

ROBERT BOROCH

Department of Central and East European Intercultural Studies

University of Warsaw

rboroch@uw.edu.pl

*The Contemporary Revolution of Manners, or, the Fuss over Rock and Roll and the Bikini*

The article is critical of the theses presented in J. Stanisławek's article *Współczesna rewolucja obyczajowa* [*The contemporary revolution of manners*] (hereafter WRO), which introduces the categories of (1) 'traditional culture' and (2) 'contemporary culture', to which attributes are assigned: to the former, elitism, idealism, and asceticism; to the latter, egalitarianism, utilitarianism, and hedonism. It also characterises traditional culture as being oriented towards the realisation of ideals, contemporary culture towards pleasure. The beginning of the collapse of the values of traditional culture is supposed to have been determined by the appearance in Western Europe of rock and roll and the bikini. The main objections to WRO concern: (1) omission of a historical-cultural context; (2) failure to base the analysis on factual data; (3) dichotomous division of categories; (4) ethnocentric evaluation of categories. Stanisławek's article is part and parcel of the war of cultures, i.e. the conflict between conservative and liberal visions of the world (social relations).

Keywords:

theory of culture, war of cultures, anthropological aggression, ethnocentrism