



Maria Pishvanova  
Chicken Tabaka  
2022

Sackcloth, painting fleece, textile ribbon, rubber

59,3 x 79 cm (27 x 32 inches)

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Texts are edited by Philipp N. Hauser

Chicken Tabaka is an embodiment of totalitarian regimes, of an object living under pressure. It personifies someone living a routine and hopeless life, whose fate is to be eaten, digested, and spewed out.

A little chick at the beginning of its life does not understand what fate awaits it, nor out of which egg it hatched. An egg of 1st, 2nd or 3rd category? A Faberge egg? It could be an egg of a partridge, a turtle, an eagle, a lizard or a crocodile. The most breakable is considered to be the egg of a chicken, because a chicken is not born free. Its life ends like that of any other slave - consumed.

One of the most unenviable fates is that of a chicken tabaka. Not only is it crushed underneath a weight, but it's also fried from beneath, until a crust forms. If lucky, it is grilled and the crust gets decorated with criss-crossed lines. This is somehow better than just being crushed.

An old song sung in prisons:

*A fried chicken, a steamed chicken, a chicken also wants to live;  
They caught him and arrested him,  
Ordered him to show his passport;  
No passport? Give a coin.  
No coin? Go to jail.*

All this ends badly for the chicken.

Behind the image of the chicken we see a small human being, one without rights, who is fully at the mercy of fate. Nobody and nothing can protect them. Any person living under a totalitarian regime can be found in this situation. Unfortunately, we still see it today.