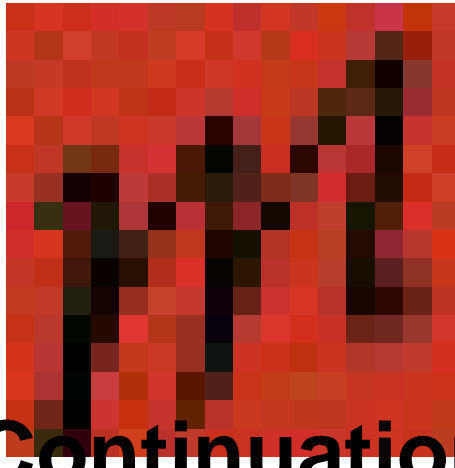


<http://montesquieu.ens-lyon.fr/spip.php?article3133>



# XXX.4 Continuation of the same subject

- The Spirit of Law - Book XXX. Theory of feudal laws among the Franks, in the relation they have to the establishment of the monarchy -

Date de mise en ligne : vendredi 7 septembre 2018

---

Copyright © Montesquieu - Tous droits réservés

---

## XXX.4 Continuation of the same subject

---

Cæsar says that "when one of the princes declared to the assembly that he had conceived a plan for some expedition, and asked to be followed, those who approved the chief and the enterprise rose and offered their help. They were praised by the multitude. But if they did not fulfill their engagement, they lost the public confidence, and were regarded as deserters and traitors." [1]

What Cæsar says here, and what we have said in the previous chapter after Tacitus, is the germ of the history of the first dynasty.

We must not be surprised that kings have always at each expedition had new armies to reconstitute, different troops to persuade, new men to enlist ; that it required, to acquire much, that they be very active ; that they constantly be acquiring through the division of lands and spoils, and constantly give away those lands and those spoils ; that their domain continually grow, and constantly diminish ; that a father who gave a kingdom to one of his children should always add a treasure to it [2] ; that the king's treasure should be regarded as necessary to the monarchy ; and that a king could not even for his daughter's dowry give any of it to strangers without the consent of the other kings. [3] The springs that kept the monarchy going had continually to be wound.

---

[1] *The Gallic Wars*, book VI.

[2] See the life of Dagobert.

[3] See Gregory of Tours, book VI, on the marriage of Chilperic's daughter. Chilbert sends him ambassadors to tell him that he need not give cities of his father's realm to his daughter, nor any of his treasuries, serfs, horses, nor knights, nor teams of oxen, etc.