

Who does Mexico belong to?

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Little more than 30 years ago this question had a far clearer answer than than we can give it today. In the early 80s there were over 100 thousand state-owned businesses that supposedly represented the interests of the nation and the people of Mexico. Back then there was still a nationalist project that sought to promote economic growth, create more jobs and contribute to improving the economic and social welfare of the population.

With the government of Miguel de la Madrid (1982-1988) this changed and the neoliberal model started to be applied in macroeconomic policies, deregulating the market, opening the economy to free trade and virtually unchecked competition and initiating a process of privatization of parastatals that has accelerated shamelessly during the subsequent administrations of Carlos Salinas de Gortari, Ernesto Zedillo, Vicente Fox, Felipe Calderon and the current government of Enrique Peña Nieto.

In other words, in just over three decades the guiding role of the Mexican state disappeared and gave way to a nascent neoliberal scheme to transfer, sell, deliver or give away the ownership of resources and companies to private, domestic and foreign hands. At that time, particularly since the government of Carlos Salinas, the role of the Mexican state was diluted with a very individual vision and an obsession with the concentration of power. This was not in a nationalist sense, but gave rise to a new generation of entrepreneur friends or associates of the president of the moment and an oligarchy which possessed wealth and influence never previously dreamed of, except in a few exceptional cases. Complicities, frontmen, confidential information, concessions and influence trafficking arose in all their splendour for the benefit of a few.

Unprecedented fortunes have been accumulated under those practices, which run contrary to national interest and that of the majority, and the results today wound and offend the vast majority of Mexicans who are marginalised, poor and frustrated. No one currently knows with any certainty what happened, or how the public resources supposedly obtained from the privatization process were used. Those responsible still owe answers and the repayment of a social debt to the people of Mexico, who were, and remain, the owners of resources and the national territory.

Because this whole strategy was accompanied by an intense propaganda campaign which used the media to deceive and confuse everyone, we are still in a situation whereby complicity and joint partnerships between the new oligarchy and the media themselves work in an immoral system to betray the people of Mexico who elected the politicians involved. There are also sadly not many alternatives for the future of the country, apart from giving back to the nation, the true owner, what was stolen from it, but this seems idealistic, romantic and outside the the reality of the immoral world we live in.

La Jornada

So who are the owners of Mexico? The cynical and immoral politicians, ambitious and dehumanized entrepreneurs, political parties, transnational corporations, the domestic oligarchy, corporate unions, organized crime organizations, the Church, the people of Mexico? Who really owns the country and its wealth? This is a key question if we are to define the current state, direction and destiny of the Mexican nation.

On many occasions in Mexico we have seen the worst of human beings, and less frequently the best as well. We very rarely glimpse the generosity and solidarity of those who have the most, at the expense of the effort and sacrifice of those who have the least. Education, principles and values, morality and ethics, as well as the passion to serve and give oneself wholly for the sake of the majority, are almost nonexistent.

In economic activity and in politics the issue of inequality and concentration of wealth is fundamental and can not be ignored. Equally the exploitation of labour and natural resources cannot be ignored, if the damaging effects for society are not correctly evaluated and quantified, both in the form and methods used by corporations to obtain higher profits even at the expense of the life and health of workers and employees; even at the terrible, often irreversible cost of breaking with ecology and the environment, or labour stability and peace.

Today the world and Mexico in particular urgently need a new, better and fairer economic model, as well as new laws and regulations that clearly define the role of the State and beneficiary companies as well as the rules and legal framework for their behaviour, while also determining and establishing their conduct and social responsibility, changing and correcting systems of production and wealth generation.

Although in reality all economic agents, businesses and government appear to act and relate directly to one another in society according to law, there are often relationships of complicity and corruption. In practice and in everyday life the law is not enforced and the rule of law is systematically violated, without seriously respecting the necessary political commitment and degree of social consciousness. As a result many entrepreneurs and authorities, who are generally the most dishonest in the country, act with great impunity.

By way of an initial conclusion on the original property of the nation, then, we can say we must either rebuild society and develop more egalitarian and social awareness, or the fate of our country will always be marked by inequality, marginalization, poverty and instability.

In remembrance and with all my love to my dear sister Hilda Ruth