



About the project

<https://tsaritsyno-museum.ru/events/special/p/lyudi-i-fondy-eng/>

Painting by Mikhail Adamovich  
(1884–1947)

# PROLETARIER ALLER LÄNDER, VEREINIGT EUCH! (German 'Workers of the world, unite!')

## Dish

State Porcelain Factory,  
Petrograd, USSR

1923

*Porcelain, selective polishing,  
overglaze painting, gilding*





SELECTED BY

***Mikhail Trenikhin,***

*Researcher, Ph.D. in Art History*



One of the most engaging museum's exhibits for me is Mikhail Adamovich's dish. There are several reasons for this.

Firstly, propaganda porcelain is a unique and striking phenomenon in Russian art, part of the national art culture. In the past, propaganda was crucial, but today these works do not have ideological overtones, it is just art. Works of art can hardly convince people in the Internet era. Today, short videos, social network images and various kinds of motivational pictures are available. They are changing the way people think. But they cannot be considered art, and will there be anything left of them in a hundred years?

Secondly, let us talk about the dish itself. It was created in 1923 at the State Porcelain Factory in Petrograd (until 1917, currently Imperial Porcelain Factory, the oldest in Russia and the third factory built in Europe).

What will the viewer see on the dish? The new and the old. The new suppresses the old.

A red star (new) on top of a double-headed eagle and an engraving with an ancient subject (old). Map of Europe, Africa and Asia; the fire of the world revolution in the USSR. Two men are painting an inscription in German on top of the map: 'Proletarier aller Länder, vereinigt euch!' ('Workers of the world, unite!'). Why are these men writing these words in German? Propaganda porcelain did not become mass art as highly qualified artists were needed to create it. The victorious people found propaganda unaffordable. It could only be a means of promoting new ideas and lifestyles, a new attitude to study and work for a small circle of Soviet people. But in the West, these works were extremely popular, and the bulk of the porcelain with propaganda symbols was exported. This Tsaritsyno dish is a replica of a 1921 dish made by the artist for an exhibition in Berlin.

The third curious thing is an unusual detail. The back of the dish bears two monograms: the monogram of the last emperor 'H II' (the mark of the Imperial Porcelain Factory, 1894–1917) and the monogram of Adamovich (the back is not visible to the visitor, but I know what is there). Interestingly enough, in the first years of Soviet power, unpainted porcelain blanks left over from tsarist times were used for painting. As a result, the dishes created at the Imperial Factory lit with the fire of the world revolution with five-pointed stars and slogans, 'There will be no end to the kingdom of workers and peasants', 'The liberation of the working class is the work of the workers themselves' and others.

This artifact, like many others, came into the museum's collection thanks to the efforts of Lidiya Andreeva (1930–2018), a key museum figure, a brilliant specialist. Every time I pass through the hall where this dish is displayed, I mentally thank Lidiya Andreeva both for replenishing the museum's collection and for the fact that I am now working in one of the most romantic locations in Moscow and have been enjoying this for more than six years. After all, it was she who offered me a job in Tsaritsyno due to my previous experience of heading the gallery of the Imperial Porcelain Factory. And now I hold the Conference in Memoriam of Lidiya Andreeva at the museum to pay respect to her.