Michael A. Lebowitz: Following Marx: Method, Critique and Crisis

Citation metadata

Author: Vineeth Mathoor
Date: Oct. 2011
From: Capital & Class (Vol. 35, Issue 3)
Publisher: Sage Publications Ltd. (UK)
Document Type: Book review
Length: 1,178 words

Main content

Article Preview:


What does it mean to follow Marx? Do we really have to become acolyte aficionados of an ideological extension of 19th-century Hegelianism? In Fallowing Marx: Method, Critique and Crisis, Michael Lebowitz provides answers to these questions. Lebowitz's new book contributes to the debates examining the legacy of Marxist philosophy and its epistemological roots. The book is remarkably critical on post-Marxist intrusions into the mainstream classical Marxist tradition; therefore the basic premise of the book is to argue about the possibility of following Marx. Structurally, the book is a collection of nineteen brilliantly argued articles on Marxist theory. These essays deal with histories and theories of the systems and philosophy of Marxism and Hegelianism. The book is divided into five sections, with each having themes on its own and a strong commitment to Marxism as the general outlook.

Section 1, 'Critiques of political economy', has four brilliant chapters on Marxian economics. The section begins with an examination of neoclassical and neo-Ricardian economics. The comparison between the Marxian and neoclassical concepts of value and wage is extensively covered. Having examined economics, the first part goes on to analyse analytical Marxism in historical and political contexts. Lebowitz decisively shows that analytical Marxism is not Marxism in essence, but anti-Marxism. Of course, the book does not lessen the magnum opus of G.A. Cohen, Karl Marx's Theory of History: A Defence, but asserts that the overall theoretical attempt of analytical Marxism stands in contrast to Marxist theory, and is therefore non-Marxism. The readers would agree with Lebowitz that it is indeed sensible to argue that methodologically analytical Marxism is corrupt and an intrusion of various streams into the general...