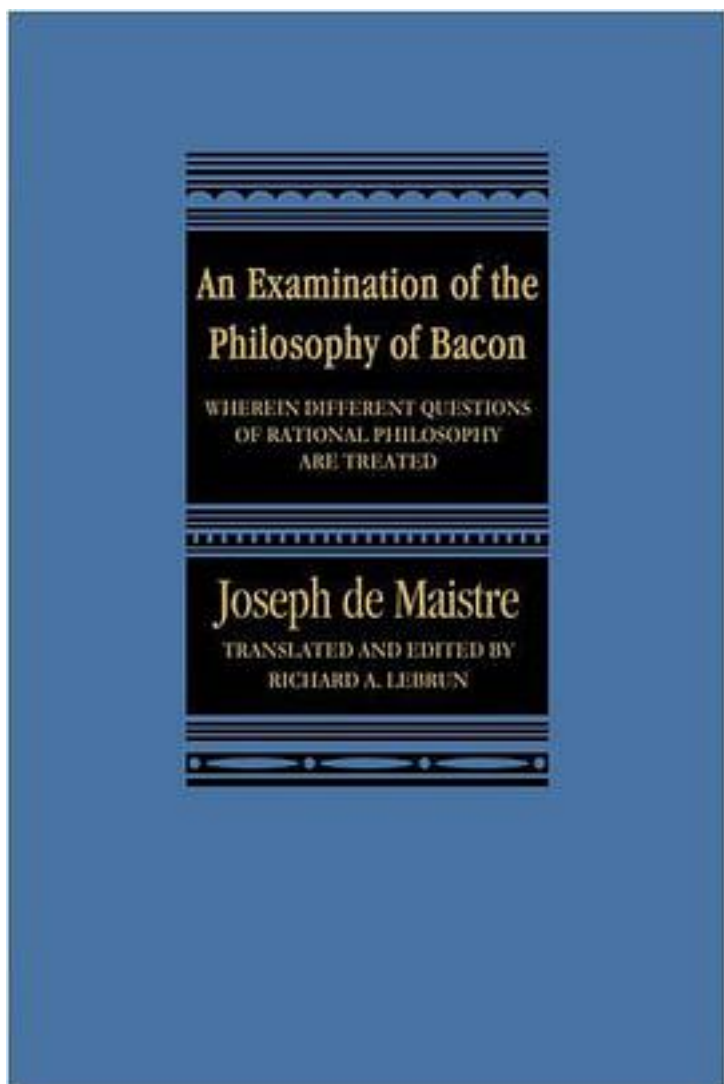


An Examination of the Philosophy of Bacon



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著者:de Maistre, Joseph; Lebrun, Richard A.; Maistre, Joseph Marie

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"An Examination of the Philosophy of Bacon" is one of Joseph de Maistre's most original and important works. Best known for his defence of throne and altar and for his critique of the political and religious thought of the Enlightenment, Maistre also addressed more fundamental philosophical issues. His critique of Bacon, written between 1814 and 1816, is a vigorous attack on the materialism and scientism that he believed characterized the thought of the French philosophers. Although often neglected, "An Examination of the Philosophy of Bacon" is crucial to understand the epistemological basis for Maistre's critique of modern science as well as his criticisms of other aspects of Enlightenment thought. Given Maistre's stature in the history of conservative thought, his critique of Bacon remains significant for what it tells us about Maistre's own thought, what it reveals about attitudes toward science in his time and what it contributes to issues that are still debated today. The work also showcases Maistre's polemical skills and his powerful prose style. Richard Lebrun's annotated translation includes Maistre's complete text, an extensive introduction that places the work in context and provides a critical exposition and assessment of Maistre's criticisms of Bacon, biographical notes on persons cited or mentioned by Maistre, and a bibliography. Differences between Maistre's manuscript and the printed text, first published fifteen years after the author's death, are noted, and Maistre's numerous citations have been identified, verified, and translated, making this the only authoritative and fully accurate edition of the work in either French or English.

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目录:

[An Examination of the Philosophy of Bacon_ 下载链接1](#)

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