Determination of the Age and Mortal Season of Wild Boars Excavated from
Ikawazu Site, Aichi Prefecture

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In the Jomon era, wild boar and deer were the Principle objects of hunting. As wild boar hunting was an important activity in the Jomon era, an explication of the actual conditions of this hunting is thought to be indispensable in terms of forming an understanding of the subsistence in the Jomon era and an overall image of the era itself. It thus became the object of this research to develop a method of determining the precise age and mortal season of the wild boar remains which were excavated. The following conclusions are based upon an examination of the eruption and wear pattern of the molar and annual cement layers of first molars from the lower jaw bones of modern wild boars.

In order to determine the age and the mortal season of the boars, a standard gradation of lower molar eruption was developed by the present wild specimens which were captured in winter. The age and mortal season of individual boar infants and young boars from birth to the third winter can be determined using this standard gradation of molar eruption. For mature boars which have passed their third winter, it is possible to determine the age and mortal season by examining the cement-formed annual layers of the roots of the first molar of the lower jaw. In the majority of specimens excavated from sites, the outermost layer of cement had become weathered making observation of the annual layers difficult. Although an approximate standard for the age of the individual could be gained by the wear condition of molars, this did not afford a precise determination of the age and mortal season of the boars.

An examination of the remains excavated at Ikawazu site in the latest Jomon period in Aichi Prefecture was carried out, based on the method for determination of age and mortal season put forward in this thesis. The classification of the data from the excavation based on the standard gradation of molar eruption showed a large amount of data which was not fit for the gradation of winter captures. From this it was seen that wild boars were being caught throughout the year at the Ikawazu site. It has previously been said that, in the Jomon era, the principle objects of hunting, deer and wild boar, were caught in the winter. Should the method be applied to the data from
other excavations, differences between eras and the characteristics of various locations on the hunting activity in the Jomon era might be understood.