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## New media and communication in creative society: A systematic review of articles published between 2012 and 2024, indexed in *Web of Science*

Yaratıcı toplumda yeni medya ve iletişim: Web of Science'ta indekslenen 2012-2024 yılları arasında yayınlanmış makalelerin sistematik bir incelemesi

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#### Abstract

Technologies, media, and creativity are strictly intersected in creative society. This study sheds light on how new media and technologies affect creativity and creative communication, through research articles published in the Web of Science (WoS-Clarivate Analytics) database. The primary objective of this research is to provide a systematic literature review of existing scientific publications on new media and communication in the creative society and to provide proposals for future research. A total of 173 articles, published between 2012 and 2024 in scientific journals indexed by the WoS database, were considered in this literature mapping. The results of this research report the following: (1) the structure of this field of study with regard to publications, authors, journals, and countries; (2) an analysis of the structure and content of selected articles; (3) an analysis of the new trends in the field (Artificial Intelligence, Algorithms); (4) a critical discussion of the current publications together with proposals for future research. This study aims to offer an overview of current scientific research on new media and communication in the context of creative society, providing for the first time a systematic literature review of this topic.

**Keywords:** Creative society, new media, communication, artificial intelligence, creativity, platforms.

#### Öz

Teknolojiler, medya ve yaratıcılık, yaratıcı toplumda sıkı bir şekilde kesişmektedir. Bu çalışma, yeni medya ve teknolojilerin yaratıcılık ve yaratıcı iletişimi nasıl etkilediğini, Web of Science (WoS-Clarivate Analytics) veritabanında yayımlanan araştırma makaleleri aracılığıyla aydınlatmaktadır. Bu araştırmanın temel amacı, yaratıcı toplumda yeni medya ve iletişim üzerine mevcut bilimsel yayınların sistematik bir literatür taramasını sunmak ve gelecekteki araştırmalar için önerilerde bulunmaktır. Bu literatür haritalandırmasında, WoS veritabanında indekslenen bilimsel dergilerde 2012 ile 2024 yılları arasında yayımlanan 173 makale dikkate alınmıştır. Araştırma sonuçları şu bulguları rapor etmektedir: (1) yayınlar, yazarlar, dergiler ve ülkeler açısından bu çalışma alanının yapısı; (2) seçilen makalelerin yapı ve içeriğinin analizi; (3) alandaki yeni eğilimlerin analizi (yapay zeka, algoritmalar); (4) mevcut yayınların eleştirel bir tartışması ve gelecekteki araştırmalar için öneriler. Bu çalışma, yaratıcı toplum bağlamında yeni medya ve iletişime yönelik mevcut bilimsel araştırmaların bir genel görünümünü sunmayı ve bu konudaki ilk sistematik literatür taramasını sağlamayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yaratıcı toplum, yeni medya, iletişim, yapay zeka, yaratıcılık, platformlar

#### Introduction

The term 'creative society' denotes the transition from a knowledge-based society to one that emphasises creativity. Elements of creativity in a broad sense can be found in every historical society, considering creativity as a factor that allows a new society to emerge and compete with others; however, the creative society can be interpreted as a society that is founded as a consequence of the rise of the creative industries (Kačerauskas, 2014a). The emergence of the creative industries has created a new and heterogeneous social class, the creative class (Florida, 2002), which can be considered the core of a creative society. In these terms, it might seem that creativity is only one aspect of the knowledge society. Yet the transition from a knowledge society to a creative one is theorised as the new creative society presupposes new and different social relationships, forms of work, and lifestyles.

Indeed, it is crucial to comprehend the aspects in which the creative society differs from the knowledge society and to identify its peculiarities. Reimeris (2016) suggests considering the creative society as the latest stage in the development of society and as an evolution of the knowledge society that is caused by the spread and application of technology in any aspect of life and, particularly, in creativity. Outlining its features, Reimeris (2016) describes the creative society as: an open, non-hierarchical, locally oriented society in which every individual can express, in a personal way, her (his) creative potential and be involved in creative activities; a society based on technological advancements and creative economy, and in which the production and consumption of exclusive creative products are means of self-differentiation.

As a postmodern phenomenon, creative society can be analysed through an interdisciplinary approach that brings together philosophy and aesthetics, sociology and communication, economics and management (Kačerauskas, 2014b).

Various aspects of creative society have been examined, in the Lithuanian academic context, by several authors: among others, the creative economy (Kačerauskas 2014c, 2018, Levickaitė & Reimeris 2011), creative class (Kačerauskas 2014d, Stasiulis 2015), creative city (Kačerauskas & Kaklauskas, 2014), creativity in sport (Kačerauskas & Tamošauskas 2015, Dadelo 2020), creative ecology (Kačerauskas & Zavadskas 2015, Kačerauskas 2016b, Stankevičienė et al. 2011), sustainability in creative society (Kačerauskas et al. 2021, Kovaitė et al. 2022), creativity in education (Navickienė et al. 2019, Žydžiūnaitė & Arce 2021), creativity management (Kačerauskas, 2016a), and political communication of creative society (Venckūnas, 2022) may be cited.

In the international context, the term 'creative society' appears in the works of authors such as Takashi Iba, Louis Galambos, and Silvia Lindtner. In particular, Iba (2016), relying on Niklas Luhmann's (1927-1998) systems theory, sees the creative society as a future society in which people are able and willing to "create their own goods, tools, concepts, knowledge, mechanisms, and ultimately, the future with their own hands" (p. 29). However, unlike Kačerauskas, who conceives the creative society as a postmodern one, Iba (2016) finds that the roots of creative society trace back to modern society. Galambos (2012) and Lindtner (2014) refer the concept of creative society to specific countries, respectively the United States (USA) and China. According to Galambos (2012), the USA is a creative society driven by the heterogeneous social class of the 'professionals;' Lindtner (2014) observes that the initiative to foster a creative society in China is led by the so-called 'Do It Yourself (DIY) makers.' Both social groups may be, in a way, associated with the 'creative class' theorised by Richard Florida (2002). Outside the academic environment, the term 'creative society' has been used by Lars Tvede (2015), with reference to creativity as a long-term development factor for both businesses and societies.

Despite a wide number of studies on various aspects of creativity, still little research has been done on new media and communication in creative society; nevertheless, as platforms, algorithms and artificial intelligence acquire a specific importance in nowadays society, their impact on creativity cannot but be investigated. Technologies, media, and creativity are closely related in creative society for two main reasons: first, technologies and media require a certain level of creativity in their development; second, technologies and media are crucial tools for creative industries (Kačerauskas, 2015). This paper sheds light on how new media and technologies are affecting creative society through research articles published on the WoS database.

## Aim and methodology

The aim of this study is to systematically review the existing scientific literature in order to understand the interplay between new media, technologies, and creativity within the framework of a creative society. Specifically, this research evaluates how new media and technological advancements impact creative processes and practises. By mapping the academic landscape (2012-2024), this study offers a comprehensive overview of current trends, challenges, and opportunities in this field. The research questions were expressed as follows:

**RQ1.** What are the trends in academic research on new media and technologies in the context of a creative society?

**RQ2.** How do new media and technologies influence creative processes and outputs in the context of a creative society?

**RQ3.** What types of new media and technologies are most commonly applied for creative purposes and communication?

**RQ4.** How are creators adapting to a creative society that is shaped by new media and technologies?

The methodology underlying this research is based on other studies providing literature reviews (Silva et al. 2019, Snyder 2019). It was decided to use only articles published in scientific journals indexed by the WoS database, as it is among the most acknowledged in its field (Li et al. 2018), and it offers the possibility of easily filtering the results based on the established criteria. Three keywords were used for three different searches: 'Creative Society,' 'Creative Society' and 'Communication,' 'Creative Society' and 'Media.' The aim was to gather as many articles as possible regarding the notion and issues of creative society, the study of creative society from a Communication studies perspective, and the role of new media and technology in creative society. It should be underlined that the results show only articles that are strictly related to creative society with reference to new media and communication. In doing so, it is understood that scientific works dealing with other aspects of creative society are excluded.

It is interesting to note that the results of the first search already incorporate the articles gathered using the main keyword 'Creative Society' in combination with the other two keywords 'Communication' and 'Media.'

The following filters were applied to the search results:

1. 'Articles,' to exclude books and other types of documents. Despite the filter 'Articles,' it can be noticed that some book chapters were still included in the results. It was decided to proceed manually with their exclusion because the aim was to investigate only literature published in scientific journals.

2. WoS categories 'Social Science Interdisciplinary,' 'Humanities Multidisciplinary' and 'Communication,' in order to limit the research in the fields of Social Sciences (which already incorporates disciplines as 'Communication' and 'Media') and Humanities.

3. 'Publication Year,' with a focus on the articles published from 2012 to 2024.

By filtering the results, 1185 articles were obtained and then screened using the following criteria:

a) Scientific articles that analyse the concept of creative society from a communication perspective.

b) Articles that address the role of media and technology in creative society.

c) Articles mapping and reviewing the literature about creative society.

With respect to the last criterion, it was decided to consider the following aspects of creative society: creative industries, creative economy, creative class, creative city, policy of creativity, and creativity.

The first selection was made by reading all the abstracts, keywords, and final considerations. Of the initial pool of articles, 1012 were excluded because they did not meet the specified criteria, leaving 173 articles eligible for inclusion in this research.

## **Findings**

Figure 1 shows the trend in the number of publications on creative society per year (2012-2024). The first (in chronological order) publication that has been taken into account in this paper is by Fink et al. (2012) in the journal *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity and the Arts* (Q1, HIndex:75). Analysing the data collected on research publications from 2012 to 2024, it can be observed a significant and progressive increase in studies on creative society and its various aspects until 2021, followed by a decline in 2022 and a slight resurgence in 2023. As for 2024, since the data were gathered in the early months of the year, a complete overview of the publications is not available.

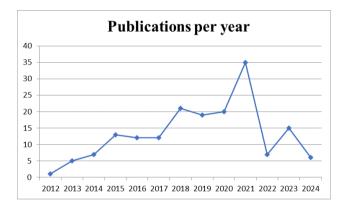


Figure 1: Trend in the number of publications on creative society (2012-2024)

#### **Publications per journal**

Fig. 2 shows data regarding six journals that have published more than five articles on creative society. However, analysing all the 173 selected articles, it can be affirmed that 61 scientific journals are involved in this research, among which the vast majority have dedicated to this topic only one article (35 journals, 20,23% of the total) or two (14 journals, 8,09% of the total). This may underline the growing tendency of scientific journals to specialise and focus on specific themes and the growing interest of such journals in the fields of creativity and creative society. The four journals with more than 10 publications are as follows: *Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society* (Q1, HIndex:24), *New Media & Society* (Q1, HIndex:149), *Media, Culture and Society* (Q1, HIndex:84), and *Logos-Vilnius* (Q2, HIndex:7).

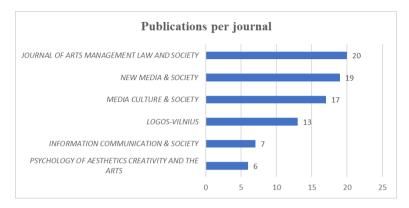


Figure 2: Journals with more than five publications

#### **Publications per author**

Considering the number of publications per author, it can be observed that out of the 173 selected articles, only a few involve the same author. Four authors have three publications (among them, C. Meisner appears in two publications as co-author and in one as sole author), and only one author (T. Kačerauskas) has six publications on this topic. The remaining articles (118 articles, 68,20% of the total) are written by authors that have only one publication in this field of study. This may suggest that creativity studies or the notion of creative society are increasing their importance in scientific research, although only few authors decide to exclusively devote their studies to this topic.

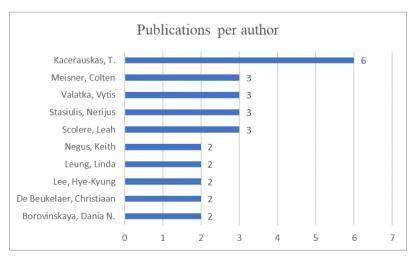


Figure 3: Publications per author

#### Authors and the 20 most cited articles

In order to focus on the more cited articles, the data provided by WoS regarding the time each article was quoted in its database were used. Table 1 presents the 20 more cited articles together with the percentage of quotes in connection with the total number of citations considered. The 173 articles collectively produced 1467 citations; while considering the top 20 more cited articles, 775 citations, which correspond to approximately 52% of the total citations, were counted. All the 20 most cited articles are published by journals that belong to Q1. Later on, the top 20 articles will be analysed per journal, focusing on each journal's metrics.

Ranking	Authors	Journal	H Index	Quartil	Total of citations	% of total citation
1°	Bechmann & Lomborg (2013)	NEW MEDIA & SOCIETY	149	Q1	100	12,90
2°	Alacovska (2018)	HUMAN RELATIONS	162	Q1	63	8,13
3°	Carah & Angus (2018)	MEDIA, CULTURE & SOCIETY	84	Q1	55	7,10
4°	Fink et al. (2012)	PSYCHOLOGY OF AESTHETICS, CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS	75	Q1	51	6,58
5°	Klawitter & Hargittai (2018)	INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION	61	Q1	48	6,20
6°	Hill & Monroy- Hernandez (2013)	AMERICAN BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST	132	Q1	41	5,29
7°	Duffy & Meisner (2023)	MEDIA, CULTURE & SOCIETY	84	Q1	40	5,16
8°	Hesmondhalgh (2021)	NEW MEDIA & SOCIETY	149	Q1	38	4,90
9°	Negus (2019)	MEDIA, CULTURE & SOCIETY	84	Q1	38	4,90
10°	Weststar (2015)	INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & SOCIETY	114	Q1	35	4,52
11°	Scolere (2019)	NEW MEDIA & SOCIETY	149	Q1	33	4,26
12°	Newsinger (2015)	MEDIA, CULTURE & SOCIETY	84	Q1	31	4,00
13°	Dent (2020)	MEDIA, CULTURE & SOCIETY	84	Q1	30	3,87
14°	Meisner & Ledbetter (2020)	NEW MEDIA & SOCIETY	149	Q1	27	3,48
15°	Frenette (2017)	JOURNAL OF ARTS MANAGEMENT, LAW AND SOCIETY	24	Q1	26	3,35
16°	Muller et al. (2016)	PSYCHOLOGY OF AESTHETICS, CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS	75	Q1	26	3,35
17°	Hong et al. (2021)	NEW MEDIA & SOCIETY	149	Q1	25	3,23
18°	Essig (2015)	JOURNAL OF ARTS MANAGEMENT, LAW AND SOCIETY	24	Q1	24	3,10
19°	Rendell (2021)	CONVERGENCE-THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH INTO NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES	56	Q1	22	2,84
20°	Coldevin et al. (2019)	HUMAN RELATIONS	162	Q1	22	2,84
				Total	775	100%

Table 1. Authors and their respective citations (20 most cited articles)

#### **Publications per country**

In relation to the authors' countries, Table 2 shows that, among the 20 most cited articles, 12 publications (60% of the total) belong to authors whose country of origin is the USA (7 articles) or the UK (5 articles). This underscores the highest attention to research in the UK and the USA in terms of financing and working conditions that potentially correspond to an increase in the productivity of researchers.

Denmark and Australia have 2 publications while the rest of the involved countries Austria, Canada, the Netherlands, and Switzerland have only one article each. One article is co-authored by researchers from different countries (Norway, Portugal and UK).

#### Publications per journal

Regarding the journals publishing the 20 more cited papers (Table 2), five journals with more than 1 article among the aforementioned publications are mentioned. The list is led by *New Media & Society* (HIndex 149, Q1) and *Media, Culture & Society* (HIndex 84, Q1) with 5 articles each; it follows *Humans Relations* (HIndex 162, Q1), *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* (HIndex 75, Q1), and *Journal of Arts Management, Law, and Society* (HIndex 24, Q1) with 2 articles each. Four journals are counted with 1 publication each: *International Journal of Communication* (HIndex 45, Q1), *American Behavioral Scientist* (HIndex 124, Q1), *Information, Communication & Society*, and *Convergence* (HIndex 59, Q1).

Journal	Number of publications
NEW MEDIA & SOCIETY	5
MEDIA, CULTURE & SOCIETY	5
HUMAN RELATIONS	2
PSYCHOLOGY OF AESTHETICS, CREATIVITY AND THE ARTS	2
JOURNAL OF ARTS MANAGEMENT, LAW AND SOCIETY	2
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION	1
AMERICAN BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST	1
INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & SOCIETY	1
CONVERGENCE-THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH INTO NEW MEDIA TECHNOLOGIES	1

 Table 2. Distribution of published articles per journal (20 most cited articles)

#### Analysis of the structure and content of the 20 most cited articles

Analysing the structure of the 20 articles it is detected that 4 are literature reviews, 2 are theoretical papers, 11 applied empirical approaches (4 quantitative, 7 qualitative) and only 3 are case studies. The most recurring theoretical frameworks among the 20 articles are the following: Creative class by Florida (2002), Social and cultural capital by Bourdieu (1986), and Connectivity by Van Dijck (2013). Concerning the units of analysis, 40% of the articles deal with new media and social media, while 25% focus on creators and the creative class. The remaining articles apply to creativity as a process (20%) and

to the policy of creativity (15%). Concerning data collection, 35% of the studies applied qualitative interviews, while articles with literature reviews represent the 20%. Among the data collection methods applied in the 20 articles, questionnaires (2 articles), 1 psychological test, and simultaneously questionnaires and qualitative interviews were observed. Three researches are based on data available online.

Regarding empirical articles, it may be noticed that, due to various methodological limitations related to the construction of robust samples that are capable of representing the population as a whole, authors themselves often request for future research, humblingly recognising their researches' limitations and also suggesting how to improve them. Nonetheless, the conclusions are, in general, adequately informative and capable of validating the established objectives. Limitations and future research sections provide us with proposals and suggestions that permit us to identify what remains to be done to progress in this scientific research domain.

Concerning the content of the 20 most cited articles and focusing solely on their findings related to new media and technologies, several studies point to the fundamental role of digital platforms in reshaping creative work and communication (Bechmann & Lomborg 2013, Carah & Angus 2018, Negus 2018, Rendell, 2021), suggesting a need to adopt a theoretical approach that brings together media studies and computer science, in order to focus on the technical mechanisms behind the platforms and not just on users' shared content (Carah & Angus, 2018). Despite the new opportunities for sharing creative content and earning provided by these platforms, challenges such as algorithmic mechanisms and unequal working conditions persist (Duffy & Meisner 2023, Klawitter & Hargittai 2018). Indeed, the informal and precarious nature of creative work in a digital environment is a recurrent theme, with a significant focus on economic and social aspects (Alacovska 2018, Duffy & Meisner 2023, Hesmondhalgh 2021). As social capital plays a strategic role in creative societies, it may lead to forms of unpaid creative work, such as bartering, voluntary work or favour-swapping. Nonetheless, creators who work and communicate through new media, as those presuppose spatially and socially distant clients and users, receive more paid work opportunities comparing to others (Alacovska, 2018). Digitalisation has also redefined creators' role: from producers of creative outcomes to content creators for digital platforms (Negus 2018, Rendell 2021); a role that is further challenged by Al-generated creative outputs (Hong et al., 2021).

Overall, the 20 articles seem to suggest the need for a more comprehensive approach to understanding the impact of new media and technologies on the creative society, balancing technical, economic, social, and cultural perspectives.

# Analysis of the structure and content of new media and communication in creative society focused articles

As previously stated, the objective of this research is to provide a comprehensive overview of the current literature on new media and communication within the framework of a creative society. To achieve this objective, three separate searches were conducted on the WoS database using three different keyword combinations: 'Creative society,' 'Creative society' and 'Communication,' 'Creative society' and 'Media.' After screening 1185 articles, 173 articles were included in this study, among which only 42 articles (around 24% of all the articles subject to our analysis) were strictly related to new media and communication in creative society.

Concerning the study type, case studies (11), qualitative interviews (14), qualitative interviews followed by ethnographic, online, or netnographic observations (5), quantitative research (5), literature review (3), and experiment (1) can be observed. This prevalence of qualitative methods reflects researchers' efforts to provide a deeper understanding of the processes involved, which can be challenging to capture through quantitative measures alone. Indeed, new media and technologies appear to have the greatest impact on the agents of the creative society—the creators, members of the so-called creative class. A qualitative approach may seem necessary to analyse creators' perceptions of the opportunities and challenges that new media and technologies bring to creativity.

#### Types of media and technology, and their implications for the creative society

Concerning the units of analysis, it may be reported that at the centre of most studies are artificial intelligence (hereafter referred to as AI) and algorithms (10 articles). Other studies focus on social and/or digital media, online (live)streaming platforms, music streaming platforms, user-generated content technology, open-source software, location-based technology, and platforms such as Patreon, Pinterest, and Tik Tok (one article each).

Creative society, as an interdisciplinary subject, requires a plural scientific approach (Kačerauskas, 2014b). For this reason, the vast majority of the research applies a combination of different scientific approaches (communication, technology, aesthetic, management, psychology, and economics). For what concerns the implications of new media and technologies on creativity, they can be thematically divided into five distinct aspects: 1) the relationship between creators and audiences, 2) the influence of platforms, 3) the role of artificial intelligence and algorithms, 4) the effects on the creative class, 5) opportunities and challenges to creativity. Here, an overview of each aspect is provided:

- New media and technologies enhance the relationship between creators and their audiences. First, they allow creators to easily build and interact with their networks (Willment, 2023; Baboo & Yi, 2018) and enable audiences to contribute to the creative process by supporting creators and providing both emotional and financial support through various monetization platforms. Through social live streaming platforms, the audience is invited to contribute to creators' selfbranding process in what is called "participatory branding" (Meisner & Ledbetter, 2022). Relationships between creators and patrons may vary from formal to familial, making it difficult for creators to maintain relational boundaries (Bonifacio et al., 2021). Moreover, the dynamics of social media, serving as a fundamental tool of creative communication, require creators to be constantly up-to-date with technological advancements (Llorente Barroso et al., 2021), continuously display their private lives, in order to self-brand and optimise their creative content (Bishop, 2023), and share inspirational content or works still in progress to engage with their audience (Scolere, 2019).
- 2. Platforms facilitate the global production and distribution of digital creative products (Bidav & Mehta, 2024; Giannatou et al., 2019). They also contribute to reduce the barriers and inequalities in cultural participation (Ateca-Amestoy & Prieto-Rodriguez, 2023), simplifying the possibilities of digitally enjoying creative works. Therefore, creators' attempts to adapt their productions to platform standards can be noticed (Zhang & Negus, 2024; Polak & Schaap, 2024; Tintiangko et al., 2023). These adaptations can impact both the form and content of digital creative products and can bring to forms of standardisation or self-censorship. Platforms can also potentially amplify independent or local creative production, especially through crowdfunding (Li et al., 2022), although inequalities and bias persist (Holcombe-James et al., 2022).

- 3. Algorithms and AI may potentially increase creative possibilities; nonetheless, they cannot replace humans in the creative process (Birtchnell, 2018) as this requires human qualities (i.e. creativity itself, critical thinking, etc.). Al-generated works might be still differently perceived than artworks produced by humans (Hong et al., 2021; Messingschlager & Appel, 2023) as a consequence of anthropocentric thinking (Kalpokiene & Kalpokas, 2023); this may generate forms of aesthetic dismemberment (Laurentiz, 2021) or antagonism with the audience (Nikolić & Liu, 2021). Al is also discussed in terms of content optimisation (by creators) and content moderation (by platforms), both of which are underpinned by AI technologies.
- 4. Creators become more autonomous from producers and publishers; they are now able to independently produce, publish, distribute and monetize without having to turn to intermediaries (Poort et al., 2015). Nonetheless, creators face various challenges in the digital space: inequalities (Hesmondhalg, 2021), overwork (Duffy and Meisner, 2023), 'hate raids' (Meisner, 2023), and content moderation, which can sometimes lead to forms of self-censorship (Dergacheva & Katzenbach, 2023).
- 5. Technologies, creativity, and economy are strictly intersected in creative society (Kačerauskas, 2015). New media and technologies enable the digital transformation of culture and art (Bannikova et al., 2023) and give rise to new, more interactive forms of creativity (Scolere and Humphreys, 2016; Carpio et al., 2023; Mago et al., 2023; Hausken, 2024; Sovhyra et al., 2023; Hill & Monroy-Hernández, 2015). They can also represent an issue to creativity in what concerns, among others, the legal protection of authorship (Tay et al., 2018), the originality of creative works, creators' capability to earn revenue from their creative works, and other challenges related to copyright, data management and commercialisation of digitised cultural goods (Terras et al., 2021). Moreover, while platforms amplify the possibilities to participate in digital creative production and sharing, despite spatial limitations (Zhao, 2024; Rendell, 2021) and often redefining cities' geographies (Berry & Goodwin, 2012), researchers note a certain tendency to homogenisation and adaptation of creative productions to platforms' standards (Zhang & Negus, 2024; Polak & Schaap, 2024; Tintiangko et al., 2023). Researchers suggest examining these phenomena through interdisciplinary approaches (Bechmann & Lomborg, 2013; Leng & Bentley, 2017; Obradors, 2021).

In conclusion, these recent studies, analysing the implications of new media and technologies on creative society through an interdisciplinary approach, highlight the increasing influence of platforms, AI and algorithms on the production and distribution of creative goods and on creators themselves.

### **Discussion and conclusion**

As noted in the introduction, the phenomenon of creative society is observed by various scholars from various countries and through different scientific approaches and perspectives. Despite this diversity and heterogeneity, what seems to unite all those different theories is the idea that creative society is a postmodern, mediated (Kačerauskas 2014a, 2017) society led by a class of creators ['creative class' (Florida 2022), 'professionals' (Galambos 2012), 'DIY makers' (Lindtner 2014)], based on the creative economy (Reimeris 2016) and in which creative activities are inseparable from new media and technologies (Kačerauskas 2015).

Through this research, the aim was to map and describe trends in academic literature on the roles and implications of new media and technologies within the context of a creative society (RQ1), considering elements such as year, journal, author, country, and highlighting the most relevant publications on this topic. Although specific keywords ('creative society,''communication,''media') were used for the search in the WoS database, it may be noticed that some of the collected articles do not specifically use the term 'creative society;' however, it was decided to include them in this systematic literature review as they analyse specific aspects of creativity in contemporary society (the creative society), relating them to new media and communication. In general, what stands out is the heterogeneity of all these articles, which occurs for mostly two reasons: firstly, creative society is a wide concept that includes several aspects (creative economy, creative class, policy of creativity, etc.), and secondly, this phenomenon can be analysed through different scientific approaches.

Regarding the influence of new media and technologies on creativity (RQ2), a dual impact may be observed: improvements (Alacovska 2018, Klawitter & Hargittai 2018, Sclater & Lally 2014, Davis & Boellstorff 2016) and challenges to the creativity process (Hill and Monroy-Hernández 2015, Negus 2018).

On the one hand, they enhance creativity by providing new tools and platforms for creative expression, such as social media, which are playing a main role in creative society as they enable both the users to participate in the creation of what is being

published and the creators to draw on and get inspiration from the audience's contribution (Bechman & Lomborg, 2013; Willment, 2023). Also, they offer new ways for creators and audiences to creatively engage and communicate together, as testified by the phenomenon of online live music shows during COVID-19 restrictions (Rendell, 2021). In doing so, social media somehow erase the border between creator (producer) and user (consumer). This is evident in the rise of user-generated content technology, which brings about collaborative creative works and authorship, and remixing practises, which redefine originality and innovation (Hill & Monroy-Hernández, 2018). This last aspect presents challenges, such as the difficulty of assigning authorship to collaborative works. In order to solve this issue, it has been suggested to introduce the concept of 'deemed author,' an entity whose function is to collect all contributions and oversee the configuration of the final output, in copyright law (Tay et al., 2018). In this respect, it can be affirmed that new media enables users not only to participate, along with creators, in creative works but also to rework and redefine them (Hill & Monroy-Hernández, 2018). The increase in remixing practises, facilitated by the diffusion of open-source software, raises questions about the nature of originality and innovation, key aspects of creativity and whether new media enhance or impede the development of creativity, potentially making the creative society 'less creative.' The duality of generativity (they are derivative works) and originality (they differ from their antecedents) in remixes, as it is conceptualised in Hill and Monroy-Hernández's research (2018), poses methodological issues. Assuming that remixes are both derivative and original, the criteria for measuring and evaluating their level of originality and creativity remain to be established, which presents a methodological gap that future research can address. This raises questions about the nature of creation in a creative society dominated by new media and technology, particularly concerning the definition of creation, the criteria for recognising creative works, the identification of creators, and the attribution of copyright; answering these questions becomes increasingly urgent following the spread of Al-generated creative outputs.

Social media provide opportunities for global communication and distribution of digital creative products, potentially benefiting independent and local productions. However, researchers are divided on this issue. Some argue that independent and local productions struggle to compete with larger productions and algorithmic biases (Bidav & Mehta, 202 4). Conversely, others highlight successful examples of crowdfunding (Li et al., 2022) and the growing popularity of livestreaming platforms (Zhao, 2024), which empower many independent and local creators.

The creators' attempts to adapt their productions to the standards of platforms can impact both the form and content of digital creative products and can lead to forms of standardisation (Polak & Schaap, 2024; Zhang & Negus, 2024) or self-censorship (Dergacheva & Katzenbach, 2023).

Algorithms and Al are increasingly being applied to artworks, increasing creative possibilities (Hausken, 2024) but also generating aesthetic dismemberment, as affirmed by Laurentiz (2021), whose statement that creators have the key responsibility of declining to incorporate these new technologies into their artworks seems to represent a quite ideological, although legitimate, position.

Researchers' positions towards algorithms and AI applied to creativity are indeed contrasting: some of them underline machines' progressive emancipation and autonomy from humans (Nikolić and Liu, 2021), while others affirm that AI is not able to replace humans in creative processes because AI does not possess human qualities such as creativity (Birtchnell, 2018) and that AI-generated creative works are still perceived as less creative than human-created artworks (Messingschlager & Appel, 2023). If creativity is assumed to be a quality that belongs exclusively to humans, the evaluation of AI-generated contributions to artworks, filmmaking, and contemporary music (Hong et al., 2021) prompts consideration of whether the idea of AI creativity should finally be accepted.

Concerning RQ3, the types of new media and technologies predominantly applied for creative purposes include, in addition to social media, various platforms, digital portfolios, open-source software and artificial intelligence. Platforms have become essential tools for creators to build their digital presence (Instagram, TikTok), distribute their digital creative works (streaming platforms), and secure financial support (Patreon, crowdfunding platforms). The application of AI in creative processes is another significant trend, offering new possibilities for creative outputs and raising questions about the role and recognition of AI-generated content (Kalpokiene & Kalpokas, 2023).

Regarding the last research question (RQ4), digitalisation, generated by the application of new technologies on creativity, redefines creators' role from producers of creative outcomes to content creators for digital platforms (Keith Negus:2019). This is evident in the music industry, where every new musical work seems not to stand on its own as it acquires economic and cultural value based only on its performance on dedicated platforms; however, it could also be applied in other sectors of creative industries where a digitalisation occurs. At the same time digitisation is seen by creators

as an opportunity to become more autonomous from publishers and producers and gain more control over their creative works (Poort et al., 2015).

New media also have an impact on how creators present and promote themselves. In a society dominated by social media, creators should not ignore the importance of building a strong digital portfolio (Scolere, 2019) through their presence on various social networks (like the *Instagram portfolio*). In this sense, building a portfolio is a complex process in the digital era, as it goes beyond a simple description of a creator's abilities and career. It incorporates personal aspects, inspirational content, and works that are still in progress. It can be affirmed, together with Scolere (2019), that the portfolio itself is currently a work in progress, as creators are "always designing" it. However, the challenges creators face in digital spaces, including inequalities, overwork, 'hate raids,' content moderation, and the pressure to constantly share aspects of their private lives, must also be considered.

New media and technologies have also an impact on creators' capability to get paid for their creative works. As the social capital plays a strategic and important role in creative society, it may bring to forms of unpaid creative work, such as bartering, voluntary work or favour-swapping. Nonetheless, creators working and communicating through new media, as those presuppose spatially and socially distant clients and users, appear to receive more paid work opportunities compared to others (Alacovska, 2018). It is undeniable that platforms have allowed more creators to earn money from their works than in the past; nonetheless, some criticisms still persist, such as inequalities and poor working conditions (Hesmondhalg, 2021).

New media enable creators to access new forms of private financing through digital patronage platforms such as Patreon ©. Thanks to Patreon ©, creators can receive feedback on content, emotional and economic support—even without expectation of reward—from their patrons (Bonifacio et al., 2021). Future research may investigate whether new media enable a creative society to become more independent from public financing, determine the ongoing necessity of public financing for the development of a creative society, and ascertain which type of financing—public or private—is most suitable for creative activities.

With reference to the general conclusion of this literature review, it may be affirmed that the roles and implications of new media and communication on creativity in the context of creative society are progressively becoming the object of various scientific inquiries, a field of studies that possess considerable potential due to the relevance and topicality of this theme. Existing studies, analysed in this research still present some limitations, such as the construction of a solid sample (Bonifacio 2021, Hong et al. 2021), the lack of knowledge about the consequences of AI and algorithms' contributions to creative processes (Birtchnell, 2018), and the struggle when analysing digital data that can be modified continuously (Hill & Monroy-Hernández, 2018). The aforementioned limitations represent valuable opportunities for future research.

Finalising this literature review allows us to observe a detailed overview of what has already been published in this field, and it also represents support for those who aim to conduct research on this topic in the future. Moreover, reviewing the existing literature on this topic highlights the different scientific approaches towards creativity studies and identifies the types of media or technologies applied to the creativity process, together with their implications and consequences for the creative society.

This research underscores the burgeoning interest within the scientific community in exploring the relationship between new media, technologies, and creativity in the context of creative society. However, it also highlights a current deficiency in robust empirical studies, particularly in the domains of algorithms and artificial intelligence.

However, this study is obviously subject to several limitations. First, this research only included articles published in journals that are indexed in the WoS database. WoS is one of the most renowned and recognised databases in the academic field; nonetheless, it would be interesting to expand the research on this topic using other databases, such as Scopus, and then compare the results. Second, the keywords used in the research brought to 1185 articles, among which only 173 articles were included in the final literature review. Using other combinations of keywords, including 'Technology' or 'Creativity,' would result in different search results and, consequently, different selection of articles. Third, it was decided to filter the 1185 articles applying, among others, only three WoS categories 'Social Science Interdisciplinary', 'Humanities Multidisciplinary' and 'Communication,' in order to limit the research in the domains of Social Sciences and Humanities; however, categories such as 'Business,' 'Management,' 'Urban Studies,' 'Economics' or 'Philosophy,' as those disciplines represent part of the scientific approaches through which analysing creative society, could have been included. Finally, as the data were collected in the early months of the year, a complete overview of the publications in 2024 is not yet available.

As interest in this field increases, future research may consider a new mapping of the literature that would include other WoS categories, as well as book chapters or conference papers that were excluded from this study.

As for future research on creative society or creativity, researchers cannot avoid to consider the impact of platforms, which seem to dominate every aspect of our life to the point that some authors have started to talk about Platform Studies as a brand-new field of knowledge (Magaudda & Solaroli, 2021), on creativity. Moreover, with the rapid spread of Al-generated creative outputs, future research should explore the definition of creation, establish criteria for recognising creative works, identifying creators, and determine the attribution of copyright for such outputs. Finally, future research may also investigate whether new media enable the creative society to become more independent from public financing and determine which type of financing—public or private—is most suitable for creative activities.

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