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Redactional Truth, Public Memory, and Spoof Videos

This paper analyzes the contention between the state and society in the construction and reformulation of public memory, with empirical evidence from networked spoof videos. The paper is informed by John Hartley's theory of redactional society and redactional processes as means of political and social engagement. The paper argues that the empowered media users, through redactional practices, have turned officially redacted truth on its head with truths created from the bottom up. Thus, the change of China into a redactional society is accompanied by a dual process of a move toward a dispersed and widespread creative construction of truth, and a redress of the power balance between the state and society