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Adam Ferguson, <i>An Essay on the History of Civil Society</i> . Part Second: "Of the History of Rude Nations". Section II: "Of Rude Nations prior to the Establishment of Property". Cambridge University Press, 2007, p.81-83	Code Sujet	CCV
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5 It must appear very evident, that property is a matter of progress. It requires, among other particulars, which are the effects of time, some method of defining possession. The very desire of it proceeds from experience; and the industry by which it is gained, or improved, requires such a habit of acting with a view to distant objects, as may overcome the present disposition either to sloth or to enjoyment. This habit is slowly acquired, and is in reality a principal distinction of nations in the advanced state of mechanic and commercial arts.

10 In a tribe which subsists by hunting and fishing, the arms, the utensils, and the fur, which the individual carries, are to him the only subjects of property. The food of to-morrow is yet wild in the forest, or hid in the lake; it cannot be appropriated before it is caught; and even then, being the purchase of numbers, who fish or hunt in a body, it accrues to the community, and is applied to immediate use, or becomes an accession to the stores of the public.

15 Where savage nations, as in most parts of America, mix with the practice of hunting some species of rude agriculture, they still follow, with respect to the soil and the fruits of the earth, the analogy of their principal object. As the men hunt, so the women labour together; and, after they have shared the toils of the seed time, they enjoy the fruits of the harvest in common. The field in which they have planted, like the district over which they are accustomed to hunt, is claimed as a property by the nation, but is not parcelled in lots to its members. They go forth in parties to prepare the ground, to plant and to reap. The harvest is gathered into the public granary, and from thence, at stated times, is divided into shares for the maintenance of separate families<sup>1</sup>. Even the returns of the market, when they trade with foreigners, are brought home to the stock of the nation<sup>2</sup>.

25 As the fur and the bow pertain to the individual, the cabin and its utensils are appropriated to the family; and as the domestic cares are committed to the women, so the property of the household seems likewise to be vested in them. The children are considered as pertaining to the mother, with little regard to descent on the father's side. The males, before they are married, remain in the cabin in which they are born; but after they have formed a new connection with the other sex, they change their habitation, and become an accession to the family in which they have found their wives. The hunter and the warrior are numbered by the matron as a part of her treasure; they are reserved for perils and trying occasions; and in the recess of public councils, in the intervals of hunting or war, are maintained by the cares of the women, and loiter about in mere amusement or sloth<sup>3</sup>.

35 While one sex continue to value themselves chiefly on their courage, their talent for policy, and their warlike achievements, this species of property which is

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<sup>1</sup> *History of the Caribbees*

<sup>2</sup> Charlevoix

<sup>3</sup> Lafitau

40 bestowed on the other, is, in reality, a mark of subjection; not, as some writers allege, of their having acquired an ascendant<sup>4</sup>. It is the care and trouble of a subject with which the warrior does not chuse to be embarrassed. It is a servitude, and a continual toil, where no honours are won; and they whose province it is, are in fact the slaves and the helots of their country.

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

