

**The main theses T. G. Masaryk's
*The Czech Question***

The Efforts and Aspirations of National Revival

The birth of the modern Czech nation, the so-called national revival, is connected with the European Enlightenment. In our milieu, the question of freedom was at the same time connected, in the philosophic sense, with the question of religious freedom. National revivalists found a solid basis for their efforts in the conception of humanity as a universal principle. This conception was most precisely formulated by Jan Kollár, who based it upon Herder's philosophy of history and the reformatory past. Organic reference to the Czech reformation, to the traditions of the Bohemian Brethren and Hussites made it possible to span the rift created by the counter-reformation and to continue there where the reaction had impeded development. The national revivalists – Josef Dobrovský, Jan Kollár, Pavel Josef Šafařík, and František Palacký became, at the same time, defenders of the sacred traditions of the Czech reformation and freedom of conscience; they proclaimed the ideals of humanity proposed by the Bohemian Brethren. The national revival is consequently an entirely, organic historical evolution: the modern idea of humanity organically perpetuated in the endeavour of the Czech reformation. Our national revival is the continuation of reformatory ideas for the sake of which Jan Hus underwent martyrdom. The idea of humanity was elaborated by the Czech reformation into the form of pure humanity and universal brotherhood and bequeathed us. In this respect, humanity is something specifically Czech and, at the same time, a contribution to all mankind. It was not only an instrument of the Czech revival, but also today its sense. Hence, the emancipation of the nation is limited by humanity. As there is a continuity between the reformation humanity and the revival humanity, it is possible to talk of the unity and continuity of Czech history and its final sense, which is religious. This, since ethical questions are always religious and religious questions are always ethical.

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