PHI 400/600: Selected Topics (Problems of Marxism)
T 5:00-7:50pm, Tolley 304
Prof. Gregg Lambert, Humanities Center, Tolley 306

> Will not the knowledge of it [the good] then have a great influence on life [*bion*]? Shall we not, like archers who have a mark to aim at, be more likely to hit upon what is right? If so, we must try, in outline at least, to determine what it is, and of which of the sciences or capacities it is object. It would seem to belong to the most authoritative art and that which is most truly the master art. And politics appears to be of this nature; *for it is that ordains which of the sciences should be studied in a polity.* Aristotle, "Nicomachean Ethics," trans. W. D. Ross, in *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, vol. 2, p. 1729 (1094a 19)

Course Description

This will be the first in a new series of spring seminars on problems in the Marxist-Leninist tradition of dialectical philosophy. This is a good, advanced introduction to Marxism and students should have already taken some basic introduction to the writings of Marx and Engels and/or 19th century German Idealism. We will be reviewing writings after the death of Marx, beginning with Engel's *Ludwig Feuerbach and the Outcome of Classical German Philosophy* (1888), followed by key philosophers and theorists in Marxist and Late-Marxist Political Philosophy (e.g., Plekhanov, Korsch, Lenin, Stalin, Mattick, Horkheimer,, Kojève, Althusser) and will conclude with Foucault's lecture course on "Security, Territory, and Populations."

This is a seminar; readings will be assigned each week and announced in the previous class. Students will be expected to participate in discussion on Tuesday nights. The evaluation for the course will be based on an annotation of a selected reading that will be presented in the seminar, a mid-term and final take-home essay exam on the following problems: first, the problem of method, or the difference between the philosophy of dialectical materialism and the science of historical materialism, including the polemics concerning idealism vs. materialism; second, the problem of the post-revolutionary state-form—i.e., democracy, communism, socialism, totalitarianism, centralized party controlled state-capitalism, a mixed political economy, or "the return to barbarism," i.e., autocracy, tyranny, nationalism, and war. Selected readings are available through the SU Bookstore or through an on-line vendor. See SU bookstore for list of class readings, but do not purchase until after the first class. *Students should come the first night having read Plato's "The Statesman."*

Students are expected to attend all class meetings that are scheduled. Students will have a "bank" of two "excused" absences to use during the semester; any additional absences are "unexcused" and will be deducted from the final grade. **Please review all SU course policies via the *My Slice* portal.** All communication in this seminar will be conducted through *SU Success*. Additional materials will be distributed in a *Dropbox* folder and students should have set up a free on-line account. Students may only contact me at the email: gregglambert23@gmail.com