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COMMON UPPER PALEOLITHIC HUMAN REMAINS — NEW CHALLENGES

*The digest discusses the key Upper Paleolithic paleoanthropological finds in the context of the recent studies: new dating, new archaeological attribution, genetic data. The authors identify three key problems of the Upper Paleolithic from the point of view of a biological anthropologist. First, the problem of the taxonomic rank of the Neanderthals and their role in the origin of the European Upper Paleolithic population. It is noted that the idea of transformation of *Homo neanderthalensis* into *Homo sapiens* develops into the idea of hybridization of *sapiens* and Neanderthals. The second problem is the origin of the “bearers” of symbiotic “transitional” cultures of the Upper Paleolithic. It is concluded that the virtual absence of human remains associated with these cultures makes it impossible for paleoanthropologists to answer the question of how the appearance of these people was formed. And thirdly, the authors consider the problem of the physical appearance of the inhabitants of Europe, makers of the first autochthonous Upper Paleolithic industry — Gravettian. It is shown that the craniological characteristics of the male crania of the Aurignacian and Gravettes cultures, against the background of summary data on European Upper Paleolithic crania, demonstrate the similarity of these groups, but, unfortunately, this similarity is not very convincing due to the small number of observations. Even though the questions formulated as problems do not find unambiguous answers, the arousal itself sets the direction for further research on Upper Paleolithic *Homo sapiens*.*

Keywords: *Upper Paleolithic, human evolution, *Homo neanderthalensis*, Neanderthals, Upper Paleolithic *sapiens*, *Homo sapiens*, *Homo heidelbergensis*, Gravettian*

For Citation: Gerasimova, M. M. and N. V. Kharlamova. 2022. Common Upper Paleolithic Human Remains — New Challenges. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 4: 352–371.

Author Info: **Gerasimova, Margarita M.** — Ph.D. in History, Leading Researcher, Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology RAS (Russian Federation, Moscow). E-mail: gerasimova.margarita@gmail.com ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4502-3586>

Kharlamova, Natalia V. — Ph.D. in History, Senior Researcher, Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology RAS (Russian Federation, Moscow). E-mail: natasha_kharlamova@iea.ras.ru ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9087-9490>

Funding: The study was carried out as a part of the research plan of the Russian Academy of Sciences N. N. Miklouho-Maklay Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology “The evolutionary continuum of the genus *Homo*”, Subtopic “Anthropology of Ancient and Modern Populations”.

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