

ON THE CONNECTION BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY
AND THE SOCIO-POLITICAL ORDER — CAUSA POPPER

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At the Centennial Popper Conference, I presented a short paper under the title ‘Karl Popper, Rudolf Carnap, and Czech Philosophy in the 1960’s’. Partly through reminiscences, partly through references to the Czech publications from that period, I attempted to suggest that in spite of censorship, which permitted only translation of a narrow range of topics from Popper’s philosophy of science, his philosophy contributed to the political movement which was to be known as the Prague Spring of 1968.

In this paper, I would like to return to the more broadly delineated problem of the relationship between philosophy and the socio-political order, in respect to its origin as well as to its impact. While it may be true that some philosophies appear to be capable of functioning, albeit in different interpretations, in quite different socio-political circumstances, Popper’s philosophy, even in its most ‘technical’ aspects, stems from and leads to what Popper called ‘open society’. It is not by accident that the philosophy most pronouncedly connected with a certain socio-political order — Marxism — was well aware of this characteristic feature and was thus most hesitant to recognize any positive role of Popper’s philosophy whatsoever. To make my point, I intend to review Marxist criticism of Popper’s philosophy of science, in particular of his *Logic of Scientific Discovery*.