

The Contradiction Between Marx and Marxism-Leninism
and a Refutation of Realist and Materialist Substance Ontology

by The Fascifist and Zoltanous HN

Introduction

How Soviet Materialism Contradicts Marx

Giovanni Gentile, the philosopher of fascism, argued that Marx's dialectical materialism was not a vulgar and superficial materialism; on the contrary, it was a sophisticated and nuanced metaphysical theory that recognized the importance of historical and social factors in the development and evolution of human consciousness. Gentile claimed that Marx's theory of historical materialism was based on the idea that material conditions are shaped by social relations, and that these relations are in turn shaped by historical forces and conflicts. This is how Gentile argued that Marx's dialectical materialism was a rejection of the mechanistic and reductionist view of materialism that was prevalent at the time. In his essay *Marxism and Idealism*, Gentile wrote:

"Marxism is the dialectical unity of materialism and idealism. It is idealism in that it recognizes the importance of ideas, consciousness, and human agency in shaping historical change. But it is also materialism in that it recognizes that material conditions and social relations are fundamental to understanding human experience and consciousness. Marx's dialectical materialism is a rejection of the mechanistic and reductionist view of materialism that was prevalent at the time. Instead, it is a more sophisticated approach that recognizes the importance of historical and social factors in shaping human experience and consciousness."

— Giovanni Gentile, *Marxism and Idealism*

In his book, *The Philosophy of Marx*, Gentile wrote:

"Marxism is not a crude economic determinism that reduces all social phenomena to the economic factor alone ... The materialistic conception of history is not a form of naturalistic or mechanical determinism, but rather a dialectical view of the historical process that takes into account the complex interplay of economic, political, and cultural factors in the development of human society."

— Giovanni Gentile, *The Philosophy of Marx*

It is thus no surprise then that Gentile argued that Marx's materialism was not a rejection of idealism altogether, but rather a synthesis of idealism and materialism. Since Marx's dialectical materialism recognizes the importance of ideas, consciousness, and human agency in shaping historical change; it was thus a dialectical unity of materialism and idealism. A more technical definition here would be “substance dualism”. Something that is extremely reminiscent of René Descartes’ substance ontology. Hence Marx’s famous quotation from his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* that philosophers must change the world, which affirms Gentile. Something later expanded upon in the hermeneutics of Marxism by Antonio Gramsci and Louis Althusser.

However, with this out-of-the-way, we must now get into the main issue at hand, namely, how the Soviet Union was fundamentally a break away from actual Marxism. This isn't getting into the economic or broader political debate but the actual philosophical structure that makes up the foundation of Marxist-Leninist substance ontology. While Marx does not directly address his own substance ontology as being a mix of idealism and materialism, he does recognize the role of ideas and ideology in shaping social relations.

Marx states the following:

"The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political and spiritual processes of life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness."

— Karl Marx, *Critique of Political Economy*

"The materialist doctrine concerning the changing of circumstances and upbringing forgets that circumstances are changed by men and that it is essential to educate the educator himself."

— Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*

These quotes show the importance Marx places on material conditions in shaping societal relations, while also acknowledging the role of consciousness and ideology. Marx obviously recognizes the importance of education and ideas in shaping social change, while still maintaining a broad materialist framework. This means Gentile, who saw Marx's philosophy as a dialectical unity of idealism and materialism, is understandable. With Marx seeing materialism as being the dominant and determining factor in shaping society and history at large while not neglecting the hard question of consciousness. In fact, Marx very implicitly rejected physicalist vulgar materialism. He didn't consider consciousness to be a product of matter organized in a particular way.

Marx states the following:

"The extent and the manner in which the senses are affected by the object of perception is determined by the nature of the object itself, and by the nature of the sensory organ. But the senses do not express anything beyond the fact that the sensory organs are affected by the object. The sensuous consciousness, as we have seen, therefore expresses only the fact that the world affects the individual in a particular way. It therefore does not give us a clue to the nature of the object which affects it, but only to the nature of the organs which are affected by the object."

— Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*

However this is where we see a fundamental break between actual Marxism and Marxism-Leninism as held by the Soviet Union.

“Materialism, in full agreement with natural science, takes matter as primary and regards consciousness, thought and sensation as secondary, because, in its well-defined form, sensation is associated only with the higher forms of matter (organic matter), while ‘in the foundation of the structure of matter’ one can only surmise the existence of a faculty akin to sensation.”

“Sensation depends on the brain, nerves, retina, etc., i.e., on matter organized in a definite way. The existence of matter does not depend on sensation. Matter is primary. Sensation, thought, consciousness are the supreme product of matter organized in a particular way. Such are the views of materialism in general, and of Marx and Engels in particular.”

— Vladimir Lenin, *Materialism and Empirio-criticism*

This is a clear violation of Marx’s views. Lenin sees consciousness as simply, “*matter organized in a particular way*” even going as far as to say this is the particular view of Marx himself. Meanwhile, Marx says that his philosophy is a correction of physical (ie. “vulgar”) materialism which wrongly sees sensation as “*only in the form of the object or of contemplation,*” the exact way Lenin sees sensation as merely organized matter.

This is discussed by István Mészáros in his book *Beyond Capital: Toward a Theory of Transition*:

"Lenin's materialism was one-sided and reductionist, denying the importance of the idealist dimension of social life. His view of history was mechanistic, seeing social development as determined solely by economic factors, with politics and ideology playing a secondary role. This led to a distorted understanding of Marx's ideas and a one-sided view of history."

— István Mészáros, *Beyond Capital: Toward a Theory of Transition*

This vulgar reductionism can be seen in Lenin's own writings, such as his famous work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, in which he focuses almost exclusively on the economic factors driving imperialism and the concentration of capital. While this analysis was an important contribution to Marxist theory, it also reflected Lenin's narrow and reductionist approach to history and social relations. In this sense, Lenin's emphasis on class struggle and the primacy of economic factors in shaping history can be seen as a break with the more nuanced and dialectical approach of Marx himself.

Just on this key issue we can understand that Marxism-Leninism represents a departure from Marx's original ideas in its emphasis on vulgar materialism and its rejection of a non-physical consciousness. As we've seen, Marx believed in a dialectical materialism, which held that material conditions shaped human consciousness, but that consciousness also played a role in shaping material conditions. This dialectical approach was grounded in a broader philosophical framework that emphasized the ontological interdependence of matter and consciousness as separate fundamental substances. In contrast, Lenin rejected this and instead embraced a vulgar form of materialism that viewed matter as the single fundamental substance of the universe and economic determinism as the primary force that moved history. This vulgar materialism was based on a reductionist view of history in which material conditions alone determined all social relations.

This departure gets far more unsettling when you look deeper into Soviet policy. The Soviet Union had knowledge that Lenin's own writings were in fundamental contradiction with Marx. This was so apparent that the Soviets actually took measures of fabrication and suppression of Marx's materials that contradicted Lenin. Some of the material by Marx were the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* and *The German Ideology*. These two books show the more idealistic tendencies of Marx.

The historian Gareth Stedman Jones explains in his Biography on Marx:

“According to Engels, [Marx] developed his new ‘materialist conception of history’ between his completion of The Holy Family in the autumn of 1844 and his reunion with Engels in Brussels in the spring of 1845. During these months, Karl did not publish anything. The only piece of relevant documentation, which Engels discovered when going through papers dating from that period, was a two-page entry in one of Karl’s notebooks, entitled Ad Feuerbach.”

— Gareth Stedman Jones, *Karl Marx: Greatness and Illusion*

He then goes on to describe how the notes on Feuerbach actually attack the vulgar materialists rather than support them. Jones also describes that this lack of support for the materialism touted by Lenin was a problem for the Soviet Union and that the best way to solve this problem was in publishing an edited version of *The German Ideology*. Archivist and Marxist-Leninist David Riazanov wrote a chapter called “I. Feuerbach”.

Quoting from Jones:

“But it has recently been demonstrated that it was ‘factitiously’ put together by Riazanov and his associates in the 1920s. The purpose of its publication during the early years of the Soviet Union was to complete the exposition of ‘Marxism’ as a system by connecting what Karl in 1859 had called a process of ‘self clarification’ with Engels’s claim about Karl’s development of ‘the materialist conception of history’ in 1885.”

— Gareth Stedman Jones, *Karl Marx: Greatness and Illusion*

The Soviet Union forged chapters and claimed they were written by Marx in order to make it sound like Marx supported the vulgar materialism of Lenin. Therefore justifying the Soviet interpretation of Marxism. We see further support to this interpretation of Marxism in an introduction to the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* written by Italian Marxist's Lucio Colletti who writes:

“The immediate reasons for the resistances and perplexities they aroused in Marxist circles were certainly of a theoretical nature. It would be needless exaggeration of the case to ascribe the reaction directly to political factors. Nevertheless, the sheer rigidity of official doctrine, the rigor mortis which already gripped Marxism under Stalin, contributed in no small way to the cool reception which the writings met with when they appeared, to the absence of any debate about them, and to the manner in which they were immediately classified and pigeon-holed.

What made the [Manuscripts of 1844] appear so 'out of line' with Marxism was their profound dissimilarity to 'dialectical materialism'. They said nothing at all about the dialectics of nature; nothing which prepared the way for Engels's theory of the three basic dialectical laws of the universe."

— Lucio Colletti, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* by Karl Marx

Colletti even brings up how in East Germany the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* were subtly repressed by them and weren't included in the larger volumes of Marx that were published, instead publishing them as stand-alones. For this reason Maoism can be seen as more compatible with Marx's views of consciousness than Marxism-Leninism, as Mao emphasized the importance of subjective agency and mass mobilization in revolutionary struggle. Mao's theory of knowledge, which he called "mass line", emphasized the need for the revolutionary party to listen to and learn from the masses in order to develop a correct understanding of social reality and guide the struggle for socialism. This approach can be seen as more in line with Marx's emphasis on the importance of praxis, or the unity of theory and practice, in revolutionary struggle.

"Maoism emphasizes the importance of consciousness and subjectivity in the revolutionary process, and stresses the need for mass mobilization and participation in the struggle for socialism. In this sense, Mao's approach can be seen as more compatible with Marx's emphasis on the importance of praxis and the role of the masses in shaping history."

— Nick Knight, *Understanding Maoism*

Like Maoism, the Juche ideology, which is the official state ideology of North Korea, emphasizes the importance of subjective agency and consciousness in shaping history, and also emphasizes the role of the "Great Leader" in guiding the revolutionary struggle. This can be seen as a departure from traditional Marxist-Leninist thought, which tends to emphasize the role of objective economic and social forces in shaping history. In his work *On the Juche Idea*, North Korean leader Kim Jong Il emphasizes the importance of subjective agency and consciousness in shaping history.

He writes:

"Man is the master of everything and decides everything. It is man who transforms nature and society. It is man who creates history. The material world is transformed and developed by man's conscious activities, and man himself is transformed and developed by his conscious activities."

— Kim Jong Il, *On the Juche Idea*

This passage emphasizes the importance of human consciousness in shaping history and transforming society. Kim Jong Il argues that it is not objective economic or social forces that determine the course of history, but rather the conscious actions of individuals and collectives. This can be seen as more similar to actual Marxism than Marxism-Leninism, which instead emphasizes objective vulgar materialism. This is why Mao Zedong was critical of the Soviet Union's interpretation of Marxism, which he believed had

become "revisionist" and had departed from the revolutionary spirit of Marxism. Mao argued that the Soviet Union had become a "social-imperialist" power that was using socialist rhetoric to justify its imperialist policies.

Mao stated:

"The Soviet Union's understanding of Marxist philosophy is vulgar and mechanical. It sees only the objective economic forces in shaping history, and neglects the subjective agency and human consciousness. This has led it to adopt a bureaucratic and elitist approach to socialism, which is disconnected from the masses and fails to promote the revolutionary spirit of Marxism."

— Mao Zedong, *On The Ten Major Relationships*

This is why Maoism and Juche argued for a renewed emphasis on the role of subjective agency and consciousness in shaping history, and for a more mass-based and participatory approach to socialism. This is something one could argue is the main factor for the Soviet Union's inevitable stagnation. Its own philosophical doctrine was fundamentally bankrupt and this eventually resulted in its own contradictions leading to its eventual collapse. It must also be pointed out that Lenin's views did eventually change in his publication, *Conspectus of Hegel's book The Science of Logic*. Towards the end of his life, Lenin recanted what he said in his book *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* and abandoned physicalist vulgar materialism turning instead to the substance dualist position of Marx.

However, the Marxist-Leninists of the Soviet Union, broadly speaking, did not include that change in the Soviet educational curriculum. *Materialism and Empirio-criticism* was still mandatory in Soviet education. So the impression remained that Lenin was a physical vulgar materialist even though he had in actuality rejected his former views. It should also be pointed out that the Soviets softly suppressed Lenin's *Conspectus of Hegel's book The Science of Logic* thereby showing that the Soviets had a selective interpretation of both Marx and even Lenin and thus opposed anything in contradiction to their vulgar materialist and economic reduction dogmatism. Hence the USSR was a vulgar materialist state in its philosophy and substance ontology that completely departed from actual Marxism.

Hermeneutics is the study of interpretation, particularly of texts. Lenin was close to the rediscovery of the more accurate hermeneutics within Marxism. Something Gramsci and Althusser would discover later, but instead, the Soviets closed themselves off by accepting a vulgar materialism and positivistic dogmatism that rejected consciousness by eliminating or suppressing it during Stalin's leadership in the USSR. Gramsci believed that his hermeneutics was a crucial tool for understanding the role of culture and ideology in society. He recognized that dominant ideas and values were often expressed through language and other cultural forms, and that these ideas and values needed to be interpreted in order to understand their impact on society. Gramsci's approach to Marxism therefore differed significantly from that of the Soviet Union. As Gramsci put it, "*Language is never innocent.*" He believed that language was a site of struggle, and that the dominant class used language to maintain its power. In order to challenge the dominant ideology, the working class needed to develop a counter-hegemonic language that could interpret and challenge the dominant ideas and values. The Soviet Union's rejection of hermeneutics was part of a broader rejection of Western philosophy and culture, which they viewed as bourgeois and

decadent. They believed that the study of hermeneutics was too philosophical and abstract, and did not have any practical relevance for the development of socialist society.

Evald Ilyenkov a prominent Soviet intellectual would say:

"Any hermeneutics is a form of bourgeois ideology, which tries to interpret the world and its products in its own way, according to the private interests of different social groups."

— Evald Ilyenkov, *The Ideal In Human Activity*

Fundamentally this focus on hermeneutics is why we see a strong emphasis on man's consciousness at the center of Communism. Something that can only be described as humanistic. Marxism, Maoism and Juche place a strong emphasis on the importance of human agency and the power of human consciousness to shape history. From a humanistic perspective, human beings are seen as active agents who have the power to transform themselves and their social conditions through collective struggle. This is in contrast to more deterministic views of history, which emphasize the role of objective economic and social forces in shaping historical development. Therefore, the emphasis on consciousness in Marxism, Maoism, and Juche can be seen as part of a broader humanistic tradition that emphasizes the importance of human agency and the power of human consciousness to shape history. In essence, they all understand this to be the fundamental justification for praxis.

Diego Fusaro states:

"Praxis is the active and creative expression of human consciousness, and it is through praxis that individuals can achieve self-realization and freedom."

— Diego Fusaro, *Marx and The Third World*

In this context, we can also bring up Trofim Lysenko, who rejected the principles of classical Newtonian Physics based genetics and instead advocated for a form of Lamarckism, which held that acquired traits could be passed down to offspring. This view is today legitimized through the modern field of epigenetics. Lysenko's rejection of the concept of "safe physical matter" as a metaphysical concept is at odds with the Soviet emphasis on vulgar materialism and economic reductionism. The concept of "safe physical matter" is a key component of Marxist dialectics, which emphasizes the interplay between material and non-material factors in historical and social development. Lysenko's rejection of this concept reflects a broader contradiction of Soviet ideology.

"Lysenkoism posed a paradox for the Soviet state, as it was based on a Lamarckian model of inheritance that contradicted the principles of classical genetics, which were rooted in Mendelian theory. However, Lysenkoism was also promoted as a scientifically valid Marxist theory, as it emphasized the importance of environmental factors in shaping biological development. This paradox reflects the tension between the Soviet state's adherence to Marxist theory and its prioritization of political expediency over scientific truth."

— Richard Joravsky, *The Lysenko Affair*

Marxism-Leninism, which emphasized scientific progress and the importance of science in building a socialist society, was rooted in the principles of classical genetics. But, Lysenkoism was more in line with classical Marxism because it emphasized the importance of environmental factors, agency, and consciousness in shaping biological development. So in this framework, Lysenkoism took into consideration the question of consciousness while Soviet ideology did not.

One could argue that Maoism and Juche ideology are superior to Marxism-Leninism. Juche, for example, criticized Soviet ideology for its emphasis on economic determinism and its neglect of the cultural and ideological factors in shaping society. One example is given by Kim Il-sung, the founder of North Korea.

In his work *The Historical Lesson Learned by the Korean Revolution* he wrote that:

"The Soviet Union followed a vulgar materialist approach and relied solely on economic factors to explain the course of the revolution."

— Kim Il-sung, *The Historical Lesson Learned by the Korean Revolution*

Ironically, in this way, Gentile's philosophical justifications for Italian Fascism have more concrete continuity with Marxism than Marxism-Leninism. Our reasoning for this is that Gentile's philosophy emphasizes consciousness as primary over everything. Like Maoism and Juche mentioned before, Fascism too is part of the same type of humanistic tradition. Gentile also considered the state to be the embodiment of human consciousness and saw it as the only way to actualize freedom for the individual. He believed that the state had the power to interpret the collective consciousness of the people and use that interpretation to guide its actions in a way that would promote the common good. This is fundamentally similar to the argumentation being put forward by Marxism, Maoism, and Juche.

Gramsci states:

"Fascism and Marxism are essentially and above all humanistic, in that they both put the human person and his or her concrete needs at the center of their attention."

— Antonio Gramsci, *Prison Notebooks*

Juche ideology critiques economic determinism on philosophical grounds. One of the central philosophical arguments against Soviet economic determinism is that it neglects the role of individual agency and creativity. Juche thinkers argue that human beings are not simply passive objects of economic forces, but rather active agents who can use their creativity and ingenuity to shape their own destiny. Juche ideology also critiques vulgar materialism on philosophical grounds, arguing that it reduces human beings to mere objects and negates the importance of the subjective dimension of human experience.

Furthermore, Maoism also asserts:

"We must recognize that the materialist interpretation of history is not yet a finished science, that there is still much to be done in the way of research and study. It is wrong to refer to the economic factor as the sole determining factor. It is necessary to study the complex interrelations of all the factors involved in social development."

— Mao Zedong, *On Contradiction*

Again, Gentile acknowledges that economic conditions are one of the factors that determine the course of events in human society, but argues that they are not the only or ultimate factor. He suggests that other factors, such as culture and ideology, also play important roles in shaping society. This implies a rejection of economic determinism and a recognition of the importance of a more nuanced and holistic approach to understanding social development. This is why he believed that the state should play a central role in shaping society, ensuring social harmony and promoting the common good.

Gentile states:

"The Marxist thesis of the economic determination of history, though it is not entirely false, is, nevertheless, very far from expressing the whole truth. Economic conditions are certainly one of the factors that determine the course of events in human society; but they are not the only one; and, above all, they are not the ultimate one."

— Giovanni Gentile, *The Philosophic Basis of Fascism*

In this regard we should mention that the Soviet Union criticized China for their rejection of economic determinism and their emphasis on consciousness because it viewed these ideas as deviating from Marxist-Leninist theory. The Soviet Union held that economic factors were the primary drivers of historical development. Similarly, the Soviet Union criticized North Korea for what it saw as an overemphasis on consciousness and the subjective will of the people, rather than on objective economic conditions. In the Soviet view, these revisions of their Marxist-Leninist theory were a form of deviationism that could lead to the adoption of non-communist ideas and practices. It's here we can mention Gentile's criticism of Marxism as a criticism of the Soviet line. Marxism and Gentile's Fascism rejected the idea that economic factors alone determine social and historical development. Similar to the Gentile, the Chinese Communist party, under Mao Zedong, counter-signaled the Soviet Union by emphasizing the importance of consciousness and rejecting economic determinism arguing, like the Fascists, that revolutionary consciousness could overcome material conditions. They both emphasized the importance of consciousness in shaping historical development. This is why we think the Soviet Union called the deviationist trends from Marxist-Leninism in China and North Korea "fascistic". Moreover, it's for this reason that we think it can definitely be said that Gentile's Fascism has more concrete continuity with actual Marxism – a rather sad irony – and that the Soviets weren't truly Marxist in their broader philosophical foundations.

All of this culminates into what is the Soviet line:

"The Chinese and North Korean views on human consciousness, which deny the role of the material world and the dialectical interrelation between consciousness and the objective world, are just another form of idealism, which is always a cover for the interests of the ruling class."

— Evald Ilyenkov, *Dialectical Logic: Essays on its History and Theory*

"The Chinese and North Korean versions of Marxism are characterized by an extreme voluntarism and idealism that leads to a denial of the role of objective economic and social factors in the historical development of society and culture. This is a serious distortion of Marxist theory and practice."

— Vadim Mezhuev, *The Role of the Subject in Marxist Philosophy*

"The Chinese and North Korean Communists have rejected the dialectical materialist conception of consciousness, which sees it as a reflection of the objective world, and have replaced it with a subjective idealist view that sees consciousness as a creative force independent of material reality. This is a departure from the fundamental principles of Marxist philosophy."

— Alexander Spirkin, *Dialectical Materialism and Modern Science*

"The Chinese and North Korean Communists have also rejected the concept of economic determinism, which is a cornerstone of Marxist theory, and have substituted a voluntarist and idealist view that sees human will and consciousness as the primary forces driving historical development. This is a serious error that leads to a distortion of Marxist theory and practice."

— Gennady Vasilyev, *The Philosophy of Socialism*

A Critique of Marx's Philosophy

In our view, Marx's true philosophy regarding substance ontology is still riddled with errors. Marx essentially takes Descartes's position of "*Substance Dualism*"; more commonly known as "*Philosophical Realism*". This is the view that the universe is made of two separate fundamental substances – namely, mind and matter – and that while these two fundamental substances interact with each other, they are both separate with neither emanating from the other. The greatest feature of philosophical realism is the notion of "mind independent reality". In theological terms, it posits that because matter is an uncreated ontological substance, reality exists independent of mind and this includes the divine mind of God.

Of course, Descartes was quickly challenged by the brilliant refutations of Bishop George Berkeley and his Subjective Idealism. According to Berkeley, matter was not a separate ontological substance apart from the mind but rather simply an abstraction of the mind used to describe perceived mental phenomena. Berkeley held the view that reality is mind dependent in the same way that humanity is divinity dependent. For Berkeley, the "I" was an individual mind, and a mind is defined as being a perceived set of ideas. The individual "I" doesn't posit things from itself. Rather, it receives represented ideas from the divine mind of God, who is ultimately the only source of ideas. One mind may know another through

analogical reasoning based on faith. However, it never perceives another mind the way that it perceives its own ideas or, better said, the ideas of the other mind which is itself a set of ideas by the perceiving mind. Berkeley was not very interested in knowing what minds truly are. The main target of his philosophical effort was the project of deconstructing and refuting Descartes's Substance Dualism and Realism.

Berkeley and German idealism didn't really communicate with each other. Berkeley lived earlier and had a different project. But there are similarities and overlaps that can be noted. Berkeley lived after Descartes. Descartes posited a metaphysical gap between mind and the so-called "external world". The gap became known as the mind-matter dichotomy. Berkeley's project, as already mentioned before, was to deconstruct the dichotomy by arguing that "matter" was nothing more than an idea in and of the mind. His arguments against the dichotomy were more logical than Descartes' arguments in favor of the dichotomy. Neither Descartes nor Berkeley were trying to articulate a "Transcendental" point of view. A view that transcended the local and immediate human point of view. That really started with Kant, then Fichte and then Hegel. To understand why Marx's *Realist Substance Dualism* is wrong, one must first be aware of the similarities between Berkeley and the German Idealists.

They weren't trying to refute the self-other distinction. Berkeley was not trying to deconstruct the dichotomy between subject and object or the "I and not-I". Arguably, the German idealists were not trying to deconstruct this dichotomy either. Interestingly, philosophies such as Advaita Vedanta and Prasangka Madhyamika Buddhism do try to deconstruct this fundamental dualism. But for Berkeley and the German idealists, as far as one can tell, there was no interest in getting rid of that dichotomy. The dichotomy is simply "softer" and more nuanced for the German idealists, but it's still present. Note the following:

1. For Berkeley, the "self" is the mind, and the "not-self" are the ideas that are perceived by the mind. Also, the self is *this individual* mind, as opposed to the *other* minds and especially the divine mind of God.
2. For the German idealists, the very notion of "self" necessitated some kind of "other." This is Dieter Heinrich's point. It was "Mind vs. World" for Fichte. "Mind vs. its expressions" (i.e., objects) for Hegel.

And now we come to the crux of the issue at hand. Marx, who was himself a Hegelian trying to build upon and better Hegel's Absolute Idealism, began to reintroduce Descartes's mind-matter dichotomy and ironically, in doing so, managed to regenerate the same philosophical problems that Berkeley had already refuted centuries earlier. The German Idealists were of course substance monists who would have agreed with Berkeley's refutations of Descartes's dualism. Even Engels and Lenin were monists albeit Materialist Monists rather than Idealist Monists. Perhaps this is the great irony of ironies at play here. After Berkeley's thorough refutation of Descartes's Substance Dualism, every philosopher and thinker from Kant to Fichte to Schlegel to Schelling to Hegel to Schopenhauer to Engels and to Lenin understood the problem with substance dualism and rejected it outright. Only Marx was the significant outlier to make the mistake of reintroducing Descartes's dualism which, thankfully, Giovanni Gentile would later correct again with his Actual Idealism. The cherry on top of this cake of irony is that Marx essentially played the role of a "Neo-Descartesian" and Gentile a "Neo-Berkeleyan".

Regarding Marx and his Realist Materialism, David Spratt states the following:

“Dialectical materialism claims to have freed Hegel’s dialectic from the errors due to his idealism. But these doctrines, the sovereignty of thought, the dialectic as a superior mode of understanding, the identity of being and knowing, the emergence of truth from error, and knowledge and practice as a single process approaching truth asymptotically, are all plausible only in a context of idealistic monism. In a materialistic system there is no more reason why the human intellect should be sovereign than the dog’s or the ant’s intellect: dogs and ants are part of nature, too. The dialectic is an infallible guide only if it embodies the self-movement of the idea: otherwise it is just as likely to lead to error as to truth. In materialism there can be no inevitability about the emergence of truth from the errors of men whose “thought is extremely unsovereign”. In the same way, there is no foreordained progress towards truth through eating, digging, and building[Marx’s] very argument, that in materialism physiological processes determine thought, has been used by McTaggart to disprove materialism. These processes proceed according to the laws of physiology, not of logic, and accordingly are not likely to give truth. If, then, our ideas are physiological processes, those ideas will be unreliable, and in particular the doctrine of materialism will be unreliable. Hence, materialism is self-contradictory.”

— David Spratt, *Dialectical Materialism as Philosophy of Nature*

A Critique of Soviet Vulgar Materialism in Light of Quantum Science’s Most Recent Discoveries

Despite our criticisms of Marxism-Leninism, we must still acknowledge that their revision of the philosophy of Marx is still better than Marx’s actual philosophy in that it is at least still a form of substance monism rather than substance dualism. Engels and Lenin, by deviating from Marx’s Substance Dualism, solved all problems that came with it. Again, it must be reiterated that this is simply because any substance monism in general, even if it is Vulgar Materialism, is more coherent than any substance dualism in general. The problem with Marxism-Leninism’s Substance Monism, however, lies in philosophical Materialism’s inability to answer the soft and hard problems of consciousness which are now being discovered and investigated through the fields of quantum mechanics, quantum physics and other quantum sciences.

Indeed, the Realist and Materialist worldviews were shaken with the advent of quantum mechanics. The realization of how the quantum world behaved began to eat away at the Realists’ and Materialists’ beliefs. The late 20th and early 21st centuries have given rise to a return of less popular perspectives which are now challenging the established philosophic Materialism of the 19th and 20th centuries. The view that matter does not exist as a wave of energy prior to observation, but instead as a wave of potentialities, has become the latest scientific view. This is shown, for example, through the double slit experiment which appears to suggest that the act of observing causes the wave function to collapse and create the existence of matter either in the state of particles or in the state of waves. According to the Schrödinger Equation, independent of observation, particles exist in a state of a wave function, which is a series of potentialities rather than actual objects.

Bruce Rosenblum and Fred Kuttner explain:

“The waviness in a region is the probability of finding the object in a particular place. We must be careful: The waviness is not the probability of the object being in a particular place. There is a crucial difference here! The object was not there before you found it there.”

— Bruce Rosenblum and Fred Kuttner, *The Quantum Enigma*

The philosophical conclusions drawn from the Schrödinger Equation and the experimental results of the time indicated that the very act of observing causes waves of potentialities to collapse into a state of matter. In other words, reality is mind dependent or, put another way, reality is a mental construct and does not exist independent of observation. This view was again reconfirmed in the 1960's by Claus Jönsson in his *“Elektroneninterferenzen an mehreren künstlich hergestellten Feinspalten”* (*Electron Interference at Several Artificially Fabricated Fine Slits* in English). At that time, however, not everyone liked the conclusion that was unfolding. Some, like Albert Einstein and Erwin Schrödinger, were greatly disturbed by the results of quantum mechanics. In 1935, Einstein and two of his colleagues proposed a thought experiment to debunk quantum mechanics. They proposed that if one placed two particles in a joint superposition and then separated them by a great distance, an observation of one would instantly affect the other. Einstein called this a “spooky action at a distance.” The point was that the observation of one couldn't affect the other instantly because information could not travel faster than the speed of light. If it did, then relativity would have been violated which was an idea that did not seem possible at the time. It was thus proposed that there must be some kind of physical, undiscovered, locally hidden variable that was actually affecting them instead of human observation. In other words, the theory was that matter acted independent of observation and only appeared to be observation dependent from the human perspective. However, in the 1960's, John Bell began to explore this thought experiment and proposed an inequality. If this inequality were to be shown as false, then the local hidden variable theories would be debunked and matter would indeed be dependent on observation. This was then put to experimental testing in 1982 by the physicist Alain Aspect. Aspect's results confirmed Bell's prediction: Bell's inequality was violated! Einstein's “spooky action at a distance” was real. This more than adequately confirmed the initial results of quantum mechanics, namely, that prior to observation, objects have no defined properties or locations! The act of a conscious observer creates the existence of the physical objects and the properties they entail instantly!

Seth Lloyd states in an interview:

“Who deserves to trust their inner intuition more than Einstein? And Einstein's intuitions told him – like everyone's intuitions tell them – that things are really there when you are not looking at them. Well, he was wrong. That intuition is incorrect.”

— Seth Lloyd, *Programming The Universe: A Quantum Computer Scientist Takes on The Cosmos*

Astrophysicist Bernard Haisch states in an interview:

“Recent experiments led by a group at the University of Vienna, Austria provide the most compelling

evidence yet that there is no objective reality beyond what we observe (subjectively). So it's really the observation that creates the reality. What they found is that Leggett's Inequality is violated as well as Bell's. Even if you allow instantaneous influences, quantum measurements do not fit with the idea of an 'objective reality'. So... rather than passively observing it, we in fact create reality."

— Astrophysicist Bernard Haisch, *A Quantum Experiment Suggests There's No Such Thing as Objective Reality*

There is even more, however, in that prior to this in 1999, "*A Delayed Choice Quantum Eraser*" experiment was performed. To explain this experiment in layman's terms, this experiment is simply a modification of the original double slit experiment. Instead of placing the detector at the slit, it was to be placed past where the particles would land. Just before the particles would hit the film, it would be pulled away, leaving the camera to capture the results after they would go through the double slit. If they observe a wave, then particles would have gone through the double slit as a wave and just adding a measuring device should not cause the collapse of particles. But if they were to collapse to a state of particles at the moment of detection, then even though they would have gone through the slit unobserved, and should produce a wave pattern; the very act of observing them would instantly transform them into particles. In addition to this, a back history would be loaded up so that particles would go through the double slit instead of a wave. To the dismay of Materialists, once the experiment was conducted, the results displayed particles! The results showed that observation created the existence of particles and loaded up a back history which revealed that they went through the double slit as particles. Thus it follows that particles do not exist unless there is an observer. Lenin's claim that "*Matter is primary.*", was thus refuted by 21st century science which showed the exact opposite as being true. The existence of matter depends on sensation. Observation is primary. Matter and its physical properties are the manifesting products of conscious observation by an irreducible mind. These results have flipped Materialism on its head and serve as a vindication of Idealism as the correct view regarding substance ontology. These scientific discoveries have given rise to something called "*Simulation Theory*" which is but only a modern reinterpretation of philosophic Idealism.

While the Materialists no longer have a leg to stand on anymore, many who are still opposed to Idealism attempt to explain these findings away by holding on to "*Naive Realism*". This view holds that human perceptions – or "phenomena" – are just a representation of a reality that exists independent of observation – or "noumena". However, this view was also falsified in 2011 this time by confirming the *Kochen-Specker Theorem*. According to the results of the "*Experimental non-classicality of an indivisible quantum system*" experiment, the outcome of observed reality depends on the measurements at the time and cannot be predicted prior to that which would be essential for Naive Realism to be possible.

Physicist Anton Zeilinger states in an interview:

"The Kochen-Specker Theorem talks about properties of one system only. So we know that we cannot assume – to put it precisely – we know that it is wrong to assume that the features of a system, which we observe in a measurement, exist prior to the measurement. Not always, I mean in certain cases. So in a sense, what we perceive as reality now depends on our earlier decision of what to measure. This is a very deep message about the nature of reality and our part in the whole universe. We are not just passive

observers.”

— Anton Zeilinger, *Physicists bid farewell to reality?*

There was also the non-local delay “*Quantum erasure with causally disconnected choice*” experiment in 2012 which produced astonishing results and concluded with the following:

“No naive realistic picture is compatible with our results because whether a quantum could be seen as showing particle- or wave-like behavior would depend on a causally disconnected choice. It is therefore suggestive to abandon such pictures altogether.”

— Johannes Kofler and Časlav Brukner, *Experimental rejection of observer-independence in the quantum world*

Thus, the conclusion is rather inescapable. This is why physicist Eugene Wigner was once able to state:

“While a number of philosophical ideas may be logically consistent with present quantum mechanics, ... Materialism is not.”

— Eugene Wigner, *The Scientist Speculates: An Anthology of Partly-baked Ideas*

With the results of these recent experiments, we can also rule out versions of Local Realism and Naive Realism. Thus, not only is Materialism incompatible with quantum mechanics, but so is Realism.

As Anton Zeilinger states:

“We have to give up the idea of realism to a far greater extent than most physicists believe today.”

— Anton Zeilinger, *Physicists bid farewell to reality?*

For anyone who still wishes to dispute all of this, we invite you to take the *Quantum Randi Challenge* where you can win a Nobel Prize if you can prove that Naive Realism or Local Realism is true and that reality is not observation dependent. *The Randi Challenge* has been available since the 23rd of July, 2012, however, no one has been able to prove Realism as true to this day.

Some try to get around all of this by separating the “*Quantum World*” from the “*Macro World*”, however, this approach was also falsified in 2012 by the “*Violation of the Leggett-Garg inequality with weak measurements of photons*” experiment. In 2011, Časlav Brukner and Johannes Kofler showed that Macro Realism does in fact emerge from Quantum Physics and therefore one can not separate the Macro World from the Quantum World. This should be rather obvious since double slit experiments have been performed successfully with larger things like atoms and molecules. Experiments are also being devised on how to do this with mid sized proteins and viruses. No one believes that the results will be different. Other elements of quantum strangeness have been seen in macro objects as well such as quantum entanglement between two Aluminum chips big enough to be seen with the naked eye, and even placing a

small metal paddle into a quantum superposition. So the notion that we can escape the results of quantum mechanics by separating the Macro World from the Quantum World doesn't work either. The Macro World is a manifestation of the Quantum World.

As a final act of defiance, in response to these scientific discoveries and conclusions, the Materialists have posited the "*Many Worlds Theory*" or MWT interpretation of quantum mechanics which is supposed to address and account for the latest discoveries in quantum science. MWT proposes that there is no collapse of the wave function upon measurement, but rather, every possibility splits off into different worlds. What this means is that every quantum possibility does in fact play out. They simply split off into different worlds and in each one, the observer observes each different outcome. This theory is today more commonly known as the "*Multiverse Theory*" and is heavily popularized in social media and entertainment, specifically in American superhero comic books such as those of Marvel and D.C. comics. To the great dismay of Materialists and comic book lovers, this view is also riddled with problems unlike the Idealist understanding. It is an extraordinarily unbelievable violation of Occam's Razor which states that entities are not to be multiplied beyond necessity. Introducing a nigh-infinite number of worlds that can not be detected is an extreme violation of this especially in light of the much simpler Idealist counter-position called the "*Many Minds Theory*" or MMT, which holds that all these possibilities simply exist as a mathematical probability in the form of a wave function instead of actual worlds that can never be verified or falsified. Simply put, an Idealist understanding can explain and account for all these things perfectly well with much fewer assumptions. The MWT interpretation doesn't have sufficient explanatory power and has to postulate so much more in order to explain the little that it can. It is absurd to postulate and completely unnecessary to do so.

As Bernard Haisch states:

"One tiny atom's quantum behavior replicates the entire universe and defines each alternative by all the possible consequences of that behavior. But at any moment, within each human body, there are on the order of a billion times a billion times a billion atoms, each making quantum transitions. In the many worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics, every human being, therefore, creates a billion times a billion times a billion alternative universes every second."

— Bernard Haisch, *The God Theory*

The last and final objection against Idealism comes in the form of the accusation that all of this leads to Solipsism. This is of course false. Solipsism, for our purposes, would represent the extreme skeptical version of Idealism which states that only one's own mind exists and anything outside of one's own mind does not exist. This however does not have to be the case as there are many types of Idealisms that reject this view. Most general forms of ontological Idealism simply state that the appearance of the physical world is created by the activity of the mental world and not that only one's own mind exists!

In a short article commenting on why Materialists cling to false notions of an independent material reality despite all scientific proofs against it, Richard Conn Henry and Stephen R. Palmquist say:

"Why do people cling with such ferocity to a belief in a mind-independent reality? It is surely because if

there is no such reality, then ultimately, (as far as we know) mind alone exists. And if mind is not a product of real matter, but rather is the creator of the illusion of material reality, (which has, in fact, despite the materialists, been known to be the case, since the discovery of quantum mechanics in 1925), then a theistic view of our existence becomes the only rational alternative to solipsism.”

— Richard Conn Henry and Stephen R. Palmquist, *The Mental Universe*

Theoretical Physicist Michiu Kaku explains:

“Here is the question, is the cat dead or alive? Well, according to quantum mechanics, the cat is neither dead nor alive, but the sum of the two states. Well, at that point you say, ‘That’s nonsense! That’s preposterous! How can you be both dead and alive simultaneously?’... (Eugene) Wigner said, ‘let’s take it one step further. If I, a human being, look at the cat, I am conscious. Therefore, consciousness determines existence.’ At that point, Einstein went ballistic and said, ‘What? You’re saying the fact that you are a conscious being determines that the cat is alive?’. The answer is yes and Wigner made one more step and that is, ‘how do I know I’m alive? You see, the cat and me, we are part of the same universe. If I don’t know whether the cat is alive or dead, I could also be dead at the same time and not even know it! So who determines that I’m alive?’. Well, Wigner’s friend looks at him. He looks at the cat and they exist. But then who looks at Wigner’s friend? And so there is an infinite chain of people looking at people looking at people until finally you hit cosmic consciousness. Some consciousness that’s aetherial and envelops the universe which looks at us and says, ‘Aha, the cat is alive’.”

— Michiu Kaku, in an episode of *“Into the Wormhole”* with Morgan Freeman

This “Theistic Idealism” can even be taken so far as to say that it is significantly more logical than the solipsist position because in this case one can point out that individual human minds do not create ultimate reality, but merely participate in it by creating our own subjective realities that are subordinate to ultimate reality. In other words, we are not the architects of ultimate reality nor do we have the ability to change the structure of the world through mental processes alone. The evidence thus suggests that we are just lesser minds dependent on larger minds that govern over humanity. Ultimately, all created minds are dependent on an uncreated divine mind that is actually in full control of the structure of the experience. We are allowed in some capacity to operate and participate in the outcomes of the idealist experience. It is this Theistic Idealism that Bishop George Berkeley himself affirmed within his famous axiom, *“Esse est Principi”*, or *“To be is to be perceived.”* According to Berkeley, It is the Triune God of Christianity that created and maintains everything by actively perceiving it. Because God is triune, each person of the trinity is uncreated and has always perceived the other with neither beginning nor end. Thus, according to Berkeley, when God states *“I am that I am”*, he is essentially stating *“We are what we always perceive”*.

One notable objection that is raised by Bruce Rosenblum and Fred Kuttner in their book, *Quantum Enigma* against the theistic perspective is the question of how we can do experiments showing something unobserved is in a superposition in the first place. In other words, If God is looking down at everything, the strange world of quantum mechanics should never have been verified since they are always being observed by God. This objection is based on a misunderstanding. God is not separate from us in some place in space and time observing us. After all, space, time and matter are created illusions of our

conscious observation.

"As Christians we affirm not pantheism but 'panentheism.' God is in all things yet also beyond and above all things. He is both 'greater than the great' and 'smaller than the small' . . . 'everywhere and nowhere, he is everything and nothing.' . . . God is at the core. God is other than the core. God is within the core, and all through the core, and beyond the core, closer to the core than the core."

— Kallistos Ware, *The Orthodox Way*

"God - who is truly none of the things that exist, and who, properly speaking, is all things, and at the same time beyond them - is present in the logos of each thing in itself, and in all the logoi together, according to which all things exist ... God is whole in all things commonly, and in each being particularly, without separation or being subject to division ... but on the contrary is truly all things in all, never going out of His own indivisible simplicity."

— St. Maximus the Confessor, *The Ambigua*

As the falsification of Realism shows, the existence of the physical world is created by our observation of it and it does not exist independent of it. So what is there for God to observe other than what we see? Consciousness is what is fundamental, and our consciousness would be dependent on a larger one that is beyond our own. God is, in a sense, observing us having an experience of a physical world. Apart from our experience, there is nothing that needs to be observed as it exists in the state of a wave function. Thus, God is not separate from us as our consciousness is dependent on his; and he doesn't need to see an independent experience of the physical world. Science, by proving Idealism as true, has not buried God; but rather, it has exalted him as an ontological necessity, and with it, buried Materialism. Materialism remains now only in the fantasy of a few minds.

But what then should we make of Humanism? If God is an ontological necessity, then we can not accept Humanism as the highest truth. All Humanistic Idealisms must be subordinated under a greater Theistic Idealism. This includes Fascism which still retains embedded within itself the marks of Humanism and Humanistic traditions. Any worldview that does not subordinate all notions of temporal becoming under an accepted tradition of perennial being based on faith in divine revelation, is doomed. In this regard, Giovanni Gentile's Actual Idealism by itself is not sufficient. It too must find its place under a greater Idealism that is Theistic rather than Humanistic.

Of course, one should also not neglect to mention the colossal ramifications all of this has against the adherents of determinism. There is no objective reality that is dialectically playing itself out. We, as human beings made in the image of God, are not determined objects of any naturalistic process of becoming. Very much to the contrary, we are free-willed subjects creating realities out of our own being. This realization is a reaffirmation of human free will. Man is the master of his own fate in so far as he is allowed to be by the passive will of God. Nevertheless, man must not forget that even this temporary state of being is possible only by the grace of God. Thus, by freely submitting himself to God, man enjoys the privilege of freedom as God has intended him to have and perhaps, one day, man may be graced with transcending even this state of being for whatever God has ultimately intended to be man's eternal estate.