CHEKHOV'S LANTERN: PROJECTION & ILLUMINATION IN 'СПАТЬ ХОЧЕТСЯ'
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1. The Lantern: Light & Shadow

Не обавательный ль, волшебный,
Магический, сей мир, фонарь?
Где видны тени перемены
Где, веселяся ими, царь
-Gavrila Derzhavin, "The Lantern" (1803/1804)

-A small machine which projects in the dark on a white wall, a variety of ghosts and terrible creatures, so that they who do not know the secret, think that this is done by magical arts.

Philosophical Dictionary, 1719

The Magic Lantern was an early type of image projection device generally believed to be invented by Dutch mathematician and optician Christian Huygens in the late 1650s, though scattered accounts of similar, pre-existing exist. The magic lantern was part of a family of early pre-cinematic devices, such as the zooscope, the praxinoscope, camera obscura, and the diorama, all of which grew out of the technological advances of the 16th and 17th centuries, eventually achieving wide popularity in the Enlightenment. This rampant popularity owed much to the lantern's potent supernatural aura, an aura fed by scientists, fanatics, and charlatans alike. Unsurprisingly, such was the strength of its representational mechanism, the fascination of the lantern quickly achieved a religious character.

One example of the lantern's effect on the religious and philosophical imagination was its fantastical rendering by priest and polymath Athanasius Kircher in his 1646 treatise Ars Magna Lucis et Umbrae (Great Arts of Light & Shadow). In his treatment of various species of projective devices, Kircher employ Neo-Platonic symbology to describe their inner workings, drawing out the spiritual character of these pieces of technology in a series of involved, metaphysical excursuses.

Kircher's Neo-Platonic meditations were in turn reflected by 18th-century poet Gavrila Derzhavin in the long poem "Фонарь" ("lantern"), which presents a stylized picture of the same popular confusion of conceivable magic and inconceivable technology. This 'magic' lantern was a device highly charged with mystery and curiosity: while its uncanny powers to simultaneously express and deceive were well-known to members of an array social classes, the leaps of technology which permitted its existence and rapid proliferation would invariably imbue the device with a powerful aura of religious awe, terror, and madness—even among its practitioners. One such magician, Johann Georg Schröpfer, famous for producing alleged visitations and reanimations of the deceased, took his own life in the belief he would be similarly resurrected.

In the leading excerpt, Derzhavin expresses this ambiguity in the play of modifiers: the palpable duplicity of "обавательный", the familiar, evocative "волшебный", and the more benign, borrowed "магический". However, while the paranormal significance attached to its magic lantern's novel projective faculty figures prominently throughout Derzhavin's literary depiction of the device, film theorist Yuri Tsivian argues in Early Russian Cinema that its temporal effect deserve equal significance. Tsivian argues this radical juxtaposition of artistic and religious tropes within Derzhavin's poem represents not only the founding of a "paradigm for the magic lantern metaphor in nineteenth-century Russian literature", but establishes in the trope of the magic lantern a remarkable conceptual prototype for Gothic, Symbolist and even early Modern aesthetics of print, canvas, and screen. One unique instantiation of this conceptual prototype is Anton Chekhov's 1887 short story, «Спать хочется».

Within the text however, the connections appears only slight. Unlike Derzhavin's poem, within the text of Chekhov's story there is no direct mention to the «фонарь» itself, nor trace of Derzhavin's poetry amidst Chekhov's work. Yet Chekhov, himself a member of avant-garde literary and theater circles, was not unfamiliar with both the technical and aesthetic properties of the magic lantern, as evidenced in "A Doctor's Visit" (1894) and "The Mirror"(1885). Furthermore, the richly Gothic capacity for phenomenal volatility in the manipulation
of light, shadow, and perspective comprised a considerable part of Chekhov's own aesthetics, as illustrated textually "The Black Monk", and satirized in the farcical play-within-a-play of "The Seagull". His familiarity with its dual nature would prove instrumental in the poignant deflation of its supernatural aura achieved in «Спать хочется».

As forcefully argued by Ann Komaroni in "Unknown Force: Gothic Realism in Chekhov's 'Black Monk'", the Romantic and Gothic theme of sublime madness would become a subject for parodic deflation under Chekhov's clinical gaze. Against such works as Odoevsky's lurid The Slyph (1836) and the "voluntary madness" of E.T.A. Hoffmann's The Golden Pot (1813), Komaroni asserts Chekhov's "Realist" emendation to the generalized theme of idealized madness drew strength and focus from the "clinical" inflection of his literary style; from letters to A.O. Menshikov and A.S. Suvorin, she cites Chekhov's description of the story as "medical": that of "a young man suffering form the mania of greatness". Citing R.G. Nazirov, the issue becomes expressly ideological: "Chekhov praised corporal and spiritual health in his entire body of works and fought for the re-establishment of Pushkinian harmony...he had to come out against the aestheticization of madness". Yet, such as an "aestheticization of madness" is plainly apparent within both "The Black Monk", and arguably even more so in «Спать хочется». This duality may be resolved by applying the nuances of Chekhov’s literary style within the aesthetic program of "Gothic Realism".

As Gleb Struve points out in "On Chekhov's Craftsmanship: The Anatomy of A Story", an important thematic and stylistic precedent to «Спать хочется» exists in D.V. Grigorovitch's "Karelin's Dream". In a letter from January of 1887, shortly following the publication of "Karelin's Dream", the young clinician and aspiring writer Chekhov praises (and strongly implies his desire to emulate) Grigorovitch's skillful rendering of "correct" science:

I have just read "Karelin's Dream," and I am very much interested to know how far the dream you describe is really a dream. I think your description of the workings of the brain and of the general feeling of a person who is asleep is physiologically correct and remarkably artistic. [...] I thought at the time that an artist's instinct is worth the brains of a scientist, that both have the same purpose, the same nature, and that perhaps in time, as their methods become perfect, they are destined to become one vast prodigious force which now it is difficult to imagine..."Karelin's Dream" has suggested to be similar thoughts, and to-day I willingly believe Buckle, who saw in Hamlet's musings on the dust of Alexander the Great, Shakespeare's knowledge of the law of the transmutation of substance--i.e., the power of the artist to run ahead of the men of science...

For Chekhov, this naturalistic attention to fantastical detail presents a criterion of the aesthetic potential of such a work, demanded by its curious subject matter:

Sleep is a subjective phenomenon, and the inner aspect of it one can only observe in oneself. But since the process of dreaming is the same in all men, every reader can, I think, judge Karelin by his own standards, and every critic is bound to be subjective.

Attention to the real-life phenomenon of sleep deprivation, in both its physiological and psychological aspects is as close as we can come to an account of the "subject matter" of Chekhov's story. The category of Gothic "Realism", expressed in a resistance to prior tropes and themes of sublime madness and illumination, serves to inform the techniques of methods of Chekhov's own faithful rendering of a naturally vexed subject. As such, Chekhov's strategy does not rest on the wry prosaisms of the committed iconoclast, but attempts at the "inner aspect" of the phenomenon through the full extension of the trope, reductio ad absurdum. Unlike that of Derzhavin then, within «Спать хочется», the figure of the lantern is never posited as an object of reference, but only enacted within the world of the text, through the coercive play of its devices.

2. The Apparatus: L'appareil & Dispositif

Thus, the governing notion of this analysis is structural: diegetically, within the text is inscribed a
projective "apparatus", a panoply of devices which coerce the subject by the forceful impression of reality; in such an apparatus Chekhov's protagonist Varka is initially suspended, and later fully dissolved as the story reaches its violent climax. This notion of the "apparatus" refers specifically to a concept elaborated by Jean-Louis Baudry in "The Apparatus: Metapsychological Approaches to the Impression of Reality in Cinema":

One constantly returns to the scene of the cave: real effect or impression of reality. Copy, simulacrum, and even simulacrum of simulacrum. Impression of the real, more-than-real? From Plato to Freud, the perspective is reversed; the procedure is inverted—so it seems. The former comes out of the cave, examines what is intelligible, contemplates its source, and, when he goes back, it is to denounce the prisoners the apparatus which oppresses them, and to persuade them to leave, to get out of that dim space.\(^1^1\)

Baudry's emphasis of the impressionistic, "metapsychological" value of the apparatus illustrates an important point of departure in Chekhov, and supports this realignment in more precise terms. In particular, the contiguity of Plato and Freud vis-a-vis the apparatus provides telling insight into both the symbolic and aesthetic properties of Chekhov's prose. Like Kircher and Derzhavin, traces of the same eagerly-applied Platonic allegory are also present within «Спать хочется», and yet unlike Kircher and Derzhavin, the apogee of this representational arc is neither philosophical, nor symbolic, but simply descriptive: as Varka grows progressively more deranged from sleep deprivation, she becomes more forcefully and inextricably integrated into this "bewitching" («обавательный») apparatus.\(^1^2\) Therefore, the course of this derangement may be expressed as plainly pathological in content, yet highly Gothic and phantasmagoric in form.

Within the text, the visible affect of this duplicitous "impression of reality", as Baudry describes, is echoed compositionally within the story's mise-en-scène:

Перед образом горит зеленая лампадка; через всю комнату от угла до угла тянется веревка, на которой висят пеленки и большие черные панталоны. От лампадки ложится на потолок большое зеленое пятно, а пеленки и панталоны бросают длинные тени на печку, колыбель, на Варьку... Когда лампадка начинает мигать, пятно и тени оживают и приходят в движение, как от ветра. Душно. Пахнет щами и сапожным товаром.\(^1^3\)

In regards to the construction of the apparatus, Chekhov's arrangement of the mise-en-scène bears special significance. In its customary corner of the room hangs the icon («образ»), before which burns a green lamp. The introduction of a light source forms the basis for the projective mechanism and its peculiar affects of light and shadow: the macular green patch which lays on the ceiling above the icon («большое зеленое пятно»), and the long shadows thrown by the trousers over the stove, the crib, and Varka herself. The shadows limn the diegetic space of the mechanism, inscribing within the text its range and reach. Even the innocuous atmospheric consideration «душно» ("stuffy", "close") evokes the thick fog created used in magic lantern shows.\(^1^4\)

The peculiar movement of the lamp «мигать» ("to wink") metaphorically confers life upon the mise-en-scène by means of a strange, animate force present within the green patch and the shadows: «оживают и приходят в движение, как от ветра» ("quickening and coming to life, as if from the wind"). Inanimate objects display synecdochial animation, as illustrated by the verbs «тянется» ("reaches"), «бросают» ("to toss, to throw") , and «лежится» ("to lie"). The liminality of this entire sequence is expressed by the verb «оживают», which takes on a suggestive ambiguity between its connotations of reanimation, quickening, and vitalization. Rendered thusly, the scene sharply evokes the allegory of the Cave:

And now, I said, let me show in a figure how far our nature is enlightened or unenlightened: Behold! human beings living in a underground den, which has a mouth open towards the light and reaching all along the den; here they have been from their childhood, and have their legs and necks chained so that they cannot move,
and can only see before them, being prevented by the chains from turning round their heads. Above and behind them a fire is blazing at a distance, and between the fire and the prisoners there is a raised way; and you will see, if you look, a low wall built along the way, like the screen which marionette players have in front of them, over which they show the puppets.\textsuperscript{15}

Varka's figurative "imprisonment" («сковывающего ее по рукам и ногам»)\textsuperscript{16}, the placement of the fire against the wall, the projection of the colored patch against the ceiling, the movement of the shadows all plainly echo the original Platonic allegory; its anthropomorphic shades, and its "raised way" become concretized in the lamp's next movement:

Лампадка мигает. Зеленое пятно и тени приходят в движение, лезут в полуоткрытые, неподвижные глаза Варьки и в ее наполовину уснувшем мозгу складываются в туманные грезы. Она видит темные облака, которые гонятся друг за другом по небу и кричат, как ребенок. Но вот подул ветер, пропали облака, и Варыка видит широкое шоссе, покрытое жидкую грезью.\textsuperscript{17}

Returning to Baudry, consideration of this apparatus, its historical precedent, and its psychological and technical attributes address the opacity typically associated with this story.\textsuperscript{18} In conjunction with this Platonic allegory, the duality of the motif of "projection" with respect to the artificial impression of reality, figure prominently within Baudry's discussion of the apparatus in reference to dreaming and waking:

Plato's prisoner is a victim of an illusion of reality, which is to precisely what would call a hallucination if one is awake, and as a dream, if asleep; he is the prey of an impression, of an \textit{impression of reality}. [...] Plato [...] would imagine or resort to an apparatus that doesn't merely evoke but precisely describes in its mode of operation the cinematographic apparatus and the spectator's place in relation to it.\textsuperscript{19}

The predatory character of this projected reality inheres within both Chekhov's story and the historical context of lantern at large. The aesthetic atmosphere achieved in Chekhov's story is broadly phantasmagoric, yet the historical trope of the magic lantern is not merely a generic contingency: the device itself, in both its popular reception \textit{and} its function assists in our understanding of the story's aesthetic attributes. As Koen Vermeir, in "The Magic of the Magic Lantern: Analagetical Demonstration in the Visualization of the Invisible" demonstrates, the varied symbolic, metaphysical, and rhetorical inferences and associations surrounding the magic lantern all figure into the circumstances of its presentation and reception throughout Europe. Vermier argues that the epistemological and ideological climate of the late 17th through 18th centuries proved to be especially volatile, a volatility which expressed itself in powerful appetites for both illusion and skepticism alike, appetites which found expression in the juxtaposition of metaphysical, aesthetic, and normative realities: "First, since antiquity, \textit{illusio} had been a rhetorical figure, related to irony and allegory...this Patristic theme was connected with pietism and spirituality and became widely popular; it appealed to the lower classes where it blended pietism with superstition."\textsuperscript{20} Like Tsivian, Vermeir argues that the rapid advance of technology made possible in the magic lantern contributed to the spiritualized tone of its reception: "The projected image was new for most spectators and was a reason for bewilderment. The shadowy projections on the wall resembled dreams, visions, or apparitions summoned by a necromancer". Citing D. Khan's "The Rosicrucian Hoax", Vermeir sketches the figure of this enchantment: "The \textit{vive lanterne}, the forerunner of the magic lantern, was explicitly compared with a head of magus filled with 'strange fancies and frenetic imaginations'.\textsuperscript{21}

In the discussion of Chekhov and «Спать Хочется», this notion is crucial, as the negative space created of this bewilderment becomes quickly filled with the \textit{simulacra} of bygone superstitions, or more precisely, the simulacra of simulacra. In «Фонарь», Derzhavin shrewdly diagnoses this problem in these eight lines:

Очаровательный огонь чудный
Mалюет на стене луну.
В ней ходят тени разнородны:
Волшебник мудрый, чудотворный.
Жезла движенем, уст, очес
То их творит, то истребляет;
Народ толпами поспешает
Смотреть к нему таких чудес.22

The "common folk" see in the wondrous, enchanting fire of the lantern a source of miracles, but for those privileged with understanding into its workings, its apparatus projects only charming simulacra.

Comparable to «Фонарь», the apparatus of «Спать хочется» borrows its potency from its supernatural aura: like the prisoners in the Cave, consideration of the object's technical aspect, that is, as a device, threatens its ideality. Similar to Derzhavin's authorial perspective in «Фонарь», the privileged position granted to the reader allows insight into the purely phenomenal character of Varka's hallucinations renders them subject to deflation.

In this way we can clarify our usage of the term "apparatus": our focus rests upon the apparatus primarily as dispositif, cognizant as to how it inheres within its appareil de base, in the sense of the event's technical and historical context. The metatextuality of Chekhov's story then, may be restated as the enactment and relation of an ensconced, "deprived" position (Varka, the viewer) to a privileged, largely-autonomous audience (the reader). Like Derzhavin before him, Chekhov emulates in literary form the effects of the trope. Inasmuch, these inferences, associations, allegories, and symbols remain useful to our understanding, but only if they are treated as essentially illusory, that is, as mere projections of the troubled consciousness of Chekhov's protagonist. The divinatory aura of this symbolic imagery begins to break down as we analyze internally and externally the figure of Varka, following the course of her "illuminations", beginning with her first hallucinatory episode:

Но вот подул ветер, пропали облака, и Варька видит широкое шоссе, покрытое ждью грязью; по шоссе тянутся обозы, плетутся люди с котомками на спинках, носятся взад и вперед какие-то тени; по обе стороны сквозь холодный, суровый туман видны леса. Вдруг люди с котомками и тени надают на землю в ждучую грязь. — «Зачем это?» — спрашивает Варька. — «Спать, спать!» — отвечают ей. И они засыпают крепко, спят сладко, а на телеграфных проволоках сидят вороны и сороки, кричат, как ребенок, и стараются разбудить их.23

The uniquely Chekhovian aspect of this passage is its subtle, darkly comic literalness: the word "phantasmagoria" comes to us from the from the Greek φάντασμα ("ghost") and ἀγορεύω (lit. "allegory", "oration"); Vermeir argues that phantasmagoria, since Plato have always borne rhetorical or didactic import24. This too, is reproduced in the story: when Varka asks about the meaning of what she is being seen, she is immediately told her deepest desire («Спать!»). As the visual sharpness of the phantasm contrasts with its immateriality, so does the clarity of the message sharply contrast with its murky context. It is by this evacuation of sense that the merely representational becomes didactic.25

3. The Mechanism: Motion & Rest

Diegetically, the violent shifts between wakeful perception and phantasmagoric memory also evoke the abrupt mechanism of the magic lantern's slide: Varka's painful (re)viewings of the death of her father, and the difficult sojourn to the town with her presumably deceased mother arrange themselves in a montage, the inner logic of which reflects the pain and cruelty with which her life is inscribed. The significance of this type of this highly temporalized visual style to early cinematic aesthetics is described by Yuri Tsivian in "The Reception of the Moving Image" as a uniquely phenomenological "fascination":
It may be added that the phenomenology of the 'magic cut' had been inherited by the Lumières' shows (and their spectators) from the pre-cinema period of screen practice. An important part of the nineteenth-century fascination with the art of the magic lantern was that, unlike any other kind of images known to the European mind, lantern pictures were not permanently attached to their material bearer, the canvas. The lantern was called magic no so much because it produced images as because it produced them in the twinkling of an eye and on the very same surface.26 (my emphasis)

This impermanence of the image held a special fascination for Chekhov, as evinced in his correspondence with Grigorovitch: "The pictures change gradually, but more rapidly than they do in waking life, so that on awaking it is difficult to remember the transitions from one scene to another.... This abruptness is well brought out in your story, and increases the impression of the dream."27 Similarly, in its depictions of Varka's psychological state, similar to the action of the "magic cut", Chekhov's prose rapidly oscillates between a Gothic air evocative of supernatural possession, and a flatly clinical tone suggestive of only the presence of pathology: "Зеленое пятно и тени приходят в движение, лезут в полуоткрытые, неподвижные глаза Варьки и в ее наполовину уснувшем мозгу складываются в туманные грезы."28 The internal volatility achieved in this passage occurs by way of the inversion of the concrete and the immaterial: the green patch and the shadows, set in motion, steal into Varka's "half-opened, motionless eyes" («полуоткрытые, неподвижные глаза») as might bold thieves through propped window. The phenomenological character of this stylistic device comes through in the apparatus' impression of reality in word and image, the artificial system of relation between appearance and truth. For Baudry, this coercive, rhetorical element of the apparatus rests heavily upon a precondition of forced immobility:

Forced immobility is undoubtedly a valuable argument for the demonstration of religious and idealist conceptions; but the initial immobility was not invented by Plato; it can also refer to the forced immobility of the child who is without motor resources at birth, and to the forced immobility of the sleeper who repeats the postnatal state and even intrauterine existence, but this also the immobility that the visitor to the dim space rediscovers, leaning back in his chair.29 (my emphasis)

The recurring motif of animation and immobilization within the text adds to the psychical interpretation of Varka's hallucinations, as the torsion imparted by Varka's past and present-day traumas loosen the anchors grounding the mise-en-scène, while simultaneously binding Varka. The nature of Varka's confinement achieves special significance in the moments between her hallucinatory episodes. Though Varka is figuratively "bound" in servitude, even her temporary freedom of movement, illustrated during the day as she completes her chores, disrupts the forced immobility required by the apparatus. When she finally returns to the room at the end of the day, she is again ensconced, literally and figuratively within the projective apparatus, wherein the hallucinatory episodes resume without delay. As Varka's sleep deprivation worsens, so do the hallucinations achieve this dangerously coercive ideality. Through this conceit, Chekhov contrasts the assumed bodily agency of the animate mise-en-scène with the subject's own persistent immobility. Under the shadow of the apparatus, the division between bodies and objects is annulled, yet the action of this mechanism is simultaneously laid bare. Likewise, the aforementioned passage from the story, the use of the prosaism «мозг» ("brain") deflates his own poetical conceit, stubbornly delimiting the scope of the phantasmagoric apparatus. Yet, it is within the confines of this inscribed circle that the story's pathological undercurrent lends force to its smoke and mirrors.

By the end of the story, this apparatus has fully taken hold «овладает»30, and Varka murders the child. This outcome belies a series of deranged equivocations, keyed specifically to her waking dream. The depiction of this state is plain: the force which finally possesses her is described as a «ложное представление» ("false representation"). The clarity achieved her mania borders upon ecstatic, a parody of enlightenment:

Варька видит опять грязное шоссе, людей с котомками, Пелагею, отца Ефима. Она всё понимает, всех
As the "passionate desire to sleep" corrupts and commandeers the powers of perception towards its own ends, the false representation serves to add an aura of supernatural justification for killing the infant. Even this proposition is ingeniously dubious: Once the child is dead, not only will Varka immediately enjoy the silence and sleep, but once found out and executed, she will be free from "that force which binds her hand and foot", her servitude. The presence of the apparatus within the text is betrayed through the purely projected character of its associative and discursive products, an essentially vacuous shell. It is this absence which characterizes the "пустяка" which seizes Varka:

Этот враг — ребенок.
Она смеется. Ей удивительно: как это раньше она не могла понять такого пустяка? Зеленое пятно, тени и сверчок тоже, кажется, смеются и удивляются.

The current of laugher echoing through Varka and all the objects represents her complete dissolution within the apparatus and with it, her own ruin. To consider then, the project of "Gothic Realism", as advanced by Ann Komaroni, it is difficult to see in «Спать хочется» anything more than a harrowing *reductio ad absurdum* of the trope of sublime madness, achieved through nothing more than its most faithful reproduction. Like the magician Schröpfer, Varka's fate serves to underscore the telling void at the center of artificial enlightenment, a cruel joke from which nothing follows.

REFERENCES


Kimmerich, Ulrich. 2005. "The Visi-


"Perhaps bewitching, or wizardry
Magical, this world, the lantern?
Wherein visible shadows variate
Wherein with them plays, a czar,"

Derzhavin, Gavrila. "The Lantern". lines 139-142.

The operation of the magic lantern is as follows: a concave mirror in front of a light source collects light and passes it through a slide. On the side is printed an image. The light rays cross through an aperture and meet a lens; the resulting image is projected onto a wall or screen. Crangle, Richard, Heard, Mervyn, and van Dooren, Ine. "Devices and Desires". Realms of Light. 13.


6 In consider of the English-language term "apparatus", it is crucial to distinguish between the two senses of the term, l'appareil and le dispositif, as expounded in "Effets idéologiques produits par l'appareil de base" (1970) and "Le dispositif: approches métapsychologiques de l'impression de réalité" (1975), respectively. On page 31 of L'effet cinéma, Baudry distinguishes them as such: "In a general way we distinguish the basic cinematographic apparatus (l'appareil de base), which concerns the ensemble of the equipment and operations necessary to the production of a film and its projection, from the apparatus (le dispositif) discussed in this article, which solely concerns projection and which includes the subject to whom the projection is addressed. Thus the basic cinematographic apparatus involves the film stock, the camera, developing, montage considered in its technical aspects, etc., as well as the apparatus (dispositif) of projection. The basic cinematographic apparatus is a long way from being the camera itself to which some have wanted to say I limited it (one wonders what bad arguments this can serve)." Though our attention is settled primarily upon the singular event of projection for a viewing subject, and its literary representation (Varka, through Chekhov's text), as Kessler asserts, le dispositif is by necessity one aspect of a larger appareil de base; our supplementary discussion of Derzhavin's poem, as well as Kircher's renderings reflects this relationship.

7 "Before the icon burns its green lamp. Across the entire room, from end to end hangs a clothesline, upon which hangs a swaddle, and a pair of large black trousers. From the icon lamp, a large green macula lays on the ceiling, and the swaddle and trousers cast long shadows on the stove, the cradle, and on Varka...When the icon lamp begins to wink, the macula come alive and begin to move. Their air is close, redolent of cabbage soup and shoe product." Chekhov. "Спать хочется". 1.

8 As was pointed out to me during the proceedings of the Forum, the immediate juxtaposition of the smell of cabbage soup and shoe product provide a humorous punctuation to the scene's supernatural affect.


10 "bound hand and foot". Chekhov. «Спать хочется». 2.

11 "The lamp winks. The green patch and the shadows climb into Varka's half-opened eyes, and within her drowsy rain take shape in misty dreams. She sees dark clouds, which chase one another across the sky and scream, like the child. But now the wind is blowing, the clouds and falling, and Varka sees a wide highway, covered with filthy mud." Ibid. 2. Chekhov's pun with the Russian word «шоссе» appears opaque at first, but rendered in brutish Anglo-Saxon ("highway"), the buried reference becomes clear.

12 As Frank Kessler writes in "The Cinema of Attractions as Dispositif" from The Cinema of Attractions Reloaded, the collusion of the two senses of "apparatus" offers unique potential for the historicization of technique and medium. "At different moments in history, a medium can produce a specific and (temporarily) dominating configuration of technology, text, and spectatorship." 61. (my emphasis)


14 Vermeir, Koen. "The Magic of the Magic Lantern: On Analogical Demonstration and the Visualization of the Visible." 132. This strongly Platonic, ideological view is remarkably parallel to that argued by Eisenstein in "Word and Image"
It seems that in reading the testament of this man [Paracelsus] became like a living lantern, full of strange fancies and frenetic imagination."

Derzhavin. «Фонарь». lines 3-10. This stanza is replete with Neo-Platonic imagery: the enchanting flame, the variform, anthropomorphic shadows («тени разнородны») "daubed" («малюет») on the wall, the «желза» (staff bearing entwined serpents, emblematic of both physicians and alchemists, such as Paracelsus), the superstitious reaction of the masses «толпа», even the "sage miracle-working wizard"(«волебник мудрый, чудотворный»).

"But now the wind blows, the clouds fall, and Varka sees a highway covered with filthy mud; along the highway stretch wagon trains, through which people weave, carrying knapsacks on their backs, shades rushing to and fro. On either side, the forest shone through the cold, cruel mist. Suddenly the people with knapsacks and the shades all fall on the ground, in the mild and filth. —"Why?" —asks Varka. —"To sleep, to sleep!"—they answer her. And they sleep soundly, sleep sweetly, while on the telegraph lines ravens and magpies scream like infants, trying to wake them." Chekov. 2.

Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 5:
Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
In this distracted globe. Remember thee!
Yea, from the table of my memory
I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past,
That youth and observation copied there;
And thy commandment all alone shall live
Within the book and volume of my brain.

The lamp winks. The green patch and the shadows climb into Varka's half-opened eyes, and within her drowsy rain take shape in misty dreams." Chekov. «Спать хочется». 2.

"The infant is her enemy. She laughs. She is surprised: How could she not have been unable to understand such a trifle? The green patch, the shadows, and even the cricket too are laughing, surprised." Chekhov. «Спать хочется». 2

Another remarkable precedent for Chekhov's depiction of the dreamlike quality of sleep deprivation in «Спать хочется» comes to us again from his correspondence with Grigorovitch: "The laughter at the carriage window is a characteristic symptom of Karelin's nightmare. When in dreams one feels the presence of some evil will, the inevitable ruin brought about by some outside force, one always hears something like such laughter.... One dreams of people one loves, too, but they generally appear to suffer together with the dreamer." Chekhov. "Letter to D.V. Grigorovitch (1887)".