



## OWNERSHIP – A STATUS QUO OR A RIGHT?

Marian Baltazar  
Class of 1980, University of the Philippines College of Manila  
AB Political Science

Every individual is entitled to his own personal interests. Whether it is an individual, partnership or a corporation type of ownership, each to its own speaks not only of ownership or occupancy of a thing but it also ...talks about the control of a person. Then, we delve more on the thought or the fact if ownership serves as a right of an individual or does it show or imprint a status quo on a person. Almost always, when we talk of ownership, it deals with an ownership of a land or a personal property by an individual.

Nowadays, people seem to own a lot of things which do not really serve as primary concerns but are considered to be luxuries in life (excess). Considering the fact that the term ownership has a very broad scope, we could talk about our personal possessions to which one owner takes full control of. Therefore, we consider personal bank accounts, jewelries, appliances, automobiles, houses, land, buildings, and many more to be part of those things that a person owns. We arrive at the definition now of ownership as the exclusive right of possession. That is, you are referring to a property right of an individual who is the temporary holder or long-term holder of a property. Legally speaking, it is understood that the person with the right of possession has the right to occupy and use the property thereof.

At present, we seldom see families who possess not only one car, one house, one kind of various appliances, one bank account and many more. It is to this account that we arrive at a level of thinking that some families live not according to what they need but they actually live in extravagance. As an effect, personal possessions do not make a person rich in the real sense of the word itself. Instead, it creates or preserves a certain level or condition or rather a stable state which can be termed as status quo. A different perspective is now imbued in the mind of an individual, to possess not because he has a right over that thing or matter to the extent of ownership but because that person wants to maintain or preserve a certain state or condition on that of being a well-off person.

The rest follows and we come to a conclusion that people have a different level of mentality. So, it's up for us to decipher what ownership really means to us. Would you want to maintain and preserve that status quo or will ownership serve as mnemonic to the kind of life that we live right now making all of us aware of our true status and our exclusive right to possessions. Perhaps the question is for each one of us to answer, "Is ownership a status quo or a right?", or maybe we still have to deliberate on that matter. It's for you to decide.

Questions for discussion:

1. How do you personally define ownership?
2. Do you happen to own a number of things that you don't really need? Why?
3. Do you protect your self-interest by acquiring a lot of possessions? How would you explain your answer?
4. Is ownership a right or a status quo for you? Explain your answer.
5. Do you have the tendency to amass properties or a lot of possessions for that matter? Justify your answer.