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XXIII.4 On families

- The Spirit of Law - Book XXIII. On laws in their relation to the number of inhabitants -

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It is accepted almost everywhere that the wife passes into the husband's family. The reverse is established without any disadvantage in Formosa, [\[1\]](#) where the husband goes to form the wife's family.

This law that fixes the family in a succession of persons of the same sex contributes greatly, independently of the original reasons, to the propagation of the human species. The family is a sort of property ; a man who has children of the sex that does not perpetuate it is never satisfied until he has some of the sex that does.

The names that give men the idea of something that seems destined never to perish are very helpful in inspiring in each family the desire to extend its duration. There are peoples among whom names designate families ; there are others where they designate only persons, which is not as good.

[\[1\]](#) Father du Halde, vol. I, p. 165.