Scattola’s study on the sixteenth century natural law traditions is of interest to scholars from several disciplines. Therefore, one can regret that the quotations in Latin, often of some length (especially in the footnotes), are not translated. Familiarity with the Latin language might still be common among legal historians (as Scattola is), but the history of natural law presumably also attracts scholars from other disciplines, among whom this familiarity might be less common. Without translation it will be hard for them to follow all the little steps forward and to get to know the contributions of scholars of a lesser degree. And this is exactly what Scattola invited us to do.

At the end of his study the difference between modern and pre-modern natural law is summarised in four elements: one principle as the sole fundament (1) of a system of law obtained by a logical proceeding (2), without recognition of any innate ideas or principles (3), that is theoretical in nature and functions as criterion for deduction (4). The work of Grotius is said to occupy a position in between the pre-modern and the modern natural law. We do find in Grotius’ natural law the idea of a system of law obtained by deduction from a basic principle, the appetitus societatis. But we also find principia interna implanted by God and functioning as a criterion and guide for the deduction from that principle.

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In spite of its monumental size, this book does not offer a reconstruction of the thought of Barbeyrac or even a presentation of all the aspects of his activities as a translator, nor does it claim to do so. The book’s aim instead is to examine the contribution this author has made to modern political and legal thought by way of his commentary on Pufendorf (or better, on De iure naturae et gentium, given that the commentary on De officio plays hardly any role in this book) and, in a much more limited way, through his commentary on Grotius. Even this more restricted claim is in turn qualified in the subtitle, which informs the reader correctly that the main thread of the research
is the legal theory of the right of resistance and that of sovereignty, with the former dependent on the latter. Those who would expect therefore a comprehensive presentation of what Barbeyrac did even only as translator or commentator will be disappointed. As for Barbeyrac the translator, the author closely scrutinizes his translation by comparing it with the Latin text, in the case of Pufendorf, only on one occasion (the translation of the term *imposi* *tio* with ‘institution’: p. 204–206), and, in the case of Grotius, a bit more extensively with a group of paragraphs of the *Prolegomena* (pp. 395–397 and 610–625). Regarding Barbeyrac the commentator, she gives specific attention neither to his impressive philological contribution in identifying and correcting thousands of sources quoted by his authors nor to the impressive use he makes of Roman law and of the Romanist literature in his commentaries.

That, despite its thus relatively restricted scope, Labriola’s volume has attained the size of 680 pages of dense text, often made even more dense by long footnotes written in very small print, is the result of several factors, both positive and negative, which we shall set out in what follows. Among the positive elements is the fact that the author has conceived her task in large terms, including in her analysis other works by Barbeyrac, for example, the *Traité de la morale des Pères de l’Église* and the two rectoral speeches in Lausanne *Sur la permission et sur le bénéfice des Loix*. She also pays attention to the generally neglected *Traité du Jeu* and to the translations of sermons of Tillotson and of the treatises of Noodt. Another element which helps to increase the number of pages of the book is the fact that the author takes nothing for granted: for example, is it necessary to demonstrate Locke’s influence on Barbeyrac? Instead, when she tries to demonstrate Locke’s influence on Barbeyrac, far for assuming that the reader knows Locke’s views thoroughly, she takes upon herself the ungrateful task of summarizing them all. Since one of Labriola’s gifts is precisely her ability to give short but clear and efficient summaries of quite complicated arguments and trains of thought, also this aspect of her work can be viewed only with pleasure by the reader. This desire to leave out nothing and to explain everything conceals some dangers, however, and here we turn to the book’s negative sides. More than half of the book, specifically the second and third parts, totaling 357 out of 680 pages, is dedicated both to a reconstruction of Pufendorf’s thinking in *De iure naturae et gentium* and to Barbeyrac’s commentary on it. Unfortunately, of these two elements, in a book on Barbeyrac, the second should be much longer, but here the first takes much the preeminent, not to say uncontested, pride of place. This gives the reader the impression