

J234-001

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A Consideration on Actualism, Uniformitarianism, Catastrophism: From a Case Study of Steno and Cuvier

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Recent consciousness about 'catastrophism' among geoscientists seems to be increasing because of their interest in the causes of mass extinction and climate change. The revisionism of the history of geology study has revealed some bias of the priority of uniformitarianism against catastrophism. Even in the historiography of post-war Japanese geoscience, dichotomy such as actualism vs. historicism is discussed.

The present paper examines the historical texts of Nicolaus Steno and George Cuvier, analyses elements of actualism, uniformitarianism and catastrophism in them, and discusses how we should use such terms appropriately to improve historical study and popularise geoscience.