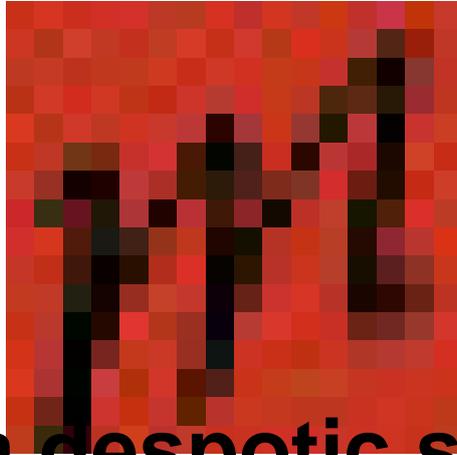


<http://montesquieu.ens-lyon.fr/spip.php?article2780>



## XIII.6 On a despotic state in the same situation

- The Spirit of Law - Book XIII. On the relations which the levying of tributes and the magnitude of public revenues have with liberty -

Date de mise en ligne : jeudi 6 septembre 2018

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### **XIII.6 On a despotic state in the same situation**

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What I have just said is even more indispensable in the despotic state. The lord who may at any moment be dispossessed of his lands and his slaves is not so determined to preserve them.

Peter I, intending to take over Germany and levy his tributes in specie, made a very wise rule that is still followed in Russia. The gentleman levies the tax on the peasants and pays it to the czar. If the number of peasants declines, he pays just as much ; if the number increases, he does not pay more : he therefore has an interest in not harassing his peasants.