

ARTURO NIETO, PLAINTIFF-APPELLANT, VS. BARTOLOME QUINES AND MIGUEL P. PIO, DEFENDANTS-APPELLEES.

G.R. No. L-14643. September 29, 1962

Ponente: BARRERA, J.

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BARRERA, J.:

SUMMARY

This is a motion to reconsider the decision of January 28, 1961, declaring appellees' title to the land in dispute as valid, enforceable and superior to that of appellant's title. A study of the facts disclosed that Arturo Nieto's predecessor-in-interest, Muriu Florentine) claimed ownership over Lot No. 3044 of the Abulug Cadastre. During the cadastral proceedings her claim was not opposed and the court found no irregularity in the proceedings and infirmity of Florentine's claim of ownership. Subsequently, it adjudicated the Lot and ordered a title issued therefor in the name of Maria Florentine. On the other hand, Bartolome Quines' Homestead Application filed long before the cadastral proceedings covers the same tract of land claimed by Maria Florentine. In like manner, Quines' application was not opposed, legal requirements were fully complied, and there being no more impediments, the Bureau of Lands, pursuant to the Public Land Law ordered the issuance of a Homestead Patent in favor of Bartolome Quines. Hence, these circumstances of two valid titles registered on the same date, in the name of two different persons and were the results of two lawful proceedings, one judicial and the other administrative. This gave rise to the question of whose title should be recognized. The Supreme Court reversed its decision and upheld appellant's title

HELD: Cadastral cases initiated by the Government are judicial in nature and one in rem. Decisions therein are binding against the whole world, including the government. After the finality of the degree, title of ownership becomes vested upon the adjudicatee and the land could no longer be disposed of. The government had lost its right to convey the land by homestead grant. Homestead patent title issued by the Bureau of Lands was the result of administrative proceedings initiated by the homestead applicant. The proceedings are under the control and determination of the Director of Lands whose decisions on the contest are not final and conclusive. In view of the nature and manner of acquisition of appellees' title over the disputed land, it must perforce give way to the appellant's title acquired by judicial adjudication.

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