

timeout

Top artist draws growing global conclusions

Jeff Ogrisseg
SPECIAL TO THE JAPAN TIMES

Neal Adams became a cult star as a graphic artist with DC and Marvel comics during the late 1960s and '70s through his work on series such as "The Spectre," "Batman," "Superman" and "Green Lantern" — and also his contributions, at Marvel, to "X-Men" and "Conan the Barbarian."

Since then Adams, now 68, has — in between designing high-tech theme-park rides — brought his vision to bear in the world of cinema. He resurrected the old campy Batman, turning him into today's Dark Knight, and brought "X-Men" to the big screen. He will also be among the first people to thank when animatics-charged "motion" comics appear in the near future.

But what really consumes Adams these days is the way he's drawn to Growing Earth Theory — to the point where he's spent more than half a million dollars of his own money striving to contribute to the scientific debates. He has, through his Continuity Associates studio, produced more than a dozen video clips demonstrating expansion tectonics in

action all around our solar system that have been viewed by millions online.

Then there's "A Conversation Between Two Guys in a Bar or a New Model of the Universe," a graphic-novel-in-waiting in which Adams takes on mainstream science and accepted wisdoms about dinosaurs in tongue-and-cheek layman's terms.

Specifically, Adams has for more than a

Neal Adams challenges the scientific community to stop ignoring evidence of growth he cites here on Earth, across our solar system and in the universe

decade been the outspoken voice of Growing Earth Theory, openly challenging the scientific community to stop ignoring the evidence of growth he cites not only here on Earth and across our solar system, but in the universe as well.

In support of his case, Adams believes he may have identified the "missing mechanism" concerning the creation of new matter in the work of the late

Australian geologist Samuel W. Carey, the acknowledged father of modern expansion tectonics whose work he has been studying for almost 40 years.

"Nobody has ever disproved Sam Carey's work. . . . And the evidence coming in from our planetary missions shows that tectonic growth is happening all over," he said in a recent interview for

The Japan Times in New York.

While berating much of the scientific community — which he accuses of having become so specialized as to be unable or unwilling to examine challenging research from outside — he doesn't shrink from talking its language.

The "missing mechanism" he tells its members, and millions more through the Internet, is to be found in the phenomenon

known as subatomic pair production.

This cutting-edge concept describes a process in which an electron and positron are simultaneously created in the vicinity of a nucleus or subatomic particle. In more accessible language, it is thought to be an example of the materialization of energy as predicted by special relativity theory in the scientific realm of quantum electrodynamics.

"I'm upsetting all the apple carts," he said. "This really comes down to a new science. I'd like to sugarcoat it, but I can't. Most of what we know or assume to know is wrong one way or another. That's kind of a kick in the ass to everyone, isn't it?"

He added that, "What surprises me is that people do not want to talk reasonably about this in any way."

"It won't change our moral beliefs, but it will totally change our view of the universe. It won't help us find more oil, but it will guarantee that we have more than enough oil while we change over to hydrogen power," he said.

To find out more about Neal Adams' work, visit <http://www.nealadams.com/nmu.html>



Geology's Dark Knight: Famed graphic artist Neal Adams holds a homemade paleoglobe showing how tightly Earth's continents fit together on a smaller sphere. HANAKO HORIBE

Dogmas may blinker scientific thinking

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crust being pushed — or "subducted," as they termed it — under another.

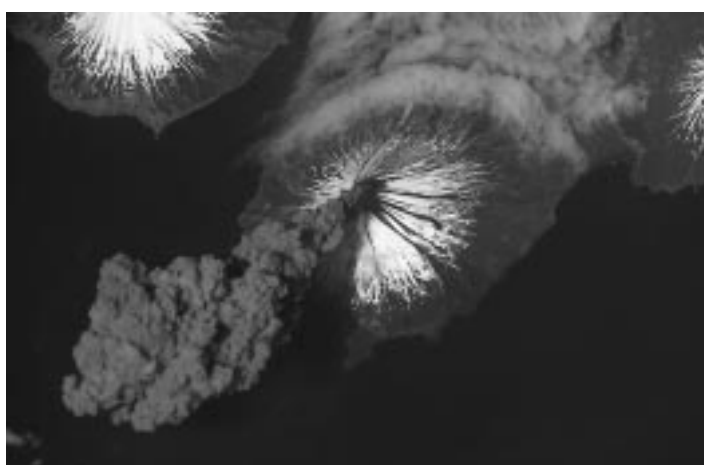
Armed with this new perspective, advocates of both continental drift and plate tectonics theories could now explain the relatively young age of the crusts forming oceanic floors as being the result of subduction.

From there it was but a short step to hypothesize that older basaltic crust underlying the oceans was either being swallowed by oceanic trenches or pushed beneath another plate, Wadati-Benioff style — and then "recycled" back through the magma to the oceanic rifts in a fashion resembling a conveyor belt.

But to cover all the bases in cases where neither of the above are happening, Plate Tectonics Theory allows for denser but thinner oceanic crust 8 km to 10 km thick to somehow be part of the same plate as the ancient, granite continental land masses up to 100 km thick. And, on some of the theory's delineated borders, such as that between the African and Eurasian plates, it's even OK for no tectonic markings to appear at all.

In short, it does seem the theory appears to make exceptions to fit each situation.

Back in Australia, meanwhile, Carey had initially supported the Theory of Continental Drift and set out to prove it. But his search for answers only led to more questions. Finally, inspired by Hilgenberg's work in Germany, and a



Smoke signal: This image taken from the International Space Station on May 23, 2006, shows ash rising from the erupting Cleveland Volcano in Alaska. Acceptance of Growing Earth Theory would transform understanding of such events' causes and effects. AFP-JIJI

growing list of similarities found in geological structures now separated by oceans, he eventually became a foremost advocate of Growing Earth Theory.

But Carey was far from alone in his scientific stance. Among his contemporaries was East German engineer Klaus Vogel, who in 1977 recreated a smaller pancontinental globe without oceans inside a transparent globe of the Earth as it now is, and Dr. Ken Perry of Wyoming, whose computer models corroborated expansion tectonics with geometrical precision.

Carey's downfall, though, was that — like Wegener in the early 20th century — he was not a physicist and so could not propose a mechanism that might cause what the geological record was telling him had happened. Then when subduction reared its head, Earth no longer had a need to be growing.

In late 1993, Carey symbolically handed off the baton in a letter to Australian geologist James Maxlow, whose draft manuscript on Growing Earth Theory, Carey said, "would satisfy the most hostile examiner."

That hasn't exactly been the case, but

Maxlow has remained an active force, disseminating research findings and various compelling evidence through books, papers and seminars in the face of continuing disdain — based on precious little scientific evidence — from mainstream scientists.

Undeterred, Maxlow continues to maintain that the difference between Growing Earth Theory and Plate Tectonics Theory simply boils down to whether or not the presumed need for a constant Earth-radius premise is true or false.

"The problem that mainstream geology imagines is that expansion tectonics is a threat to their career, research programs, reputation, or at the very least a threat to their intelligence," said Maxlow by e-mail.

"An expanding Earth is perceived by mainstream literature as having been proven wrong, so why should they bother?"

Whether that's entirely the case or not, what certainly seems to be true is that rather than being pursued by the entire scientific community in a dedicated spirit of inquiry, research into how the Earth came to be the way it is now is tainted instead by dedications to dogma, whatever the exciting results of new research. (Jeff Ogrisseg)

Is Earth expanding now as ever?

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planet, it cracks and breaks and throws up mountain-range-size ripples such as today's Himalayas.

For 160 million years until 65 million years ago, dinosaurs were the dominant species and roamed this planet unhindered by oceans, often migrating much as birds do today, Growing Earth Theory posits. Indeed, fossil evidence of like dinosaur species continue to be found on multiple continents now separated by oceans too vast to traverse.

From the fossil record it has also been learned that the bones of dinosaurs had about the same density as animal bones do today, yet many dinosaurs were three or four times larger than any existing animals, yet were probably just as maneuverable. The reduced gravity on a smaller planet with less mass could well account for this, growing Earth theorists propose, as well as accounting for the significantly larger flora of that time.

And as for the mass extinction of the dinosaurs in geologically short order, the theory has it that because they were the dominant species for so long, as oceans

formed between the continents and climatic zones changed, their habitats and migratory life cycles were fatally disrupted. Moreover, the known decline of the dinosaurs coincides with the emergence of mammals, which both protect their eggs internally and will readily feed on those of other species (such as dinosaurs) left lying around. So the "terrible lizards" simply did not adapt fast enough as the Earth grew, and that is what killed them off — not some CG-like impact from outer space.

There it is. We are growing from the seams as new crust is added at the undersea volcanic ridges. No need for giant rocks from outer space, runaway continents or credulity-straining subduction zones to consume and recycle epic masses of material.

But if you remain skeptical, or just plain dogmatic, about Plate Tectonics Theory, the crustal-age map produced in 1996 by the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may yet tip the balance. The colored bars on the map that are in the ocean areas represent various ages of the crust, as measured by what's called radiometric dating of electromagnetic

radioactivity in the rocks.

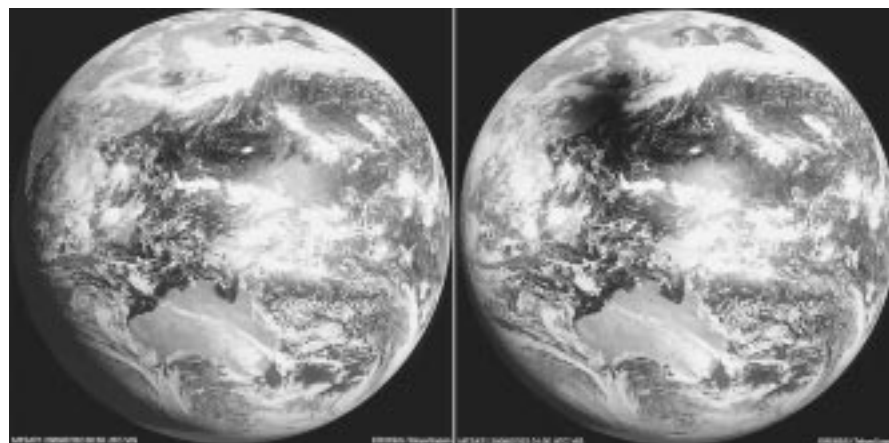
For clarity, this rainbow of color has been further graduated down into segments of 10 million years. The pink and red areas in the very middle are the most recent additions to the Earth's surface; the yellows, greens and then blues near the continental shelves represent the oldest.

The data was originally compiled — paradoxically, to back up plate tectonics theory — because geologists and paleontologists could not find fossils in the deep oceans older than 70 million years.

For those deft at visualizing 3D processes, working backward in time, progressively remove each age stripe on the map in your mind and close up the empty space to see our planet as Growing Earth Theory sees it back through the eons. Alternatively, simply cut up a world map and then reassemble the pieces on a smaller-size ball or globe.

Few theories are without their flaws, but Growing Earth Theory certainly has a way of growing on you.

Jeff Ogrisseg is a Tokyo-based journalist with an abiding interest in Earth sciences.



States of flux: July 22, 2009, eclipse images from the Japanese geostationary satellite MTSAT show the Earth at 8:30 a.m. local time in Taiwan (far left) and an hour later (left), near the time in eastern China when the moon's disk completely overlapped the disk of the sun. It is not known how future growth of the Earth — and its moon — will affect this phenomenon. AFP-JIJI

COUNTERPOINT

Ozawa's sermon hardly befitted the spirit of the mount he chose

Roger Pulvers
SPECIAL TO THE JAPAN TIMES

On Nov. 10, Ichiro Ozawa, secretary general of the ruling Democratic Party of Japan, dropped a bombshell in a speech he made atop one of Japan's most sacred mountains, Mount Koya, in Wakayama Prefecture.

The temple on that mount was founded in the ninth century by the great monk Kūkai (774-835), who was buried there. The doctrines of the Shingon (True Word) school of Buddhism he established, though known for their asceticism, are also notable for their tolerance and benevolence.

In his speech there, however, Ozawa saw fit to declare that Christianity was "a self-righteous religion that excluded other religions." Islam was somewhat better, he claimed, but "it too excludes other religions." Unsurprisingly, given the setting, he had fulsome praise for Buddhism, which he deemed "magnanimous."

The fallout was immediate. The Nihon Kirisutokyo Rengokai (Japan Christian Federation of Churches) issued a protest the very next day that branded Ozawa's comments as exhibiting "a one-sided understanding (of Christianity)."

Vociferous objections were also heard from people in the West, not least in the Readers in Council letters section of The Japan Times, criticizing Ozawa for prejudice and for overlooking some allegedly mean-spirited aspects of Buddhism.

But what are we to understand from Ozawa's pronouncement from on high — and how does it illuminate the Japanese outlook on faith?

Firstly, though, a not insignificant semantic observation.

Ozawa's remarks were subtly mistranslated in the English-language media coverage, which rendered the Japanese word *haitateki* that he used as "exclusive." While not technically incorrect, this gives the impression that he was labeling Christianity and, to a lesser extent, Islam, as considering themselves to be faiths above others — in some sense the holiest of the holy.

Certainly, there are adherents to all religions who think "theirs" is the best — far too many, if you ask me. But to give him his due, Ozawa was casting no such barbed aspersions at the world's two most popular religions. In the Japanese nuance undoubtedly understood by his audience, in fact, he was stating his belief that those two religions were "not able to encompass" other religions. On

the other hand, according to him, Buddhism is an inclusive religion as its fundaments of faith do not exclude those holding other religious beliefs, too.

As for the comment about Christianity being "self-righteous," if this means that many Christians see themselves occupying the world's moral high ground, then it doesn't seem to me to be such a radical overstatement. More than a few fistfuls of politicians from so-called Christian countries have claimed and now claim the moral high ground for their homelands, and many have justified policy by employing some biblical reference.

Here's another nit to pick with the pronouncement's translation in the English-language media.

Ozawa was quoted as saying that "European and American societies are at a dead end." The word he used was *ikizumatteiru*, which is closer in English meaning to "being deadlocked" or "at an impasse." This leaves room for them to extricate themselves — if not, I would presume, by converting to Buddhism. "Dead end" is too strong, too unforgiving for the Japanese original.

Nuances apart, however, can it be true that "Islam could be ideal, Christianity may be cool, but Buddhism is better"?

It is true that devout Buddhists generally withheld support for Japan's 15-year era of brutal militarism across the Asia-Pacific region that ended in August 1945. In fact, their support, when it came at all, was largely engineered through a Buddhist establishment that was both suppressed and tightly controlled.

Shinto, however, was used as the legitimizing spiritual basis for Japan's aggressive empire building. Shinto ritual was evoked to give Japan's militarism a kind of spiritual endorsement — just as Christianity, Islam and Judaism have been and are being used to justify some nations' transgressions on the territories of others.

This former identification of Shinto with the warlike state remains potent in the national memory. That is why there were protests on the recent occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Emperor's enthronement, since associated Shinto trappings smacked of that past religious endorsement of monarchical authority.

But there were Buddhist groups that were gung-ho for the empire, and Ozawa would do well to recall them. The mass organization Kokuchukai (National Pillar Association), affiliated with the proselytizing Nichiren Buddhist sect, preached all-out aggression — linking patriotism to piety and slipping Buddha,

as it were, into the backpacks of troops marching off to war.

Many people, intellectuals among them, fell for this type of "muscular" Buddhism that is intrinsically inimical to the true doctrine of that faith — much as warmongering is to the all-forgiving tenets of Christianity or to the value Islam places on human life.

I guess it just goes to show that, with any religion, there's many a slip between the gentle cup of peace and the coarse lips of assault.

Mainstream Japanese Buddhism has at its core a current of tolerance as, I believe, do all religions. Shinto, though, is not an ethical faith so much as a body of animistic philosophies and spiritual rituals that help Japanese people come to terms with the forces of nature. You often see a Buddhist altar in a Shinto shrine; but I have never seen a crucifix in a synagogue, or a copy of the Torah in a mosque. This does not make one religion better than the other, but it does explain what Ozawa meant by the adjective *haitateki* — in terms of Christianity "excluding other religions."

And what about his remark that European and American societies are at an impasse?

Well, this sounds eminently appropriate as a description of where

American and some European societies stand today: deadlocked, damned if they do change and damned if they don't. I would, however, include Japan in the category of deadlocked states — and indeed Ozawa identified the half-century of rule by the recently ousted Liberal Democratic Party as having brought Japan to just such an impasse. Yet can three months of DPJ rule already have dragged Japan out of that gloomy plight and into the light? God forbid that Japan, with its more "magnanimous" spiritual base, would be found in the company of other more "self-righteous" nations.

The above discussion of Japanese people's attitudes toward their faith and that of others in no way comprises a defense of the secretary general of the DPJ in his new-found elevation within the nation's ruling party — glory such as he has sought over his 40-year Diet stint as a member of more than one party. After all, if his remark comparing Buddhism with other religions does not itself demonstrate self-righteousness, then I don't know what does.

But what's new about shallow generalities issuing from the lips of politicians the world over? And if Ozawa was seeking the vote of heaven by pontificating in the holy precincts of Mount Koya, at least he went to the right place.