

Title: The Soviet Swift: Gulliver's Travel to Stalinist Animation
Author: Robert Bird, University of Chicago

Gulliver's Travels was a singularly popular text in the USSR, attracting the attention of many notable authors. The 1928 illustrated edition by the prestigious publishing house Academia was republished in 1930 and 1932. Individual episodes of the long novel were published separately for children, the latter in a 1937 re-telling by prominent poet Nikolai Zabolotskii. It was the object of the particular fascination of critic Mikhail Levidov and his friend Sigizmund Krzhizhanovskii. The story penetrated deep into Soviet satire, emerging in details like the name of Ostap Bender's car in Il'ia Il'f and Evgenii Petrov's novel *The Golden Calf* (1930). As Andrei Bitov has noted, Gulliver became a functional equivalent of Robinson Crusoe in Soviet cultural consciousness, a solitary agent spreading the new model of civilization. The most successful adaptation of Gulliver was the first Soviet stop-action animation film *The New Gulliver* (1935), which begins with the Young Pioneer Petia reading the Academia edition and heading off to Liliput in his imagination. Aleksandr Ptushko's film, on which Krzhizhanovskii allegedly worked, allows us to assess the key problems in Soviet satire of the 1930s. Of particular interest is whether its reversals of scale support Bakhtin's contemporaneous theory of the Menippean satire.

bird@uchicago.edu