

# Australia del Espiritu Santo

## A Spanish name for an English Country

A monograph of the historical origin of Australia, its names, discoverers and the contentions between Spain and Great Britain over its sovereignty.



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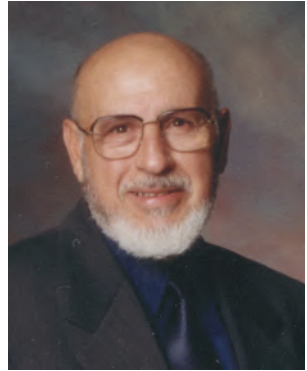
**Monograph:** The term monograph is used, in an ample sense, to denominate the texts of argumentative plot and informative function that organise, in analytical and critical form, data on a subject gathered from different sources. In order to write a monograph it is necessary to determine a problem, to discover and to collect suitable data, to classify the materials, to make contact with individuals and institutions, to accede to the information and to exercise the critical spirit, to communicate the results in writing and/or to express orally its contents in front of an audience. A monograph is also a work of scientific research with a restricted subject. If this work is presented to an audience, specialised and competent in the subject, the same work is usually called a dissertation or technical article. The scientific term supposes the development of a logical process of knowledge of the truth on a subject. In the monograph, the author presents the results in an organised and systematic form. In order to sustain the description and assumed position, bibliographical evidence of professional works and investigation is required.

**References:** The page of the Spanish language <http://www.elcastellano.org> and the Dictionary of the Spanish language, twenty-second edition.

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## The author

Gustavo Márton-Montenegro, born in Chillán, Chile, studied Philosophy and Theology at the Main Pontifical Seminary of Santiago (Seminario Pontificio Mayor de Santiago) and the Catholic University of Chile. Abandoning an ecclesiastical career as a seminarist, he continued pedagogic studies at the Catholic University of Valparaiso. In 1974 he went into political exile, leaving Chile for Australia. At the University of New South Wales, Sydney, he obtained his Masters (with honours) in Spanish and Latin American Studies.



In Chile, he worked in the rural sector for ten years. There he became familiar and very close to the Mapuches, the native people of South Chile. On his arrival to Australia, he became dedicated to learn more about the Australian aboriginal people, by studying the extensive literature written about them and by visiting some of the places in which they live.

His research gave origin to his book *The Visual Art of the First Australians*. He has written and has had published several other articles about the Australian aboriginal people. These publications were written to teach Latin American compatriots resident in Australia about the history, art and customs of the first habitants of this island continent.

Márton-Montenegro has dedicated his 32 years of residence in Australia to study and write about the aboriginal people. Other works by the author are *The History of Chilean Immigration in Australia* and *The Chilean Solidarity Campaign in Australia, 1973–1990 (An Historic Memory related to the Chilean–Australian Solidarity Movement)*.

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## Dedication

I dedicate this monograph, firstly to the original people of Australia, the Aborigines, custodians of this country.

Secondly, to my grandchildren: Jan, Alexandra, Michael, Jacqueline, Samantha, Josephine and Caitlin. With all my love and affection,

Your tata Gustavo

The fourth centenary of the naming of this country, Australia of the Holy Spirit (Australia del Espiritu Santo), will be commemorated in Spain and in some Australian sectors on 14 May 2006. The designation was given by Pedro Fernandez de Quirós, a Portuguese navigator in the service of the Spanish Navy in 1606. The arrival of the Spaniards to this island continent almost two hundred years before the British, and the demand of its sovereignty by the King of Spain, Carlos IV, is something that remains pending in the analysis of contemporary historical debates. What was Australia before European colonisation, and what historical situations took place that allowed two colonial powers to claim sovereignty? Why, in this scenario, does the Chilean General Captaincy, under the command of Don Ambrosio O'Higgins, appear as assignee of an important part of the Australian territory? These and other questions are what I seek to answer in the development of this monograph.

## Introduction

Australia celebrates its national day on the 26th of January each year. It was on this date in 1788 that Captain Arthur Phillip, in the name of the British crown, initiated the process of occupation of these territories. Previously, on 22 August 1770, Captain James Cook had taken possession, in the name of the King of England, George III, of the entire eastern coast; from Cape York in the north, to the southern end of the island continent; the islands comprising 135° longitude, East; and adjacent islands in the Pacific Ocean.

When taking possession of the eastern coast, Cook did not give the region a specific name. It is known, however, that on his return home, while revising the diaries of his travels, he gave the name “New South Wales” to all the territory of which he had taken possession of in the name of the English crown.

James Cook disembarked at Botany Bay and recommended that the first settlement be established there. However, Phillip considered that this was not a suitable place and sailed further north with his eleven convict ships, which consisted of 568 men and 191 women, all brought from England to establish colonies in these territories.

Phillip landed at Port Jackson, the place where the city of Sydney was founded. Sydney was named after Lord Sydney, the Minister of the Interior, who had within his ministerial portfolio the responsibility for prisons. This motivated him to propose to Cabinet the establishment of a colony in New South Wales.

Prior to the British occupation, this territory had long been desired and coveted by European navigators and their respective monarchs who sat in the antique metropolises of the Old Continent. This historical avidity, and the events that followed the territorial incorporation of the English crown, raised three important issues. First, devastating actions against the original inhabitants of these territories commenced, and the consequences of these actions remain a contentious issue to this day. Secondly, the European navigators were desperate to arrive and conquer these antipodean territories. Finally, once reached, and as a result of the conquest and beginning of English colonisation, Spain also claimed its sovereignty, provoking a

legal battle between both colonial powers for their right to these territories.

With respect to the first issue, an abundant proliferation of Anglo-Australian literature exists that analyses and discusses this problem. It is not my intention to do so here. Nevertheless, I find myself obliged to initiate this work with historical facts that demonstrate the Anglo-Spanish dispute, and the period of occupation on the part of the indigenes for the thousands of years before Europeans set foot in this nation, known today as Australia. The second and third aspects, which are the objectives of this monograph, refer to the European explorers who travelled in search of this legendary Terra Australis Nordum Cognita (Land of the south still unknown), and the contentious issues between Spain and England that arose upon England's establishment of a colony in 1788, with Spain claiming a right of sovereignty over the territories.

Through this monograph one looks to simply present the facts to which we have had access, and to propose a call to Australian and Spanish historians to investigate the historical truth within the different versions of these issues by both nations.

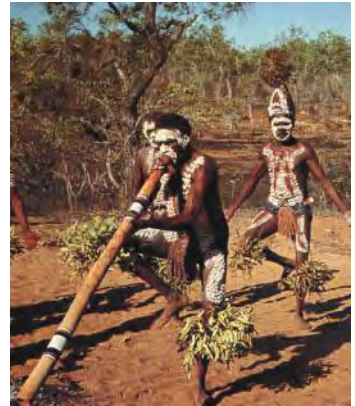


## Australia before the arrival of the Europeans

For millennia this southern land, unknown to most of Europe until the beginning of 17th century, was occupied by a population that is assumed to have migrated from the other side of the globe. The exact place of their origin is unknown. Nevertheless, archaeology has given diverse hypotheses; these waves of migration could have originated from some part of Africa, the south of China, the north of Japan, the south of India (of the group of islands in the Bay of Bengal), from New Caledonia, or directly from South East Asia.<sup>1</sup> It is the theory that their origin is from South East Asia that dominates Australian archaeological and anthropological literature.<sup>2</sup>

These first Australians could have arrived and occupied this territory at least 40 thousand years ago. According to the analyses of human bones and food residues found at Lake Mungo,<sup>3</sup> however, the oldest evidence of human existence in Australia has been established to be approximately 116 thousand years ago, as a result of the discovery of aboriginal habitation at Jinmium, a site located in the Kimberley region of Western Australia.

These investigations were led by Dr Richard Fullgar, PhD in Archaeology; Dr Lesley Head, professor at the University of Wollongong, School of Geosciences; David Price of the University of Wollongong, an expert in determining the antiquity



*The Australian natives were residents of this country thousands of years before the Europeans occupied these territories. How and when did they arrive? It continues to be an enigma for the social sciences and has raised diverse hypotheses.*

- 1 Harry Gordon, *Bicentennial – An Australian Mosaic and 1788 Diary*, Sunshine Diaries Pty Ltd, Brisbane, 1987. However, John Mulvaney sustained that: "Whether Chinese, Arab, Hindu, or representatives of others civilization even stepped ashore in prehistoric Australia is beyond the present possibility of Prof". Refer to his article "Origins" in *Aboriginal Australia*, Australian Gallery Directors Council, The Davil Ell Press, 1981–1982, p. 16.
- 2 David Horton, *Prehistory, Black Australia: An annotated bibliography and teacher's guide to resources on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders*, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra, Humanities Press, New Jersey, USA, 1978, p. 19.
- 3 Josephine Flood, *Archaeology of the Dreamtime*, Chapter 3: "Life and Death at Lake Mungo", Collins, Sydney and London, 1983, pp. 40–52.



The archaeological site of Jinmium where Dr Richard Fullgar and his work party found evidence of the existence of Australian natives, estimated to be 116 thousand years old. Map from the Sydney Morning Herald, News Review, dated 21 September 1996, p. 29.

of objects and archaeological artefacts from the distant past; and Dr Paul Tacon, Acting Director of the Department of Anthropology at the Museum of Australia.

They began their excavations in Jinmium and discovered sediments that dated some 75 thousand to 116 thousand years.

Once they had excavated and reached levels of 176 thousand years, they found barren earth devoid of evidence of human existence. Their excavations showed evidence of sediments that came off rocks painted by the old inhabitants of Australia. The British scientific journal, *Antiquity*, reported the analysis of these ochres and, together with other artefacts found, presented antiquity of 116 thousand years.<sup>4</sup>

In September 1996, the Australian newspapers, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Weekend Australian*, gave wide coverage to this discovery, while acknowledging that “school children had only been taught that aboriginal occupation of Australia was between 40 thousand and 60 thousand years ago”.<sup>5</sup>

This new evidence indicates that its antiquity could be extended even to 176 thousand years of occupation, challenging the scientific world to turn back the clock in the matter of the process of evolution of the human species.

From that time, even perhaps before the dates indicated, human occupation of Australia could have taken place. In fact, in this investigation, diverse disciplines have been incorporated, such as Archaeology, Geology, Palaeontology, Physical Anthropology and Chemistry; this last one is related to the systems of measurement of the antiquity, such as the Radius 14 Coal and the system of thermos luminescence.

4 R.L.K. Fullgar, D.M. Price and L.M. Head, “Early Human Occupation of Northern Australia: Archaeology and Thermoluminescence, dating of Jinmium rock-shelter, Northern Territory”, *Antiquity*, Vol. 70, No. 270, December 1996, pp. 751–773.

5 James Woodford, “Unearthed: Australia’s Lost Civilisation”, *The Sydney Morning Herald*, No 49.627, September 21, 1996, p. 29; James Woodford, “Unveiled: outback Stonehenge that will rewrite our history”, *The Weekend Australian*, September 28–29, 1996, p. 27.

The first inhabitants of this island continent populated important areas of the national territory. Past historians and Australian scientists support that long before Great Britain occupied this country in 1788, there existed in Australia more than six hundred indigenous communities, organised independently and with autonomous groups, with an average of five to six hundred people per community.<sup>6</sup>

In 1788 it was calculated that between 200 and 250 different languages existed and that numerous dialects were spoken. However, the first inhabitants of Australia never had a name, or lexical meaning, that identifies them with this island continent in its totality or a concept of country-territory.<sup>7</sup>

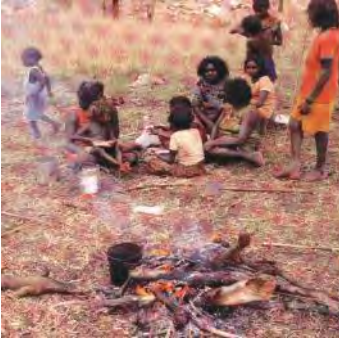
The aborigines formed communities or independent tribes, whose distance and environmental climatic conditions prevented them from maintaining an idea of the amplitude and extension of the territory that they occupied. In this way, they only identified places of residence or accidental geo-physical conditions that they, as nomads, found in their constant journeys from one place to another. Under these conditions, native communities used names to identify residential places, such as Arkaroola (Arkaroo in Southern Australia), Boggabri (Place of Mountains), Bungambrewatha (Albury), Nganbirra (Canberra), Uluru or Oolra, Arunta or Aranda (in the centre of Australia), etc.<sup>8</sup>

These names remain today and are obviously preserved in actuality. They have arrived to us through the work of ethnographers and anthropologists, and each one of them

6 Even though numerous books exist that describe the life of the natives from the moment of the colonisation and later, only some have been written on the distant past. Among them include: John Mulvaney, *Prehistory of Australia*, Penguin, 1975; Geoffrey Blainey, *Triumph of the Nomads: A History of Ancient Australia*, Macmillan, South Melbourne, 1975; Peter White, "Before the White Man", *Reader's Digest*, Sydney, 1974; R.L. Kirk and A.G. Thorne (eds.), *The Origin of the Australian*, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra, 1976.

7 Eric Vaszolyi, *Aboriginal Australia Speak*, Aboriginal Teacher Program, M Lawley College of Advanced Education, Perth, 1976; Stephen Wurm, *Language of Australia and Tasmania*, Mouton & Co. La Hague, 1972.

8 Refer to the book by A.W. Reed, *Place Names of Australia*, Reed, The Book Printer, 1992.



*The families of the original inhabitants of Australia have and feel a great right to the land of their ancestors. The explanation of their arrival and occupation of this island continent is of religious character. It is described in the "Dreamtime", that is, the era of the creation in which their ancestral beings created and gave life form to all that existed around them.*

has been accurately documented since European occupation. Currently, Australian Aborigines continue with a significant presence in Australian society, in spite of the devastating colonial action imposed by England in 1788, when Arthur Phillip took possession of the eastern coast of Australia to establish the first colonies.

In the last twenty years, political and cultural changes have occurred in Australia, and a significant population identify themselves as being of native origin, or inhabitants of the Torres Strait. In 2001, during the last census of the Australia population, 410,000 people declared themselves as Aborigines and the indigenous population was estimated then to be 458,500, thus representing nearly 2.4 per cent of the total population. After the census of 2001, the Australian Bureau of Statistics projected that this figure would increase to approximately 470,000 by 2006, based on the present numbers of birth and mortality.<sup>9</sup>

With a quote from Dr Josephine Flood we conclude this first section:

*If the time scale of human occupation of Australia were represented by one hour on a clock, Aboriginal society would occupy over fifty-nine and a half minutes, European society less than half a minute.*

*The human story has been unfolding for over 40 thousand years in Australia, and 99.5 per cent of Australia's human history it is aborigines who have been on the stage".<sup>10</sup>*

9 Australian Government, *Australia Now*, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, January 2006, [http://www.dfat.gov.au/facts/indg\\_overview.htm](http://www.dfat.gov.au/facts/indg_overview.htm).

10 Flood, *Archaeology of the Dreamtime*, 1983, p. 11, 15.

## The first explorers

No written information exists anywhere in the world that speaks either of the first explorers or of how they were to engineer the population of the continents and islands that exist on the planet Earth. Writing did not exist and the oral tradition, which perhaps passed through many generations to tell how it had happened, ended up being lost. The truth is that the populations—called indigenous, native or original inhabitants—occupied practically all places on Earth, with the exception of some islands that remained unoccupied until Europeans and Asians became aware of their existence.

Obviously, these first explorers must have taken advantage of the different glacial times and perhaps walked on enormous masses of ice to traverse from one continent to another.<sup>11</sup>

Others, turned navigators, with professionalism and skill, assumed the task of exploring new lands looking for better nutritional conditions and life. It is necessary to also add that the rising European empires looked to open commercial routes to allow their metropolises to sell and buy merchandise, developing their nations and creating better conditions of life for their inhabitants.<sup>12</sup> There is no doubt that these missions to open new markets and to find raw materials outside their borders must have been heroic; as surely, in many cases the boats were swallowed by the violence of oceanic storms or by the lack of suitable vessels that could have avoided the catastrophes to which they were subjected. Not all commercial missions achieved a happy ending.



*Hunters and collectors of food possess a deep sense of compromise with the environment that is around them. They are the guardians and keepers of all that exists. For them, man is not the king of creation, but the creation is the king and they are only a part of it.*

- 11 One example of this hypothesis is developed by the French anthropologist, Paul Rivet, in his book *Origen del Hombre Americano (Origin of the American Man)*, Fondo de Cultura Económica, México, Chapter 5, pp. 96–111, and also included in the *Chilean Geographic Atlas*, 2nd Edition, Military Geographic Institute, Santiago, 1988, p. 38.
- 12 In March 1602 the Dutch company, United East Indies Company, was created when the State-General of the Netherlands granted the monopoly rights to commence colonial activities in Asia. It was the first multinational corporation in the world and was the first authorised company to promote and to maintain shares, and the sale of them. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dutch\\_East\\_India\\_Company](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dutch_East_India_Company).



According to the theory of the French anthropologist, Paul Rivet, the Tasmanians would have walked by the polar cap towards the south of Chile; giving origin to the communities of the Tehuelches, Onas, Yaganes and Alacalufes. This affirmation has been given the name of "Theory of the bridges of islands of the Pacific Ocean". This map and commentary from the Chilean Geographic Atlas, Military Geographic Institute, Santiago, 1988, p. 38.

In the specific case of Australia, even though the Aborigines already inhabited this island continent, it has been documented that there were very old attempts of exploration on the part of other nations. However, no scientific or historical evidence exists to prove that it occurred. In fact, it has been claimed that the Chinese and the Phoenicians made incursions on Australian coastlines. Few historians give credit to these assertions.

## The theoretical existence of land in the south of the planet

History also tells us that, several hundred years before our era began to shape, philosophical and scientific disciplines looked for a rational answer to natural phenomena and to the characteristics of the planet; in particular, the universe in general, the life and the environment. Emerging from the old world—especially in Greece, Rome, Egypt and Mesopotamia—figures such as Pythagoras, together with his followers, and thought to include the Greek philosopher Aristotle, reached the conclusion that the Earth was round. Others, such as Eratosthenes, even established the longitude of the radius that the Earth could have.<sup>13</sup>

During the arrival of the second century of our era—even though it predominated in intellectual, ecclesiastical and popular circles the existence of a flat and floating Earth—appeared an astronomer, mathematician and geographer, named Claudius Ptolomeo or Tolomeo, who was born in Hermii, Egypt, which was then an Hellenic city. Ptolomeo published a number of books; in one of them, *A Guide to Geography*, he presents a description of the Earth in which he speaks for the first time of a terraqueous mass located in the south of the planet. The Europeans thought at that time that the Earth only comprised

<sup>13</sup> L.F. Hobley, *Early Explorers to 1500 AD*, Methuen & Co Ltd, London, 1954, pp. 29–30.

of what had been seen and known, that is, Europe, part of Asia and North Africa.

The work of Ptolomeo, in eight volumes,<sup>14</sup> does not represent in practice what should have been good text of geography due to a series of errors and contradictions contained within, according to the geographers who studied his texts. Nevertheless, it contributes in his writings some ideas that would be used later by other generations to undertake bold trips, in the exploration of other latitudes. One of them was Christopher Columbus, who used Ptolemeo's conclusions in undertaking his travels to the Indias. According to Ptolomeo, the Indias were reached by travelling towards the west, and he had indicated that Asia extended further than where it was known to be. This created great confusion and attributed to Columbus' encounter with the Americas and not with the Indias, which was his intended destination.<sup>15</sup>



*Ptolomeo's map fascinated the explorers and greatly influenced conquests of other continents.*

Another aspect that Ptolomeo maintained was the existence of a continent in the south—an unknown land—which, according to him, established the correct balance and equilibrium between the terraqueous masses of the north and the south. To reach this conclusion he experimented with drawings and wooden models, which he submerged in water containers, to determine and to prove this equilibrium.

## In search of the Southern Land

The works of Ptolomeo remained hidden and ignored for several centuries. But without doubt the preoccupation to find the unknown land intensified at the beginning of the 17th century. The reference to the geographic and astronomical system, which curiously had been given by Ptolomeo, dominated

14 Refer to: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ptolemy>.

15 These details and commentaries referred to in the book by Robert Clancy and Alan Richardson, *So Came They South*, Shakespeare Head Press, The Education Division of Golden Press Pty Ltd, NSW, 1988, p. 15 onwards.

almost all of the Medieval Age. It was believed that the Earth was the centre of the universe, with a flat surface that floated in waters of the seas and oceans. This knowledge and geographic analysis remained practically unchallenged until the end of the Medieval Age. The translation of Ptolomeo texts took place in the year 1410 and generated a great influence and interest among the first explorers.



*Map of the world, 1534–36, by Oronce Fine (1494–1555), Department of Maps and Geographic Charts, National Library of France. A globe in the Library of Paris maintains that Terra Australis was discovered in 1499. This affirmation comes from H. Harrisse in his book “The Discovery of North America”, p. 613. This globe would have been elaborated near 1535.*

By the end of the Medieval Age, explorations commenced and the works of cartographers and geographers, who began to speak with insistence of a great southern land, were published. It was merely theoretical speculation, however, as no one had actually achieved personal or collective experience of having seen it. In 1531 French cartographer, Oronce Fine, depicted in his maps an imaginary continent to the south called “Terra Australis”, a Latin expression meaning “land of the south” or more precisely, and according to the Latin translation, “terras de los vientos sureños” — “land of the southern winds”.

The inscription on a peculiar wooden globe, conserved in the Department of Geography of the National Library of Paris, indicates that the continent was discovered in 1499.<sup>16</sup> However, as time passed, new maps and globes of the world were created that obviously were going to end up in geographic research centres. New names arose or were simply invented for this continent, still not known by the Europeans. To the name of “Terra Incognita” (unknown earth) others were added, such as Abraham Ortelius’ map of 1570 in which he called it “Terra Australis Nordum Cognita” (land of the south still unknown).

In 1587 the son of cartographer Rumold Mercator established different names for areas along the coast and decided to call them Maletur, Locach and Playa. However, he also used other names to identify them in order to disorient the explorers who dreamt about their own discoveries. The names “Isla the Great One”, “Notasía”, “Brazil Regal”, “Island of

<sup>16</sup> The Grolier Society of Australia, *The Australian Encyclopedia*, Volumes II and V, Sydney, 1963, pp. 466–485.



Edels Landt”, and “Nouvelle Hollande”, were given by various authors, including Miriam Estensen and George Collingridge.<sup>17</sup>

Phillip Playford wrote peculiarly that this problem of the definitive name of the country took too long to be solved. Speaking of the expedition of Willem de Vlamingh in 1696 to investigate the disappearance of a Dutch ship in Western Australia, Playford tells that:

*It is interesting to observe how Vlamingh, in his travel journal, preferred to use the name of Terra Australis (Terre Australe in French) when he referred the Australian continent, occasionally he also uses the name “Land of the South”, but never the names “Tierra Eendrach” or “New Holland”. The use of “Terra Australis” originated before the discovery of the western coast of the continent by Dirk Hartog in 1616. Until then the mythical South continent was generally known (in Latin) as “Tierra Austral Incognitá” ... The name “Terra Australis” (Land of the South) would be revived 117 years later by Matthew Flinders who thought that it was more appropriate as a name for the continent instead of “New Holland” or “New South Wales”. However, Flinders, among others, also pleaded for a shorter name calling it “Australia” and thus its use became generalised after officially being used for the first time in 1817.<sup>18</sup>*

Obviously, not only was there concern on the part of historians to know the names that were given to Australia, but also with respect to those who first arrived, and how and when they did.

The encounter with the “Unknown Southern Land” is without doubt a process that has taken years to materialise and which, through sporadic trips, has taken an imminent approach. In 1512 Portuguese boats arrived at what is today Bali and Java (Indonesia).

17 Miriam Estensen, *Discovery, The Quest for the South Land*, Allen & Unwin, NSW, 1998, pp. 60–81; George Collingridge, *Discovery of Australia*, Golden Press, 1987.

18 Phillip Playford, *Voyage of Discovery to Terra Australis by Willem de Vlaming in 1696–97*, Western Australian Museum, Perth, 1999, pp. 8–9.

In 1520 Fernando de Magallanes sailed to the north-west of the Pacific and reached the Philippines. In November 1567, Alvaro Meldaña de Neira sailed from Callao in search of the southern land but did not achieve his purpose, finding only the Solomon Islands. Between 1577 and 1580 the English, led by Francis Drake, failed in their intention to reach the southern land.

In 1598 the Dutch sent four ships from Java and reached the coast of Western Australia. In 1595 the navigator Lope de Vega accidentally arrived on the eastern coast of Australia, in a trip intended for the Solomon Islands. After separating himself from the rest of the fleet, he landed at what is now Bondi Beach in Sydney. Al Grassby details that photographs of stone near Bondi with carvings of the Spanish coat of arms and drawings of its ships exist in the National Library of Australia.<sup>19</sup>

## **The encounter with the Southern Land and the beginning of the controversy**

Anglo-Australian literature maintains that the first Europeans to arrive in Australia were the Dutch, although they never tried to take possession or to colonise the land. Diverse Australian and European authors believe this to be unquestionable and true. Australian school and university history books confirm this. In fact, there are very few that disagree with this belief.

The idea of the existence of a continent in the south remained alive and was believed that this new land could be richer than Mexico and Peru; this was something that obviously tempted and deluded European powers. It would be necessary to add that the “preoccupation” of the ecclesiastical powers, to a great extent fused with political powers, looked for new souls to convert to Christianity. While the Portuguese and Spanish were initiating their colonies in America, and experiencing economic difficulties associated with a geopolitical and geo-

19 Al Grassby, *The Spanish in Australia*, Australasian Education Press, 1983, pp. 27–33.

economic undertaking of such magnitude, Holland emerged as a commercial and shipping power of great importance.

*On 17 June 1494 the monarchs of Portugal and Spain signed a treaty in the Castilian city of Tordesillas. This treaty was the direct consequence of the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus: both kingdoms agreed to establish imaginary limits to distribute the new discovered lands and those that were discovered thereafter. That imaginary limit, established by Pope Alexander VI in his two papal bulls (1493), was the meridian that passed 100 leagues off Green Cape Island. Non Christian land west of the meridian would belong to the Spanish; those towards the east would come under Portuguese jurisdiction. Curiously enough, according to the above mentioned meridian, eastern Australia would have fallen under Spanish jurisdiction.<sup>20</sup>*

In 1580 the Kingdom of Portugal became part of the Hispanic Monarchy, whose only tie was King Felipe II. Each kingdom maintained its political and institutional peculiarities.

There was only one sovereign, but without any real territorial unification; either administrative or judicial, each maintained its complete autonomy. Felipe II prevailed in his hereditary rights to the Portuguese throne as he was the grandson of don Manuel de Afortunado; one of his immediate tasks was to keep Holland distant from inter-oceanic ambitions. The successor of Felipe II, in 1598, was his son Felipe III, whose mother, Ana of Austria, was born in the town of Vallisoletano Cigales. His grandfather, Felipe I, was the son of the German emperor Maximilian of Hamburg, who provided the Spanish crown a link with the house of Austria. Felipe III was married in April 1599 to his cousin, Margaret of Austria, and this important situation was taken into account by Pedro Fernandez de Quirós to name the southern land “Australia of the Holy Ghost”—this we will see later.

20 Carlos Fernandez-Shaw, *España y Australia: Cinco Siglos de Historia (Spain and Australia: Five Centuries of History)*, Edición Alonso Ibarrola y Mercedes Palma, Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores de España, mayo de 2000, p. 34.

The greater capacity and skill of the Portuguese navigators made them experts in cartography; a matter that remained hidden so as not to arouse suspicions on breaking the Treaty of Tordesillas that sealed this part of the world to Spain.

Lositanos maps were given secretly to the Dutch, which made it possible for them to arrive in Indonesia. With these little known antecedents, history confirms that in November 1605, the ship *Duyfken* sailed from Java to explore New Guinea and from there, in March 1606, navigated past Cape York Peninsula. Its crew, of European origin, would have been the first to see the eastern coast of Australia; previously they had reached the western coast in 1598. In 1623 two Dutch ships, *Pera* and *Arnhem*, visited Australia and followed the same route previously taken by the *Duyfken*.<sup>21</sup>



Replica of *Duyfken*, the Dutch ship, in the Swan River, Perth, Western Australia.

There is another version that refers to the search by the Dutch to new commercial routes. According to Henry van Zanden,<sup>22</sup> in 1602 five Dutch ships anchored at Banda, a small Western island of the archipelago of Indonesia. Between the years 1602 and 1604 they realised commercial activities, but unexpectedly all trade ceased. In 1605 Holland instructed that the commercial activities would have to reopen and that they were to look for new markets in the Pacific, “avoiding the Spanish fleet” that was anchored in the Philippines. This instruction would have caused the shift to New Guinea, where they would have met white men. From there, the *Duyfken* would have sailed by the eastern waters of Australia, without having direct information of the navigation of Willem Janszoon. The English captain, John Saris, told that during Fleming Pinnasse’s return to Banda, they would have discovered an island, but they had to leave as they had lost six men, eaten by cannibals.<sup>23</sup>

21 Refer to F.L.W. Wood, *A Concise History of Australia*, Dymock’s Book Arcade Ltd, Sydney, 1961, for details of these affirmations. Also Glyndwr Williams and Alan Frost, *Terra Australis to Australia*, Oxford University Press, Melbourne, 1943, in association with the Australian Academy of the Humanities.

22 Henry van Zanden, *1606: Discovery of Australia*, Rio Bay Enterprises Pty Ltd, Perth, 1997.

23 Clancy and Richardson, *So Came They South*, pp. 66–67.

Other evidence, in a letter from the United East India Company, claims that another company called "Australia" had sent commercial expeditions to the East Indies through South America and the Pacific. The company, property of the Dutch, said, "suddenly it has been issued orders to explore the land of New Guinea and the islands located to its east". Following these instructions Willem Janszoon, captain of the ship *Duyve*, or otherwise known as the *Duyfken*, discovered this land around 1606. In addition, Henry van Zanden states that when Abel Tasman received his instructions for the trip in January 1644, specific reference was made of Janszoon's discovery.<sup>24</sup>

Dirk Hartog, a Dutch explorer, was the first European to arrive at the western coast of Australia. Hartog sailed from Amsterdam on the ship named *Eendracht*. He sailed around the Cape of Good Hope to Java and later, by accident, arrived at Western Australia in 1616, to a small island named "Island of Dirk Hartog". Hartog spent three days examining the island and, before leaving, he fixed a tin plate to a post. On the tin plate he engraved an inscription that refers to his visit to the western coast of Australia.<sup>25</sup>

From 1616 to 1636, the Dutch recognised the coast of Western Australia and gave it the name "New Holland". In 1642 Abel Tasman completed these explorations, discovering Van Diemen's Land, later renamed Tasmania.

The Dutch never tried to colonise Australia, since the impression obtained on its "barren territory and the population in primitive state" were abominable. In successive reports and documents they talked about their impressions of Australia, which made them cease the creation of settlements and the population of its territories, and decide not to establish commercial bonds.

The Spanish have their own version on the arrival of Europeans in Australia. They claim to have been the first to ply its waters and visit the island continent before the Dutch. Carlos Fernandez<sup>26</sup> claimed that in 1526 the ship *San Lesmes*,

24 van Zanden, *1606: Discovery of Australia*.

25 <http://www.dirkheartogisland.com/history.htm>

26 Fernandez-Shaw, *España y Australia: Cinco Siglos de Historia*, pp. 40–73.

from the fleet of Jofre de Loaysa, was searching to return to Spain via the Strait of Magellan, but deviated and reached the “Land of the East”, which would be New Zealand. This obviously does not help to determine who of the Europeans arrived first to Australia. Al Grassby’s opinion, which is shared by Fernandez-Shaw, mentions the work of Robert Langdon, an Australian/Spanish scholar who said that Captain Lope de Vega, who disappeared in the Solomon Islands in 1595, took women in his boats—the *Santa Barbara* and the *Santa Isabel*—with the clear intention of establishing colonies in this part of the world. Lope de Vega, before his disappearance, would have been in Australia and, to be exact, in the suburb of Dee Why in Sydney. The hypothesis has arisen that the letters recorded and found in Manly, “DY”, would be “DV” and correspond to the initials of “de Vega”. Obviously, this argument is weak, but necessary in its consent—*we will come back later to this hypothesis.*<sup>27</sup>

## Pedro Fernandez de Quirós and the name “Australia”

On 21 December 1605, Pedro Fernandez de Quirós and Luis Váez de Torres, second-in-command of the fleet, sailed from Callao, Peru, further to the south than Meldaña had done previously, with the intention of establishing a settlement in the southern land. On 14 May he took possession and immediately wrote to the King of Spain a note that appears in his journal. He says:

*I take possession of all the lands, those seen, and those to be seen, of all part of the south as far as the South Pole, that from that day was to be called Australia del Espiritu Santo.*<sup>28</sup>

His memoirs—published in 1610 in Seville, and October 1617 in London—contain a copy of a letter addressed to King Felipe III, monarch of Spain. Fernandez de Quirós says:

27 Grassby, *The Spanish in Australia*, p. 16.

28 Collingridge, *Discovery of Australia*, p. 247.

*For the happy memory of Your Majesty and for the sake of the name of Austria, I named it (the said land) Australia of the Holy Ghost, because in your day (the anniversary of your birth) I took possession of it.*<sup>29</sup>

After the departure of Fernandez de Quirós, his lieutenant, Luis Váez de Torres, sailed to the north of Australia, where he named the waterway that to this day is named “Torres Strait”.

The Anglo-Australian literature maintains that the place of arrival of Fernandez de Quirós was not Australia, but one of the 37 islands of the New Hebrides (today Vanuatu), a volcanic archipelago of Melanesia between New Caledonia and the islands of Fiji, named by the then Lieutenant James Cook (later to become Captain) on his trip to Australia in 1770.

The opinion of Watt<sup>30</sup> was that “the Spanish fleet would only have reached what Cook called later The New Hebrides”.

Opinions are divided. For Cardinal Patrick Moran, first Cardinal of the Catholic Church in Australia (whose origin was Irish-Chilean), and for Lawrence Hargrave, the point of arrival of Fernandez de Quirós was Port Curtis in Queensland, and Lope de Vega would have arrived at Port Jackson in New South Wales. Obviously, this debate does not stop there.

The fratricidal fight between Protestants and Catholics reached the extreme, to sustain the position of Cardinal Moran and Hargrave, which was nothing more than looking to defend a type of religious dominion of Catholics over Protestants in eastern Australia.

To accept the theory of Spanish sovereignty of Australia, to a certain extent was to reframe the religious/economic conflict between England and Ireland; a situation that was to be avoided



*Monument to Pedro Fernandez de Quirós in the Ibero-Latin American Square in the city of Sydney. The inscription plate says:*

**Pedro Fernandez de Quirós  
1565–1615**

*This great explorer, born in Portugal, in service to Spain, made important discoveries in the Pacific. Quirós gave the name of “Australia of the Holy Ghost” to the great southern continent. He died in Panama while he was preparing to return and establish a colony in the new land.*

29 Collingridge, *Discovery of Australia*, p. 248.

30 E.J.M. Watts, *Stories from Australian History*, William Brooks & Co. Limited, Sydney.

so as not to transfer this contentious issue to the new land that had begun to be colonised. The issue was silenced in Australia and did not take long to fall into oblivion.

## The divergent position

Following reading of the Spanish documents, had they been presented at the right time to the Episcopal, would have helped Spain to take possession of Australia; a situation the Vatican would have accepted. As a result the Roman Pontiff, Inocencio X, created the Apostolic Prefecture of the Tierra Australis on 15 July 1681. Grassby accurately states that, in Rome, nine cardinals discussed this proposal and decided to send the Dominican priest, Father Vittorio Riccio, to the Philippines Episcopal in Manila. Riccio later wrote a report to the cardinals of the Sacred Congregation of the Evangelists and sent a map of present-day Australia. It is known that Vázquez Torres managed to capture some natives from the north with the idea of taking them to Spain. Today it is known that they only reached the Philippines.<sup>31</sup>

Another problem in discussion is the proper naming of Australia. Some maintain that Fernandez de Quirós named the country “Austrialia” (Austria+lia) and not “Australia” as stated in Spanish literature. The author George Collingridge clarifies this fact.

In the diary of Quirós, where he speaks of taking possession of this land, which he believed to form part of a continent, he makes use of the term “Australia”. Formal possession of the country was taken on the day of the Pasch of the Holy Ghost, the 14th of May, and he says that “he took possession of all the lands, those seen, and those to be seen, of all that part of the south as far as the South Pole, that from that day was to be called Australia del Espiritu Santo”.

An alteration, however, appears to have been made in the manuscript in the Library of the Ministry of Navy (Spain), which suggests that the word was originally written “Austrialia”.

31 Grassby, *The Spanish in Australia*, p. 18.



González de Leza gives an account of the ceremony of taking possession almost in the same words, but using the term *Austral* instead of *Australia*; he says: from now on it will be called AUSTRAL of the Holy Ghost.<sup>32</sup>

In other words, one letter more or one letter less does not change the meaning of the formation or deformation of the altered word in the oral or written use of the time.

The memoirs of Fernandez de Quirós, published in London in 1617, has the Latin expression “Terra Australu Incognita” on the cover. I have not seen the cover of his memoirs, published in Seville in 1610.



Luis Váez de Torres, who gave his name to the Torres Straits, waters that separate Australia from New Guinea. Engraved plate on the door of the Mitchell Library of Sydney. Australian Museum.

## Conspiracy of silence

Australian historians have always doubted the veracity of these facts. They see them with reticence and they try to be distanced from them. Grassby calls this a “conspiracy of silence”. In his book, *The Spanish in Australia*, he remarks his discontentment:

*Anglo-Australian historians have been incredibly silent about the strategic considerations which were taken into account by Britain in establishing the Sydney settlement... Australian historians still refuse even to acknowledge that the debate ever took place. They have also ignored, for nearly 200 years, the fact that there was any prior claim to Australia by Spain. This conspiracy of silence continues at Australia's universities today, where students are encouraged and indeed permitted by their studies guidelines to look only at the aspects which were put forward in London, relating exclusively to British domestic matters. This is part of the unbalanced ethnocentric approach to Australian history which has for so long rendered it so inadequate.*<sup>33</sup>

32 Collingridge, *Discovery of Australia*, p. 247.



Cover of the memoirs of Pedro Fernandez de Quirós, published in London in 1617.

It is obvious that Spain did not have the political or military capacity to defend its sovereignty over Australia. Its empire was in decay, while the empire of Great Britain was rising. Learning of England's arrival to Australia in 1788, Spain did everything possible to preserve the territories it assumed belonged to the Spanish crown. The danger was seen coming and on 18 October 1776 instructions were given to the Viceroy of Peru to arrest James Cook and to accuse him of infringing the law when invading Spanish territorial waters.

Having news of the disembarkations and the attempts of colonisation by the English in Botany Bay, the Spanish government sent its protests to the Court of Europe and instructed the Viceroy of Mexico, Count of Revilla Gigedo, to take adequate action. The Viceroy responded to the Minister of War that there were not sufficient forces in the southern seas to stop the British.

Spain continued to apply pressure, requesting the Viceroy of Peru to take similar action. The answer was the same. There were not sufficient forces to evict the invaders, according to what Grassby indicates.<sup>34</sup>

A peculiar anonymous letter, published on Saturday 4 November 1978, in the newspaper of the federal capital, *The Canberra Times*, relates an unusual history that took me to Santiago, Chile, in October 2004, to review the colonial archives of Chile to find the truth and to verify its authenticity.

The article says:

*Sir, – The Canberra Times of October 24 carried Crispin Hull's record of an unusual judgment by the High Court which established, inter alia, that the northern parts of the King and Flinders Islands are constitutionally part of New South Wales and not, as vulgarly supposed, of Tasmania.*

33 Grassby, *The Spanish in Australia*, p. 22.

34 Grassby, *The Spanish in Australia*, p. 20.

Had learned counsel's researches been carried a little further, the even more shocking discovery would have been made that all of Eastern Australia is constitutionally part of the Republic of Chile.

The 1900 Letters Patent quoted, which established the State of New South Wales, are a modified form of the original definition of the boundaries of New South Wales laid down in Governor Phillip's Commission of 1787 (proclaimed 1788) hence the inclusion of the mysterious phrase "including all the islands adjacent in the Pacific Ocean".

This phrase was designed to include Tahiti, Fiji, New Zealand and all the islands of the South Pacific in the Territory of New South Wales, and provides the basis for Australia's claim of Norfolk Island and the Coral Sea Islands.

In 1788 all these islands were claimed by Spain as part of the domain of the Viceroy of Peru, and more particularly of the Captaincy General of Chile (who in 1788 was Ambrosio O'Higgins, the father of the Liberator). Indeed, Spain's claim extended as far as Longitude 135 E, a boundary which was ultimately based on the Treaty of Saragossa (1529) between Spain and Portugal. This boundary had been recognised by the Dutch in the Treaty of Goa (1661), when they succeeded to the Portuguese empire in the East Indies. This meridian formed the western boundary of New South Wales in Phillip's Commission.

The territorial claim embodied in Phillip's Commission was therefore clearly aimed against Spain: New South Wales was carved out of territory which belonged in international law to the Captaincy-General of Chile.

By the Treaty of Versailles of 1763, Britain renewed the Treaty of Paris of 1763, which renewed the Peace of Utrecht of 1713, which renewed the Treaty of Madrid of 1670, in which Britain and Spain had agreed to recognise each other's existing imperial claims i.e. Britain was to have title to the eastern seaboard of North America, while



Letter published in the newspaper, The Canberra Times, Saturday 4 November 1978.

*Spain was to have the rest of North America, Central and South America, and the "South Sea and adjacent coasts and islands", as far westward as the Moluccas and the Philippines, and including Terra Australis.*

*Britain's proclamation of the Territory of New South Wales in 1788 was there for in breach of the treaty with Spain signed just five years before, and ipso facto, in breach of international law. The British settlement of New South Wales was illegal.*

*Consequently, all subsequent British legal instruments regarding Australia were illegal, including the Constitution of Australia Act 1900, and consequently, Eastern Australia reverts to its true constitutional position as part of the Republic of Chile, the successor State to the Captaincy-General of Chile of 1788.*

*Public servant  
Canberra<sup>35</sup>*

This seems to have been the last resource used by Spain to leave historical evidence of its sovereignty over Australia. Grassby continues with his analysis saying that when Spain had knowledge of the settlement of colonies in Port Jackson and Botany Bay, the Spanish ambassador in London, Bernardo del Campo, between April and December 1788, presented several claims of protest to the crown and to the British government.

These compelling affirmations published in *The Canberra Times* took me to Chile in October 2004 to investigate their veracity, specifically, if Chile had news documented of the allocation of the eastern part of Australia to the Captaincy-General, in the time of Don Ambrosio O'Higgins.

I worked diligently for two and a half months, in various libraries and national archives, and had conversations with distinguished and documented Chilean historians, whose specialties covered the colonial period of Chile. The access to institutions and people was facilitated by Mrs Clara Budnik Sinay, Director-General of Libraries, Archives and Museums,

35 Letter to the Editor, *The Canberra Times*, 4 November 1978, p. 2.

who granted me a researcher's pass that facilitated my task enormously, especially in obtaining documents from the national archives.

My first meeting was with historian Jose Bengoa, Professor of History at the University of Chile and the Catholic University of Chile, who advised me on how to go about my research. Professor Alexander Witker Velasquez, Doctor in History and ex-Professor of the University of Concepción and Autónoma University of Mexico in the city of Chillán; and Jorge Pinto Rodriguez from the University La Frontera of Temuco, one of the greatest experts in Chilean colonial history, also provided assistance. In addition, I had the opportunity and privilege of attending the Fourth Meeting of Colonial History between 23 and 25 November 2004, organised by the Faculty of Humanities and Education of the Andrés Bello University. There I spoke to Sergio Villalobos, Professor of History of the University of Chile, and with two Spanish professors, Jose Galician Andrés and Dr Mario Hernandez Sanchez-Barba, who had been invited to this event.

With each of them I discussed my preoccupation with the information contained in the article published in *The Canberra Times*. No one knew of any records or files on this matter, except for the general knowledge of the origin of the name of Australia; the Spanish participation in its origin; and the continuous navigation of the Spanish in the South Pacific during the period in question.

In the matter of research, I reviewed thoroughly historical works of the era of the government of Don Ambrosio O'Higgins in the historical texts of Barros Arana, Vicuña Mackena and Francisco Encina, at great length. I read the best Chilean work published on the life and work of Ambrosio O'Higgins (Marquess de Osorno de Ricardo Donoso) very thoroughly; and I reviewed the historical archives of Jose Toribio Medina, Vicuña Mackena, Morla Vicuña and the Archives of Indians and documents of the Real Audencia (Court of Appeal).

None of these documents recorded the claims of the letter, document or edict, received by the King of Spain, Carlos IV (1788–1808) or top civilian employees of the crown, who have given to the Captaincy-General of Chile, the eastern

part of Australia. Curiously, when talking about Australia, the documents called it “New Holland”, an expression used by the colonial authorities of Australia when they wrote to the metropolis. The first governors and colonial authorities spoke indistinctly of New South Wales and New Holland. The name “Australia” was imposed in 1824. It has been used officially ever since.

Having not found the antecedents looked for does not mean that they do not exist. They could still be in the hands of Spain, as at the time Chile achieved independence, the civil employees of the Spanish colonial power gathered the documentation and sent it back to Spain. The majority of colonial archives that still exist are copies of the original manuscripts held in Spain. A vast amount of documents in the possession of the National Archives of Chile today are in microfilm, copied and transferred to Chile by historians or public notaries—many of which display great deficiencies in their writing and are practicably illegible. These historians or public notaries only copied those that specifically interested them for the purpose of their own research. Australia, and the controversy between Great Britain and Spain, surely was not of interest to their investigations. Therefore, there is still the opportunity for further research, as the door has not been closed.

## **The definitive adoption of the name “Australia”**

The colonial authorities of Australia, in their writings and official notices to London, commonly used the names “New South Wales” and “New Holland” to refer to colonised lands, as has been previously stated. Initially, explorer Matthew Flinders named the zone “Terra Australis”, which was a form of the original name of the legend that had been forged by European cartographers, before the arrival of the Spanish. The Dutch, in their writings and documents of their own central government, use the expression “Nova Hollandicus” or “New Holland”.

Flinders returned to name this land “Australia”, specifically in the map drawn up in 1804, while he was in Mauritius as a prisoner of the French. When he returned to England and published his work in 1814, he was forced by the British Admiralty to change the name and to return to using “Terra Australis”. Flinders insisted on its name and the Governor of New South Wales, Lachlan Macquarie, supported the idea of the name “Australia” and he used it in his messages to England. In 1824 the British Admiralty finally accepted that the continent had to be officially called Australia.<sup>36</sup>

Great Britain did not formally demand the western part of Australia until 1829. Little by little, they formed new independent colonies in New South Wales; Van Diemen’s land, today Tasmania (1825); Australia Meridional, or South Australia (1836); Victoria (1851); and Queensland (1859). The Northern Territory was founded as part of the province of South Australia; and Canberra, the Territory of the Federal Capital, was founded in 1901, when it was agreed that the capital would be established outside of Melbourne or Sydney.<sup>37</sup>

Spain, in spite of having lost its right to sovereignty of Australia, in the matter of right, maintained and still maintains it in its original records. Spanish encyclopedias, scholastic and university texts express with conviction that this occurred. An example of this is the following affirmation:

*In 1606 (referring to Australia) the Spanish explored those seas and gave to the great island the name “Australia” in honour of the house of Austria, that reigned in Spain.*<sup>38</sup>

The role of Spain is important to the history of Australia. Spain will have to provide, with greater exactitude, the documents and legal material of its dispute with England on the contentious issue of the sovereignty of Australia. It will be necessary to propose to the Spanish academics the search and publication of these documents, should they exist. Australian

36 The Grolier Society of Australia, *The Australian Encyclopedia*, Volume IV, p. 109.

37 *Wikipedia*, Spanish edition, <http://www.wikipedia.org>, 2001.

38 Dictionary, Manuel Sopena, *Illustrated Encyclopedia*, Tomo I, Editorial Ramón Sopena, SA Barcelona, 1962, p. 281.

university professors, fluent in the language of Cervantes, could, in different Australian universities, contribute to it through joint equipment that guarantees the authenticity of documents at issue. Surely, in the archives of the Naval Museum of Madrid or the Archives of the Indias, in Seville, the answers could be found, as the debate has not yet ended.

Spain must provide, with the complete texts, the indicated treaties that have been signed, not only by the United Kingdom, but also by all the colonial powers of the era, since the only one that exists in Australia (in the National Library) is the Treaty of Zaragoza, which is written in Latin. In addition, the legal documents presented in the Court of Europe, at the end of 1788 and the beginning of 1789, claiming the sovereignty of Australia and the verdict that it gave.

To reach favourable conclusions it would be possible to recover or vindicate the historical truth; to introduce it into Australian scholastic texts; and to impel, in a collective form, the change of the national day of Australia from the 26th of January, the date of the beginning of colonisation in the state of New South Wales, to the 14th of May, the date in which the country was given the name "Australia". A result of this change would help to attenuate the devastating pain that was caused by the process of colonisation between the original settlements. In addition, this would quieten the other Australian states; being born as independent colonies, they had to accept the date of commemoration, from process of colonisation of the state of New South Wales.

To conclude this monograph, I emphasise that it is only possible for me to try to connect the diverse pieces that the puzzle has to offer and to present them for future investigation. Each historian that has delved into this subject will maintain his own conclusions; but history, like social science, allows room for diverse interpretations and deductions.



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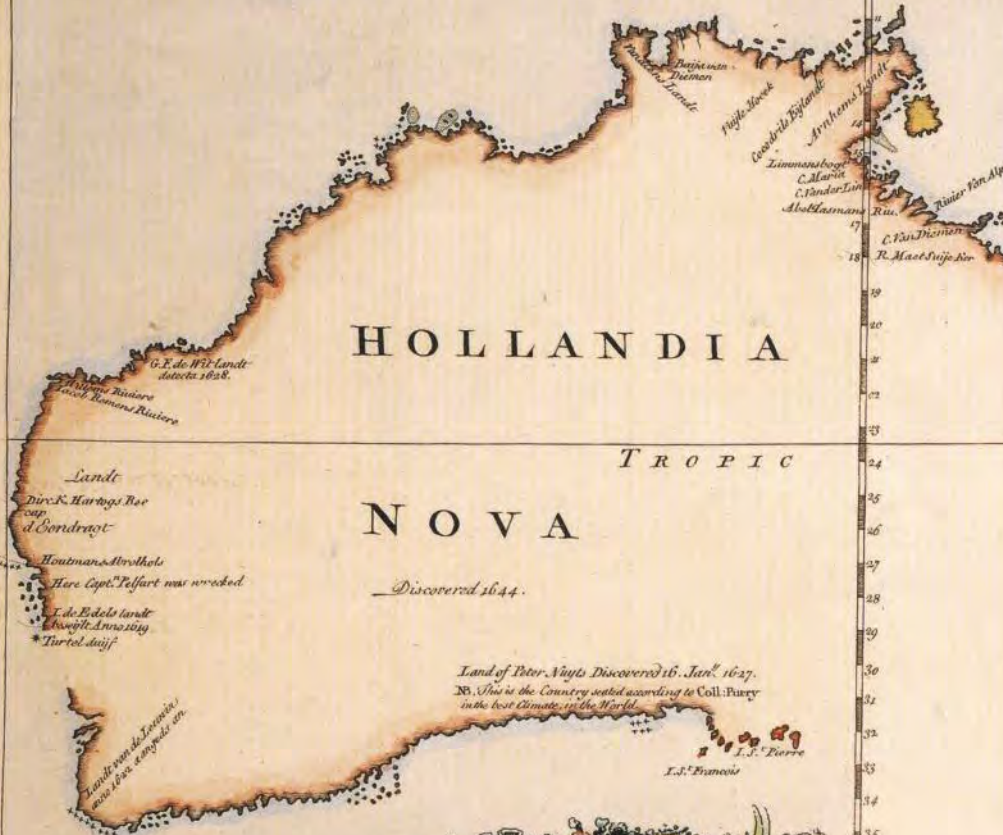
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HOLLANDIA

TROPIC

NOVA

— Discovered 1644. —

Land of Peter Nyts Discovered 16. Jan<sup>o</sup> 1647.  
N. This is the Country noted according to Coll. Pury  
in the best Climate of the World.

L.S.<sup>o</sup> Francoix

Landt  
Dir. K. Hartogs Bee  
cap. d. Condract  
Houtman, Strouthol  
Here Capt. Tafhart was wrecked  
L. de Bekels landt  
Discovered Anno 1619  
\* Turtel drijf

Landt van de Tasmans  
vondt 6. Jan. 1642. an.



H. Blaeuw, Sculp.

