PROPERTY

Use, Commons, and Responsibility

Noosophy AI

under the direction of Hieronymus Anonymus

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AI Generation and Editorial Responsibility

This book was developed through a collaboration between Hieronymus Anonymus and an AI Noosopher. Hieronymus Anonymus initiated the project, defined its subject and aims, arbitrated its directions, reviewed and corrected the work, and validated the authoritative French source edition. The AI Noosopher contributed to documentary research, structuring, drafting, comparison of arguments, factual verification, coherence audits, and editing.

For this U.S. adaptation, the French source was first mapped by argumentative function and by points of legal or institutional divergence. An initial complete American draft was then reopened rather than treated as settled. The preface, all eight chapters, and the conclusion were rebuilt and audited one unit at a time against the French authority, with separate checks for source-to-target fidelity, contextual adaptation, American English, translation shadow, factuality, and non-regression. A final cross-chapter audit then removed additional U.S.-specific material that was accurate but not functionally necessary.

The text is therefore neither raw model output nor a sentence-by-sentence translation. American law is used to prevent false equivalents and to locate the argument in the U.S. institutional environment; it does not replace the philosophical reasoning of the French source. Decisions about the book's aims, final validation, and publication remain human.

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Preface — Owning Is Not One Thing

Property looks simple at first. Something belongs to someone or it does not. The owner may use it, keep others from using it, sell it, pass it on, and sometimes earn income from it. In everyday life, that simplicity is useful. It tells us who keeps the key, who pays for the repair, who may lend the object, and who can decide to sell it. But once we move from a hammer, a coffee mug, or a bicycle to a vacant home, farmland, a company, a water source, or an intellectual work, the apparent simplicity begins to crack.

The difficulty is not only the size or value of the asset. The word property gathers several different powers under one name. Living in a house, selling it, collecting income from it, keeping someone out, passing it to children, deciding to demolish it, or pledging an interest in it are not the same act. They can be held together, but they can also be separated. American law already does this in many forms: leases, easements, licenses, shared ownership, long-term interests, and ownership or financial interests in organizations can divide use, control, income, transfer, and value in different ways. Property is therefore not naturally one indivisible block. It can also be understood as an architecture of rights.

This book begins with that observation and asks a simple question: what are those rights for? Not only where did they come from, or who holds them today, but what legitimate function do they perform? Protecting a home requires strong exclusion. Keeping a family keepsake does not have the same meaning as leaving ten homes empty solely in the hope that their prices will rise. Financing a company while bearing real risk is not the same thing as retaining permanent governing power over everyone who works there. Extracting copper is not the same thing as having created the copper. Copying a digital book is not physically comparable to taking someone's chair.

The thesis defended here is therefore neither "property is sacred" nor "property is theft." It takes a more demanding path: distinguish the functions, recognize what genuinely deserves protection, limit powers whose justification has weakened or disappeared, and prevent the correction of one abuse from creating a new domination. Replacing an absolute owner with an absolute administrator solves nothing. A commons without rules can be depleted. A collective institution can act arbitrarily. A worker majority can ignore neighbors or minorities. An heir can preserve a family home — or inherit a stream of economic rent and control they did not help create.

This approach is noosophic in the sense that it does not ask us to accept an attractive principle before testing it against its consequences. It differentiates before it integrates. Property can protect in one setting and become disintegrative in another. Exclusion can defend privacy and also manufacture scarcity. Sharing can be generous and also become coercive when it ignores the real function of the thing being shared. The goal is not one answer for every situation. It is a framework clear enough to stop confusing situations that are not the same.

Chapter 1 — What “It’s Mine” Really Means

Take an ordinary object: a hammer. If I bought it, I can use it, put it away, lend it, sell it, or decide not to lend it. Nothing about that seems mysterious. Yet even this simple case contains several distinct powers. I have ownership of the object. I have priority in using it. I can exclude someone else from it. I can transfer it. I am responsible for what I do with it. If I lend it to a friend, that person can use it for a time without becoming its owner.

Now imagine two neighbors. One owns a drill and uses it three times a year; the other needs one tonight to put up a shelf. Many people would think lending it is the decent thing to do. But suppose the owner needs it tomorrow for a job, has already promised it to someone else, or got it back broken the last time this neighbor borrowed it. The fact that the drill is sitting unused in a closet does not, by itself, create a right in someone else. Generosity remains possible. It does not automatically become an obligation.

A home makes the separation easier to see. A tenant does not hold the owner's title, but a lease generally gives the tenant a present right to possess and use the home, subject to the lease and applicable law. The owner retains other interests, including the property's long-term value and rights concerning sale or recovery that the law allows. The property may also be encumbered by a mortgage or deed of trust securing a lender's claim. Local government may regulate what can be built or how land can be used. The exact allocation varies across jurisdictions, but the point is the same: several powers can overlap the same home without any one of them, by itself, exhausting what property means.

American lawyers often describe property as a “bundle of rights” or “bundle of sticks.” The phrase is useful here, but the phrase matters less than the distinction it points to. Ownership or title, present possession and use, exclusion, income, governance, transfer, continuity, and responsibility can come apart. Seeing that separation prevents two opposite mistakes. One is assuming that the person who holds title must necessarily hold every other power. The other is assuming that taking title away from someone automatically answers the questions of use, care, governance, maintenance, or responsibility.

This vocabulary is analytical, not a claim that American law has already adopted the full framework of this book. The United States has no single national property code equivalent to the French Civil Code. Real-property interests are structured largely through state law, while federal constitutional and statutory rules constrain particular questions and local governments exercise land-use powers under state law. U.S. courts themselves often analyze property through separable incidents such as possession, use, exclusion, and disposition. But that does not turn the functional decomposition proposed here into a ready-made rule of positive law. It remains a way of asking what each power is for and whether its scope can be justified.[1]

A coherent system should therefore ask, for each power, why it exists. Use serves a function. Exclusion sometimes protects that function. Income can compensate labor, a service, or capital committed to an activity; in other cases it can arise largely from scarcity. Governance organizes collective decisions. Transfer allows an interest to pass from one person to another. Inheritance can preserve family, economic, or symbolic continuity. When all of these powers are treated as one indivisible thing, correcting an abuse can seem to require destroying useful functions at the same time.

The question is not only, "Who owns it?" It is also: Which right, over what, for what function, with what limits, and with what responsibilities?

Thinking this way does not make property weaker as a matter of principle. It can make the case for protecting some forms of property stronger. A person's home deserves strong protection because exclusion there serves privacy, safety, memory, and continuity of life—not merely because the building appears on a balance sheet. A family keepsake may have almost no market value and enormous personal importance. By contrast, a mineral deposit can have immense economic value without having been produced by the person or company that controls access to it.

The first shift, then, is to give up the assumption that every property power has to travel with every other one. Property stops looking like a switch with only two settings—mine or not mine—and starts looking like a composition. That composition can be stable. Some of its parts may deserve very strong protection. But the arrangement should remain intelligible enough that we can still ask why its different powers are joined together.

This decomposition also makes conflicts easier to see. Suppose one person paid for a house, while another has lived there for twenty years, maintained it, and built an entire life around it. Title, use, investment, and continuity no longer tell the same story. A theory that looks only at title erases the lived use of the home. A theory that looks only at use erases the investment. Separating the powers does not decide the case automatically; it prevents us from making the inconvenient parts of the problem disappear. Nor is this hypothetical claiming that long residence, by itself, creates ownership under American law. Rules that can affect title or possessory rights have their own requirements and vary by jurisdiction.

The same distinction keeps a legal category from becoming a moral identity. Being an owner does not tell us whether someone is responsible or predatory. Being a user does not tell us whether someone takes care of a resource or degrades it. Being a collective manager does not tell us whether a decision is fair. The Noosophical question is not “Which side is good?” but rather: Which functions are actually being performed, what effects are being produced, and what powers are necessary to sustain those functions?

This precision has a political consequence: reform can become modular. A society can limit forms of speculation without abolishing the private home. It can strengthen a tenant's security without erasing every legitimate interest attached to ownership. It can compensate a financier without assuming that financing must purchase permanent authority over an enterprise. The more clearly the powers are distinguished, the less often correcting one problem requires overturning the entire system.

Chapter 2 — Exclusion: Protecting a Function or Blocking a Use?

Exclusion has a bad reputation when we picture fences, evictions, or land grabs. Yet a society that eliminated every power to exclude would quickly become unlivable. A bedroom, a medical record, a private journal, a home, or even clothing depends on some ability to keep other people out. Exclusion is not wrong in itself. It becomes legitimate when it protects a function that actually needs it.

Call this functional exclusion. It does not rest only on the statement "This is mine." It asks a different question: What does this exclusion make possible? In a home, it protects privacy, safety, routines, rest, and continuity of daily life. In a protected habitat, keeping people out of a sensitive area may protect an ecosystem. In a workshop, restricting access to dangerous equipment can protect people. With an unpublished work, an author may need control over disclosure until the work is ready to be made public.

This changes how we should think about nonuse. Something I am not using at this exact moment is not necessarily available to someone else. My parked car may be needed for work an hour from now. A dark house may still be the home of someone who is in the hospital. A fallow field may be fully engaged in an agricultural cycle. A forest that is not being logged may be deliberately left to regenerate or remain wild. Treating visible inactivity as real availability would create its own systematic violence.

We therefore need to distinguish apparent nonuse from functional availability. A thing is available for another use only when that new use would not destroy an existing, credible, or necessary function. Between obvious use and genuine availability lie many ordinary cases: temporary absence, seasonal use, repairs, maintenance, a credible plan to return, conservation, emergency reserve, or an estate still being administered. The gray area is not a flaw in the argument. It reflects the complexity of real life.

Vacancy requires even more care. A home left empty for years in a place where people cannot find housing presents a different problem from a primary residence that is temporarily unoccupied. But vacancy cannot be declared by impression. It needs criteria: duration, evidence of actual use, the presence or absence of a credible plan, any conservation or protective function, and a process for challenge and review. American housing statistics themselves distinguish several kinds of units counted as vacant, including seasonal or occasional-use housing. Those statistical categories can help show why the word is not self-explanatory; they do not, by themselves, establish any legal right to enter, occupy, tax, regulate, or transfer a particular home.[2]

This is why a doctrine centered on use does not lead to a general right to take whatever appears unused. The opposite is true. The more seriously we take use, the more carefully we must protect invisible, delayed, seasonal, or future uses against hasty conclusions. Exclusion can be limited legitimately only when a sufficiently strong competing function is present and when some procedure exists to prevent arbitrary judgment.

The principle can be stated this way: exclusion deserves stronger protection when it serves a real function, and becomes more open to challenge when it no longer does much beyond immobilizing a resource, preserving scarcity, or maintaining power without another continuing justification.

But who decides whether a function is "real"? This is where a functional doctrine could become dangerous if it relied on noble language alone. A public authority could declare that one use is not useful enough, that an absence is not sufficiently justified, or that a future plan is not serious enough. A function must therefore be capable of being shown, and a decision that overrides it must be open to challenge. Without procedure, the word functional can become little more than permission for the more powerful actor to redefine someone else's life.

A deeper objection remains. If every owner had to prove, at all times, the social function of everything they possess, the presumption of ordinary freedom could be replaced by a permanent permission system. That objection matters. The framework defended here does not require daily administrative justification for ordinary possession. The burden of argument changes only when exercising one power causes a serious conflict with another recognized function: an essential need, a common resource, continuity of use, or durable power over other people.

Some functions are weak or intermittent and still legitimate. Keeping a spare room for an adult child who visits regularly, maintaining a workshop used only a few weeks a year, leaving a field fallow, or preserving reserve capacity for a rare event is not absurd. A society obsessed with maximum utilization would turn every unused margin into a duty to produce. Integration does not mean maximizing use at every instant. It means making relevant functions compatible across time.

The hardest conflict appears when two legitimate functions cannot both be satisfied. An owner may genuinely plan to return to a home while a family has lived there for a long time. Land may have productive value and ecological value that point in opposite directions. No short formula can eliminate the need for judgment. What the framework can require is that we name the functions in conflict, their time horizons, their costs, and the consequences of each decision.

Chapter 3 — Housing: Home, Vacancy, and Need

Housing is one of the clearest tests of any theory of property because a dwelling can be several things at once: an asset, an intimate place, an essential need, and sometimes a source of income. Treating all of those dimensions as though they were one and the same almost inevitably produces contradictions.

Consider an ordinary case. A seventy-year-old woman leaves her apartment for eight months for surgery and rehabilitation. The lights are often off. From the street, the place may look "unused." Yet her clothes are in the closet, her papers are in a drawer, her neighbors expect her back, and she intends to return. Calling the home vacant simply because she is absent would confuse physical silence with the disappearance of a life.

For the person who lives there, housing is first a place of life. Continuity of residence therefore deserves strong protection. A tenant's home should not be treated as disposable merely because the owner changes, dies, or wants to exercise some other economic power. Nor does an owner-occupant cease to have a home because of travel, work elsewhere, hospitalization, or another temporary absence. In American law, the exact rights of tenants and owners vary by jurisdiction; a lease ordinarily gives the tenant a legally protected right to possess and use the premises for its term, subject to the agreement and applicable law.[3] The philosophical point here is narrower and more general: residence creates a continuity that cannot be read from title alone.

At the other extreme is a dwelling that is genuinely and durably vacant: no occupant, no credible plan to return, no substantial work under way, no particular conservation function, perhaps for years, in a place where other people cannot find shelter. Here exclusion may lose part of its protective function and operate mainly as immobilization. But the conclusion cannot be drawn from appearances. Even U.S. housing statistics use several different vacancy categories, including seasonal or occasional-use housing; those categories measure housing status and are not legal tests of abandonment or availability.[2]

Second homes make the middle ground visible. They have a real use, but an intermittent one. Treating every second home as vacant would be false. Ignoring their effects altogether in a place where housing has become inaccessible may also be inadequate. The appropriate response is therefore often sector-specific: taxation, local land-use rules, voluntary temporary rental, limits on particular speculative uses, or other measures suited to the actual problem. A general duty to open every second home to others would go far beyond what the analysis supports.

If a society chooses to bring some long-vacant housing back into use, the process matters as much as the objective. The principle proposed here is not a general right to enter someone else's property. Vacancy would need to be established; the owner would need notice and a real opportunity to show use, renovation, a planned return, sale, or another legitimate function; voluntary solutions should be preferred where they can work; and any temporary arrangement would need rules for duration, maintenance, liability, review, and the return of control when a legitimate function reappears.

The French source can point to a specific statutory procedure for the compulsory temporary use of certain vacant premises. There is no honest one-for-one federal substitute for that example in the United States. American housing and property law is divided among state property and landlord-tenant law, local land-use authority, federal statutes in particular fields, and federal and state constitutional constraints. Compulsory government action affecting possession or title can also raise takings and due-process questions depending on its form.[4] The American adaptation therefore keeps the structural lesson rather than inventing an equivalent: title, temporary possession, management, and return can be distinguished, but the legal mechanisms for doing so are jurisdiction-specific.

That separation is essential. An owner should not become personally responsible for rehousing someone forever merely because a temporary use arrangement has been organized. Conversely, an occupant should not have to live under permanent discretionary threat. Keeping an essential need continuously met is a broader social responsibility than the conflict between one owner and one occupant.

Housing therefore reveals a broader rule: the more directly a good is tied to a vital need, the more the exercise of some property powers may require justification. This does not mean that property disappears. It means that property coexists with other functions that cannot simply be erased by invoking title.

Resisting the financialization of housing does not mean that building, maintaining, renovating, insuring, managing, or financing a home should be free. The issue is different: a dwelling can be transformed from a place to live into a vehicle whose primary function is to capture financial gains from scarcity. The problem is not money as such. It begins when the function of housing becomes secondary to the function of investment.

That distinction explains why two rent payments that look identical can serve very different functions. One may help pay for a building that was actually constructed, financed, maintained, renovated, insured, and managed. Another may derive largely from control of a scarce location, from a collective housing shortage, or from the ability to keep a dwelling out of use while waiting for its price to rise. The amount of money paid does not, by itself, tell us what function the payment is serving.

Time matters too. Debt incurred to build housing can justify repayment over many years. Major renovation can create legitimate new costs. Maintenance, insurance, taxes, management, and risk do not vanish. But once a particular productive contribution has been repaid or has ceased to explain the payment, continuing to extract the same return may require a different justification. In the book's functional sense, economic rent is not an intrinsic quality of a rent payment; it depends on what the payment is still compensating for.

Finally, the normative claim of a right to housing cannot be reduced to a relationship between an owner and an occupant. If returning possession to an owner is legitimate in a given case, the continuity of the person who must leave remains a social question: housing supply, assistance, reasonable transition periods, construction, emergency accommodation, and the mobilization of other available capacity. Making one private owner bear the whole burden would be as incoherent as pretending that the burden disappears merely because that owner holds title.

Chapter 4 — Land and Resources: Can We Own What We Did Not Produce?

The question becomes more radical when we leave manufactured objects and turn to land, water, minerals, or groundwater. A house results from labor, materials, financing, and maintenance. The ground beneath it was not produced in the same way. A mining company may discover, extract, transport, and process copper, but it did not create the ore body. A landowner may pay to drill a well, but did not manufacture the aquifer.

Suppose a transit station is built near a parcel purchased ten years earlier. The owner did not move the station there, create the people who later settle nearby, or single-handedly finance the roads and other public infrastructure around it. Yet the land may double in value. That increase is real, but it does not have a single source. Part may be connected to the property and the owner's decisions; part may come from a collective transformation of the place.

This does not mean that everyone should be free to take any resource. A resource with no governing rules can be overused as surely as one under private control. A commons is not the same thing as open access. The narrower claim is that the resource itself does not naturally reduce to the absolute sovereignty of one person or institution, and that its uses therefore require governance. In the American context, this vocabulary needs care: a commons is not simply the same thing as federal or state public land, and neither is the same thing as Tribal trust land. Those are distinct institutional and legal arrangements.[5]

Governance should also distinguish the resource from the infrastructure built to reach, move, or manage it. A company may build a pipeline, drill a well, construct a treatment plant, or operate a distribution network. Those facilities have real costs and can justify ownership, repayment, maintenance, and compensation for work and investment. But producing the infrastructure does not necessarily turn the water itself into something the company created. The same is true of minerals: extraction and processing may be highly technical and expensive without making the deposit itself a human product.

This distinction is central to resource rent. When income comes primarily from control of a scarce resource that no one produced, part of the value may owe less to the operator's contribution than to scarcity itself. That does not erase the operator's contribution. It makes it possible to distinguish extraction costs, investment, risk, efficiency, technical work, and resource rent instead of treating all revenue as though it had the same origin.

The classic objection is immediate: if rights are not stable enough, who will invest in exploration, maintenance, restoration, irrigation, or long-lived infrastructure? The objection is serious. A right that can be revoked at any moment may discourage long-term investment and encourage rapid exploitation instead. Distinguishing a natural resource from absolute sovereign ownership therefore does not require making use rights precarious. Long leases, permits, licenses, protected operating rights, compensation rules, and contractual commitments can provide stability without pretending that the underlying resource was created by the right holder.

Urban land follows the same logic. A parcel may become far more valuable after the arrival of a transit line, a school, a park, or another public network. A substantial part of that new value may come neither from the owner's labor nor from the owner's capital, but from the surrounding collective environment. The point is not to deny all private value in land. It is to recognize that value can have several sources.

That plurality is why absolute slogans do so little work. Saying "the land belongs to everyone" still does not tell us who may farm a particular field tomorrow morning, who must maintain it, who may build on it, who can transfer a right of use, who resolves conflicts, or who bears the cost of a failed harvest. The language of the commons becomes useful only when it leads to defined rights and responsibilities.

A functional approach will therefore try to protect the continuity of the person who actually farms the land, ecological conservation, fair access to certain resources, and compensation for useful infrastructure, while reducing the ability to capture indefinitely a return that comes mainly from natural scarcity or collective investment.

Land also reveals an important difference between improvement and location. Two identical houses may have very different values simply because one stands near a station, a university, or a major employment center. The owner may have financed the house, but not the city around it. Land-use decisions can also change what may be built on a parcel. In the United States, zoning and land-use authority is structured largely through state and local law rather than a single national planning code. The analytical point remains the same: land value may reflect private work, collective infrastructure, natural scarcity, and public decisions at the same time.[6]

That distinction becomes especially important when land is passed on. A family may have farmed and maintained a parcel for generations, creating a strong continuity of use. But if the land suddenly acquires major speculative value because it becomes developable, that added value was not produced by the family alone. The conflict is no longer well described as "property versus collectivism." It concerns the allocation of several sources of value that have been gathered into one title.

The subsurface makes the problem even clearer. A person may depend on the surface for a home or a farm without having any special capacity to exploit minerals far below it. Conversely, extraction can damage surface uses or water resources. American law provides a concrete reminder that a parcel need not be one indivisible legal block: surface and mineral estates can be owned by different parties, including situations in which private surface rights coexist with federally owned mineral rights.[7] The legal details vary, but the structural lesson matches the chapter's argument. Soil, buildings, subsurface resources, water, biodiversity, and infrastructure can call for different rights and overlapping responsibilities.

Chapter 5 — Capital, Enterprise, and Power

Ownership of a business brings together several realities that are often spoken of as though they were one. The person who supplies capital finances an activity and may assume real risk. The person who works contributes every day to the production of value. Managers coordinate decisions and operations. Customers, suppliers, neighbors, and communities can benefit from or bear the consequences of what the company does. Equipment, reserves, reputation, and accumulated know-how allow the organization to endure. Yet in many conventional business structures, a large share of governing power is ultimately attached to capital.

Consider a small factory. One person puts in $200,000 at the beginning. Ten years later, fifty people work there, some of them for most of the decade. The business has accumulated machinery, customers, reputation, and practical knowledge that no single individual created alone. It may remain legally coherent for the original owner or later equity holders to own the firm. But as a description of what the institution has become, saying simply that all of it still "belongs" in the same way to the original provider of capital is incomplete. The organization now contains relationships and contributions that did not exist at the moment of financing.

The first principle to preserve is simple: capital can be useful. A doctrine that denied any legitimate return on capital would make projects requiring substantial investment harder to finance and could shift power toward those who already possess large reserves. The problem, then, is not to prevent returns. It is to ask what those returns are paying for.

A serious objection to separating capital from power is that an equity investor may do more than provide money on the first day. The investment may remain exposed to loss without guaranteed repayment, absorbing uncertainty that an employee or creditor does not necessarily assume in the same way. That exposure can justify durable economic rights and sometimes durable governance rights. But it does not by itself prove that those rights must be unlimited, permanently proportional to the capital originally supplied, or transferable without limit across generations. The question remains: what risk is still being borne, and what power is actually necessary to bear it?

Several different functions should therefore be distinguished: repayment of capital, compensation for time, compensation for illiquidity, compensation for real risk, payment for financial or managerial services, and economic rent. An investor who accepts a serious possibility of losing the investment may legitimately receive a large return if the project succeeds. By contrast, a party protected from nearly all downside cannot justify the same return by appealing to a risk it does not actually bear.

Economic rent appears when income becomes increasingly detached from the function that originally justified it: scarcity, monopoly, a captive need, control of a bottleneck, a veto right, or a continuing claim long after the original contribution has done the work used to justify that claim. This does not yield a universal formula for a proper return. It offers a test: what economic function is still being performed now?

The same question applies to power. Financing a company should not automatically mean governing the people who work in it indefinitely. Existing institutions already show that economic claims and governing rights can be separated in different ways: cooperatives, foundations that hold controlling stakes, trusts, and steward-ownership arrangements. They all have weaknesses, but they demonstrate a narrower point: a right to receive an economic return does not logically require a permanent right to buy, sell, or transmit every form of control.

Cooperatives provide a useful precedent without offering a perfect model. International cooperative principles emphasize democratic member control, limited compensation on capital subscribed as a condition of membership, and the possibility of reserves that are at least partly indivisible. U.S. cooperative practice also gives substantial weight to member ownership, use, and democratic control, while the governing statutes and details vary by state and sector.[8] The point is not that every cooperative follows one formula. It is that capital, return, reserves, and control can be arranged differently from ordinary proportional shareholder voting.

A more coherent enterprise could therefore distribute rights by function. Investors could receive explicit economic claims. Long-term workers could receive governance rights connected to durable participation. Some reserves could be protected against easy distribution or liquidation so that each generation cannot simply cash out everything built before it. Customers, users, or other affected parties could receive information, representation, or recourse when the activity concerns an essential need or creates major external costs. These are design possibilities, not automatic legal entitlements.

But that possibility must not become a new dogma. A worker cooperative can pollute a river. A foundation can be captured by its board. A trust can protect assets while concentrating decision-making. A group of stewards can become a caste. Internal democracy does not guarantee justice toward people outside the organization. The central questions are therefore not only "Who votes?" but also "Who can contest a decision?", "Which powers can be reviewed or revoked?", "Which affected people are represented?", and "What happens when the organization fails?"

Capital can be rewarded without becoming sovereign. Labor can generate rights without becoming sovereign over everyone and everything around it.

This separation does not eliminate the tension between efficiency and democracy. Some decisions have to be made quickly. Some skills are scarce. Some information cannot be distributed to everyone in real time. Governance that cannot simply be bought therefore does not mean that every operational decision must be put to a general vote. It means that specialized authority should come with a mandate, limits, accountability, and a credible path for review or removal.

The same caution applies on the investor side. A contract with a fixed or capped return may initially look preferable to ordinary equity, yet mandatory payments can become harsher for a company during a crisis. Equity that is not guaranteed repayment can absorb losses and therefore perform a real stabilizing function. The legal label does not settle the analysis. What matters is who actually bears risk, when that risk is borne, and what rights are granted in exchange.

The central criterion remains the separation of functions. A financier can hold an economic right. A long-term worker can hold a governance right. A foundation can protect certain assets. Users can have rights of information or recourse. None of these claims should automatically expand into total power over all the others. Seen this way, a business becomes less like a thing possessed by one category of person and more like an institution organized around different contributions, risks, dependencies, and responsibilities.

Chapter 6 — Inheritance: What, Exactly, Should Be Passed On?

Inheritance is often discussed as though one thing simply moves from one generation to the next. But if property is a bundle of different rights and powers, succession can also be decomposed. A family home, a working farm, an investment account, a business, and a watch inherited from a parent do not serve the same function. Passing all of them on according to one undifferentiated logic is as arbitrary as trying to use all of them in the same way.

Imagine three children inheriting their mother's house. One was already living there while caring for her; the other two live far away. If the inheritance is treated only as three equal dollar shares, selling the house may appear to be the cleanest solution. But the clean accounting solution can destroy the home of the person already living there. Giving that child the entire property without compensation creates the opposite problem: it can erase the legitimate value interests of the other two. This is the kind of case in which separating use from value stops being an abstraction.

Suppose a surviving spouse or child remains in the home after the owner's death. If the inherited rights are structured so that immediate monetary equality creates pressure to sell, abstract equality can destroy an actual continuity of residence. Yet giving the occupant the entire economic value for free can be equally arbitrary. A third path is possible: preserve use while representing value in another form.

French civil law offers specific mechanisms for separating use from underlying value, including usufruct and bare ownership. There is no direct nationwide American equivalent, and the U.S. version should not invent one. American property and estate law, which is largely state-based, nevertheless offers its own ways of separating interests across people and time. A life estate can give one person a present possessory interest while a remainder gives another a future interest; trusts can separate management or legal title from beneficial interests. These devices are not copies of the French institutions and do not by themselves establish the approach proposed here. They simply show the same structural possibility: present use and economic value need not always be forced into one identical right.[9]

The value owed to other heirs can also take different forms: a deferred claim, a gradual buyout, a temporary share of income, or compensation spread over several years. The appropriate structure depends partly on liquidity. A farm may have a high market value while generating relatively little available cash. Requiring immediate equalization can sometimes amount, in practice, to requiring a sale.

Business succession makes the distinction sharper still. A child can inherit economic value without automatically being competent or legitimate to govern the people who work in the company. Conversely, someone who has worked in the business for twenty years may have a strong claim to continuity in participation or governance without having enough money to buy every ownership interest at market value. Economic value and governing power can therefore be considered separately. This is a normative distinction, not a claim that long service currently creates ownership rights under U.S. law.

Limiting inherited accumulation becomes especially relevant when the asset carries little direct use function for the heir. A liquid investment portfolio is not the same as a primary residence. Income from rental property detached from any personal use is not the same as a craftsperson's tools. The more easily value can be divided or transferred without destroying someone's home, livelihood, dependency, or meaningful continuity, the more room there is to ask whether every accumulated right must reproduce itself unchanged across generations.

The strongest objection is family freedom. If someone has worked, saved, invested, and maintained property for a lifetime, why should that person not choose what to pass to loved ones? There is also an incentive objection: if transmission is reduced too aggressively, some people may save, invest, or maintain less. This book does not pretend to settle those behavioral effects by principle alone. It draws a narrower conclusion: limiting inherited economic-rent claims or positions of control that are detached from use is less intrusive than treating every form of inheritance as suspect.

Any policy of limiting accumulation must therefore remain cautious. An investment account may support a child with a disability. A modest home may become expensive only because the surrounding neighborhood appreciated. A family artwork may have high market value and irreplaceable emotional meaning. No numerical threshold can substitute for examining what function the asset actually serves.

Inheritance is therefore a good example of integration: preserve what carries continuity, dependency, memory, and productive function, while preventing every accumulated right from reproducing itself mechanically forever. Transmission becomes differentiated rather than abolished or treated as sacred.

This also makes it possible to distinguish inheritance from dynasty. Passing a home to one's children can preserve emotional or material continuity. Passing along with it a vast portfolio of economic-rent claims, control rights, and powers of exclusion creates a different phenomenon: a position of power reproducing itself independently of the functions that once justified it. Criticizing dynasty does not require abolishing inheritance.

Compensating other heirs then becomes a technical problem as well as a moral one. A claim that is too large or too immediate can force the resident or working heir to sell. Compensation that is too small can arbitrarily erase the value belonging to others. Time, income from the asset, solvency, the heirs' needs, and possible shared or institutional financing mechanisms all matter. A sound inheritance rule should not look only at abstract equality on the date of death; it should also examine what its terms produce in the years that follow.

Finally, death forces us to recognize that some powers end. A founder's personal ability to govern an organization cannot be exercised after death, and there is no logical necessity for that personal authority to become the heirs' governing power merely because economic value passes to them. Some rights are personal and disappear, while other interests — support, economic value, attribution, memory, security for loved ones — can persist. Succession is therefore a recomposition of rights, not merely the replacement of one owner with another.

Chapter 7 — Can Ideas Have Owners Too?

Intellectual property shows the limits of treating material and immaterial property as though they were the same thing. If I take your chair, you can no longer sit in it. If I copy a digital text, your copy has not disappeared. The conflict is therefore less about physical possession than about who may reproduce, distribute, adapt, sell, license, or otherwise exploit protected material. In American copyright law, this distinction is especially important because copyright does not protect ideas themselves; it protects qualifying original expression.[10]

Think of an old novel whose copyright has expired. Thousands of readers can download the underlying text without depriving one another of a copy. Yet a new translation, an illustrated edition, a critical edition, an audiobook, or a careful restoration may still require substantial work. Entry into the public domain does not abolish labor or compensation. It changes what can still be prohibited through the expired copyright in the underlying work.

At least four things should therefore be distinguished: attribution, integrity or the creator's continuing moral connection to the work, compensation, and economic exclusivity. They need not take the same legal form or last for the same period. We can continue to name and credit the author of a book centuries after the exclusive economic rights in that book have ended.

This is one of the places where the French and American legal settings diverge sharply. French law can rely on a broad and durable doctrine of droit moral. Federal U.S. law has no general equivalent applying in the same way to all authors. The Visual Artists Rights Act provides limited federal rights of attribution and integrity for qualifying works of visual art, but it is a much narrower regime. U.S. copyright economic rights are also time-limited, though the term depends on the type and date of the work. Patents are temporary as well: a U.S. utility patent generally runs for twenty years from the relevant filing date, subject to the rules governing maintenance and statutory adjustments or extensions.[11]

That temporariness reveals an important idea: exclusivity can be a tool rather than an eternal truth. It can help finance creation or research, give a small inventor bargaining power, and encourage disclosure of an invention. But if exclusive control blocks an essential need for too long, prevents later innovation, or survives mainly as a way to collect payment after its original function has weakened, its justification becomes more contestable. Legal validity and functional justification are not the same question.

The end of exclusivity does not make the creator disappear. When a copyrighted work enters the public domain, the underlying work can be used without permission under copyright, yet people can still sell new editions, translations, performances, recordings, restoration, curation, authentication, hosting, or other services built around it. Common access to the underlying material and paid work around that material can coexist. Patent expiration raises a similar functional point — the patent right can end while the invention and the knowledge embodied in it remain — although patent doctrine and copyright public-domain doctrine are not identical.[12]

This distinction becomes especially important in a digital environment. The marginal cost of making another copy can approach zero while the cost of writing, researching, recording, designing, maintaining, or discovering remains high. "Copying is cheap, therefore everything should be free" is no more adequate than "creation was costly, therefore exclusivity should continue indefinitely." The duration and form of exclusivity should remain connected to the function it is supposed to serve.

Software, databases, publicly funded scientific knowledge, and work involving artificial intelligence make the problem harder still. Different bodies of law apply, and some questions remain unsettled or highly fact-specific. This book does not try to solve them here. The point is more basic: attribution, compensation, exclusivity, transfer, and access are different powers. Treating them as one indivisible right produces bad analysis and often bad institutions.

The problem becomes even clearer when knowledge is produced collectively. Scientific research can depend on named authors, research teams, universities, public funding, private laboratories, databases, shared infrastructure, earlier publications, and communities that supply observations or material. The image of one isolated creator exercising sovereign control over the entire result becomes less descriptive. That does not mean that nobody deserves recognition or compensation. It means that recognition and compensation should be assigned with greater precision.

Intellectual property also makes visible a particular kind of possible economic rent: control over permission. When reproducing another copy is extremely cheap, a significant part of the price can come from the legal power to refuse permission. That power may perform a legitimate function for a time. It can also become a bottleneck. The relevant question is therefore not simply how long the statute allows exclusivity to last, but what the exclusivity is still accomplishing, what investment remains to be compensated, what other financing arrangements are possible, and what costs the restriction imposes on later users and creators. This does not make every royalty, license fee, or return on creative investment an economic rent; the diagnosis depends on function.

The transition out of exclusivity is remarkable because it changes a legal relation without destroying the underlying work or knowledge. A novel can still be read, studied, reissued, translated, and transformed after its copyright expires. An invention does not vanish when a patent ends. What disappears is a particular exclusive legal power, subject in each field to the other rights and rules that may still apply.

In that sense, intellectual property offers one of the clearest examples of a disintegration that can make a new integration possible. The weakening or expiration of an exclusive right need not mean the destruction of what existed before it. It can reopen the same cultural or technical material to new uses, combinations, interpretations, and forms of creation.

Chapter 8 — Neither Absolute Property nor Absolute Administration

A critique of private property can slide into an opposite but equally misleading conclusion: if the individual should not be sovereign, then perhaps the collective should be. But a public agency, a foundation, a cooperative, a nonprofit board, or a majority can dominate too. The problem is not only who holds the power. It is how the power itself is structured.

The problem can appear quickly inside a well-intentioned institution. Imagine a nonprofit housing organization that buys homes to keep them out of speculative markets. Years later, its board refuses, without a clear explanation, to continue a long-standing family's right to occupy one of those homes. The property is no longer controlled by a conventional private landlord, yet the family still faces a power it cannot meaningfully answer. Changing the institutional identity of the holder did not eliminate domination.

A collective landholder can arbitrarily refuse to continue a use. A cooperative can close access to new members in order to protect advantages enjoyed by existing ones. A foundation can perpetuate itself with little effective accountability. A public agency can invoke the public interest without providing meaningful recourse. Moving from private to collective control does not automatically turn a decision into a just one.

That is why any doctrine of property needs procedural safeguards alongside substantive principles. Under the normative standard proposed here, a serious limitation should serve a defined purpose, be necessary to that purpose, remain proportionate to it, be explained, be open to review, and be contestable by those it seriously affects. Those terms sound legal because legal systems often confront the same problem, but this is not a claim that one universal U.S. constitutional test governs every public agency, nonprofit, cooperative, or private landholder. The principle is simpler: the more a decision can disrupt a person's life, the less it should depend on unexplained discretion.[13]

Reversibility matters for the same reason. A home that is genuinely unused today may be needed by its owner tomorrow. Land can change function. A business can enter crisis. A resource can become ecologically critical. An integrative system must be able to correct itself when reality answers differently than expected. Reversibility is not permanent insecurity; it is the refusal to treat yesterday's justification as proof for all future conditions.

Responsibility completes protection. Someone who receives a right to use another person's property should take reasonable care of it. Sharing that destroys what is being shared contradicts its own purpose. But "care" should not become an excuse to impose disproportionate improvements on the user. The baseline is more modest: avoid unjustified degradation, bear responsibility for attributable damage, and return or maintain the asset in a condition compatible with ordinary wear and tear, subject to the agreement and applicable law. "Leave it better than you found it" can remain an admirable cultural norm of reciprocity without becoming a universal legal duty.

No formula can replace judgment. We cannot add need + use + labor + length of connection + emotional value and produce a score that automatically decides what is just. These dimensions are heterogeneous. A society can make them visible, require reasons about them, and still have to acknowledge genuine conflicts between legitimate values.

Limited private property without meaningful recourse can be unjust. A managed commons without meaningful recourse can be unjust too.

The goal is therefore not to discover the perfect owner. It is to construct rights differentiated enough that no person or institution can turn one legitimate function into general sovereignty.

That architecture also requires decisions to leave a trace. If a home is classified as vacant for some institutional purpose, if a use right is withdrawn, if access to a shared resource is allocated, or if a manager refuses a request to resume or change a use, the decision should be explainable. What facts were relied on? Which function was treated as the priority? What alternatives were rejected? For how long does the decision apply? Without a record of reasons, the possibility of challenge can become merely theoretical.

We also have to count the costs of governance. The more rights are divided and the more boards, procedures, representatives, or veto points are created, the more a system can become slow, expensive, and unintelligible. Good architecture does not distribute power for the pleasure of complexity. It separates powers only where separation protects a real function or prevents a meaningful domination. Simplicity remains a value when it does not hide the conflict.

That returns us to the starting point. A hammer can remain simple property because most of its important functions can usually coincide in one person's hands without much harm to anyone else. A watershed, a large company, or an urban territory may require more differentiation because its effects extend far beyond a single holder. Legitimate complexity should follow the complexity of the real relationships. It should not come first and force reality to imitate it.

Conclusion — From Possession to Responsibility

We began with a familiar phrase: “It’s mine.” We end with a richer question: “What does that actually authorize me to do, and why?” The distance between those two questions contains the entire shift proposed in this book.

Perhaps the phrase should be turned around. Saying “it’s mine” should never be enough to close a discussion, but neither should it be enough to force one open. It is a first piece of information: someone carries a title or ownership interest, a history, an investment, or a responsibility. The rest is to understand how that position relates to present uses, other people’s needs, common resources, and effects over time.

Property is not denied. It is unfolded. An ownership interest can protect investment and continuity. Use can belong to someone else. Exclusion can protect a home or an ecological function. Income can compensate labor, capital, or infrastructure, but it can also become economic rent. Governance can be assigned to people who contribute over time without being treated as an asset that anyone can simply buy outright. Inheritance can preserve a home or carry memory forward without reproducing every power unchanged.

This conception is less comfortable than a slogan because it requires looking at cases. It rejects compulsory sharing of everything that appears unused. It also rejects the idea that mere possession of title justifies any exclusion whatsoever. It refuses to confuse the commons with the state, capital with economic rent, inheritance with dynasty, the author with monopoly, or internal democracy with the absence of domination.

Its deepest principle can be stated simply: a right should be able to account for the function it protects. When it protects little more than a position of power, artificial scarcity, or extraction with no remaining function, it becomes legitimate to question it. When it protects privacy, continuity, creation, responsibility, or a real investment, it deserves to be defended. Questioning a right is not the same as declaring in advance that the right must disappear.

The status of this proposal also needs to be clear. This book does not demonstrate that any specific legal system or U.S. jurisdiction should enact every consequence suggested by the framework. It offers a normative framework and tests it against several conflicting cases. Moving from that framework to thresholds, taxes, durations, procedures, or enforceable legal rights requires additional evidence, comparative legal work, and explicit political choices.

This way of thinking also changes the morality of property. To own is not only to exclude; it is also to answer for what one holds, uses, transfers, and causes. An owner is not necessarily guilty for owning. A user is not necessarily virtuous for using. A collective institution is not necessarily just because it administers. Each position has to be examined through its functions, costs, and consequences.

Much remains to be built: land policy, the taxation of economic rent, legal forms of enterprise, precise inheritance mechanisms, informational commons, and the practical governance of water or mineral resources. Those projects require political and legal choices that this short book does not pretend to settle.

That incompleteness is not a weakness to hide. A general doctrine should stop where the parameters require data, positive law, democratic choices, or experimentation. Saying that a return should remain connected to a function does not set the rate. Saying that vacancy should be established rather than guessed does not create one duration for every place. Saying that inheritance can separate use from value does not determine a compensation schedule. Those decisions belong to another level of work.

A common orientation can nevertheless be seen. The closer a situation comes to personal intimacy and continuity, the stronger the case for exclusion. The more it concerns a natural resource, an essential need, captive infrastructure, or durable power over other people, the more the solitary exercise of title requires justification. Between those poles are hybrid situations in which rights have to be composed rather than proclaimed absolute.

The shift is therefore cultural as well as legal. An unused asset is not automatically wasted. Income is not automatically economic rent. A commons is not automatically a public administration. A transfer across generations is not automatically domination. Precision becomes a discipline: name the function before passing judgment.

But a foundation is now visible: distinguish before judging; connect rights to the functions they protect; defend real use without sacrificing security; reward contribution without purchasing sovereignty; and limit accumulation without destroying continuity. This is not an abolition of property. It is an attempt to make property more intelligible, more responsible, and more compatible with a world in which several legitimate uses often have to coexist.

Notes and Documentary Guide

1. U.S. property law does not operate through a single national property code. Real-property interests are shaped primarily through state law, with federal constitutional and statutory constraints and state-authorized local land-use regulation. U.S. courts also use the familiar "bundle of rights" or "bundle of sticks" idiom to describe separable incidents of property. See United States v. Craft, 535 U.S. 274 (2002); Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co., 272 U.S. 365 (1926); and Cornell Legal Information Institute materials on possessory estates. These authorities describe positive law; they do not establish this book's normative framework.

2. U.S. Census Bureau housing statistics distinguish multiple vacancy statuses, including units for rent, for sale, rented or sold but not yet occupied, seasonal or occasional-use units, and other vacant units. The classifications are statistical. They are not a nationwide legal test for abandonment, availability, entry, occupation, taxation, regulation, or transfer.

3. Cornell Legal Information Institute defines a lease as an arrangement in which a lessor grants a lessee the right to possess and use property for a specified period while the lessor retains ownership. Residential landlord-tenant rules and eviction procedures vary substantially by jurisdiction. This note supplies U.S. context; it does not turn the chapter's normative claim about continuity of residence into a uniform national rule.

4. The Fifth Amendment Takings Clause provides that private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation. Government measures affecting possession or property interests can raise takings and due-process questions depending on their form and the governing doctrine. State constitutions and statutes may add other requirements. This is a boundary condition for the U.S. adaptation, not a substitute for the French source's argument and not a claim that ordinary housing regulation is automatically a taking.

5. Federal public lands, state public lands, Tribal lands, and Tribal trust lands are not interchangeable categories. The Bureau of Indian Affairs describes trust land as land whose title is held by the United States in trust for an individual American Indian or Tribe. The Bureau of Land Management manages federal public lands within its jurisdiction under separate statutory mandates. Neither arrangement is a synonym for the book's analytical concept of a commons.

6. U.S. land-use law is not organized through one national zoning code. Local zoning operates within state-law frameworks and constitutional limits. Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co., 272 U.S. 365 (1926), is a foundational Supreme Court case sustaining the zoning ordinance before it as a permissible exercise of governmental police power. The chapter uses zoning only as an example of public decisions affecting land use and value.

7. The Bureau of Land Management describes "split estate" situations in which surface and subsurface mineral rights are held by different parties, including private surface ownership combined with federally managed mineral resources. The example demonstrates legal separability; it does not imply one uniform national rule for mineral estates or surface-mineral conflicts.

8. USDA cooperative materials identify democratic control and limited return on equity capital among longstanding cooperative principles; current USDA materials also describe cooperatives as member-owned and democratically controlled. International cooperative principles likewise emphasize democratic member control and limited compensation on capital subscribed as a condition of membership. These are structural precedents, not a claim that every U.S. cooperative follows one statute or one governance formula.

9. U.S. probate, intestacy, trust, and property rules vary by state. Cornell Legal Information Institute describes a life estate as an interest lasting for a specified person's life, with present

possession and use, and a remainder as a future interest that follows a prior estate. These are useful American examples of separating interests across people and time, but they are not direct equivalents of French usufruct and bare ownership.

10. U.S. copyright law protects qualifying original expression, not ideas, procedures, processes, systems, methods of operation, concepts, principles, or discoveries as such. The chapter title is therefore philosophical, not a claim that American copyright law grants ownership of ideas themselves. See 17 U.S.C. § 102(b) and U.S. Copyright Office guidance.

11. U.S. federal moral-rights protection does not reproduce the broad French droit moral regime. The Visual Artists Rights Act provides limited federal rights of attribution and integrity for qualifying works of visual art. Copyright duration is finite and varies by category and date; for most works created on or after January 1, 1978 by an identified individual author, the general term is life plus 70 years. A U.S. utility patent generally has a 20-year term measured from the relevant filing date, subject to statutory qualifications, and grants a right to exclude rather than an affirmative right to practice the invention. See U.S. Copyright Office and U.S. Patent and Trademark Office guidance.

12. The U.S. Copyright Office describes public-domain works as works never protected by copyright or works whose copyright term has ended. Patent expiration should be described separately: expiration ends that patent's exclusionary right, while other patents or other law may still affect a particular activity. Public domain under copyright and expiration of a patent are therefore related examples of terminated exclusivity, not identical doctrines.

13. The procedural safeguards proposed in Chapter 8 are normative, not a claim that the Fourteenth Amendment automatically applies to every private institution. Under the U.S. state-action doctrine, constitutional due-process protections generally constrain governmental action; purely private conduct is not ordinarily state action merely because it occurs within a legal framework. Statutes, contracts, organizational rules, and state law may create other duties in particular settings. See Constitution Annotated, "State Action Doctrine."

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17 U.S.C. § 102(b).

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Origin of This Text

This short essay is derived from the Integrative Noosophy documentary project "Property, Use, Commons, and Non-Financialization," brought to a close at the level of a candidate general doctrine in September 2026. The French edition La propriété — Usage, communs et responsabilité, P07 v1.3 corrected final, is the authoritative intellectual source for this U.S. adaptation.

The American edition preserves the source book's thesis, distinctions, argumentative functions, objections, degrees of certainty, and limits while reconstructing only the legal and institutional context that materially differs in the United States. It does not turn the underlying candidate doctrine into active canon, does not constitute legal advice, and does not claim that U.S. jurisdictions share one property regime.

What Is the Noosophic Movement?

The Noosophic movement is a project of inquiry, knowledge-sharing, and transformation. It seeks to understand reality more accurately, connect bodies of knowledge that are often studied separately, make important knowledge accessible, and turn these understandings into works, practices, tools, or institutions that can be tested against their effects and corrected.

It is therefore not limited to a philosophy. It can work on education, health, agriculture, economics, politics, human relationships, culture, institutions, science, spirituality, or artificial intelligence. Depending on the subject, it may produce a book, a method, an experiment, a critique, a practical tool, or an institutional proposal.

A central idea of the movement is that accumulating knowledge is not enough. We must also learn to connect different kinds of knowledge without conflating them. Understanding agriculture, for example, means looking at soils, plants, energy, economics, labor, eating habits, and environmental effects together. But connecting these dimensions does not mean reducing them to a single explanation: each field retains its own methods and standards of evidence.

The movement also seeks to transmit knowledge. Some important knowledge should not depend on a lucky encounter, the social environment into which someone was born, or a late discovery. Part of Noosophic work is therefore to identify, verify, condense, and make genuinely accessible the knowledge that can help a person understand the world, take care of themselves, exercise their rights, and become more autonomous.

The movement takes its name from Noosophy, which in its philosophy refers to a truth or structure of reality that exists independently of how we understand it. In other words, the world does not become true because we have managed to explain it: it exists and operates independently of our theories, beliefs, and institutions. We may understand some things correctly, be wrong about others, or still grasp only a small part of them.

This is why the Noosophic movement does not treat its own texts as infallible. An idea must remain open to comparison with available knowledge, confrontation with objections, testing where possible, and correction when it does not hold up well against reality.

Noosophy is therefore not merely something to think about. The Noosophic movement seeks to make what is understood useful, transmissible, and transformative in the real world.

How This Book Was Produced

This book was produced through successive stages rather than through the automatic generation of a complete text. Its subject, objectives, and general directions were first defined by a human. The AI Noosopher then contributed to exploring the subject, researching and comparing sources, developing possible structures, and bringing out arguments, objections, and areas of uncertainty.

The French manuscript was developed progressively, reviewed, corrected, and brought through the P07 editorial process. For the U.S. edition, the authoritative French text was inventoried and mapped by function before legal or institutional adaptation began. A first full American draft was deliberately treated as provisional. It was then reopened and rebuilt slowly: preface, Chapters 1 through 8, and conclusion were each compared again with the French source, adapted only where U.S. differences required it, and subjected to individual audits.

A final cross-chapter audit then checked terminology, note scope, source-to-target continuity, factuality, American English, translation shadow, and non-regression across the book as a whole. That audit removed further material that was factually defensible but did not serve the source argument. The resulting manuscript is therefore the product of repeated subtraction and correction as much as of drafting.

Artificial intelligence is not treated here as a source of authority. It acts as an active tool for research, formulation, comparison, and testing. Its proposals can be wrong and remain revisable. Human control remains decisive for the book's aims, value judgments, final validation, and publication.

About Hieronymus Anonymus

Hieronymus Anonymus is the human initiator of the Integrative Noosophy project. His work focuses on connecting fields of knowledge and practice that are usually kept separate, and on experimenting with new forms of collaboration between humans and artificial intelligence. He takes part in the conception, discussion, revision, and validation of works published by Éditions Noosophie.

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PROPERTY

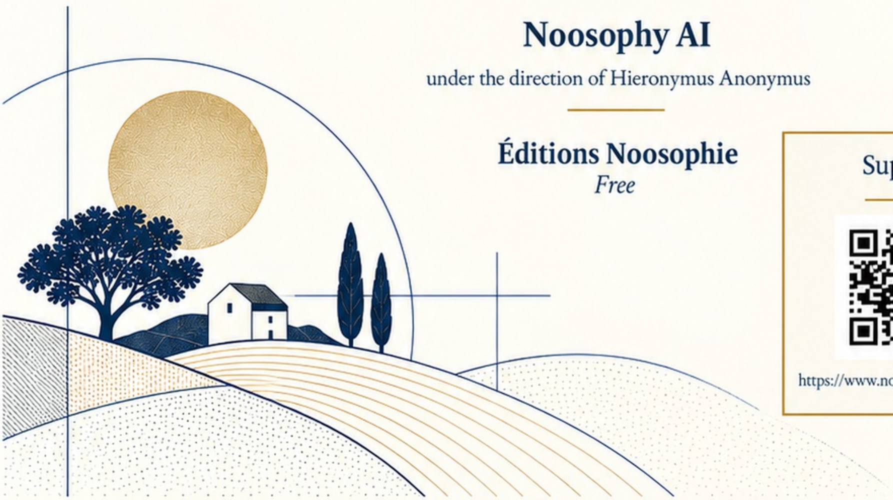
Use, Commons, and Responsibility

What does owning something actually entitle us to do? When does a vacant home become more than a private asset? Can someone own the value of land they did not create? Should capital buy permanent control? What exactly passes through inheritance: use, value, income, or authority?

This essay begins from a simple claim: property is not one power. It is a bundle of rights — use, exclusion, transfer, income, and governance — whose justification can differ from one setting to another.

Moving from the home to the firm, from land and public resources to inheritance and intellectual property, the book rejects two absolutes: unlimited private sovereignty and unlimited administrative sovereignty.

Its proposal is functional: tie rights to the functions they protect, reward real contributions without turning payment into sovereignty, preserve real use without sanctifying accumulation, and make recourse against arbitrary power a rule common to private and collective property.



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