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An Analysis of Witold Lutoslawski's "Variations on a Theme by Paganini" for Two Pianos and an Original Composition "Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra".

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AN ANALYSIS OF WITOLD LUTOSLAWSKI'S
"VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY PAGANINI" FOR TWO PIANOS
AND
AN ORIGINAL COMPOSITION
"CONCERTO FOR TWO PIANOS AND ORCHESTRA"

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Musical Arts
in
The School of Music

by
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ABSTRACT

The dissertation is divided into two parts. Part I is an analysis of Witold Lutosławski's "Variations on a Theme by Paganini" for Two Pianos. This consists of a detailed analysis preceded by a brief introductory discussion of Witold Lutosławski's life and musical background. The composer has followed Paganini's model faithfully as far as the basic thematic material is concerned. However, his addition of supporting harmonies, imitative and free countermelodies, and rhythmical accompaniments make this setting an original composition.

This analysis focuses on harmony, dynamics, counterpoint, rhythm, form and general texture of the piece. The main issues to be discussed are Lutosławski's manipulation of the original subject matter, his development and usage of the above mentioned techniques. In harmony, the usage of polytonality, quartal and whole-tone harmony, tritone and third relationships are discussed. Graphic analyses illustrate the way dynamics shape the entire piece. Although Paganini's theme was written for solo violin, Lutosławski makes his version extremely contrapuntal by incorporating canon (both strict and inversion) between and within piano parts. Rhythmically, Lutosławski follows the original version, but introduces some syncopations and off beat accents. Tempo, dynamic markings, texture and density make the piece seem to fall into three parts.

The second part of this dissertation is an original composition, "Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra." This three movement work is approximately twenty-five minutes in length. The tempos of the movements are fast-slow-fast. The entire piece includes quotations of Taiwanese folk tunes. The first movement's tempo scheme is a palindrome: (A) \( \text{j}=69 \), (B) \( \text{j}=144 \), (C) \( \text{j}=100 \), (D) \( \text{j}=69 \), (C') \( \text{j}=100 \), (B') \( \text{j}=144 \), and (A') \( \text{j}=69 \). It has also elements of a Sonata form regarding thematic materials. A is the introduction, B includes two contrasting themes, C and D are developmental, and B'-A' is the recapitulation. The second movement is through composed. It employs quotations in a

\[ \text{v} \]

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free manner. Movement three is a set of variations using a folk tune as the theme. In addition to the two solo pianos, the orchestral instrumentation includes the following: winds (2222), brass (2221), one timpanist, two percussionists, and strings (minimum 88642).
PART I

AN ANALYSIS OF WITOLD LUTOSLAWSKI'S

VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY PAGANINI FOR TWO PIANOS
PART I
AN ANALYSIS OF WITOLD LUTOSLAWSKI'S
"VARIATIONS ON A THEME BY PAGANINI" FOR TWO PIANOS

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Witold Lutoslawski was born on January 25th, 1913 in Warsaw. He started piano lessons at the age of six. Although he took violin lessons later, his first degree at Warsaw Conservatory was in piano, which he studied with Jerzy Lefeld and completed in 1936. In the following year, he completed another degree in composition with Witold Maliszewski.¹

During the war, Lutoslawski was forced to make his living playing music at Warsaw's cafes because of the German occupation and the paralysis of official musical life in Poland. He appeared as a soloist, sometimes as an accompanist for artists such as the violinist Eugenia Minska, the soprano Ewa Bandrowska-Turska, and the mezzo-soprano Janina Godlewska.²

During this time, much of his piano duo playing was done with his colleague Andrzej Panufnik, a composer and conductor. Their repertoire consisted of arrangements of serious works, rather than light cafe music. The Variations on a Theme by Paganini for Two Pianos was written for such a collaboration during 1941.

This set of variations has achieved its place in the duo-piano repertoire. Unlike the free variation sets by Brahms and Rakhmaninov, Lutoslawski's composition follows Paganini's original variations (from the twenty-fourth Caprice, Op. 1 for solo violin) quite closely. Each variation is translated skillfully into the keyboard idiom. Lutoslawski wrote the first piano part for himself, and the second piano part for Andrzej Panufnik.³

The purpose of this essay is to analyze the variations and to explore their

harmony, melody, counterpoint, dynamic contrast, meter, and texture. The contents of this essay will compare and contrast Paganini's original variations and Lutoslawski's transcription and discuss Lutoslawski's harmonization, management of the texture in both pianos as well as his treatment of counterpoint.

Lutoslawski's variations follow Paganini's model closely. The Caprice, Op. 1, is a classical variation form, in the tradition of J. S. Bach (e.g. the Goldberg Variations), Beethoven (e.g. the Thirty-Two Variations), and Brahms (e.g. Variations on a Theme by J. Haydn), yet he incorporates twentieth century techniques such as the polytonality, parallel fifths, and tritone relationships which make the piece sound characteristic of Lutoslawski. He employs such techniques even in the opening theme, the music then quickly progresses into a light contrapuntal style with a countermelody in Var. I, contrasted by a thicker texture in Var. II. The counterpoint, parallel motion, and tritone relationships continue in Var. III as well, but the texture is somewhat thicker and the style more legato in character. An F# at the end of Var. III presents a deceptive cadence leading into Var. IV. This F# along with a D in Var. IV represents an added note harmony. In contrast to Vars. IV and VI, Var. V incorporates less counterpoint and the melodic line is interlocked and divided between both piano parts.

Var. VI is the only slow variation in the entire work. It is a peaceful interlude that is isolated from the other variations due to its tempo and the fact that it is almost a complete recomposition of Paganini's sixth variation. Lutoslawski incorporates strict canon by inversion in both piano parts throughout; this is the first time that both piano lines intersect each other's registerally.

To resume to the faster tempo, Lutoslawski employs a two-measure "vamp" between Vars. VI and VII, which serves as a bridge and sets up a chromatic neighbor figure in continuous motor rhythm throughout Vars. VII and VIII. He then introduces a whole-tone scale in Vars. VII, VIII, and XI, which (with additional material) actually
produces all twelve pitch classes. In Vars. IX and X, the triplet motor rhythm is reduced to auxiliary note dyads, meaning there is an alternation between the intervals of a perfect fourth and fifth. In order to reduce the momentum (which has been building steadily since Var. VII), the original theme is augmented in Var. X, making it twice as long. Also, the tritone relationships become more strongly accentuated throughout the variation as part of the accompanying figure in Piano I. The whole-tone scale which has been built up from Var. VII is very evident in Var. XI.

In ending the piece, Lutoslawski chooses not to follow Paganini's Finale but instead restates the original theme in augmented form to serve as a recapitulation. Lutoslawski then ends with Paganini's original Finale, incorporating it into a coda, thus producing an exciting conclusion. However, Lutoslawski's addition of supporting harmonies, imitative and free countermelodies, and rhythmical accompaniments make this setting a different piece entirely; the following analysis will illustrate this in further detail. For purposes of discussion, the variations will be grouped as following: Vars. I, II, III; Vars. IV, V, VI; Vars. VII, VIII, IX, X; Vars. XI, XII and Finale.
Paganini's original theme is a lively unaccompanied dance for violin in the key of A minor, labeled *Quasi Presto*. It is divided into two even sections of eight measures. The first section consists of one four measure phrase played twice, implying tonic and dominant harmonies in alternation (see example 1). The second part is an eight-bar phrase with no repeat. It opens with the harmonic sequence $V/iv$, $iv$, $V/III$, $III$ in mm. 5-8. Beginning in m. 9, the harmonic motion progresses through a leading-tone diminished seventh chord, tonic triad, an (Italian) augmented sixth chord ending with an authentic cadence (see example 2).

In Lutoslawski's two piano version, the opening theme is labeled *Allegro Capriccioso* and a metronomic marking is given ($\mathbf{J} = \text{ca 144}$). Melodically, the first piano follows the original model very closely (compare the two versions in example 3). Lutoslawski writes out all eight measures instead of repeating the first four bar section.
Example 2: Paganini’s original theme (mm. 5-12) and implied harmonies

Because the accompaniment in Piano II is constantly changing, mm. 5 and 6 are displaced and equal the repeat of mm. 2 and 3 an octave lower (see example 3). In the second part, Lutoslawski adds dynamics, sub sf, f, molto sf, and diminuendo, which are not included in the original theme (see example 3).

Harmonically, Piano I adheres closely to the original theme in the first part, and Piano II serves as an accompaniment, but in a non-traditional manner. Lutoslawski uses dissonant harmonies in Piano II to create a mysterious and restless quality. The combination of Piano I and Piano II produces a feeling of polytonality. For example, in m. 2, Piano II has an F⁷ chord against Piano I’s E major chord; in m. 3, Piano II has a D major chord with an added sixth against Piano I’s A minor chord. The final chord in m. 4 is a pure E major triad—the expected traditional dominant. In m. 8, however, this is replaced by C major and D major triads (see example 3), whose roots create a stepwise
Example 3: 1) Original Paganini theme

Example 3: 2) Lutoslawski's two piano version (example contd.)

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ascent to the opening polychord of the next section (see example 4). The voice leading and chord succession are non-traditional, and most dissonances are not prepared and resolved in the traditional way. The parallel open fifths in the bass at the beginning recur later (see 

Example 4: Lutoslawski's version Piano II mm. 7-9 rising steps

Piano I mm. 9, 11, 13, 14) and throughout the piece. From m. 9, the tritone relationship, which plays an important role in the entire piece begins to apply. A series of tritone relationships are found beginning in m. 9, for example: Piano II Eb major chord against Piano I A major chord; m. 11, Piano II Db major chord against Piano I G major chord; m. 13, Piano II Cb major chord against the F major chord in Piano I and m. 14, Piano II Bb major chord against the E major chord in Piano I (see example 5). From mm. 9-16, Piano II provides a stepwise bass line, Eb (m. 9)--Db (mm. 10-11)--Cb (mm. 12-13)--Bb
Example 5: Lutoslawski’s version (Theme mm. 9-14)

(m. 14)—B♭7 (continuing to the second ending tenor voice, m. 15b)—A (the second ending tenor voice, m. 16b), and simultaneously, in mm. 15b-16b, the bass line provides F-E-A as an authentic cadence (see bass outline in example 6). In m. 15a, Piano II has a G9-b5 against an Italian sixth chord in Piano I. The seventh (B-natural) is retained in the tonic resolution, which produces a jazzy characteristic (see example 7). Just as the left hand turned toward C in m. 8, it again shifts in this direction in m. 15a of the first ending. The repeat in the second part does not exist in the original theme. Lutoslawski concludes the first ending on dominant, and the second ending on tonic. In m. 12, he begins to combine the two harmonies of both pianos together. The E♭, in Piano I, (instead of the original E-natural) together with Piano II’s right hand, gives an F7 sonority (see

Example 6: Piano II mm. 9-16b
Example 7: Lutoslawski's version mm. 15a-16a

Example 8). The $E_b$ and $F^7$ together are a preparation for the $E_b$ in m. 13 Piano II. Also, in mm. 13 and 14, the tritone relationship continues. He uses an $F$ major in Piano I against a $C_b$ major in Piano II, which is different from the original diminished seventh chord; and in m. 14, Piano I's $E$ major chord sounds against the $B_b$ major chord in Piano II.

Example 8: Lutoslawski's version mm. 12-13
Example 9: Reductive sketch of the theme
CHAPTER 3
VARIATIONS I, II, AND III

In Vars. I, II, and III, parallel open fifths from the opening theme are constantly employed in the bass line accompaniment throughout these three variations (see example 10). At the beginning of the second section of Var. I, the open fifths in Piano II move in a

Var. I

![Diagram of Var. I]

Var. II

![Diagram of Var. II]

Var. III

![Diagram of Var. III]

Example 10: Parallel open fifths in Vars. I, II, and III
chromatic descending bass line reaching an F pedal in m. 9 at which point three measures of tritone polyharmony (C♭=B against F) occur (see example 11). In Var. II, parallel fifths freely occur without interruption throughout the variation. In Var. III, the parallel fifths move to the bass line of Piano I and occur throughout the entire variation (see example 10, Var. III).

In addition to parallel fifths, tritone relationships also represent a development of ideas (i.e. of Lutoslawski's ideas, not Paganini's) from the theme. For example, in Var. I, there is a collision between the F and C♭ triads in m. 9 which is reminiscent of m. 13 of the theme. This collision not only happens between the two pianos but also within Piano II itself (see example 11). This tritone relationship continues throughout the first part of Var. II between the two pianos (see example 12), where the C♯ and G♯ neighboring harmonies of Piano I clash against the G and D harmonies in Piano II. In Var. III, tritone-related

Theme

Var. I

Example 11

harmonies occur on the final beats of mm. 1, 3, 5, 7, 10, and 11, cadencing on F♯, (see example 13), which serves as a connecting added note harmony between Vars. III and IV.

Example 12: Var. II

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Example 13: Var. III

Although Lutoslawski employs non-traditional harmonic progressions throughout Vars. I, II, and III, there are many other elements that have also been changed. These changes may represent Lutoslawski's interpretation (or re-reading) of Paganini's original version. Sudden changes of dynamics which include a wide range of crescendos, diminuendos and accents as well occur frequently throughout Vars. I and II. Var. III, however, employs only one dynamic level (ff) throughout the entire variation.

For example, the character of Var. I is not only lighter with staccato triplets but is also very contrapuntal in texture. It is the first time that the two pianos have independent contrapuntal lines, and most of the time, their lines are in contrary motion (see example 14). This counterpoint continues in Var. II between both pianos (see example 15).
Example 15: Var. II

although here the connective lines move in parallel motion. There is a change in tempo
(Meno mosso \( \downarrow \) =ca 100) and the texture becomes denser due to the thirty-second-note
chords in Piano I. As in Paganini's original theme, Lutoslawski writes out the repeat for
the first section, using contrasting higher octave registers throughout the rest of the
variation with the exception of the last measure. This heavy texture is actually increased in
Var. III in both piano parts with \( ff \) throughout. Here, the melody is transferred to Piano II
in the upper register, and at the same time, Piano I becomes an accompaniment. The
syncopated rhythms here will become more prominent in later variations (especially Vars.
VI, VII, and XI).
Example 16: Reductive sketches of Vars. I, II, and III (example contd.)
Var. III
CHAPTER 4
VARIATIONS IV, V, AND VI

In Var. IV, Piano II retains the primary melodic role. This role shifts to Piano I in Var. V and returns to Piano II in Var. VI. Melodically, Vars. IV and VI are highly contrapuntal. In Var. IV, the melody (played by Piano II) is supported by counterpoint in contrary motion (played by Piano I). Also, in Var. VI, the two lines are a strict canon by inversion (see example 17). Var. IV is in a fast tempo (♩=100) and is articulated staccato. This is the opposite of Var. VI's slow tempo (♩=80) which is very lyrical in character.

Example 17: Var. VI---strict canon by inversion
Between these two contrapuntal movements is the chordal Var. V. The loud dynamic level of Var. V (f and louder) stands out against the two softer variations surrounding it. Var. IV’s use of crescendos and diminuendos create a smoother dynamic change, although the fp (m. 13), which is a sudden change of dynamics, is also employed. In Var. VI, the dynamic level does not exceed p. Also in Var. V, a new rhythmic pattern, \( \frac{\text{\( \uparrow \) \( \uparrow \) \( \uparrow \)}}{\text{\( \downarrow \) \( \downarrow \) \( \downarrow \)}} \), is used instead of the nearly continuous sixteenth-note motion in both Vars.

Polyharmony continues to be a feature in these three variations. In Var. IV, Piano I’s arpeggios along with Piano II’s melody project the tonal center of A minor. The lower D (mm. 1-2, 5-6) and lower F# (mm. 3-4, 7-8) behave as "added notes" contradicting the harmonic structure of the original theme (a simple alternation of tonic and dominant) (see example 18). Piano I’s right hand serves as a countermelody, embellishing Piano II’s melody in contrary motion (see example 19). Beginning in m. 9, Piano II continues the original theme and its implied harmonies, as shown in example 20. Piano I’s right hand maintains its countermelody role, however, the left hand’s accented arpeggios create polychordal effects against Piano II’s harmony. These polychordal effects are realized in a very contrapuntal manner (see example 20), and end with a strong tonic cadence.

Example 18: Var. IV

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Example 19: Var. IV

Example 20: Var. IV—polychordal effects in a contrapuntal manner

In Var. V, the neighbor note figures and the implied harmonies of Paganini's original version are shared between the two pianos. The three upper lines of the theme are conventional (tonal), but harmonies with the bass line of Piano II asserting the key of F major (see example 21). This polyharmony becomes more intense from mm. 9-15. Here the low bass line is doubled, Piano II's right hand follows Paganini's original harmonies, but the bass line adds a series of falling fifths implying a different analysis, with each chord acting as an altered applied dominant to the next as detailed in example 22. The prominent tritones continue from Var. IV Piano I's left hand E-A# (mm. 3-4, 7-8) and between the two pianos as shown in example 23.
Example 21: Var. V—melody shared by both pianos in different registers

Example 22: Var. V—falling fifths and altered applied dominant chords

Example 23: Tritones in Var. IV

Repeats are written out in Vars. IV and V for different reasons. In Var. IV, it is to provide two different endings for Piano I’s right hand in the high register; while the left hand remains in the same arpeggiated pattern (see example 24). In Var. V, it is for the higher register of Piano I’s right hand, and the lower register in Piano II’s left hand (see example 25). Also, note the similarity between the melody which begins on the second beat of m. 14 and that in mm. 7-8. Unlike mm. 7-8, in which the melody goes up, the
Example 24: Var. IV (mm. 3-4, 7-8, 14-16)

Example 25: Var. V (mm. 1-8) (example contd.)
melodic figure in mm. 14-15 contrapuntal surrounds an A, which is positioned at a cadence point (see example 24). This leads to the next variation (Var. V) whose melody hovers around an E, with upper and lower neighbor tones (see example 25).

Paganini’s Var. VI is forte, and gives no indication of a slower tempo. However, Lutoslawski’s Var. VI serves as the slow movement of the entire work. It sounds isolated from the rest of the variations because of its tempo and character. The tempo change (poco lento $\frac{1}{4} = 80$) and the soft and smooth legato line give it the character of a slow movement or a peaceful interlude. It is also the first time that two piano lines cross each other. In mm. 5b-10, there are hints of the whole-tone scale and modes (see example 26). Mm. 5b-10 serve as a preparation for the whole-tone scale in the next variation. At this point, Lutoslawski’s Variations depart most strongly from the controlling overall tonic, A minor. The move to Eb (a tritone distant) reflects the continuous emphasis on tritones in the local polyharmonies but now on a grander scale. Eb at the end is a connection to the two-measure vamp. Melodically, this variation is in parallel thirds throughout.
To prepare for the next variation, *Allegro molto* ($\text{J} = 100$), Lutoslawski uses a two-measure "vamp": it consists of a chromatic figure in triplets in the right hand of Piano II against its left hand $E^b$ (polyharmony) (see example 27), which serves as a link between Vars. VI and VII, and it also serves as a modulation for the key of $E^b$ in Var. VII. The key returns to A minor later in Var. VIII.

Example 27: Vamp (*Allegro molto* $\text{J} = 100$)

Var. IV

Var. V

Example 28: Reductive sketches of Vars. IV, V, and VI (example contd.)
Var. VI

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CHAPTER 5
VARIATIONS VII, VIII, IX, AND X

After the slow tempo of Var. VI, Var. VII returns to a faster tempo of Allegro molto (\( \text{\textbf{J}} = 100 \)). A two-measure vamp located betweenVars. VI and VII, a very important feature, serves as preparation for Vars. VII and VIII. This triplet chromatic pattern (the right hand of piano II) against an Eb open fifth (the left hand of Piano II) continues throughout Var. VII. In Var. VIII (piano II), it is replaced by a diatonic triplet pattern (see example 29). This feature eventually develops into a quartal pattern of alternating fourths and fifths pattern in Var. IX (see example 30).

Var. VII Piano II: Chromatic

Var. VIII Piano II: Diatonic

Example 29: Vars. VII and VIII
Harmonically, Var. VII features the whole-tone scale in Piano I mm. 3 and 4. Although whole-tone segments appear earlier in the Theme mm. 9-13 Piano II and Var. III mm. 5-8 Piano I, they were not prominent. Piano II continues this whole-tone texture from mm. 5-12 as the bass moves from $E_b$ (m. 5) to $D_b$ (mm. 6-7) to B (mm. 8-9) to $D_b$ (m. 10) and to $E_b$ (mm. 11-12) (see example 31). In mm. 9-10, as the bass returns to $E_b$,

Lutoslawski employs a chromatic pattern B-C-$D_b$-$D$-$E_b$ (see example 31). Against this whole-tone figure in Piano II, he creates a tritone relationship in Piano I, which produces a whole-tone "canon" in both pianos (mm. 5-8) (see example 32). From mm. 9-12, the melody moves back to the tonic.
Example 32: Var. VII—whole-tone canon and tritone relationships

In Piano I, the first section of Var. VIII follows the original harmonic structure closely (i-V-i-V). Harmonically, in the second part, mm. 5-8, the two pianos correspond to each other closely reproducing the sequence implied by the theme. However, from m. 9 to the end, Lutoslawski begins to emphasize the tritone relationship between the two pianos and within Piano II itself (see example 33). In mm. 11-12, the chromatic figures in Piano II conflict with the whole-tone features in Piano I (see example 33).

Example 33: Tritone relationships and whole-tone features in Var. VIII mm. 9-12
In Var. IX, the triplets are reduced to auxiliary note dyads (see example 30) to accompany the theme in Piano II. Harmonically, the two pianos correspond to each other in this variation. In the first section, the harmony is again a simple i-V-i-V alternation, but the jazzy syncopations and sf dynamic accents give the variation a fresh sound. In the second part mm. 5-8, the harmony falls into the auxiliary note resolution pattern. In mm. 5-6, Piano I employs, harmonically, the pitches G-D in the right hand and A-E in the left hand. The right hand combination of G-D switches to the left hand in mm. 7-8. As the left hand takes over the G-D the right hand changes to an F-C pattern (this occurs also in mm. 7-8). Two bars later, in m. 9, the right hand F-C moves to the left hand. This entire progression is heard beneath the A minor descending scale passage of Piano II. Also, in mm. 9 and 12 of Piano I, the right and left hand are exchanged, thus simultaneously supporting the Eb chromatics of Piano II in m.12. This chromatic scale reaches the tonic A in Var. X, which is the tritone of Eb, and begins the theme of Var. X. Also, the pitches D-A (m. 12 of Var. IX Piano I left hand) continue and expand into a pedal tone in Var. X that supports its melody in Piano II (see example 34).

Example 34: Var. IX Piano I mm. 5-12

Compared to Vars. VII and VIII, Var. IX is more active in its articulation, with staccato all the way through. It also has huge dynamic changes (sf-p), while Var. VII and VIII are more legato and softer in dynamics. The texture of Var. VII is thinner and the range is smaller, but Var. IX has the thickest texture and the highest range, while Var. VIII has the lowest range.
In order to slow the momentum (which has been building steadily since Var. VII),
the original theme (which is in Piano II) is presented in augmentation, thus doubling the
length of this variation. The repeated section is written out. The accompaniment in Piano
I, as mentioned earlier, is a continuation from Var. IX with the alternation of perfect
intervals (fourth and fifth) throughout the entire variation. The harmony implied by the
theme (Piano II) is the same as the original in A minor (i-V-i-V), but Piano I sets the pedal
tones D (mm. 1-6, 9-14), F (mm. 7, 15-16), A and C (m. 8) against it (see example 35),
again, as in earlier Variations.

Example 35: Pedal tones in Var. X

The second part of this variation begins in m. 17, where polychords occur. The
harmony of the augmented theme (in Piano II) changes to A major (V/iv) against Piano I's
left hand A minor chord alternating with an Eb major chord, again displaying the familiar
tritone relationship. The theme, in m. 20, deviates slightly from the original. The
preceding four bar phrase is transposed to G in mm. 21-24. In mm. 24 the theme deviates
slightly from the original as it did earlier (see example 36). From mm. 25-32, Lutoslawski
changes the theme into 3 + 2 + 3 bar groups. Although the theme is changed from the
original, the harmonic structure remains similar to that of the previous two phrases (mm.
17-24). The pedal tone is moved from G to F and its tritone-related B triad is in Piano I's
left hand (see example 37).
Example 36: Var. X—theme deviation and tritone relationship

Example 37: Var. X—3 + 2 + 3 bar groups

Dynamics gradually build up from a soft beginning, rising steadily from m. 8 to ff at the end. Piano II’s theme, most of the time, stays in the high register. Piano I’s accompaniment is more contrasting. From m. 24 (in Piano I), the right hand moves an octave higher, and from m. 25, the left hand pedal note moves an octave lower, reaching the highest and lowest notes in this variation. For its articulation, the theme is lyrical, but the accompanying part in Piano I is very active with accents and staccatos. The dynamics reach ff and the meter changes (4/4) for the next variation.
Example 38: Reductive sketches of Vars. VII, VIII, IX, and X (example contd.)
Var. X:
CHAPTER 6
VARIATIONS XI, XII, AND FINALE

Thematic material in Var. XI is again a departure from Paganini's original. The high E's stand out from the melody (m. 1), but except for the arpeggiated figure in m. 2, this does not closely resemble Paganini's music. The tempo marking, Piu mosso, is faster \( \frac{d}{\text{tempo}} = 144 \) than previous four variations \( \frac{d}{\text{tempo}} = 100 \). The dynamic level stays loud \( \text{ff} \) in the first half which has a repeat sign, but it drops in the second half to allow dramatic swells.

The polychords and tritone relationships continue in this variation. The composer highlights the tritone relationship in both piano parts, thus creating strong polytonal effects. Another important feature is the whole-tone scale, which was actually introduced earlier in Var. VII. This whole-tone scale is projected by triads ascending stepwise from D to G\# (m. 1). Also, it serves as a bass foundation while the tritone relationship is presented on the top (see example 39). Dense polychords occur in m. 5, above a whole-tone scale in

![Example 39: Whole-tone scale and tritone relationships in Var. XI](image)

Piano II's left hand G - A - B - C\# which turns into a five-note grouping of sixteenth notes (based on the whole-tone pattern) in m. 6 (see example 40). Mm. 7-8 are an exact repeat
of mm. 5-6, only transposed a major second lower with a 3/4 meter change for the next phrase (see example 40). The whole-tone scale continues but moves to Piano I's left hand

Example 40: Var. XI mm. 5-8

against a tritone relationship in Piano II, which ends the variation with a glissando from E to A. The original theme is then stated in augmentation, in Piano II, beginning where the glissando from the previous variation ended (see example 41).

Example 41: Var. XI mm. 9-12
Before reaching Paganini's original Finale, Lutoslawski highlights the original theme for sixteen measures in what amounts to an additional variation. This theme is played by Piano II, with the repeat written out. In the accompanying part in Piano I, A minor and C# major neighboring chords alternate in triplets throughout mm. 1-2, then change to D major and C# major neighboring chords alternating triplets in mm. 3-4; then it repeats the same thing throughout m. 8. Simultaneously, the downbeat pedal chords, F major (m.1), D major (m.3), F major (m. 5), D major (m. 7) are sustained for two measures each (see example 42).

Example 42: Var. XII mm. 1-8

From m. 9, a similar structure continues. The low tonic pedal tone in Piano I is sustained in mm. 9-10, mm. 11-12, then diminishes to one measure. In m. 13, a chromatic ascent begins, reaching C in m. 15, then continuing chromatically to the dominant in m. 16. The accompaniment remains in triplets, now scattered throughout the various registers. The theme remains in Piano II but changes slightly in mm. 11-16, at first introducing only a few chromatic tones, then departing quite radically in the final bars to settle on the melodic tritone D - G# (see example 43).
In Paganini's Finale, the implied harmony is i - V/iv - iv - vii°7 (mm. 1-4), and is repeated exactly in mm. 5-8. It ends with an eight-measure cadential tonic: A major appears as a picardy third. However, in Lutoslawski's piano version, this Finale material is used in abbreviated form as a coda which remains in A minor. Figures like Paganini's arpeggios appear in Piano I, and the triplet accompaniment shifts to Piano II. The tritone A-D♯ occurs prominently in mm. 17 and 19, between both pianos and within Piano II itself. The basic harmony is tonic but with a chromatic scale woven through the whole coda in Piano II (see example 44).

This brief Coda provides the climax of the whole piece. A crescendo molto intensifies the already forte dynamic level, with added sfff in mm. 9, 11, 13, 14, 21-24, and the tempo increases once again on the final page. Besides these, the glissandi in mm. 1, 4-5, 8-9, and the unmeasured tremolo with fff on mm. 21-22 really reach its high point and close the piece with great excitement.
Paganini's Finale:

Lutoslawski's Coda:

Example 44: Paganini's Finale and Lutoslawski's Coda (example contd.)
Example 45: Reductive sketches of Vars. XI and XII

(example contd.)
Var. XII:

Coda

Chromatic

Chromatic
CHAPTER 7
CONCLUSION

As mentioned previously, Witold Lutoslawski's *Variations on a Theme by Paganini for Two Pianos*, adheres closely to Paganini's version. However, Lutoslawski's work is no mere transcription. His addition of supporting harmonies, imitative and free countermelodies, and rhythmical accompaniments make this setting a different piece entirely, as shown earlier in the detailed analysis.

This essay has provided an in-depth discussion of Lutoslawski's use of harmony, counterpoint, and rhythm/texture and other aspects as well. The implied harmony of Paganini's original theme was the source for Lutoslawski's two piano version, and from this theme Lutoslawski derived visions for later development.

Lutoslawski accompanies the opening theme with polyharmony in both piano parts. From this nucleus grows an array of polychords and bitonality that are presented in many fashions throughout the entire composition. Also, the sequences of falling thirds and rising steps in the accompaniment to the theme recur later in the piece. The sequence of falling thirds develops into rising thirds in Vars. III, X, and XII, foreshadowing the tonal departures to F# and D found later in Var. IV. The emphasis on falling fifths along with sequences of a dominant 7–#5 is of particular interest in Vars. V and VIII. Also, the use of parallel motion--particularly parallel fifths--occurs in the harmonization of the theme and is employed throughout the entire piece. In the opening theme, Lutoslawski introduces important tritone relationships which are prominent features in Vars. I, II, III, and IV. These tritone relationships create polychords in both pianos, and foreshadow the large-scale departure to Eb in Var. VII and the Coda, thus projecting a tritone relationship of A–Eb. This tritone relationship builds intensely from Var. VII, and is thus interwoven with whole-tone harmony in Vars. X and XI. This whole-tone harmony is first officially
introduced in Var. VII, but it is obliguely suggested in the opening theme and Vars. III and VI. The tritone relationships and whole-tone harmony climax simultaneously in Var. XI.

Lutoslawski's counterpoint is highly structured. He achieves an effective balance through the use of parallelism and contrary motion in the melodic lines. In Var. VI, he employs a strict canon by inversion and gradually builds adding a triplet rhythm in Var. VII and quartal dyads in Var. IX. These factors, along with others, gradually create greater tension as well as thicker texture.

Since Lutoslawski employs Paganini's original theme and follows its model faithfully, some features of the rhythmic structure are similar to the original. However, Lutoslawski's incorporation of displacement and syncopation creates complex rhythmic details. In an effort to express mood and color, Lutoslawski has created an untraditional type of modulation in Vars. V, VI, and VII. Although it presents aspects of a bitonal setting, it most assuredly offers the listener a modulating flavor. The modality in Var. VI, for example, exemplifies a strong sense of transition. Lutoslawski also achieves color and mood in the variations by altering the melodic material from its original form. Examples of these alterations appear in such places as Var. IV, mm. 7-8, 14-16, and Var. XI, m. 3. In Var. XII, he not only substitutes the original opening theme for the original Var. XII theme, but he also lowers some of the pitches a half step (examples: A♭ instead of A-natural in m. 11, E♭ instead of E-natural in m. 12, and B♭ instead of B-natural in m. 14). In addition to these changes, Lutoslawski also employs added-note chords throughout the entire work. Texture and tension are increased gradually with dynamics and other features, bringing the piece to its final climax. The graph below diagrams the overall shape and climax of the piece:

```
I   II  III  IV  V  VI  VII  VIII  IX  X  XI  XII
```

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In the graph, one can easily see how the materials Lutoslawski employed relate as a group. The light contrapuntal texture from Var. I gradually intensifies, leading into the fortissimo chordal Var. III. Despite the continuation of counterpoint in Var. IV, the dynamics diminish to create a second section that builds up through Var. V. Var. VI brings a drastic change in dynamics which totally change the character of the variation, making it extremely contrapuntal, slow in tempo and legato in style. This movement, unlike the others, functions to relieve tension and create a sense of peace. Returning to a faster tempo and a vivacious character, a new section begins with Var. VII. Lutoslawski uses a two-measure vamp to introduce new material, consisting of a triplet rhythm which continues throughout Var. VIII. This figure is reduced to neighboring note dyads in Vars. IX and X, but their rhythm remains propulsive. The dynamics continue to be somewhat soft in Var. IX, but there is a gradual crescendo leading into and continuing throughout Vars. X and XI. The dynamics in Var. XI are intensified even more by the whole-tone scale and tritone relationships. The glissando at the end of Var. XI brings out the recurring theme in augmented form which Lutoslawski inserts to relax the tension. Finally, Paganini’s Finale appears as a Coda thus creates an exciting conclusion.

In terms of the compositional procedure, bitonality, tritone relationships, whole-tone scales, chromaticism, counterpoint, texture, register, dynamics, rhythm, and articulation are all important factors and are interwoven throughout the composition. Lutoslawski’s set of variations, like the free variation sets by Brahms and Rakhmaninov on this famous theme, has achieved its place in the duo-piano repertoire.4

BIBLIOGRAPHY


PART II
AN ORIGINAL COMPOSITION
"CONCERTO FOR TWO PIANOS AND ORCHESTRA"

A. INSTRUMENTATION

2 Flutes (Fl)
1 Piccolo (Picc)
   (Flute 2 interchanges with Piccolo)
2 Oboes (Ob)
2 Clarinets in B♭ (Cl)
2 Bassoons (Bsn)
2 Horns in F (Hm)
2 Trumpets in C (Tpt)
2 Trombones (Tbn)
1 Tuba (Tba)
4 Timpani (Timp)
2 Pianos (Pno)
Violin I (Vln I)
Violin II (Vln II)
Viola (Via)
Cello (VC)
Double Bass (DB)

2 Percussionists (Perc):
   Perc 1: Wood Block (WB)
         Wind Chimes (WC)
         Triangle (Tri)
         Suspended Cymbal (SC)
         Concussion Block (CB)
         Tambourine (Tamb)
   Perc 2: Bass Drum (BD)
         Triangle (Tri)
         Wind Chimes (WC)
         Wood Block (WB)
         Suspended Cymbal (SC)
         Concussion Block (CB)

NOTE:
1. The score is in C.
2. There is no pause between Variations in the third movement.

B. FOLKTUNES USED:

I

II

III

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CONCERTO
for TWO PIANOS and ORCHESTRA

Score in C

Adagio (d=64)

Flute (Piccolo)
Oboe
B♭ Clarinet
Bassoon
F Horn
C Trumpet
Trombone
Tuba
Timpani
Percussion

Adagio (d=69)

Piano I

Piano II

Adagio (d=68)

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello
Double Bass

Ling Chao Chen

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* Aim for as fast as possible.
VITA

Ling Chao Chen, a native of Taiwan, was born in the city of Kaohsiung in 1959. After the elementary school and private studio teaching, Chen came to United States in 1981 to advance her studies in Western music. She completed both bachelor of music in 1985 and master of music in 1987, in piano performance at Pittsburg State University. The major professors included John MacKay and Susan Machant. In 1988, Chen completed a master of music in Theory/composition with Richard Cook as well as a Piano Technology Certificate. In 1991, she received an educational specialist, a post master degree in Community College and Higher Education at Pittsburg State University, Pittsburg, Kansas. Upon graduation from PSU, Chen furthered her studies at Louisiana State University under the professorship of Dinos Constantinides, where she will receive a doctor of musical arts degree in December 1996.

Chen is a member of the following professional organizations and honor society: American Music Center, Society of Composer, International Alliance for Women in Music, National Association of Composers USA, Piano Technicians Guild, and Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society. Her music has been performed in Pittsburg, Kansas; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Houston, Texas; as well as her native Taiwan. She has received commissions by the following: the Houston Chinese Adult Choir, Houston Chinese Youth Orchestra, Baton Rouge Children's Choir (composer in residence 1995-96), and with Paul Tsai, who is the most famous operatic singer from Taiwan. She has also received commissions from numerous performers. As a music teacher, Chen has maintained a studio of teaching piano, composition and theory. A member of the Piano Technicians Guild, she is also an experienced piano technician in piano tuning, repairing and rebuilding.

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DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

Candidate: Ling Chao Chen

Major Field: Music

Title of Dissertation: An Analysis of Witold Lutoslawski's "Variations on a Theme by Paganini" for Two Pianos and An Original Composition "Concerto for Two Pianos and Orchestra"

Approved:

Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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David H. Sams Jr.

James E. Belke

Date of Examination: July 24, 1996