Badiou's Being and Event and the Mathematics of Set Theory

By Burhanuddin Baki

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Alain Badiou's *Being and Event* continues to impact philosophical investigations into the question of Being. By exploring the central role set theory plays in this influential work, Burhanuddin Baki presents the first extended study of Badiou's use of mathematics in *Being and Event*.

Adopting a clear, straightforward approach, Baki gathers together and explains the technical details of the relevant high-level mathematics in Being and Event. He examines Badiou's philosophical framework in close detail, showing exactly how it is 'conditioned' by the technical mathematics. Clarifying the relevant details of Badiou's mathematics, Baki looks at the four core topics Badiou employs from set theory: the formal axiomatic system of ZFC; cardinal and ordinal numbers; Kurt Gödel's concept of constructability; and Cohen's technique of forcing. Baki then rebuilds Badiou's philosophical meditations in relation to their conditioning by the mathematics, paying particular attention to Cohen's forcing, which informs Badiou's analysis of the event.

Providing valuable insights into Badiou's philosophy of mathematics, *Badiou's Being and Event and the Mathematics of Set Theory* offers an excellent commentary and a new reading of Badiou's most complex and important work.

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Editorial Review

Review
Readers of Badiou without a background knowledge of the relevant mathematical concepts have long been in urgent need of a book like this. Baki elucidates those concepts with great authority and flair, as well as a gifted expositor's sure sense of just how to vary the pace according to level of difficulty. His own background as a professional mathematics teacher and, more recently, philosopher and critical-cultural theorist makes him uniquely well qualified for this task. Anyone who approaches Being and Event with understandable trepidation on account of what appears its forbidding mathematical content will be greatly heartened and assisted by this admirable work. -- Christopher Norris, Distinguished Research Professor in Philosophy, Cardiff University, UK Demonstrating a commendable mastery of the material, Baki guides the reader with patience and precision through the set-theoretical infrastructure of Alain Badiou's mature thought. His sensitivity to the complexity that inhabits the drastic equation between mathematics and ontology is particularly welcome. Armed with this guide-book, readers of Badiou will be better able to struggle against disorientation and discover new, rigorous paths through his oeuvre. -- Alberto Toscano, Reader in Critical Theory, Goldsmiths, University of London, UK

About the Author

Burhanuddin Baki is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Humanities at the Malaysian University of Science (Universiti Sains Malaysia), Malaysia.

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