

New Perspectives on the Krapina Frontal Sample and Supraorbital Change in Late Pleistocene South-Central Europe. JAMES C. M. AHERN, Dept. of Anthropology, Babcock Hall, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND 58202 USA.

The frontal bones from Krapina comprise one of the largest such samples from a single hominid site. Of the forty-eight specimens, six preserve large portions of the frontal, while the rest are fragmentary. Furthermore, the sample preserves a wide range of individuals.

As the earliest large hominid sample in south-central Europe, the Krapina remains are frequently compared with later Neandertals and modern humans in order to discern patterns of Late Pleistocene human evolution in the region. The frontals have played prominently in this endeavor. The late Neandertal frontals from Vindija Cave, Croatia appear to be transitional between the older frontals from Krapina and Upper Paleolithic post-Neandertals.

In this paper, I present a new interpretation of age and sex variation within the Krapina frontal sample and the implications of this variation for the pattern of late Pleistocene human evolution in south-central Europe. Patterns of age and sex variation were analyzed among a sample of recent humans using an all-paired ratios method combined with an analysis of distribution shape. This analysis indicates that the Krapina frontal sample is dominated by young adults and/or females. Adjusting for this finding, I then reanalyzed the metric patterns of frontal change among the Krapina, Vindija, and Upper Paleolithic samples. Even when sample bias is taken into consideration, evolution remains as the best explanation for the morphological differences between the Krapina and Vindija frontal samples.