

**ESTEBAN MEDINA AND GERTRUDES A. DE MEDINA, PETITIONERS,
VS. HON. FRANCISCO MA. CHANCO, PEDRO CARANTES, SR.,
MONDERO CARANTES, MARVIN CARANTES, AND JUAN CARANTES,
RESPONDENTS.**

G.R. No. L-34947. September 30, 1982

Ponente: BARREDO, J.

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/5c4651fe5780/>

BARREDO, J.:

Petition for certiorari, prohibition and mandamus praying that the orders of the respondent Judge of October 20, 1969, January 25, 1971 and December 29, 1971, Annexes C, G and K, respectively, of the petition, be set aside as acts in grave abuse of discretion or in excess of jurisdiction of the respondent Judge and that said respondent be permanently prohibited from taking any further proceedings in Civil Case No. 2043 of the Court of First Instance of Baguio and Benguet, Br. III, La Trinidad, Benguet, entitled "Pedro Carantes, Sr., et al. vs. Spouses Esteban and Gertrudes Alejandrino de Medina, et al."

The original complaint filed by private respondents who are the plaintiffs in the court below was filed on May 7, 1969. It alleged as basis of their causes of action that the land here in question which was registered under the Torrens System in the name of their parents, Cuidno and Guinda Carantes, was transferred to the name of a certain J.O. Wagner through fraud and insufficient consideration and lack of proper compliance with all the legal requirements for such transfer, their said parents being members of the cultural minority, and then, insofar as herein petitioners are concerned and in respect to Lot No. 2-B, the said J.O. Wagner sold a part of said property on March 13, 1917 to Messrs. Leung Yee and Leung Shank who partitioned the same between them in an Escritura de Particion executed by them on February 25, 1926; and it was only April 23, 1932 that the spouses Leung Shank sold a portion of the property apportioned to them under the aforesaid deed of partition to the herein petitioners, spouses Esteban and Gertrudes A. de Medina, who became the holders of Transfer Certificates of Title Nos. 1452 and 1454 of the Register of Deeds of Baguio City.

A motion to dismiss the complaint was filed by herein petitioners in the latter part of June, 1969 alleging as grounds thereof the following:

"1. That the filing fee paid by the plaintiffs was insufficient because the assessed value of all the properties involved is about P1,500,000.00 (the assessed value was later proven to be P2,543,470.00);

"2. That the complaint states no cause of action against the said defendants because:

“a) The circumstances constituting the alleged fraud were not stated with particularity; and that since the lands involved are covered by the Land Registration Act (Act No. 496) and the petitioners herein are innocent purchasers for value, their title thereto is absolute and indefeasible -assuming that the original contract with the alleged predecessors-in-interest of the plaintiffs was fraudulent;

“b) That the plaintiffs have no legal capacity to sue since there are nine heirs and five of them withdrew as

parties -plaintiffs and expressly recognized the validity of the contracts executed by their deceased parents, for which reason the remaining four co-heirs cannot sue on behalf of all the nine heirs because the majority of them did not want to join as parties-plaintiffs; and lastly

"3. That the cause of action, if any, has prescribed or that it is barred by the statute of limitations because of the lapse of about 56 years from the date of the alleged sales in January, 1913 to May, 1969 when the original complaint was filed." (pp. 350-351, Record).

Said original complaint was amended on May 11, 1970 by dropping five (5) of the original plaintiffs who had filed affidavits that they had no knowledge whatsoever of the complaint; that they never hired the services of counsel Jesus M. Ponce and Ernesto Abrogueña to prosecute the complaint; that they were not interested in the prosecution thereof for the reason that they had always recognized and respected the acts of their late father and mother with respect to the properties which they have disposed of during their lifetime; and, furthermore, they fully knew that the present owners and occupants thereof have legally come into the possession and ownership of said properties, etc.

After the amended complaint was filed, petitioners filed a motion to dismiss dated July 31, 1970 on the following grounds:

"a. That since the main basis of the complaint is fraud and considering that the circumstances constituting the alleged fraud are not stated with particularity as required by the Rules of Court, then the complaint is defective;

"b. That the complaint states no cause of action because the lands involved herein, more particularly that presently owned by the defendant spouses Esteban Medina and Gertrudes A. de Medina, are covered by the Land Registration Act (Act No. 496) and the said defendant spouses are innocent purchasers for value, their title thereto is absolute and indefeasible, even assuming that the original contract with the alleged predecessors-in-interest of the plaintiffs was fraudulent;

"c. That the plaintiffs have no legal capacity to sue because they constitute a minority of four out of the nine heirs and cannot therefore lay claim to the whole estate of their deceased parents; neither may they institute this action over the objection of the majority of five co-heirs;

"d. That the cause of action, if any, has prescribed or that it is barred by the statute of limitations because the original sale of the property by respondents' deceased parents which was subsequently sold to another and then later on to the herein petitioners, was made on January 20, 1913, or after the lapse of about 56 years when the complaint was filed." (pp. 354-355, Record).

But after hearing, the respondent Judge denied the said motion on January 25, 1971 (Annex G of the Petition).

Petitioners filed thereafter a motion for the reconsideration of the order of January 25, 1971, but again, said motion for reconsideration was denied on December 1, 1971. (Annex I, Petition)

In a second motion for reconsideration dated December 22, 1971 (Annex J of the Petition), the petitioners reiterated their plea for the dismissal of the amended complaint with particular re-emphasis on the fact that the defendants spouses, the petitioners herein, were innocent purchasers for value of the property claimed from them and that their title thereto was already absolute and indefeasible under the Land Registration Act, and to support their motion, they asked for a preliminary hearing on the ground just stated considering that the documents in support of their motion were public documents, the genuineness and authenticity whereof could not be denied. But notwithstanding that the documents referred to were made annexes to their second motion for reconsideration, respondent Judge denied the said motion insisting that the ground alleged was more proper as a defense than as a basis for a motion to dismiss.

We will not tarry on the other issues raised in the petition because We are convinced that the issue alone that petitioners herein are purchasers in good faith and for value sufficiently constitutes a bar to the complaint of private respondents and there being enough proof to that effect, respondent Judge should have dismissed the complaint of private respondents. What is more, We have read both the original and the amended complaints of the private respondents and We cannot discern in any of them any specific act indicating any participation of the petitioners in whatever fraud might have attended the original transaction between the parents of private respondents and J.O. Wagner.

It is very clear from section 55 of the Land Registration Act that although an original owner of a registered land may seek the annulment of a transfer thereof on the ground of fraud, such a remedy, however, is "without prejudice to the rights of any innocent holder for value" of the certificate of title.

In the case at bar, We are readily persuaded that on the faces of the original and amended complaints of private respondents and the documents presented by the petitioners in connection with their second motion for reconsideration, the genuineness and authenticity of which do not appear to be denied insofar as the transfer from Wagner to the Leungs and from the Leungs to the petitioners are concerned, the petitioners are purchasers in good faith within the contemplation of section 55 of the Land Registration Act. If only because (1) petitioners did not acquire the property in question from Wagner but from the Leungs and this transaction between Wagner and the Leungs took place in 1917, or four years after the alleged fraudulent execution of the transfer in favor of Wagner; (2) the transfer or conveyance to the petitioners took place only in 1932 or 19 years after the sale to the Leungs by Wagner; and (3) the complaint below was filed only in 1969, more than 50 years after the first transaction, it is unbelievable that the herein petitioners could have taken part in any manner in either the transfer from the parents of the private respondents to Wagner as well as the transfer from Wagner to the Leungs.

WHEREFORE, judgment is hereby rendered granting the petition and hereby ordering the respondent Judge to dismiss the complaint of private respondents insofar as herein petitioners are concerned in Civil Case No. 2043 of the Court of First Instance of Baguio and Benguet, Br. III, La Trinidad, Benguet, entitled "Pedro Carantes, Sr., et al. vs. Spouses Esteban and Gertrudes Alejandrino de Medina, et al."

No costs.

Aquino, Guerrero, De Castro, and Escolin, JJ., concur.

Concepcion, Jr., J., no part.

Abad Santos, J., dissents.

[*] The Court has been notified that petitioners Esteban Medina as well as respondent Pedro Carantes, Sr. have already died, but by proper resolutions, the Court has already ordered their substitution

ABOUT BATAS.ORG

Study smarter at BATAS.org

The Philippine bar review and law-school companion built around how your brain actually remembers.

The complete Philippine law library - free for everyone.

More than 100,000 Supreme Court decisions, Republic Acts, and executive issuances - full-text searchable, browsable by category and year, and always free. No paywall, no login. This PDF came from it.

Audio case-brief lectures.

Any decision becomes a podcast-style lecture - facts, issues, ruling, and doctrine - with read-along highlighting and a hands-free presentation mode. Study while commuting, working out, or resting your eyes.

Bar review built on the science of memory.

Complete, sequenced courses for all eight bar subjects, narrated like podcasts and reinforced with retrieval practice and spaced review - the study techniques with the strongest evidence behind them.

The full law-school curriculum.

One subscription unlocks the entire J.D. curriculum - every subject, every lesson, with your progress tracked down to the paragraph so you can pick up exactly where you left off, on any device.

Mock exams that tell you where you stand.

Timed multiple-choice exams graded instantly, with per-subject score breakdowns and focus suggestions that point you at your weakest topics first.

A study planner that keeps you on pace.

Set your schedule and BATAS tells you every day whether you are on track for bar day - and exactly which lesson to take next.

Start free at <https://batas.org>

The law library is free forever - and your first lesson is one click away.

The text of this document is an official public record and remains in the public domain. Formatting, presentation, and compilation © 2026 batas.org.

Downloaded free from the batas.org Law Library. Share it freely - the library is free for every law student, bar reviewee, and practitioner.