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Lenin Statue Beheaded in Orenburg

By The Moscow Times

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A photo posted on social site VKontakte showed a beheaded statue of Lenin in Ponomaryovka. **Я рожден в Оренбурге**

In just the latest of numerous indignities carried out against his image in the past two decades, a statue of Vladimir Lenin was discovered to be lacking a crucial piece of the historical figure's anatomy in the southern district of Orenburg this week.

"Emergency in Ponomaryovka! Unknown people have sawed off the head of the monument to V.I. Lenin!!!!!" a user posted Wednesday on social networking site VKontakte, attaching a picture of the decapitated statue as proof, Regnum.ru reported.

Unfortunately for the former proletarian leader, this is not the first time that his statue has been defaced.

The monument was beheaded once before in the 1990s, said regional Communist Party head Vladimir Novikov, who noted that monuments in several nearby towns have suffered similar fates.

The statues are generally made of plaster and impossible to repair, so local residents inspired to restore the revolutionary to his former glory must raise enough funds to erect a new one, Novikov said.

The ubiquitous Lenin monuments have faced hard times since the fall of the Soviet Union, with most post-Soviet countries having dismantled or destroyed them as soon as they achieved independence.

Within Russia the statues have come to hold a rather more ambiguous position. While they serve as a rallying point for the country's Communist Party and are looked on fondly by some residents, they are also frequently subject to petty acts of vandalism.

Alexander Kurdyumov, a State Duma deputy from the Liberal Democratic Party, proposed last year to have all monuments to Lenin removed from the centers of Russian cities. The idea received support from some United Russia members but was vociferously opposed by the Communist Party, Izvestia reported.

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