or second-generation migrants, are not fully integrated into the cultural and artistic history of the territory where they settle down, and therefore are not able to actively contribute to the creation and evolution of a renewed collective social history. **Hence the necessity of reflecting and acting on inclusive didactics also in learning settings dealing with the methods and techniques of valorisation and fruition of Cultural Heritage**: the materializing of individual rights, participation in the community and successful equality cannot remain just statements of principle, but must become the ultimate and unmissable goals of any educational action. As pointed out by Booth and Ainscow (2008, p. 31), if "**inclusion happens as soon as the process of increasing participation is started**", then it must be presented as a moral obligation: educators, mediators, especially those working with disadvantaged groups, and cultural spaces must all base their actions on a conception of the human being as an active contributor to the cultural development and to the development of our Country's community (Chiappetta Cajola, 2013).

Cultural entitlement and the availability of, and public access to, data

Right to education, access to culture, cultural-epistemological sovereignty, they all become demands from which some extremely important fundamental principles derive, such as those of **CULTURAL ENTITLEMENT and of the AVAILABILITY OF, AND PUBLIC ACCESS TO, DATA,** with particular reference to the **public and sustainable management of the spaces where the Digital Cultural Heritage is located and is publicly and interactively open to fruition.**

The **taking-over** of a common and shared responsibility for a common good corresponds to a process of acquisition of a "**cultural entitlement**", which, when rightfully exercised, applies both to everything we inherit from the past and to what we have the chance to project and co-create today within the cultural ecosystems we live in, we experience and carry on our activity in, with the perspective of leaving in our turn this heritage to those who will come after us.

Cultural Digital Heritage Education

By now **Cultural Digital Heritage Education** has become an essential element of the knowledge and competencies of a global citizenship, and its valorisation in the material, immaterial and digital heritage is by itself multi-, trans- and interdisciplinary, founded as it is on active and participative shared methodologies that require strong synergies between the territories and their educational bodies through an actual involvement both of the actors of the institutional educational system (schools, universities) and of those who operate in the fields of informal learning and of the valorisation and preservation of cultural heritage.

The new Digital Culture

In this perspective, ever since its foundation the DiCultHer Network has been deeply engaged in training, educational and research activities through the use of *Digital Humanities*' innovative instruments and strategies, in order to provide the new generations with both the knowledge, the dimensions and the renewed values taken over by the tangible and intangible Cultural Heritage and with the wider universe of the new *Digital Cultural Heritage*. These goals presuppose an awareness that today it is absolutely necessary to provide for the integration of traditional humanities and the knowledge of computational methods and techniques in the structuring of the **new Digital Culture** through a process enabling the elaboration of educational models aiming at creating cross-sectoral knowledge and competencies, an active participation in the processes of digital innovation and the production of a *digital knowledge design system* necessary for a sustainable educational system dealing with Cultural Heritage. Such process will put at its centre the youth's 'creativity', in order to promote – through an informed use of the digital and innovative approaches – knowledge, participated access, and the management, presentation, fruition, preservation and valorisation of *Digital Cultural Heritage*. The final aim is to **"grant to all students the key**

competencies to face the changes and challenges of their time, in order to be able to face the future at their best and to become active and well-informed citizens, able to share common values and interact with others in a positive way".

The scenario indications

The **Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society**, also known as **Faro Convention** of October 27, 2005; **Creative Europe** 2014-2020; the **Conclusions of the Council of May 21, 2014 on the Cultural Heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe**; the **Decision of the European Parliament and Council of May 17, 2017** on a European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018); the **Report of the European Parliament of May 14, 2018** on structural and financial barriers in the access to culture; the Resolution of the European Parliament of December 11, 2018 on the new European agenda on culture; the **National Plan for Cultural Heritage Education** promoted by the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (MiBAC); the **National Plan for Digital Education** promoted in 2016 by the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR); the "**Digital Ventotene Manifesto**" elaborated by the DiCultHer Network in 2017 for the European Year of Cultural Heritage (2018); the **Instructions** of the Congregation for Catholic Education 50 years after *Populorum progressio* on **Educating to fraternal humanism**:

> *all these national and international documents **identify in the digital and in the acquisition of the related knowledge and competencies** one of the main axes and the premise enabling active policies on Cultural Heritage, a premise whose **strongest points are also the principles of public sovereignty of data, necessary to grant the "entitlement" to our digital cultural resources**.*

In this perspective, the digital is posited as a paradigm of global approach to cultural heritage. From the viewpoint of a deeper and deeper awareness, it brings up-to-date the elements of the transmission and organization system of the latter and it increases its dimension of diffuseness and hyper-connectivity also through the modes of collective access and, since it connects different themes by integrating old and new media, languages, geographies and history in order to renew contents, methodologies and access logics, 'entitlement' and civic responsibility, it represents a context of opportunities for social, cultural and economic growth,

The Faro Convention

The **Faro Convention**[5] sparked a profound revision of the concept of Cultural Heritage by connecting it inextricably to the community. It assumed a crucial role by encouraging a critical and informed use of the channels and forms of expression offered by digital technologies, seen as a vehicle for a larger inclusion of various social and cultural elements, as an actual opportunity for all various social, cultural, generational components to participate in the definition of an identity that can represent them, as a tool of self-representation and definition in the public spaces of the shared bio-cultural heritage.

Digital methodologies and technologies do indeed offer the possibility to collect, share and archive/preserve the forms of expression of the different groups, thus achieving the goal of *empowerment*, the goal of increasing the awareness of their shared identities and the goal of selecting, valorise, discuss critically what represents us and founds the community's pact at the basis of our living together, extending it to a wider community, which being a digital one is for this same reason more inclusive. Promoting and establishing the conditions allowing the acquisition of these critical abilities and skills in the educational space that marks the most important timing of our life cycles means giving an actual contribution to the definition of a cultural entitlement to the heritage and to a shared and informed management of the latter, all converging in the full realisation of a democratic citizenship.

Well beyond the simple use of new technologies as mere valorising devices – i.e. as tools able to promote processes of simple updating and digitalization of the existing materials, **digital 'knowledge' provides the possibility to wholly reconfigure the entities and cultural settings as 'common heritage'**: the digital acquires a methodological, epistemological, structural and contextual value, in which one can launch a new hermeneutics of culture and of Cultural Heritage; its introduction has favoured the emergence of strategic occasions for the re-organization of the different branches of knowledge, for an opening to entities and contents, and for access to the forms of contemporaneity themselves.

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5   https://www.diculther.it/blog/2019/01/15/convenzione-di-faro-loccasione-digitale-per-la-cultura-litalia-leuropa/

Digital Cultural Heritage

On the other hand, Article 2 of the *Conclusions* of May 21, 2014 frames the evolution experienced by the digital in the past few years by integrating the whole of Cultural Heritage with a first outline of the new *Digital Cultural Heritage* (DCH), which derives from **the new cultural functions that the digital and digitalization have to take on in their role of future historical memory and source of knowledge in the Digital Era**:

> *Cultural heritage consists of the resources inherited from the past in all forms and aspects – tangible, intangible and digital (born digital and digitalized), including monuments, sites, landscapes, skills, practices, knowledge and expressions of human creativity, as well as collections preserved and managed by public and private bodies such as museums, libraries and archives. It originates from the interaction between people and places through time and it is constantly evolving.*

This framing was resumed in its entirety and further articulated in the subsequent *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Towards an integrated approach to Cultural Heritage for Europe* of July 22, 2014[6], and in the Decision on a European Year of Cultural Heritage of May 17, 2017[7], evidently aiming at giving continuity to, and stimulating, the reflections started in 2014.

In these scenarios, the development of digital 'knowledge' and of *Digital Cultural Heritage* in particular, were the guidelines that oriented the DiCultHer Network in projecting and experimenting new learning and teaching models, in the perspective of sharing intellectual resources and the related competencies, thus **highlighting the role of Training and Education as main driving forces of the changes taking place in contemporary society.**

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6   https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2014/IT/1-2014-477-IT-F1-1.Pdf

7   https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2014/IT/1-2014-477-IT-F1-1.Pdf

The *Charter on Digital Cultural Heritage Education*

For the DiCultHer Network the **Charter on Digital Cultural Heritage Education** represents the natural evolution and valorisation of the reflections, projects and experiments started since its establishment in 2015, knowing that a **responsible use of the digital** cannot occur without an informed and participative involvement of **the youths and of those who in one way or another deal with their training and education**, in order to make them protagonists in the realisation of this *digital knowledge design system* applied to cultural heritage education. Today such a process is unavoidable, for it is absolutely necessary to guarantee the "*right of each citizen to have access to knowledge and education that provide him/her with the cognition and ability to use the digital in a responsible way, in order to protect and valorise the cultural heritage and cultural spaces*", thus stimulating in the youths the need for knowledge and for a regeneration of historical memory, developing in them a critical conscience urging them to go beyond simple erudition and rediscover the importance of being able to read, interpret and deal with these new source of knowledge in intellectual autonomy.

Digital STHEAM

The reflections of DiCultHer Network e the experiments it undertook meant to represent also an occasion to think over *Digital STHEAM* as an innovative value approach needed by our youths in order to acquire the new knowledge and competencies of the present time: a challenge wider and more articulated than what common sense synthesizes in a critical use of the Web or of Information Technology. It is a challenge that has to be faced starting from the idea of an ecosystem of knowledge and competencies structured in such a way as to be in line with the rapidity of evolutionary change that characterizes the Twenty-first Century, made of new kinds of literacy, but also of new inter- trans- and multi-disciplinary knowledge and competencies to develop and of creativity, with a particular focus on reinforcing also the production and comprehension of complex and articulated contents within the universe of digital communication, wherein granularity and fragmentation prevail.

A challenge between digital creativity, arts and Humanities and between entrepreneurship, development and work which has to be faced by

favouring an introduction to logical and computational thinking and by getting people acquainted with the operational aspects of information technologies. A challenge to support the passage "*from STEM to STEAM*", wherein the letter "A" stands for "Art and Design", whose integration is meant to support innovation through artistic and project-oriented creativity. The further proposal of integrating the letter "H", which stands for "Humanities", turns *STEAM* into "**STHEAM**", and represents the natural evolution needed to promote an approach putting the elimination of disciplinary barriers at the basis of innovation, in order to lead the **attitude to change** towards an awareness that the digital, after having provided a formidable boost for change, can now become its engine, fuelled by a really sustainable energy: knowledge.

A cultural action starting from a renewed idea of "**learning settings**", meant as **virtual agoras for innovation** and not just as physical spaces, **platforms** on which one can experiment with repossessing digital knowledge and competencies not just as something abstract, but as something practical to be experienced in **workshops** wherein students and teachers can develop together shared cognitive paths, and thus promote the reciprocal sharing of new knowledge. In this paradigm, digital methodologies and technologies become empowering, ordinary, "familiar", fundamental in order to accomplish activities aimed at shared training and learning. In this sense, Schools and Universities, the largest generators of demands for innovation and, at the same time, of experimentations able to satisfy such demand, "in their digital dimension" represent neither another School nor another University, but the challenge that can provide our students with the keys to understand the present, keys which are necessary to carry out a transition to the future. By writing all together an "Italian way" of Digital STHEAM, one consistent with, and anticipating, European debates on training, education, gender equality and equal opportunities.

Ethically effective communication

The **Charter on Digital Cultural Heritage Education** is meant to represent an indispensable premise to promote a deeper knowledge of a correct and informed use of the Web, of web-related technologies and of the communication tools and techniques made available by new digital technologies. Because knowing Digital Cultural Heritage is crucial, but such is also the ability to convey it, communicate it, present it and promote it. Nowadays communication is no longer a privilege enjoyed

by mass media, journalists or professionals of the field: it involves all Internet users. It is necessary, therefore, to grant everyone the right to get to know and learn to use in a informed, correct and effective way the methods, tools, techniques and platforms made available by the new digital era (web TV, web radio, blogs, websites, newsletters, chats and social media). **Media education**, specifically envisaged also in Action 14 of the PNSD, is an indispensable tool to train the new generations to know, accept, understand and convey the dimension of "beauty" and to avoid that "hate language" that is currently raging throughout the Web as a new, acceptable norm of social communication, and aiming at a "kind, positive communication". It is necessary to give back to our students the most authentic meaning of "ethically effective communication", which could at last contribute to generating an important part of the new *Digital Cultural Heritage*.

First Proposals:

1. Considering the present Charter on Cultural Heritage Education as a reference framework for a renewed idea of "**learning settings**", meant as *virtual agoras for pedagogical innovation*;
2. Promoting a critical digital literacy in schools as a preparatory and mandatory subject for all activities. A sort of zero-degree course, such as grammar or arithmetic. The core of a new Trivium. If one does not know how a search engine works or what digital codification is, it is as if one were illiterate.
3. Promoting the re-use for didactic purposes of the digital cultural contents stored in important national and European institutions, such as ICCU, ICBSA, INDIRE, EUROPEANA;
4. Promoting, in the re-use of digital contents, forms of copyright management that fully exploit the potential of **blockchain** technology (in line with the EU policies on the matter);
5. Creating occasions for comparisons and interaction with similar experiences at the European level, involving schools and institutions like the Italian ICBSA, ICCU and INDIRE;
6. Intensifying the occasions for collaboration between School Institutions and Cultural Institutions related to the MiBAC, both starting from the three-year educational policy plan (POF) that each school has to prepare and aiming at the realisation of specific programmes, such as the *alternanza scuola-lavoro* (work-related learning and young apprenticeship programmes);

7. Going beyond the cultural reductionism of the shift from STEM to STEAM towards Digital STHEAM;
8. Supporting "meta-incubator workshops" to train Italian schoolteachers and students in digital innovation for Cultural Heritage, with reference to the meta-incubator set up in Matera (DIGITAL CULTURE WORKSHOPS);
9. Encouraging professional refresher training for teaching staff and for the operators and professionals of public and/or private cultural institutions accredited by the LRX CULTURA platform;
10. Promoting in Primary Education Sciences BA and MA curricula training courses on the value of digital culture, on the knowledge of the digital ecosystem and on cultural identity, in order to train would-be teachers;
11. Supporting higher professional training by the establishment of new kinds of Technical High Schools (ITS) in Digital Cultural Heritage, according to the various operating fields in order to support creative industries;
12. Promoting and supporting Digital Cultural Heritage education and training as a competitive advantage for the creation and support of **cultural and creative industries**[8];
13. Promoting Media Education in schools and, more specifically, tools, techniques and languages able to valorise our digital cultural heritage.

Pietrelcina (Italy), July 30, 2019

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[8] **«Cultural Industries»** are those that produce and distribute digital goods or services which, when conceived, are considered as possessing a specific character, use or aim and which incorporate or convey cultural expressions, whatever their commercial value in the traditional sectors of cinema, television, radio, videogames, new media, music, ebooks, the press, the arts…
«Creative Industries» are those that use culture as an input and have a cultural dimension, even if their output has a purely functional character, such as architecture and design, and which integrate creative elements in larger processes, and in fields such as graphic design, fashion design or advertising…

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