

MATEA E. RODRIGUEZ, PLAINTIFF AND APPELLANT, VS. SUSANA DE LA CRUZ, ESCOLÁSTICO DE LA CRUZ, AND PROCESA DE LA CRUZ, DEFENDANTS AND APPELLEES.*G.R. No. 3629. September 28, 1907*

Ponente: JOHNSON, J.

Read online (full-text search, related cases, audio case brief): <https://batas.org/library/g-r-no-3629/>**JOHNSON, J.:**

On the 21st day of August, 1905, the plaintiff, through her attorneys, filed an amended complaint in the Court of First Instance of the Province of Albay for the purpose of recovering from the defendants certain pieces or parcels of land described in the complaint, alleging: That she was the owner of the said lands; that she had acquired said lands during her first marriage from her deceased father, Alejo Rodriguez; that Hilarión de la Cruz was her second husband and that she had permission from him to commence this action in her own name against the said defendants; that she had been in possession of said lands and enjoyed the fruits of the same, from the month of May, 1882, until the month of February, 1905; that the said Hilarión de la Cruz had no interest or right in said property; that on or about the 20th of February, 1905, the defendants in this cause commenced an action in the Court of First Instance of the Province of Albay against the said Hilarión de la Cruz for the partition of the lands described in the present cause; that on the 29th day of March, 1905, the judge of the said court adjudged in favor of the defendant Susana de la Cruz in this action the ownership and possession of the lands described under letter "B" in the complaint in this cause, adjudging and decreeing the ownership and possession of the lands described under letter "A" in this complaint to Escolastico de la Cruz; that the plaintiff in this cause was not made a party in the action for partition between the present defendants and the said Hilarión de la Cruz.

To this petition the defendants filed a special denial, denying certain parts of the facts set out in the complaint and admitting certain other of the facts alleged in. said complaint. As a special defense the defendants set up the judgment of the Court of First Instance of the Province of Albay of the 29th of March, 1905.

The issue thus formed was duly submitted to the lower court, and after hearing the evidence the lower court rendered a judgment in favor of the defendants and against the plaintiff, dismissing the said cause with costs to the plaintiff. The lower court found as a fact from the evidence adduced during the trial that the lands described in the complaint were acquired by Hilarión de la Cruz, the father of the present defendants, "during his married life with his first wife, Andrea de Leon," and that said lands were not inherited by the present defendant from her father, Alejo Eodriguez.

From this decision the plaintiff appealed to this court, alleging that the lower court committed errors, in substance as follows:

1. That the lower court erred in considering the fact that the said Matea E. Rodriguez did not intervene in said action for partition between the said Hilarión de la Cruz and his children of the first marriage as sufficient to show that she had no interest in the lands in question.
2. That the court erred in declaring that the said Hilarión de la Cruz was the owner of the lands in question, for

the simple fact that he had been administering said lands during the entire period of his marriage with the present plaintiff.

3. That the court erred in finding from the evidence that the said Hilarión de la Cruz had acquired said lands during the existence of his marriage relation with the said Andrea de Leon, his first wife, and that said lands were not inherited by the present plaintiff from her deceased father.

With reference to the first assignment of error above noted, we are of the opinion, and so hold, that for the reason that the said Matea E. Rodriguez had not been made a party in the action for partition between the present defendants and the said Hilarión de la Cruz, her interest in said lands was in no way prejudiced by the decision of the court in that cause.

Section 277 of the Code of Procedure in Civil Actions provides, among other things, that proceedings in a cause against one person can not affect the rights of another.

It is admitted by the parties in the present action that the said Matea E. Rodriguez was not made a party in the former action for partition between the present defendants and the said Hilarión de la Cruz, neither is it shown that she had any knowledge or information concerning the existence or pendency of said action.

With reference to the second assignment of error above noted, it is admitted that soon after the marriage of the said Hilarión de la Cruz with the present plaintiff he commenced to administer the property in question. There is no provision in the Civil Code which prohibits a husband from administering the property of his wife, as her representative, and certainly it can not be concluded that the property which he administers for his wife is his for the mere reason that he has administered the same for a long time.

Article 1382 of the Civil Code provides that the wife shall retain the ownership of her property which she brings to the marriage relation. It is true that article 1384 prescribes that she shall have the management of the property, unless she has delivered the same to her husband by means of a public document, providing that he may administer said property; but it can not be claimed, from the mere fact that she has permitted her husband to administer her property without having his authority to do so evidenced by a public document, that she has thereby lost her property and that the same has become the property of her husband. No such claim was made in the court below on behalf of the defendants. Their claim was that the said Hilarión de la Cruz had acquired said property during the existence of his marriage with his first wife, Andrea de Leon.

With reference to the third assignment of error above noted, we are of the opinion, and so hold, after an examination of the evidence adduced during the trial of said cause, that the said lands in question were acquired by Matea E. Rodriguez by inheritance during the existence of her first marriage, from her deceased father, Alejo Rodriguez.

Therefore, from all of the foregoing facts, we are of the opinion that the judgment of the lower court should be reversed, and it is hereby ordered that the said cause be remanded to the lower court with direction that a judgment be entered declaring that the said plaintiff, Matea E. Rodriguez, is the owner and is entitled to the possession, as against the said defendants, of the lands described in the amended complaint presented in this cause.

Without any finding as to costs, it is so ordered.

Arellano, C. J., Torres, Willard, and Tracey, JJ., concur.

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.