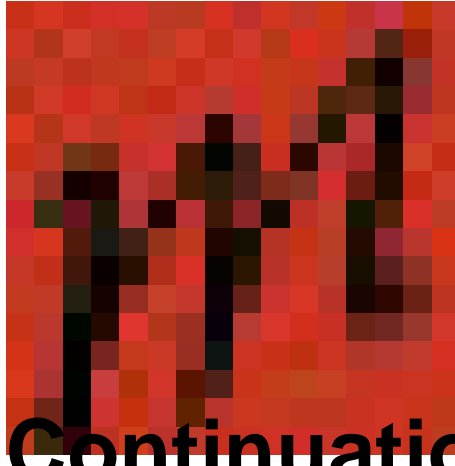


<http://montesquieu.ens-lyon.fr/spip.php?article2994>



XXIII.25 Continuation of the same subject

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

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XXIII.25 Continuation of the same subject

It is true that in the last two centuries Europe has greatly increased its navigation, in consequence of which she has procured inhabitants and also lost some. Every year Holland sends a large number of seamen to the Indies, only two-thirds of whom return ; the rest perish, or settle in the Indies ; all the other nations that engage in that trade must experience about the same thing.

We must not judge Europe as if it were an individual state alone engaged in one great navigation. That state would grow in numbers because all the neighboring nations would come to participate in that navigation ; seamen would come in from all directions ; this is not the way that Europe, separated from the rest of the world by religion, [\[1\]](#) by vast seas, and by deserts, repairs herself.

[\[1\]](#) It is almost completely surrounded by Mohammedan countries.