

Anti-woke culture rhetoric through internet memes: A cross-cultural multimodal narrative approach

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Abstract: This article investigates how anti-woke rhetoric is constructed in memes and the accompanying comments from a cross-cultural perspective across three comparable datasets: Greek, French, and English. It adopts a multimodal narrative approach to memes and uses framing analysis to detect the main frames used in both comments and memes to deconstruct woke culture and shape anti-woke rhetoric. To detect the main frames, it first examines the salient semantic fields as they unfold in comments and then moves on to a multimodal analysis of memes, considering salient visual and lexical frames. From a narrative perspective, our study considers every meme around anti-woke culture as part of a wider narrative. This wider narrative around woke culture, despite some differences in the three datasets, seems to shape a common rhetoric that appears to be shared at a transnational level on Twitter.

Keywords: memes, wokeism, anti-woke rhetoric, narrative approach, critical discourse analysis, framing analysis