

PROLOGUE

This 7th teacher/parent manual in the Spiritual Syllabus Series deals with the human world – Social Studies. The subject is taught in 3 x 3-week main lessons per year; one each of Geography/history, Study of Man (Sociology), and World History. As well there are 3 middle lesson units; these share the ‘Discovery’ stream with Science (dealt with in other books). Discovery is one of 4 middle lesson streams, each with 3 units per year; the 3 Discovery strands are Physical World, Living World, and Human World. In Class 3 and 4, Social Studies and Science share equally with 3 Discovery units each. Social Science, with which this book deals, has 2 middles in Class 3, one in Class 4. Of course one would retrain from programming a Social Studies Main in the same 3-week bracket as a Social Studies middle.

The broad curriculum is to be regarded as a menu, from which the individual teacher chooses a particular ‘meal’ which suits both him/herself, and the child/ren. These syllabus suggestions are to be regarded as just that, suggestions. New initiatives, as long as they’re of value to the children, should continually arise from the soul of the creative teacher.

Social Studies awakens, before all else, the etheric or ‘life bodies’ of the children – their social faculties. These are expressed through the capacity to build meaningful relationships and community, all in the light of unfolding self-knowledge. The social skills, acquired through a comprehensive 12-year program, enable the child to both know, and be part of – The Lore of Life.

The most comprehensive Steiner Education curriculum ever published.

SOCIAL STUDIES - HEAD

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DISCOVERY - CHEST

See Logios for full Class 3 and 4 curriculum.

Full Primary Curriculum in my book *La Pleroma; Highschool in A Steiner High School?*

Full Programming details in *A Steiner Homeschool?*

MY FRIEND TERRA AUSTRALIS

The Living Land Stories

Living World – Class 3 – Middle Lesson

One of the greatest gifts Rudolf Steiner bestowed upon mankind (among many), was a creative, spirit-imbued education. This calls upon the teacher, in every possible circumstance, to transform dry concept to rich content.

A vital subject area which specially lends itself to an imaginative presentation is The Living Land; that which provides a specific dwelling place on the planet for the heaven-sent Spirit of the child – in this case the Living Land is the continent of Australia.

A middle or ‘heart’ lesson is devoted to this; one taught in the Discovery stream, that which cultivates the etheric faculties of the child. This is a corollary to both the Social and Natural Science main lessons. The Living Land, or Earth Stories, is Social more than Natural – but only just!

In telling the saga of the continent on which the child live, the human element must be paramount. After all, in the deepest understanding of Spiritual Science, Man, over vast eons of torturous descent into matter, actually created the Terra Firma on which s/he lives – and dies. Needless to say, an artistic interpretation is most appropriate in this potentially earth-bound lesson.

So stories for Class 3 is what The Living Land is all about – rather than turgid geophysical description; the emphasis in these cleverly transformed tales is, as usual, on the ‘Living’ element – the Land as Being.

This is further reinforced by scheduling the unit in the Living World strand of the Discovery stream, the 2nd,m that which appeals primarily to the *Feeling* life of the child. So it’s life, Life, Life, Life – a Living Land lesson taught in the Middle Lesson (Life), part of the Discovery stream (Life Body), in the Living World strand!

All this Life is further compounded by the lesson being taught in Class 3. In the Educational Zodiac (starting with Cancer in Class 1) these 9-year-olds are Virgo children.

In Ancient Greece, Virgo was recognized through the story of Persephone (‘sound of fire’); she who spends half her life – autumn and winter – in the Underworld. The other half she dances among the spring/summer flowers, enriching the natural world with her Life forces – with her unbounded muliebrity.

Mercury lives in the House of Virgo – Hermes (Roman Mercury) is the quintessential Life – form and movement – advocate of the Olympians.

Anyhow, it is on the golden river of Life that our 9-year-olds are introduced to their very own continent. Australia is of course unique in the world in this respect, being the only country that is at the same time a continent.

Australia was personified by your author, for his Glass 3, as The Awakening Giant. He was painted, in graphic images of joy and pain, through the medium of the serialized story. It is the tale of the birth and biography of this remarkable land on which we've been lucky (or smart) enough to find ourselves.

This is a Story of Place – better still, of *Sacred Place*; a concept about which we have a lot to learn from our co-stewards, the Australian Aborigines. The story went something like this:

THE AWAKENING GIANT

One, long, long ago, it could have been here, there or anywhere, a great Fire Giant rose out of the sea. He had been sound asleep in the depths for many eons, but now he was waking up. His name was Terra Australis, and he was very big and strong indeed!

Flames leapt from his huge head – even his hair was flaming! – and no-one dare approach him. He was so large, that even his fiery breath scorched far off lands if he turned in their direction. On his back, enormous mountains were uplifted, and erupted with terrific explosions, sending sheets of flame and searing heat high into the sky. Terra Australis sensed his own strength, and his dominion over all things around him – Terra Australis was almost awake.

A sleep soul, Thin Mist, rolled in from the sea. She was not really afraid of old Terra Australis – as everyone else was – because at the first touch of his fiery breath, she would soar skywards, higher and higher, where it was cold.

One up in the heights, Thin Mist would meet many of her friends; they would gather together in a great cloud-crowd to play, and that is what they were called, Cloud Crowd. They began to scatter big raindrops down onto Terra Australis' hot head. His fires hissed in anger, but the raindrops kept falling – and falling – and falling.

And so the fires of cranky old Terra Australis were gradually cooled, and his mood improved. Only a few complaining grumbles from dying volcanoes could be heard. The giant was now very, very wet; and he began to grow sleepy again.

Terra dreamed, perhaps of his half-forgotten deep-sea home. Sunny Sun, and his hosts, Warm Ray Sons, beamed down on his broad, wet back – that's when the Baby Greens appears. These plant shoots seemed to pop up everywhere, chattering away to each other. They were particularly fond of the wide swamplands which lay across much of the giant's back.

Baby Greens grew and grew, and soon they became the Feather Fern Family – others were the Tall Pines; and yet a 3rd group were Proud Palms. They were happy neighbors, and even old Terra didn't mind being drowsily awakened now and then with their cheery banter – he soon went to sleep again though. As well as gossip and such, there were secrets passed from one family to another; these were brought by those airy messengers, Gentle Breeze Brothers. Once when Terra Australis awoke, he was delighted to see that Sun Yellow and Water Blue had joined hands in a Garden Green. After that, his dreams were sweet indeed.

But far to the south, the beauty and happiness of all the folk dwelling in peace on Terra Australis, was beheld in envy by another giant – the cold and sullen Terra Antarctica – brother of Terra Australis; through hey hadn't seen each other for years! He lived with two hard-eyed sisters called White Ice and Driven Snow. These kept the giant under a frozen blanket of ice – and ignorance. One day his curiosity was roused about his brother, to the point where he shrugged off White Ice and Driven Snow, and journeyed north. The two sisters of course followed. He was surprised to see Terra Australis was no longer a fire giant, but one of tranquility.

Without sheets of flame to repel him, Terra Antarctica blew a frosty blast across the green back of his brother; with a little help from those frigid sisters, White Ice and Driven Snow. Happy Plant Families withered and groaned in anguish, holding stark arms up to the pitiless sky. Shallow Swamps froze over, and all was silent and white – so quiet indeed that Terra Australis didn't even wake up. Terra Antarctica now had dominion of all he surveyed.

Sunny Sun was displeased by what had occurred, and sent Warm Ray Sons down to comfort the now not-so-happy Family Greens. At these unwelcome solar intrusions, Terra Antarctica grew angry. All day long, with the help of the icy sisters, he battled the dancing Warm Ray Sons, until at evening, they flew away over the western horizon. He had, as usual, won the day.

However next morning, Warm Ray Sons had returned again from the east, and were as persistent as ever. Again the 3 chilly allies struggled all day to disperse the warming Sons of the Sun, those who gave new hope to all the Family Greens on the sleeping giant's back – and again they flew into the west at sunset. This happened day after day, with the Ray Sons returning each morning as invigorated as ever. At last the exhausted Terra Antarctica surrendered, and with White Ice and Driven snow, fled southward from whence they came. They are still there; every now and then a frosty breath still covers the high country in white.

Frost faded, Water Blue warmed, Sun Yellow shone, Gentle Breeze skipped lightly with lots of secrets for all the stirring Family greens – and Terra Australis smiled in his dreams. Soon his wide, generous back bore a garden of Plant Families again. But his time there were many more, some had sweet fruits not seen before; other were bedecked in perfumed flowers of every color of the rainbow. With these new plants, came many strange creatures – crawling, slithering, flying, swimming, or just plain running. The once-feared giant was home to a teeming botanical and zoological garden! Terra Australis dreamed anew, dreams filled with color, movement and sonorous sound. In his sleepy stirrings, he hoped that nothing would ever change – this indeed was Paradise. He might even be able to go back to sleep again!

But small black dots appeared on the western horizon, an ominous sign through some of the animals who had come from other lands, and knew the danger of – Man. The dots grew bigger, until soon, canoes of black-skinned humans could be seen. Terra Australis woke a little at this new, strange sound – human voices. Even though Plant Families hid the frightened animals, the new arrivals were skilled hunters. As well they had brought glowing fire embers with them in hollow logs. It has been a long time since the old giant had smelled smoke; he was waking more all the time.

The dark people used this fire weapon to flush the creatures, large and small, out of their hiding places – and Green Garden began to burn – and burn – and burn. Only the toughest and most fire-resistant Plant Families survived – on most areas of the giant's back that is – and their leaves became hard, and their fruits wooden. Even Sunny sun turned orange from the smoke of long lines of signal fires or ring burning, and called to old Terra to wake up, at least a little more.

New, harder Family Greens had largely replaced the old, softer kind; yet all seemed to be in order again to Terra Australis. He even grew rather fond of the dark-skinned humans – he especially liked the stories they would tell around their campfires at night. So time passed, until one rosy dawn, a great, white sea bird appeared out of the eat. It was all tied up with ropes – a prisoner bird? – but was swimming straight towards the giant. Even the Dark Folk lined the cliffs to watch this amazing sight; in the light of the rising sun,, they soon saw however that the bird was really a big canoe – very big!!

Soon the dark-skinned stewards of old Terra Australis saw that the big canoe carried a complement of gods; dressed in strange clothes they were, both splendid, in rich blues and blazing reds, or rags! Some even had black, shiny hard feet, other not. The gods of course conversed in a strange language, and most amazing of all, they had pale skins, like mother's milk!

Oh how the dark folk ran from the roar of the thunder sticks the pale gods carried; Terra Australis heard too as he woke with a start – who dared disturb his slumber!!? In time more pale skins came (they were not gods as originally thought, only humans, like them) in their 'ships'. The dark people began to seek refuge in the forest, as trouble seemed to follow in the new arrivals' wake.

Terra Australia was disgruntled by this intrusion into his otherwise near-perfect world, and refused to help the white folk who would make him their home. No edible fruits grew on him; his soil was hard-packed and bitter; his timber was hard; and he was either too hot, cold, wet or dry.

The besieged dark folk left the forest only to hunt the tame, hoofed animals that the whites had brought with them. Those people who chose to live in the strange shelters the 'English' built, soon lost both their culture, and their bush skills – this made the Awakening Giant very sad indeed; they were even forgetting *him*. The clatter of hard hooves and the ring of steel on hard wood had never been heard before, now it became a clamor over this wide, wide back. Terra Australis was waking up as never before.

The pale people battled hard to survive on the edges of the giant's back; they needed grasslands for their animals, and roads to travel along. To make way for all this 'progress', the timeless forests began to fall, and the harbors and shining rivers were now dirty and busy with 'white bird' traffic.

After the first simple shelters, sturdy stone building were erected, the first such structures Terra Australis had ever seen. But there was something even more strange than this to the bewildered giant; many pale ones wore chains on their arms and legs with the attendant iron balls, this made movement, especially running, very difficult. Strangest however was the fact

the strangers created building to lock themselves in, or the people in the rags and chains that is. Neither Terra Australis nor the dark folk had ever seen a human being bonded before, and they were sore amazed!

The dark people's food did not suit the new-comers, so they cut furrows along the back of the giant with steel blades – ploughing they called it. Terra liked this actually, regarding it as a kind of massage. After the rains, new plants sprouted from the furrows; they grew and grew until they burst forth in hitherto unseen – and delicious – leaves, flowers, fruits, and seeds. A new, rich garden grew on the back of the giant, one which tempered his earlier poor impression of the visitors. His dreams improved too among the new orchards, fields, flowers – and even quaint little towns. He still grieved for his dark friends' plight though.

Time passed... the giant has woken to the busy world of humanity, of all colors, black, white and every tincture between. He feels young again in his interest in all the newness spread across his generous back. Still he makes the task hard enough to discourage complacency; and build strength. He has also given up many of his secrets, some which have lain hidden since his birth, like the mineral riches under this sunbaked skin!

Sometimes he frowns when witless people do things that harm him; like poisoning his rivers of life, or choking his clear air with acrid smoke. The new folk brought the spirit of change with them; Terra Australis had known only inertia for so long, both culturally and naturally. He will be the first to tell you that change is life – all things considered, he's glad the strangers arrived in that pink dawn 200 odd years ago – but they've still got a lot to learn. Indeed he's happy to teach them – with the help of the forgiving dark folk. But first the new arrivals have to learn not just to hear – but to listen.

So that's his story, told I the 3rd person; but perhaps we should let the old Awakening Giant himself give his own point of view, and fill in some of the details the teacher might need – details which are then transformed into story and images that the children can digest. Much of this forms part of the 'discussion' part of the lesson; that which often takes place in an informal atmosphere when the children are writing out a poem, doing a painting of a scene from the story – or just basking in the after-image!

Hello Readers, Terra Australis here; Yes I'm happy to tell you of my Being, if you are of good will, heart and mind that is. You are? Good: Whence came I? Oh from a very long way back. I am the son of Pangaia – 'all earth'. I was nurtured in her deep womb until the time of my fiery birth. By the way, in the context of this short exposition, I can only sketch in the main events of my life. When telling my story to Class 3, a certain lavishness of detail and dramatic embellishment should be employed.

Anyway, I was one of 5 children; we were collectively called Gondwanaland (the 'Lemurian' – Mesozoic – period). We were very happy together, and very close, but like most families, we literally 'split up', and went our own ways. Terra Africa drifted west; Terra South America, east; Terra India went north – that is until he bumped into one of our northern cousins, the big fellow – Terra Asia!!

Boy was Terra India surprised when he ran into Terra Asia; here the original irresistible force met the immovable object – result? The Himalayas! Ha, ha, ha ... where was I? Oh yes, that solitary soul, Terra Antarctica, went as far north as he could – to the bottom of the world in fact! Oh we still have

contact, but he's a stranger one is Terra Antarctica – no wonder, his name means 'not the north'!

Mind you, way back then I was different from now; I was much softer, and very playful, like most children. My toys were earthquakes and mountain-forming volcanoes. When I solidified, to the consistency of soft clay anyway, I supported massive swamps where great dinosaurs wallowed and fought among my giant fern trees.

Sometimes Terra Antarctica came to visit (twice actually) with his legendary Ice Ages – The Atlantean geological period. I didn't really enjoy this, as a child I got used to a pretty high body temperature, and he was... well you can imagine! I repelled him both times though.

The demise of the leather-sided giants, known as 'The Great Dying', saw the beginning of my *warm-blooded* animals – still giants they were – Marsupials, huge savage creatures which rent my nights with their predatory roaring. Sometime in this period I had my first human visitation – the Aborigines.

The great debate rages about where they came from – the north? The west? Physically they came from the west, from the smoking ruins of ancient Lemuria, but spiritually – that which interests them more? Well they really came from the 5th Direction, *above* – or as they call it 'no direction'. They are fire people, just as I am a fire continent.

My hair, the endless fern swamps, gave way to a more complex coiffure; from sea to shining sea I was covered with rainforest. But the dark folk, being a fire people, soon 'subdued the earth' to use a Genesis term, and burned their way across my back. Over time they left only the more sclerotic plants as survivors of this sustained but re-creating pyro-program.

Thousands of years of burning transformed by soft rainforest (except for a few protected pockets) to the fire-resistant flora one finds all over my back today.

Mind you, the new settlers have even cleared most of the fire-hardened forests which were left, not to mention those pockets of irreplaceable rainforests. It was your Captain Cook who remarked in his log that there were small fires burning (in autumn) all the way up the coast. This was nothing compared with the conflagration following the arrival of his countrymen.

Many of my plants were so regularly exposed to fire that they can't germinate without it. Slow burning actually revivifies the land, destroying diseases even. You see, after a fire, there is a thick bed of mineral-rich ash left behind; this, combined with the rain that usually follows a fire, provides a perfect seed bed for the new generation of plants. Modern fire-prevention methods can even lead to native vegetation dying out.

When I was a nipper, I was very pyro-active indeed, but by the time the Aborigines arrived, I had settled down. The Dreamtime was their most cogent reality --- the Wander Stick their only compass in a bewildering physical world. We were both rudely awakened from our complacency by the arrival of you lot! First there was the ring of the steel axe – I had never even heard the sound of metal before.

Then I heard the hooves; all my by-now-subdued cuddly toy animals had padded feet – but the clip-clop of the hard hoof in its various forms was a shock indeed! And that include human hooves – boots!

I remember the first sensation of the plough, my skin had never been deliberately broken before. I didn't know at first whether I liked it or not; but if the plough is wielded as an artist does a brush, yes, ploughing is a pleasant back-scratching sensation.

Many before-and-after things that happened to me are marvelous subjects for classroom discussion; ask the children how I feel when a deep hole is frilled into my body, and an atomic bomb exploded – how would *you* feel!? Indeed the 9-years-old's sense of responsibility to the earth in general, and me in particular, begins here by regarding geographical phenomena as Beings, rather than things. Adults' deeds in the world will still be monitored by the heart, if as children they agonized and exalted with me.

In fact focus should be given to debate on each of my five main senses; this can be a salutary learning experience: What do I like to look at for instance? Sprawling suburbs? Not likely – but beautiful paintings, you bet! There was nothing like that before the white man came. And sounds; I just hate machinery – the cacophony of mechanical noise is making my very ether tremble in pain, with dire consequences I warn you. But the sound of lovely music actually reminds me of my own divine origins. I think you get the 'senses' idea.

I am very misunderstood, regarded as just a lump of rock by the materialists among you. I am 4-fold in physicality, just as you are. Both mine and your oldest organization is the Heat Body. You have a temperature pattern and so do I – the 1st of the 4 Elements, warmth.

In general your heat center is your head – and you have cold feet. I'm very similar really, my fold feet are in my south-east corner of the continent, from the Snowy Mountains to Tasmania. My head is the opposite, the north-west, centered on that oven of a place, Marble Bar, the hottest town in Australia.

So my temperature axis is north-west/south-east. In geo-spiritual terms, this diagonal is known as the Michaelian Line, a Will line (the will is a heat entity). Michael is the Archangel of the Physical Body, or in its metaphysical expression, the Will.

And you think you're the only ones that breathe do you – to have the Air Element? Well I've got a rhythmic system too; in summer my Red Center heats up, creating massive updrafts. This skyward spiral of air creates a prevailing low-pressure system, or suction, over much of my back.

This vacuum draws on-shore winds to me from the surrounding cool oceans; 5 main winds in fact (more of this can be read in the article Australian Maritime Discovery). In autumn there is a hiatus of a sort, as the winds turn seaward again, leading to offshore winter winds caused by a sustained high pressure (pushing) system. This is caused by heavy, cold stratospheric air sinking overnight to ground level over the desert. In spring there is again the chaos of change, as the winds turn landward again.

So both your and my breath is 4-fold: in (summer) – pause (autumn) – out (winter) – pause (spring) – in ... and so on. Yours takes a few seconds, mine a whole year!

I also have a metabolic – Water Element – system like you as well. The area of greatest rainfall, hence containing the largest river (vascular) systems, is my South-east Crescent. This stretches, in a liberal sense, from Central Queensland to Adelaide. Indeed this region takes the lunar shape of the astral, as your nicely rounded tummy does!

ON offence! This is of course the breadbasket (another astral shape) of the country, and for much of the world – with my huge wheat, fruit, sugar and meat, etc. exports.

The 4th principle is that of the Mineral Element; even the materialists acknowledge my skeleton – the major visual feature being my spine. This is the Great Dividing Range, stretching from Cape York right down my east coast to the Snowy Mountains – and beyond. So we see concordance between the human being and myself, a continent; with both having a temperature, air, water and mineral nature. We're not so different after all!

My word, how I've gone on; it's time you went to class. After all, it's not for your benefit I'm telling you all this, but for your eager 9-year-olds; those who find no problem with my Being-ness. But remember, as one of the 7 Terra Brothers, I'm pretty well omniscient, so I'll be listening to everything you say. I, like the children, can't endure mundanity or pedestrianism, something you so-called technically-advanced people brought to my shores in scads (like T.V. worship). But luckily you also brought something to counteract this cultural ennui, Rudolf Steiner's pedagogic impulse – remember that one, 'a creative, spirit-imbued education'!?