Heinrich Meier has written and taught extensively on political philosophy, with an understanding on the topic that allows for nuanced original insights. *Political Philosophy and the Challenge of Revealed Religion* is an example of such work. Chapter one is a compendium of determinants which lay out the teleological motivation inherent in philosophy, and by extension, *política*, according to Meier. Four central points in the chapter guide the journey to posit dynamic political conclusions, and although apophatic statements are scarce the quest to summarily identify political philosophy is generally accomplished. Meier’s ensuing two chapters are critical interactions of highly regarded works with unique thoughts.

Chapter two interacts with Leo Strauss’ *Thoughts on Machiavelli* while chapter three with Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Du Contrat Social*. In the first of three sections in chapter two, Meier details Strauss’ discernment into the hidden thoughts of Machiavelli. Machiavelli’s apparent contradictions and hidden intended audience were key for Strauss’ conclusions. However, as Meier points out, Strauss’ assessments may have been premature, which I agree. Meier allows the reader to follow his chain of thought, which in my opinion mirrored Strauss’ similar discovery process in *Thoughts*. This same tone is seen throughout Section II. Here Meier is more critical of Strauss who arrives at conclusions Machiavelli never stated regarding revealed religion, Natural Theology, and conscience. In my opinion, Meier should have gone further still explaining Strauss’ shortcomings.

Section III and the epilogue, Meier seems to interact with Strauss and Machiavelli in broader strokes, often addressing various contemporary philosophers, while keeping *Thoughts on Machiavelli* in purview. These final two sections, I found, allow the novice reader to interact with Meier in broader
strokes rather than the first two sections, which almost exclusively require the reader to be fully versed with Strauss and Machiavelli. This is unfortunate. While technically one not need to have read Strauss’ Thoughts, nevertheless, without understanding the premise of that book, as well as Machiavelli’s Prince and Discourses, the reader may not be able to fully engage with and appreciate the amount of work Meier put into this chapter.

Chapter three is an original take on Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s Du Contrat Social. In the past, critics of Rousseau have wondered the placement and importance of the “Legislator” in The Social Contract. Meier contrarily expounds on this point at his final assessment which, in my opinion, should have had more prominence and mention throughout his critique, however, methodologically would have been out of place. Similar to the previous chapter, Meier explains the premise and key concepts of Rousseau's influential work; the citizen(s), the sovereign, the general and individual will. He highlights Rousseau’s logical ordering of the individual, the citizen, the sovereign, and the general will as key for a political community. Understandably, if this ordering hierarchy is off all vested parties suffer harm. Section II of that chapter delineates one of the principle parts for the thrust of Meier’s argument. God must be the higher intelligence needed to found the volonté particuliére, which in turn, effects the volonté générale. Meier places significant emphasis on the higher intelligence to found the thoughts of the individuals. As such the thoughts of the individuals would be “enlightened,” self-abasing, and definitely not self-serving. This seems like an intentional foreshadowing connection to a further critique on Religion civile, which lends support for the thesis of this chapter.

Section III interacts in greater detail with Du Contrat Social, delineating the workings of the Prince and the sovereign, the executive and legislative offices, and the rights or duties of the individual(s) which comprise the political community. Meier highlights Rousseau’s assessment of the sujets and the magistrats, and the dichotomy of nature over it’s works where the earlier is seen as pristine and the latter as undesirable. Section IV starts with Meier pointing out the chiastic structure in Rousseau’s work, with the placement of the second half of book II (matters concerning the Legislator) with the latter half of book IV (Institutions resulting from legislation). Moreover, these sections serve as bookends to book III which concerns the description of government. For Meier this seems key, for religion and polity have worked congruently throughout history. He feels Rousseau makes this overture intentional through chapter and book ordering. Nevertheless, that is, until Jesus (Legislator) announced a spiritual kingdom that has irreversibly damaged modern politics.