

NEWSLETTER

New Concepts In Global Tectonics

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FROM THE EDITOR

See facts as they are, precisely and comprehensively

The above title was the maxim I was taught by my then supervisor Prof. Masao MINATO during my tenure at the graduate school of Hokkaido University, Sapporo, Japan. Other ones I repeatedly heard were, "Field is the mother of geology", and "History is always fair in the end".

The reason I am raising the above title here is that the current geological establishments are following the exact opposite approach. This was one of the reasons for forming the NCGT group. The establishments don't want to take a simple, self-evident, mounting data set as fact. They use the data only when they purportedly fit their models, and otherwise neglect them. Naturally the establishments don't need to delve into the details of the data. They never try to examine the data to see whether they fit other possible interpretations or models. The single, accepted, grand geophysical model is enough for them, because they believe it has been proved beyond doubt. They feel no need to learn about other possible geodynamic models even though they explain the data better. It seems we are living in the world of belief, almost on the level of religion embedded in arrogance, not science.

Whenever I read well-circulated geological journals at libraries in Canberra, I always encounter numerous plate tectonic papers. I often send back issues of our Newsletter to the authors of the papers by e-mail. But most of them don't respond; they prefer to remain silent than to engage in scientific debate with us. Obviously they don't want to know about or consider alternative ideas, perhaps because they fear their research funds would dry up if they took non-plate models seriously, or because they are worried about their jobs and future. I rarely receive replies, but when I do it is usually, "I still believe in plate tectonics despite its problems".

When one seriously examines vast amount of hard data as they are, precisely and comprehensively, on the basis of well-established geological, physical and chemical laws without being shackled by existing models, one can be creative. Creative ideas and hypotheses are essential to the geological sciences. We have to respect them and give them a fair hearing as long as they are supported by sound evidence. Because we are not perfect, and our scientific thoughts are constrained by availability and quality of data in each era in which we live, we have to be open minded and prepared to revise or even totally reject our own ideas in the future. Our current understanding about the Earth is still very limited and primitive. We don't know what lies beneath the basaltic layer in the oceans, only several kilometres from the ocean floor, let alone the real nature of the mantle and the core, even though human technology can now send space craft to other planets. We have to admit that all what we know about the Earth is far less
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