

MARCH 1-2, 2024 "DIALOGUES

## **LEV KARSAVIN:** THE WAY OF THE RUSSIAN PHILOSOPHER IN LITHUANIA

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#### FRIDAY March 1, 2024

9.30 Opening of the Conference Sr. Teresa Obolevitch, The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow.

Head of the Organizing Committee **Karina & Andrey Chernyak**, NGO "Dialogues of Cultures",
Vilnius

#### Section 1 (chair: Teresa Obolevitch)

9.40 Gintautas Mažeikis, Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania

Экзегетика и Метафизика истории Л.П. Карсавина

10.10 Françoise Lesourd, Université Jean Moulin, IRPhiL, France

Творчество Льва Карсавина как размышление над истоками европейской мысли

- 10.40 Discussion
- 11.10 Coffee break

#### Section 2 (chair: Daniela Steila)

- 11.30 Sławomir Mazurek, Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland Karsavins' Philosophy of History and its Place in Russian and European Thought
- **12.00** Aleksandra Berdnikova, University of Turin, Italy
  The Middle Ages and the crisis of Western culture:
  L.P. Karsavin, N.A. Berdyaev, S.L. Frank and O. Spengler
- 12.30 Tomasz Herbich, University of Warsaw, Poland Idea of Progress in the Light of Metaphysics of History. Some Remarks on Karsavin's "Philosophy of History"
- 13.00 Discussion
- 13.30–15.00 Lunch (G39 Cafe, Giedraičių St. 39)

#### Section 3 (chair: Harry Moore)

15.00 Ruri Hosokawa, The University of Tokyo, Japan
The correspondence between ideas of Lev Karsavin's
"On personality" and Pavel Florensky's concept of form

### 15.30 Rev. Robert F. Slesinski, The Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic (NJ), USA

The Metaphysics of All-Embracing Unity of L. P. Karsavin: A Paean to Love

16.00 Nataliia Shelkovaia, Volodymyr Dahl East Ukrainian National University, Ukraine; University of Turin, Italy; USERN

Whether L. P. Karsavin's All-Unity is All-Unity? (Phenomenology of all-unity in philosophy, religion and sacred art)

- 16.30 Discussion
- 17.00 Coffee break

Section 4 (chair: Andrius Valevicius)

- **17.20** Janusz Dobieszewski, University of Warsaw, Poland Достоевский Льва Карсавина
- 17.50 Lilianna Kiejzik, University of Zielona Gora, Poland Лев Карсавин в переписке семьи Флоровских (на основании архивных материалов)
- 18.20 Discussion
- 19.00 Supper (G39 Cafe, Giedraičių St. 39)

SATURDAY March 2, 2024

Section 5 (chair: Ruri Hosokawa)

- **9.30** Harry Moore, Beijing Normal University, China Lev Karsavin and Natural Theology
- 10.00 Daniel Kisliakov, University of Divinity, Melbourne, Australia

Personhood in the Russian Diaspora milieu and Lev Karsavin's Contribution

- **10.30 Yuki Fukui, Waseda University, Tokio, Japan**The meaning of life and death: L.P. Karsavin, N.F. Fedorov and F.M. Dostoevsky
- 11.00 Discussion
- 11.30 Coffee break

#### Section 6 (chair: Pavel Lavrinec)

#### 12.00 Gintautas Mažeikis, Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania

Л. Карсавин. От симфонической к пульсирующей личности

### 12.30 Nikolai Kostin, The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, Poland

Человек в истории: концепция «симфонической личности» Л.П. Карсавина и «Homo Ludens» Й. Хейзинги

13.00 Discussion

13.30–14.50 Lunch (G39 Cafe, Giedraičių St. 39)

#### Section 7 (chair: Françoise Lesourd)

### **14.50** Pavel Lavrinec, Vilnius University, Lithuania Лев Карсавин и русскоязычная среда межвоенной Литвы

#### 15.20 Marija Čepaityte, Vilnius, Lithuania Отец Станисловас Добровольскис – переводчик Карсавина

- 15.50 Pylyp Bilyi, University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland Краткая история спора между Львом Карсавиным и Николаем Лосским
- 16.20 Discussion
- 16.50 Coffee break

#### Section 8 (chair: Marija Čepaityte)

### 17.10 Agata Czapiewska, The Institute of Literary Studies, Poland

Between East and West, stages of Dialogue – Stanislav Przybyszewski and Lev Karsavin

# 17.40 Andrius Valevicius, Université de Sherbrooke, Canada The original topics in Karsavin's philosophy in advance of well-known Western philosophers and his emphasis on Christian dogma as a philosophical tool

- 18.10 Discussion and Concluding remarks
- 19.00 Banquet

#### **Abstracts**

#### Gintautas Mažeikis Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania

#### Экзегетика и Метафизика истории Л.П. Карсавина

«Метафизика истории» – сочинение Карсавина написанное в 1942–1947 годах на литовском языке. Доклад делается на основании изучения машинописи и рукописи хранящихся в Вильнюсе и Санкт-Петербурге. Карсавин рассматривает историю скитания человечества, как поиск пути возвращения в потерянный Рай. Преодолеть эту непреодолимую тьму самораскрытия возможно только через свободную деятельность людей. Так путем трагического изучения собственных ошибок, сатанинских глубин и свободного самосознания происходит актуализация богочеловечества.

#### Françoise Lesourd Université Jean Moulin, IRPhiL, France

#### Творчество Льва Карсавина как размышление над истоками европейской мысли

Lev Karsavin's work is a kind of gathering of numerous cultural movements, with, at the background, an only aim: to rethink the foundations of Christian metaphysics. As a historian, in the first years of his activity, Karsavin devoted himself to the study of Western religiosity at the end of the Middle Ages. The religious movements of that time testify to the spiritual aspirations of the masses, which are reflected in the social as well as the religious life of this moment. The concept of an "average person" (the construction of a kind of average consciousness, the concentration of all kinds of spiritual quests, among which the main place is occupied by the desire for immortality) reveals, first of all, the "ambivalence of religious consciousness", the soul of every person being a place of confrontation between two aspirations: renunciation of this world in the name of salvation, or salvation of one's soul through "good deeds", for the good of the world, without renouncing it. Thus, two main criteria emerge (love of the world or renunciation of the world and of oneself), according to which different types of culture are distributed (this is the theme of the treatise published in 1922, East, West

and the Russian Idea). The revolution of 1917 revealed the collapse of the first of these, the Western ideal of "empirical universal well-being," within Russian culture. In the Poem on Death, the opposition of these two principles sometimes expresses itself as a confrontation between Orthodox and Catholic conceptions. In the pre-war years (1939–1940) this dynamic confrontation would culminate in an inter-confessional dialogue between Karsavin and a young Jesuit, Fr. Wetter. Appealing to medieval theology, this correspondence reveals the common roots of European thought and its religious unity.

Sławomir Mazurek The Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland

### Karsavins's Philosophy of History and its Place in Russian and European Thought

Philosophy of history has always been one of Russian thinkers' favourite areas. Certain aspects of Karsavin's treatise *Philosophy of History*, which counts as one of the most important works on this topic written by Russians, make it exceptional both in Russian and Western context. While Russian philosophers were interested above all in historiosophy (i. e. philosophy of history conceived of as a real process), contemporary western thinkers focus on philosophy of historical science; yet Karsavin unites both perspectives in a unique synthesis. His philosophy of history, strictly related to his version of the metaphysics of pan-unity, has an ontological foundation, which gives it a kind of coherence unattainable for others. Starting from such premises, Karsavin presents impressive critiques of progressivism and cyclical theories, offering instead a highly original, panentheistic model of historical process and no less original concept of historical science as a description of symphonic personality and its vicissitudes.

Aleksandra Berdnikova FINO Consortium, University of Turin; Independent Institute of Philosophy

The Middle Ages and the crisis of Western culture: L.P. Karsavin, N.A. Berdyaev and O. Spengler

The speech aims to analyze the main features of the Middle Ages doctrine by L.P. Karsavin. For example, such concepts, introduced by him, as "common religious fund" and "average person." Also, it's worth noting that this doctrine emerged during the early 20th century, a period considered as a "philosophical crisis" both in Europe and Russia. One prominent work on this topic is *The Decline of the West* by L.P. Karsavin's contemporary, Oswald Spengler (1918). In Russia, a notable response to this work was the collection of articles under the title Oswald Spengler and the Decline of the Europe (1922), which included contributions from such thinkers as N.A. Berdyaev, S.L. Frank, F.A. Stepun, and Ya.M. Bookspan. Thus, in my future speech I will try analyze L.P. Karsavin's critical stance on Spengler's concept and compare his personalistic view of the Middle Ages with the concept of the New Middle Ages, as proposed by another contemporary, N.A. Berdyaev (1924).

Tomasz Herbich University of Warsaw, Poland

Idea of Progress in the Light of Metaphysics of History. Some Remarks on Karsavin's "Philosophy of History"

To be done.

Ruri Hosokawa The University of Tokyo, Japan

### The correspondence between ideas of Lev Karsavin's *On Personality* and Pavel Florensky's concept of form

This speech is focused on the correspondence between ideas of Lev Karsavin's On personality and Pavel Florensky's concept of form. As is well known, both Karsavin and Florensky were born in 1882 and their names are highly common in the contexts of philosophy of the Silver age, especially as concerns philosophy of personality. However, in many cases, they are mentioned little more than as contemporaries with similar metaphysical interests. It is true that the concept of personality seems to have been accomplished less thoroughly in Florensky's philosophy than in Karsavin's, but when we consider Florensky's philosophy than in Karsavin's, but when we

rensky's concept of form, which repeatedly appears in his thoughts on mathematics, space, and art, then the parallels between the two philosopher's understanding of corporeality, materiality, continuity and discontinuity, and infinity and finiteness – which are, for Karsavin, related mostly to the key ideas in his Lithuanian period i.e. death and love – are revealed.

Robert F. Slesinski Independent Scholar, Retired Priest of the Byzantine Catholic Eparchy of Passaic (NJ), USA, Mashpee, Massachusetts

### The Metaphysics of All-Embracing Unity of L. P. Karsavin: A Paean to Love

This paper examines Karsavin's first major philosophical work, *Noctes Petropolitanae* (1922). In his searching study of the reality of human and divine love, he does not propose to write an academic treatise per se, but only to proffer a lived metaphysics of love, grasping this fundamental reality "from within" and not "from without," empirically or rationally speaking. Only by personally experiencing love can one know what love is. Initially, it presents itself as an essential biunity of a lover with his or her beloved. But in this experience of biunity, a real *triunity* comes to the fore – lover, beloved, and love itself. Being in love, for its part, demands the reality itself of love, earthly love ultimately revealing divine love, Love in the Person of the Godhead. God is Love, in other words, meaning that God's Being as Love is equally the foundation of Truth, Goodness, and Beauty in the cosmic order. In sum, there can be no cognition of the transcendental properties of being without love.

Nataliia Shelkovaia Volodymyr Dahl East Ukrainian National University, Ukraine; University of Turin, Italy; USERN

L. P. Karsavin's All-Unity Is All-Unity? (Phenomenology of all-unity in philosophy, religion and sacred art)

The speech is an attempt to ground the idea of real all-unity, not limited by the confessional boundaries of Orthodox Christianity, in philosophy, religion and sacral art, as well as to reveal the inconsistency between of the name and the content of Karsavin's concept of the "philosophy of all-unity". Real all-unity, which is based on the idea of One God, just having different names in different religions, consists in the recognition of the profound unity of all religions and all elements of the universe. This unity is displayed in sacral art of various religions, in which, in spite of apparent differences, shared profound principles and ideas may be found. The author demonstrates and proves that "philosophy of all-unity" is the "eternal philosophy", which naturally integrated into the philosophy of cosmism, theory of organicism, philosophy of cordocentrism, and it is vitally important today.

#### Janusz Dobieszewski University of Warsaw, Faculty of Philosophy

#### Достоевский Льва Карсавина (Dostoevsky by Lev Karsavin)

Мысль Льва Карсавина – как и всех представителей русского религиозно-философского возрождения – значительно вырастает из мысли и творчества Федора Достоевского. Но нас будет интересовать здесь не общий план этого отношения, а совершенно конкретный его аспект, т. е. две важные статьи Карсавина, посвященные Достоевскому: «Достоевский и католичество» (с 1922 г.) и – вернее, прежде всего – «Федор Павлович Карамазов как идеология любви» (с 1921 г.). После краткого изложения первого текста, я попытаюсь показать дискуссионный, даже спорный, но одновременно вдохновляющий и даже смелый характер второго текста.

#### Lilianna Kiejzik University of Zielona Gora, Poland

### **Лев Карсавин в переписке семьи Флоровских (на основании архивных материалов)**

As is known, Georges Florovsky applied for a place as a lecturer in pathrology at the Saint Serge Institute in Paris. Lev Karsavin, who at that time (1926) was already habilitated and was a well-known and

respected historian, applied for the same place. However, Florovsky's candidature was supported by Bulgakov, then dean, while Karsavin's candidature was supported by Professor Frank. Florovsky won, helped of course by Bulgakov. Perhaps this is why the relationship between the two thinkers was difficult, although Karsavin did not criticise Florovsky, while Florovsky criticised Karsavin very often. Light is shed on these complex relationships between the two great historians and philosophers by the correspondence of the Florovsky family (Klaudia, Georges and Anthon), which is held in the Slavic Library in Prague. The article discusses these accounts. It uses published and unpublished letters found in the Anton Florovsky archive.

#### Harry Moore Beijing Normal University, China

#### Lev Karsavin and Natural Theology

This paper will examine the thought of Lev Karsavin from the perspective of natural theology. The latter will be defined as the enterprise of providing support for religious beliefs by starting from premises that neither are nor presuppose any religious beliefs. It will be shown that Karsavin's relation to natural theology can be separated into two layers. On the surface layer, Karsavin rejects natural theology as a symptom of declining Western rationalism. On a deeper level, however, Karsavin provides several of his own natural theological arguments. Three of which will be addressed here.

The paper will first introduce Karsavin's broad metaphysical outlook, according to works such as On Principles and On Personhood. We then analyse three of Karsavin's "natural theological" arguments. The first is an argument for the necessity of the incarnation – part of the Absolute's process of self-relativisation. The second is an argument for the necessity of an act of creation out of nothing. The doctrine is necessary since the absolute must enter into nothing to establish itself. And the third is a theodicy which, by assuming a panentheistic interpretation of some Church Fathers, justifies God's being in the face of human suffering. Although all these arguments are flawed they still reveal a deeper layer where Karsavin was willing to develop natural theological arguments.

#### Daniel Kisliakov University of Divinity, Melbourne, Australia

### Personhood in the Russian Diaspora milieu and Lev Karsavin's Contribution

Lev Karsavin is a nexus of the thought dynamics of the early-mid 20th century Russian intellectual milieu, including those of the diaspora. As a medievalist he drew on multiple influences – patristics and Vladimir Soloviev, for example – assembling them into a coherent synthesis on personhood that took account of notions common to his time such as sobornost. His putting this into an international context is also noteworthy.

The notion of personhood is also salient in a modern context in light of its prominence in theology and philosophy – John Zizioulas's *Being* as *Communion* being one example. However, its origins in the 20th century milieu are less known, and Karsavin represents an important part of the broader tapestry that led to its subsequent prominence.

In light of recent studies on Sergius Bulgakov and Nikolai Berdyaev, this presentation considers the intersection of Karsavin and his contemporaries on the subject of personhood. Critical Karsavin texts – in particular On personhood – are compared and contrasted in relation to contemporaries, while similarities and differences are further established in order to differentiate the unique nature of Karsavin's contribution.

In conclusion, an approach is proposed on how to contextualise Karsavin's contribution in light of the broader reflections on person-hood in the 20th century. This contributes to the "roadmap" of the study of a complex dynamics of modern Russian thought.

Yuki Fukui Waseda University, Tokio, Japan

### The meaning of life and death: L.P. Karsavin, N.F. Fedorov and F.M. Dostoevsky

In this paper, I will discuss L.P. Karsavin's philosophy of life and death based on N.F. Fedorov's and F.M. Dostoevsky's thoughts.

It is true that Karsavin criticizes Fedorov's magical ways of resur-

rection, but in fact their thoughts are very close on many points. First, Karsavin and Fedorov are considered as philosophers who treat with the question of death in the deepest way. Their attitudes towards it at first glance seem completely opposite, but they agree with each other that an empirical death must be overcome in the divine-human process. We also present several similarities between Karsavin and Fedorov: religious materialism (the dual-unity of body and soul), the question of sexual and mystical love and so on.

Finally, we put emphasis on one of Dostoevsky's ideological legacies. The idea of the absolute value of all (individual) personalities, which is also found in Fedorov, can overcome the "sociocentrism" of Karsavin's philosophy from within.

#### Gintautas Mažeikis Vytautas Magnus University, Kaunas, Lithuania

#### Л. Карсавин. От симфонической к пульсирующей личности

В докладе обсуждается концепция Карсавина о «пульсирующей личности», изложенная в трактате «О совершенстве» абезского периода. Концепция рассматривается в контексте идей Николая Кузанского (Nicolaus von Cues): coincidentia oppositorum, infinitum, complicatio и explicatio. Показано, как Карсавин постепенно отходит от концепции всеединства Вл. Соловьева, которую Карсавин соотнес с апофатической философией Кузанского. Карсавин изменяет своей прежней тоталитарной идеи симфонической личности и открывает новую, динамическую теорию личности, способную противостоять тоталитарному давлению. В статье сравниваются современные идеи идентичности, коммуникативного действия (Ю. Хабермас) с теорией симфонической и пульсирующей личности Карсавина. Рассматривается свертывание (complicatio) внутреннего божественного потенциала человека, что позволяет защитить моменты совершенства и экзистенциальный смысл жизни от тоталитарного сталинского режима. Причем болезненное и смелое свертывание в себя понимается как нечто иное нежели Героический энтузиазм (Eroici furori) Дж. Бруно, о чем Карсавин много рассуждал в прежних сочинениях. Свёртывание пульсирование — это совершенно другой тип любви нежели любовной энтузиазм симфонической личности. В докладе апеллируют к некоторым идеям С. Хоружего и вспоминаются личные дискуссии с ним по этому вопросу.

### Николай Костин The Pontifical University of John Paul II in Krakow, Poland

#### Человек в истории: концепция «симфонической личности» Л.П. Карсавина и «Homo Ludens» Й. Хейзинги

Доклад посвящён анализу двух историко-философских концепций человека – идее «симфонической личности» Л.П. Карсавина и «Homo Ludens» Й. Хейзинги. Оба исследователя являются в равной степени и медиевистами, и философами. Именно поэтому их понимание личности в междисциплинарном пространстве представляется особенно интересным.

«Симфоническая личность» – это, в первую очередь, глубоко религиозная идея, исходящая из традиции восточного христианства, близкой Карсавину. «Homo Ludens» Хейзинги – в большей степени культурологическая концепция, появившаяся в протестанском дискурсе. Несмотря на существенные различия, общим остаётся онтологическое пространство этих идей – динамическое и диалектическое понимание личности. Рассмотрение этого общего пространства по преимуществу – основная задача доклада.

#### Павел Лавринец Vilnius University, Lithuania

#### Лев Карсавин и русскоязычная среда межвоенной Литвы

В характеристиках каунасского периода деятельности Льва Карсавина обычно выделяются чрезвычайно быстрое освоение литовского языка, участие в литовской печати, тесное общение с литовской профессурой. Упоминаются его давнее близкое знакомство с В. Сеземаном, продолжившееся в Каунасе, общение с художником М. Добужинским, историком искусства Н. Воробьевым, балетным критиком В. Сотниковой. Опубликованы отрывки из дневника участника созданного Карсавиным и Сеземаном Религиозно-философского кружка Г. Сорочкина. Отмечалась вовлеченность Карсавина в деятельность корпорации русских студентов Литовского университета. Однако взаимодействие Карсавина с русскоязычной средой межвоенной Литвы остается недостаточно изученной. Внимания требуют его лекции и докла-

ды в Каунасе и Паневежисе «Евразийство о революции», «Наука и религия», «Мираж прогресса», «Судьбы Восточной Европы», «О религиозном опыте», «Любовь и смерть» и другие формы взаимодействия с русскоязычной средой межвоенной Литвы.

#### Marija Čepaityte Vilnius, Lithuania

#### Отец Станисловас Добровольскис - переводчик Карсавина

Отец Станисловас Добровольскис в лагере переводил с литовского на русский сочинения Льва Карсавина, написанные им в Абези. Редактором был ученик Карсавина А. Ванеев; сохранились письма о. Станисловаса А. Ванееву.

#### Pylyp Bilyi University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland

#### Краткая история спора между Львом Карсавиным и Николаем Лосским

Доклад представляет собой анализ дискуссии, произошедшей между Львом Карсавиным и Николаем Лосским в первой половине XX века. Данная дискуссия началась со страниц изданной в Литве книге Карсавина «О личности», в которой автор обрушился с критикой основных тезисов интуиционизма Лосского.

Доклад рассматривает ключевые вопросы, поднятые в ходе дискуссии, такие как реализм, субъектно-объектные отношения и – ядро рассуждений интуитивиста Лосского – гносеологическая координация. Таковым ядром теории интуитивизма является условие единства мира как целого, т. е. гносеологической координации, вследствии чего становятся возможным познание мира. Карсавин критикует такой подход и предлагает заменить его понятием – согласно пониманию Лосского – Всеединства.

В неизданной ранее рецензии Лосского на вышеуказанную книгу Карсавина, а также в «Ответе на возражения проф. Крейчи и Карсавина» можно найти полемику с главным тезисом о Всеединстве, которая, в интерпретации Лосского, сводится к пантеизму. Однако позже в своей пионерской работе по истории рус-

ской философии Лосский будет более благосклонно относиться к трактату «О личности».

Доклад направлен на раскрытие значимости этой забытой дискуссии как обмена мысли между философами, которые к тому времени находились уже в эмиграции.

#### Agata Czapiewska The Institute of Literary Studies, Poland

### Between East and West, stages of Dialogue – Stanislav Przybyszewski and Lev Karsavin

The subject of the presentation is the analysis of the philosophical dialogue between the Polish writer Stanislaw Przybyszewski (called by August Strindberg, "a brilliant Pole") and Lev Karsavin. The analysis of this relationship focuses on the works: East, West and the Russian Idea by Lev Karsawin and On the Paths of the Soul by Stanislaw Przybyszewski.

Przybyszewski postulated creative individualism in his works, he was interested in the type of, "man of the moment", artist, creator. Like Karsawin, he explored the limits of human mentality or existential experience, and (and most importantly) compared the philosophical traditions of the West with the spirituality of the East. Stanislaw Przybyszewski's work; his fascination with Slavic culture, his connections with Russian philosophy (including Karsavin's) occupy an important place in the dialogue of neighboring cultures, and (so far) have not been elaborated in the Polish-Lithuanian humanities.

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# The original topics in Karsavin's philosophy in advance of well-known Western philosophers and his emphasis on Christian dogma as a philosophical tool

Lev Karsavin was a most unusual philosopher. He is known as the "Russian Socrates" in that he gave his life for philosophy, dying in a Soviet gulag when he could have fled like so many others before him. Karsavin was primarily a philosopher of history. He saw histo-

ry as leading towards a time of all-encompassing fulfillment, but at the same time, all moments of history were of equal importance. He sought the fullness of time in which all separate moments could find their meaning. Karsavin also sought the unity behind all things. It is unity that reveals the Absolute. However, contrary to Hegel and other fashions of the day, Karsavin's philosophy was not a philosophy of progress and he is opposed to the theories of progress in history.

Lev Karsavin drew heavily upon the Fathers of the Church. He made the link between St. Augustine and Descartes (the proto-cogito) before Etienne Gilson. Karsavin had a preference for Origin and borrowed the latter's *Peri Archon* as the title of one of his books. In this book, Karsavin treats of Being very much in a "heideggerian fashion," making a link between Being and time, but he does so before Heidegger.

Lev Karsavin can also be seen as a Christian philosopher in that he is intrigued by Christian dogma and its philosophical value. He sought the eristic (argumentative) value of dogma, as opposed to the popular heuristic (discovery based) approaches to dogma. Karsavin saw Christian dogma as a very sophisticated philosophical creation, largely neglected by philosophers. The three persons of the Trinity led him to develop a theory of the tri-unity of God, all the while remaining faithful to the traditional monotheistic understanding. This paper will explore some of these issues and concentrate on the Karsavin's use of Christian dogma for philosophy.

#### Notatki