



Universiteit  
Leiden  
The Netherlands

## Health and demography in late 19th century Kimberley : a palaeopathological assessment

Merwe, A.E. van der

### Citation

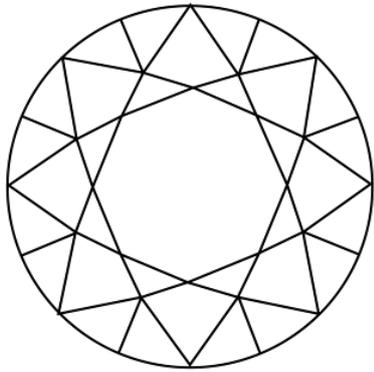
Merwe, A. E. van der. (2010, September 8). *Health and demography in late 19th century Kimberley : a palaeopathological assessment*. Barge's Anthropologica, Leiden. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/15931>

Version: Corrected Publisher's Version

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/15931>

**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).



**CHAPTER 9**

---

**The origins of late nineteenth-century migrant  
diamond miners uncovered in a salvage  
excavation in Kimberley, South Africa**

Modified from article accepted for publication as:

The origins of late nineteenth-century migrant diamond miners uncovered in a salvage  
excavation in Kimberley, South Africa

A.E. Van der Merwe, I. Ribot, D. Morris, M. Steyn, G.J.R. Maat

*South African Archaeological Bulletin*



**Individuals housed in the De Beers mine compound**

(McGregor Museum Kimberley Photography nr.4606)



**Cyclists with Kimberley mine shaft in background**

(McGregor Museum Kimberley Photography nr.5918)

## **Abstract**

The metric analysis of phenotypic variation observed in human skeletons is valuable for the determination of biological relatedness or ancestry, particularly when testing specific hypotheses concerning the possible ancestry of individuals from unmarked graves.

The purpose of this paper is to determine the possible ancestry of unknown individuals excavated from an area next to the fenced Gladstone Cemetery in Kimberley, South Africa, using cranio-morphometry. The skeletons are thought to be those of migrant diamond mine labourers who died between 1897 and 1900. Two historical statements will be tested: Firstly that black labourers came to work in Kimberley from various regions in Africa south of the equator and secondly that the local Khoe-San people did not participate in significant numbers as mine workers.

Standard craniometric measurements were taken from 59 well preserved male crania. These measurements were compared to craniometric data of eight modern and archaeological groups of males of known origin from Africa and Asia. Descriptive as well as univariate and multivariate statistical analyses were performed using SPSS. Eleven craniometric variables were selected for analysis.

Results obtained are in accord with the historical documents stating that the majority of labourers at the Kimberley mines were migrant workers and that the local communities (including Khoe-San) did not contribute much to the workforce. Many of the labourers came from elsewhere in southern Africa (e.g. Kwa-Zulu/Natal), but some may have originated from further afield. The heterogeneous nature of the sample reflects the varied origins of workers in Kimberley as well as some possible genetic admixture. This study reiterates the value of craniometric analyses as a tool to determine the probability of ancestry of unknown individuals when viewed in the light of contextual historical information.

## 9.1 Introduction

Phenotypic variation, as observed in human skeletons, and the metric analysis thereof can be a useful tool for the determination of biological relatedness or ancestry of unknown individuals, as they are highly correlated with the geographic origin as well as genetic characteristics of those being investigated (Relethford & Harpending, 2004; Roseman & Weaver, 2004; Pietrusewsky, 2008). Although morphological variation among population groups is continuous and does not reflect clear discontinuous groupings or ‘races’ in a strict sense, the craniometric investigation of unknown skeletons can still provide researchers with valuable information in terms of probabilities of the ancestry of individuals, when used in conjunction with available historical, archaeological or genetic information (Konigsberg *et al.*, 2009; Relethford, 2009). This method of investigation is particularly valuable when testing specific hypotheses that can help to trace back the possible origins of individuals from unmarked graves.

Two aspects should be kept in mind when investigating the possible biological affinities of unknown individuals based on their cranial morphology: firstly that the ‘real’ levels of population diversity present within a region for a specific period in time, although never precisely known, should be taken into consideration during interpretations, and secondly that ‘real’ levels of population diversity, as predicted by comparative data sets, are dependant on the sample size and nature of the comparative population samples. Despite these methodological difficulties inherent to morphometrical assessment as a tool for the determination of possible ancestry, studies of this kind on past and recent populations are possible (i.e. Franklin *et al.*, 2004; Morris & Ribot, 2006; Stynder, 2009). In fact, these studies prove to be especially valuable in the investigation of unknown population samples from the African continent since these population groups present with high levels of biological diversity and relatively large comparative data sets are available, especially in South Africa (i.e. Howells, 1996; Froment, 1992; Ribot, 2002-2004).

The purpose of this paper is to determine, as far as possible, the geographical origins of unknown individuals, whose graves were disturbed during the construction of a storm-water trench alongside the fenced Gladstone Cemetery in Kimberley, by assessing their cranio-morphometric dimensions. The skeletons are thought to be those of migrant diamond mine labourers who died between 1897 and 1900 (Van der Merwe, 2007, Van der Merwe *et al.*, in print).

The discovery of diamonds in the central interior of South Africa in the late 1860s sparked not only international interest, with thousands of hopeful diggers swarming to the diamond fields in pursuit of fortune, but also drew labour from African communities of the subcontinent and even beyond, as they moved to exploit the opportunities for material benefits. Describing *The Diamond Mines of South Africa*, De Beers Consolidated Mines general manager Gardner Williams recalled, “there [were] adventurers from the United States, Mexico, and South America; and white men from all the Colonies of South Africa [mingled] with...native Africans...[coming from] the Cape to the equator” (Williams, 1902:407).

Most of the labour in the Kimberley mines was provided by migrant black workers. Numbers fluctuated: in 1881 as many as 17 000 “African natives” were employed on the mines, this figure dropping back to some 11 000 in the late 1880s and to around 7000 to 8000 for the period represented by the Gladstone graves (Turrell, 1987:228). From the outset workers were bound by contract to work on the mines for fixed periods, usually for at least three months, after which they could return to their rural villages with their earnings. Labourers from more distant parts would often elect to remain for longer: from the 1880s some workers remained at the mines for up to 18 months or more (Turrell, 1987).

From the mid-1880s, black labourers were accommodated in closed compounds, where limited contact with the outside world was a measure for preventing illegal diamond trade as well as increasing company control over the workforce (Turrell, 1987; Worger, 1987). The compounds were intended to also provide labourers with food and accommodation, and workers’ medical needs were additionally taken care of in compound hospitals, in association with the Kimberley Hospital (Williams, 1987) – although, in reality, the compounds were overcrowded, the diet inadequate, and medical care deficient (Turrell, 1987:162). In the unfortunate event of death – in a context of notoriously high mortality rates – the black labourers were buried as paupers, wrapped in blankets, often in unmarked graves which could contain often more than one individual, in specified parts of local cemeteries. One of these was the Gladstone Cemetery in Kimberley (Swanepoel, 2004).

This study will attempt to test two statements emerging from historical records concerning the origins of the migrant labourers in Kimberley at the close of the nineteenth century. Firstly, where the documentary evidence of the time suggests that the “native Africans” coming to the Kimberley mines originated in various regions of Africa south of the equator (Williams, 1902:407; Turrell, 1987; Worger, 1987), this study seeks to

determine the broad geographical origin (within or outside of South Africa) represented by the remains of migrant labourers excavated alongside Kimberley's Gladstone Cemetery. Secondly, it will assess to what extent local Khoe-San communities also laboured on the mines and were accommodated in the compounds. Contemporary records suggest that they did not, in fact, participate in appreciable numbers in mining activities but, like the nearby Tlhaping and Rolong Tswana, engaged rather in supplying Kimberley with fresh produce and firewood (Kallaway, 1981; Worger, 1987).

It can be expected that the discovery of diamonds will have had a huge impact on communities living in Kimberley's hinterland, including people of Khoe-San ancestry, and on other African groups who migrated from more distant regions in response to the opportunities in Kimberley for wage labour (Worger, 1987). So far, little research has focused on the perspectives offered by the study of skeletal remains on these questions and the role of indigenous miners in late nineteenth-century Kimberley. This study contributes to the understanding of some of the dynamics of population movements at the time and the involvement of labourers of local origin.

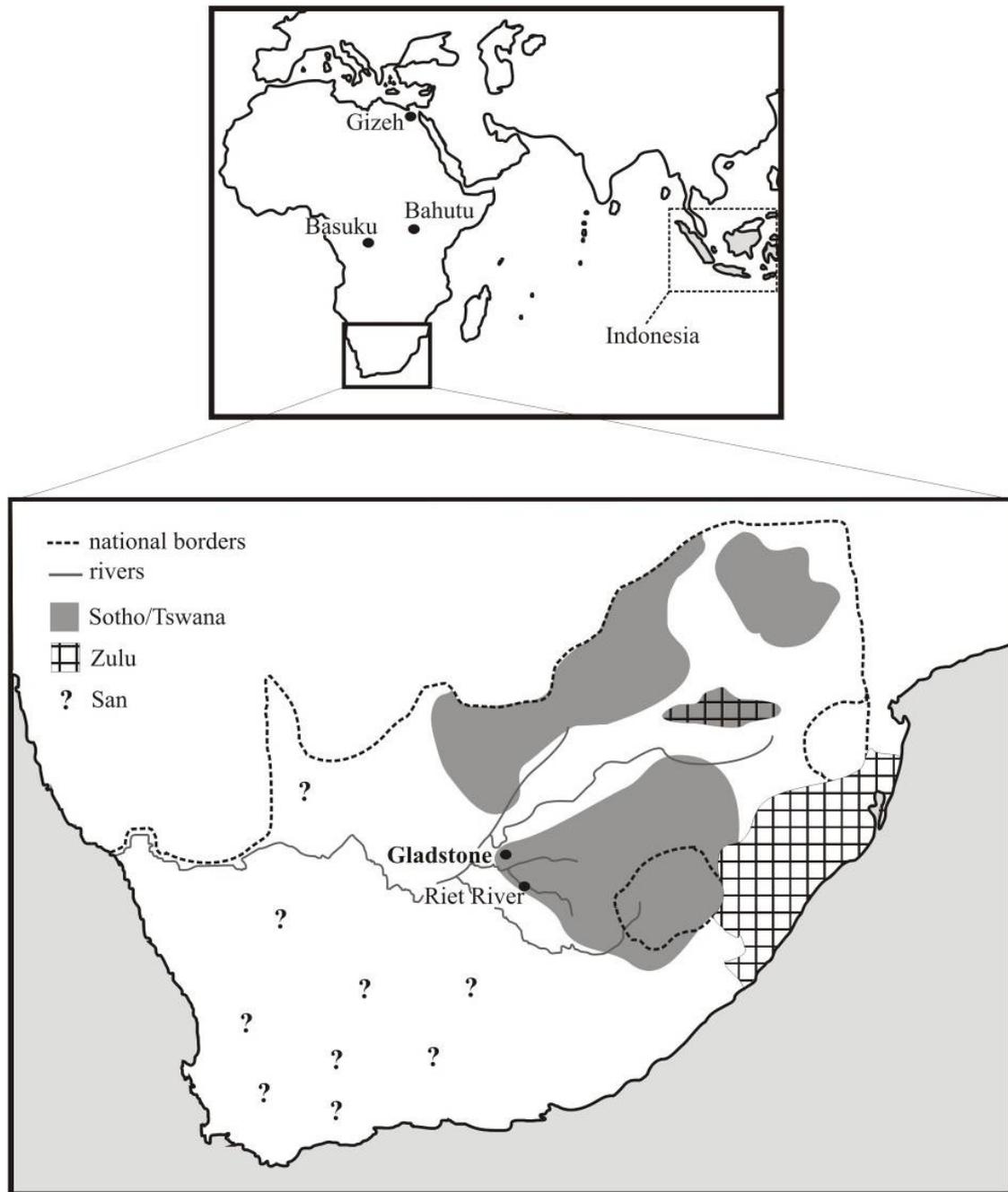
## **9.2 Materials and methods**

A total of 107 exceptionally well preserved skeletons, currently curated at the McGregor Museum in Kimberley, were excavated after unmarked graves had been accidentally intercepted by a trench alongside the fenced Gladstone Cemetery (Morris *et al.*, 2004). They comprise 86 males, 15 females and 6 individuals of unknown sex. The large number of males in the sample reflects the fact that most of the individuals under study were probably migrant labourers on the mines (Van der Merwe, 2007; Van der Merwe *et al.*, in print).

Due to the unequal sex distribution of this sample population a decision was made to include only male individuals in this study. Standard craniometric measurements were taken from 59 males (Knussman & Barlett, 1988). Unfortunately 27 (31%) had to be excluded from the study because of poor preservation of the necessary cranial landmarks (De Villiers, 1968; Howells, 1996).

In order to assess the possible population affinity of the well-preserved male crania from the Gladstone sample, craniometric data of eight modern and archaeological male groups of known origin, mainly from Africa and one from Asia, were used for comparative

purposes (Figure 9.1). They correspond to specific regions within Africa (N = 279) and one outside the continent (N = 53). The largest sample comes from South Africa (N = 152), and is represented by at least three modern ethnic groups (Sotho/Tswana, Zulu and various Khoe-San) (Table 9.1). The Sotho/Tswana and Zulu data correspond to sub-groups of Bantu-speakers living in the north eastern interior and the central parts of South Africa (De Villiers, 1968; Howells, 1996). The Khoe-San data correspond to two different samples: a



**Figure 9.1** Geographical distribution of study sample: Gladstone cemetery (Kimberley, RSA) and worldwide comparative groups (after Giles *et al.*, 1997 and Olson, 1996).

**Table 9.1** List of comparative male cranial series studied.

Region	n	Geographic or 'ethnic' origin	Country	Date	Reference
<b>Southern Africa</b>	31	Sotho/Tswana	South Africa	20 <sup>th</sup> c. AD	De Villiers 1968
	55	Zulu	South Africa	20 <sup>th</sup> c. AD	Howells 1996
	48	various San	Various	19 <sup>th</sup> - 20 <sup>th</sup> c. AD	Howells 1996
	18	Riet River, Orange River Valley (Khoe- San)	South Africa	11-19 <sup>th</sup> c. AD	Morris 1992
<b>Central Africa</b>	44	Basuku	Democratic Rep. Congo	20 <sup>th</sup> c. AD	Ribot 2003; 2004
<b>East Africa</b>	26	Bahutu	Rwanda	20 <sup>th</sup> c. AD	Ribot 2003; 2004
<b>North Africa</b>	57	Gizeh	Egypt	7 <sup>th</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> c. BC	Howells 1996
<b>Asia</b>	53	various	Indonesia	19 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> c. AD	Von Bonin 1931

n=number of individuals investigated

group of various modern San individuals originating from locations not very precisely documented (Howells, 1996); and an archaeological (eleventh to nineteenth centuries AD) population from the Riet River site in the Northern Cape Province (Maggs, 1971; Morris, 1992). People of Khoe-San descent made up a significant component of the indigenous population of the area around Kimberley. Also in Kimberley's near hinterland were Tswana groups including Rolong and Tlhaping. The Sotho/Tswana comparative sample also represents groups from further away, and the Zulu a yet more distant group expected to be present amongst migrants working in the Kimberley mines originating from regions within South Africa (eastern and northern areas including the coast).

Two other regions of sub-Saharan Africa are represented by data originating from two modern Bantu-speaking groups (N = 70), the Basuku from Central Africa (central region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo) and the Bahutu from East Africa (Rwanda) (Ribot, 2003, 2004). These two population samples represent possible migrant labourers

originating from more distant regions of sub-Saharan Africa, outside of South Africa itself. Two other comparative groups, originating from North Africa and Asia (N = 110), have been added, as it is known that people working on the Kimberley mines originated from a wide range of countries and every continent (Williams, 1902). Although no large Indian sample was available for statistical analysis, late dynastic Egyptian and modern Indonesian data were selected here to detect something of the potentially far wider range of possible geographical origins (Von Bonin, 1931; Howells, 1996). According to Howells (1996), Indian populations are extremely diverse craniometrically showing affinities with both Egyptians and various South Eastern Asians.

Statistical analyses were performed using SPSS (version 11.5), and all graphs were generated with SYSTAT (version 10.0). In order to maximize the sample size of the eight comparative groups, 11 craniometrical variables were selected (Table 9.2): cranial length (g-op), cranial breadth (eu-eu), basion-bregma height (ba-b), cranial base length (b-n), basion-prosthion length (b-pr), upper facial height (n-pr), nasal height (n-ns), nasal breadth (al-al), orbital breadth (obb), orbital height (obh) and bizygomatic breadth (zy-zy).

The whole sample was evaluated for normality (i.e. through stem-and-leaf displays) and descriptive data are presented in Appendix 4. Results obtained from craniometric analyses of the Gladstone crania were compared to the various other populations described above with both univariate and multivariate statistics.

One-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) were performed to assess the differences between various groups by testing the equality of group means. *Post hoc* multiple comparison tests (Scheffe's or Tamhane's tests) were also done in order to localize group differences and similarities. When Levene's test (for homogeneity of variance) was significant, Tamhane's test was used instead of Scheffe's test.

Multiple discriminant function analyses were performed (with sample sizes more or less equal), including a stepwise method and Mahalanobis distances ( $D^2$ ) as it serves as a basis for classifying unknown cases (such as those from Gladstone) into one of the defined groups (such as the eight comparative populations used in this study) (Pietruszewsky, 2008). The stepwise method was used to maximize group differentiation: variables were selected individually and evaluated in relation to all other variables to assess whether they meet the criteria of good discrimination between populations. A linear combination of independent variables was produced which corresponded to the best predictive model for population differences. Summarized classifications in percentages were obtained for each group as

well as for the unknown specimens. The largest posterior probabilities (based on discriminant scores) were used to provide an estimate regarding the likelihood of an unknown case belonging to a certain comparative group. In addition, the jackknifing method was used to cross-validate the final classification results (i.e. misclassified individuals were excluded to provide a less biased estimate of the misclassification rate). Finally, the degree of overlap and range of variation between the various groups was also assessed visually (i.e. plots of two functions with 95% confidence ellipse and centroid for each group).

In order to investigate the two statements made in historical documents regarding the population composition, two multivariate analyses were done: Analysis I included all data sets (groups within and outside of the African continent) in order to assess the possible multiple origins of individuals within the Gladstone sample population. Analysis II only included data from Africa (N = 322), in order to assess what proportion of the individuals in the Gladstone sample was of local Khoe-San origin.

Analysis I was conducted using only seven variables (instead of all 11 selected initially). Four measurements (nasal length, orbital breadth, orbital height and bizygomatic breadth) were excluded, as they showed only slight differences between comparative populations.

### **9.3 Results**

Descriptive data resulting from the comparison of the Gladstone sample with the eight comparative data sets are presented in detail in Appendix 4. As was expected, the Gladstone sample appeared to be very diverse (presenting with relatively high standard deviations) for most of the variables, especially for g-op, ba-b and n-pr dimensions (S.D. > 6) (landmark abbreviations as given in the Material and Methods section 9.2, also see notes for Table 9.2). The results obtained from the one-way analyses of variance reflected high levels of group differentiation as the tests for the 11 craniometrical variables are all significant at the highest levels of probability (at least  $P < 0.01$ ) (Table 9.2). The post hoc multiple comparisons tests indicated that the sample from Gladstone Cemetery was very similar to South African Bantu-speaking groups (Sotho/Tswana, Zulu), and significantly different from the other six comparative groups (Khoe-San, Riet River, North Africa, Bahutu, Basuku and Asian).

Tables 9.3 to 9.5 show the results of the multiple discriminant analysis for Analysis I, which compared the Gladstone individuals with all African and other comparative groups, using seven variables (g-op, eu-eu, ba-b, b-n, b-pr, n-pr, al-al). Each function accounts for a percentage of the total variance with the first ones, having the highest ‘eigenvalues’, being the most important. The ‘eigenvalues’ (ratio of the between-groups to within-groups sums of squares) help to assess whether the obtained functions are effective in maximizing group differences. A good discriminant function is one that has much between-groups variability in comparison to within-groups variability, therefore high ‘eigenvalues’ are associated with good functions (below 0.1 the function has no efficiency). The first three functions obtained here were the best in the model as they accounted for most of the variance (90.2% in total)

**Table 9.2** One-way analyses of variance for testing all group differences.

Variables <sup>6</sup>	N <sup>1</sup>	F <sup>1</sup>	Sig. <sup>2</sup>	L. <sup>1</sup>	Groups compared <sup>4</sup>	Significant differences between Gladstone and comparative groups <sup>5</sup>
<b>g-op</b>	384	28.79	**	NS	all	IND, BAS, KHS
<b>eu-eu</b>	384	22.92	**	NS	all	IND, NAFR, BAS
<b>ba-b</b>	384	25.78	**	NS	all	KHS, BAH, RRV, BAS
<b>b-n</b>	384	7.78	**	NS	all	KHS, BAS
<b>b-pr</b>	384	19.56	**	*	all	KHS, IND, NAFR, RRV
<b>n-pr</b>	384	26.34	**	*	all	KHS, BAS
<b>n-ns</b>	331	31.56	**	NS	all without IND	KHS, RRV, IND, BAS
<b>al-al</b>	383	17.74	**	*	all	NAFR, IND
<b>obb</b>	330	2.84	*	NS	all without IND	no differences
<b>obh</b>	331	9.96	**	NS	all without IND	KHS
<b>zy-zy</b>	322	12.92	**	NS	all without IND	KHS, BAS

<sup>1</sup>N=number of measurements investigated, F=F-ratio, L=Levene’s test of homogeneity of variances

<sup>2</sup>Level of significance (NS = not significant; P<0.01\*; P<0.001\*\*).

<sup>4</sup>Groups with a minimal number of individuals (N≥15) have been selected for analysis and are coded as follows: **GLD** = Gladstone, **STW** = Sotho/Tswana, South Africa, **ZUL** = Zulu, South Africa, **KHS** = Khoe-San, Southern Africa, **RRV** = Riet River, South Africa, **BAS** = Basuku, Democratic Republic of Congo, **BAH** = Bahutu, Rwanda, **NAFR** = Gizeh, Egypt, **IND** = various Indonesia.

<sup>5</sup>Significant differences (P<0.001) between groups evaluated with post hoc multiple comparisons tests in descending order.

<sup>6</sup>**g-op** = cranial length or *glabella-opistocranium*, **eu-eu** = cranial breadth or *euryon-euryon*, **ba-b** = *basion-bregma* height, **b-n** = *basion-nasion* length, **b-pr** = *basion-prosthion* length, **n-pr** = *nasion-prosthion* distance, **n-ns** = nasal height or *naso-spinale*, **al-al** = nasal breadth or *alare-alare*, **obb** = orbital breadth, **obh** = orbital height, **zy-zy** = bizygomatic breadth or *zygion-zygion*.

**Table 9.3** Multiple discriminant analysis I: eigenvalues and percentage of variance for seven first canonical discriminant functions used in analysis.

Function	Eigenvalue	% of variance	Cumulative %	Canonical correlation
1	1.625	44.8	44.8	0.787
2	0.923	25.5	70.3	0.693
3	0.723	19.9	90.2	0.648
4	0.213	5.9	96.1	0.419
5	0.128	3.5	99.6	0.336
6	0.013	0.4	100	0.112
7	0.001	0	100	0.034

**Table 9.4** Multiple discriminant analysis I: standardized canonical discriminant functions

Variables <sup>1</sup>	Functions (as indicated in Table 9.3)						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
<b>g-op</b>	-0.970	-0.509	0.484	-0.153	0.002	0.533	0.241
<b>eu-eu</b>	0.593	-0.336	-0.407	0.295	0.409	0.163	0.564
<b>ba-b</b>	0.378	0.741	0.323	-0.838	-0.065	0.265	0.325
<b>b-n</b>	0.296	-0.819	-0.081	-0.084	0.668	-1.131	-0.736
<b>b-pr</b>	-0.111	0.820	0.208	0.434	-0.475	-0.207	0.982
<b>n-pr</b>	0.384	-0.086	0.593	0.526	-0.257	0.334	-0.522
<b>al-al</b>	-0.104	0.530	-0.164	0.217	0.767	0.284	-0.295

<sup>1</sup>**g-op** = cranial length, **eu-eu** = cranial breadth, **ba-b** = *basion-bregma* height, **b-n** = *basion-nasion* length, **b-pr** = *basion-prosthion* length, **n-pr** = *nasion-prosthion* distance, **al-al** = nasal breadth.

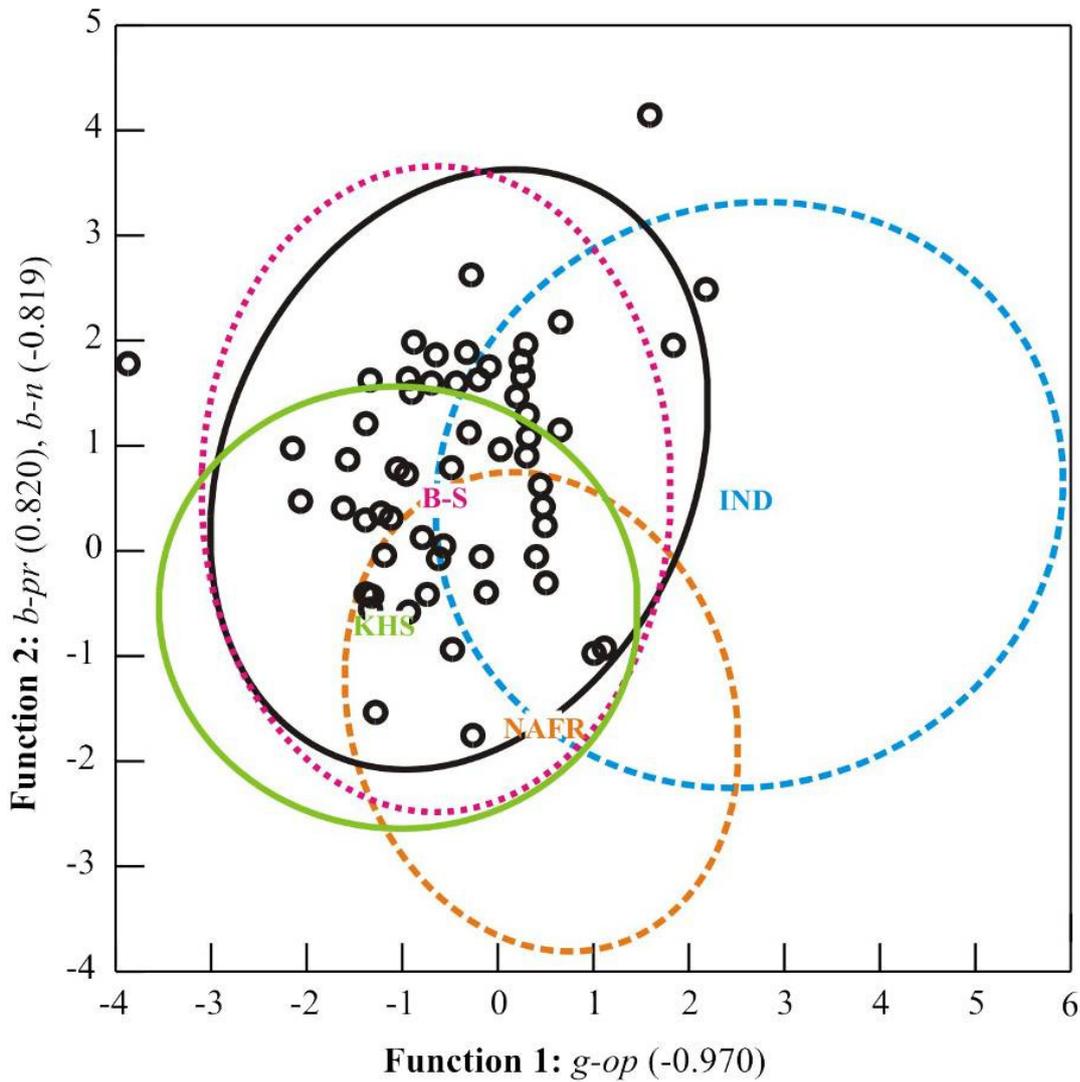
(Table 9.3). Their canonical correlations above 0.6 showed the high degree of association between the discriminant scores and the groups.

The higher standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients (above 0.6) are used to indicate the importance of the variables involved, whose different combinations result in different functions (Table 9.4). For example, cranial length (**g-op**) in Function 1, and both cranial base length (**b-n**) and basion-prosthion length (**b-pr**) in Function 2 corresponded to the key variables responsible for group differentiation.

**Table 9.5** Multiple discriminant analysis I: classifications in counts (and %) for both unknown group (Gladstone) and known groups. Total correct classification after cross-validation = 59%.

Groups under study <sup>1</sup>	Predicted group membership								n
	STW	ZUL	KHS	RRV	BAS	BAH	NAFR	IND	
<b>GLD</b>	<b>6 (10.2)</b>	<b>32 (54.2)</b>	<b>3 (5.1)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8 (13.6)</b>	<b>2 (3.4)</b>	<b>6 (10.2)</b>	<b>2 (3.4)</b>	59
STW	<b>1 (3.2)</b>	2 (6.5)	1 (3.2)	3 (9.7)	4 (12.9)	16 (51.6)	4 (12.9)	0	31
ZUL	6 (10.9)	<b>1 (1.8)</b>	1 (1.8)	8 (14.5)	1 (1.8)	30 (54.5)	6 (10.9)	2 (3.6)	55
KHS	0	0	<b>31 (75.6)</b>	0	1 (2.4)	3 (7.3)	5 (12.2)	1 (2.4)	41
RRV	0	1 (5.6)	7 (38.9)	<b>2 (11.1)</b>	3 (16.7)	0	5 (27.8)	0	18
BAS	1 (2.3)	0	5 (11.4)	30 (68.2)	<b>0</b>	5 (11.4)	2 (4.5)	1 (2.3)	44
BAH	1 (3.8)	0	2 (7.7)	2 (7.7)	13 (50.0)	<b>5 (19.2)</b>	2 (7.7)	1 (3.8)	26
NAFR	2 (3.5)	0	1 (1.8)	0	2 (3.5)	4 (7.0)	<b>45 (78.9)</b>	3 (5.3)	57
IND	0	0	0	1 (1.9)	1 (1.9)	4 (7.7)	6 (11.5)	<b>40 (76.9)</b>	52

<sup>1</sup>Groups coded as follows: **GLD** = Gladstone, **STW** = Sotho/Tswana, South Africa, **ZUL** = Zulu, South Africa, **KHS** = Khoe-San, Southern Africa, **RRV** = Riet River, South Africa, **BAS** = Basuku, Democratic Republic of Congo, **BAH** = Bahutu, Rwanda, **NAFR** = Gizeh, Egypt, **IND** = various Indonesia. n = number of individuals investigated



- 95% confidence ellipse
- centroid ○
- Gladstone unknowns
  - individual cases without centroid
  - B-S** ○ Bantu-speaking sub-Saharan Africans (Sotho/Tswana, Zulu, Basuku, Bahutu)
  - KHS** ○ Khoe-San (various)
  - NAFR** ○ North Africans (Gizeh)
  - IND** ○ Indonesians (various)

**Figure 9.2** Discriminant scores plot for analysis I. Two functions account for 70.3% of total variance. 95% confidence ellipse with centroid shown for each group (for Gladstone, individual cases shown instead of centroid). Highest standardized discriminant function coefficients put into brackets for each function.

The classification results of the multiple discriminant Analysis I are summarized with the predicted membership for each individual in Table 9.5. In total, only 59% of the cases were correctly classified into their group of origin after cross-validation. This again indicated that there is a lot of morphological overlap between the groups as can also be seen by the scatter plot with the 95% confidence ellipses (Figure 9.2). As a high number of comparative groups were used, Africans in particular were pooled into two groups, of Bantu-speakers (Sotho/Tswana, Zulu, Basuku and Bahutu) and Khoe-San, for better visual assessment of the variation (although the multiple discriminant analysis considered the original groups separately).

Relative to the available comparative samples, the Gladstone individuals were classified as follows: mainly as Zulu (54%), and in decreasing order with the Basuku (13.6%), Sotho/Tswana (10.2%), North Africans (10.2%), Khoe-San (5.1%) and Bahutu (3.4%), but never with Riet River (Table 9.5). More than 80% of the Gladstone group fitted rather well into the Bantu-speaking groups (mainly Zulu and a few others), with a relatively more prognathic face. According to the highest posterior probabilities, three cases (GLD N74.8, GLD N38.7, GLD S2.6) were classified as Khoe-San as a result of a flatter face. Six individuals (GLD N31.E, GLD N38.8, GLD N74.1, GLD NOP3, GLD S2.1, GLD S3.2) were grouped with North Africans due to a flatter face and shorter vault, and two (GLD N34.7, GLD N34.1) with Indonesians as a result of a shorter cranial vault.

Tables 9.6 to 9.8 show the results of multiple discriminant analysis II, which compared Gladstone individuals with only the African groups, using all 11 variables. The first three

**Table 9.6** Multiple discriminant analysis II: eigenvalues for discriminant functions.

Function	Eigenvalue	% of variance	Cumulative %	Canonical correlation
1	1.896	50.1	50.1	0.809
2	1.036	27.4	77.5	0.713
3	0.515	13.6	91.1	0.583
4	0.178	4.7	95.8	0.388
5	0.118	3.1	98.9	0.325
6	0.041	1.1	100.0	0.198

**Table 9.7** Multiple discriminant analysis II: standardized canonical discriminant functions.

Variables <sup>1</sup>	Functions (as indicated in Table 9.6)					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>g-op</b>	0.037	-0.034	0.334	0.633	-0.378	-0.900
<b>eu-eu</b>	0.382	-0.372	-0.006	0.064	0.145	0.682
<b>ba-b</b>	-0.050	0.791	-0.775	-0.108	-0.283	-0.110
<b>b-n</b>	0.642	-0.499	0.112	0.489	0.239	0.492
<b>b-pr</b>	-0.529	0.635	-0.030	-0.497	0.201	0.396
<b>n-pr</b>	-0.370	0.032	0.897	0.155	-1.152	0.477
<b>n-ns</b>	1.050	0.306	-0.683	-0.275	0.926	-0.179
<b>al-al</b>	-0.625	-0.040	-0.184	0.647	0.201	0.319
<b>obh</b>	-0.368	0.327	0.096	-0.179	0.271	-0.172
<b>zy-zy</b>	-0.125	0.033	0.637	-0.190	0.327	-0.490

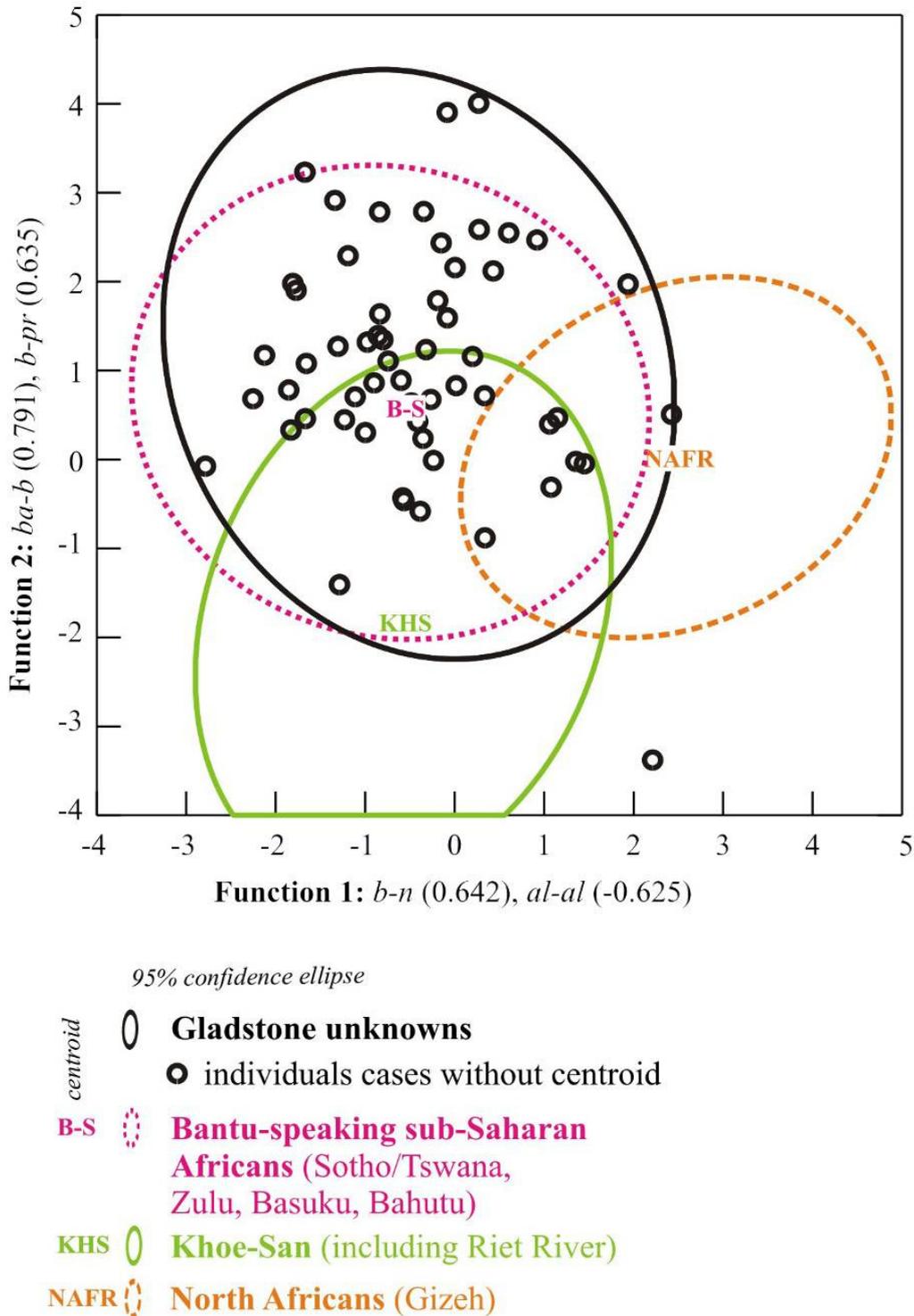
<sup>1</sup>**g-op** = cranial length or *glabella-opistocranium*, **eu-eu** = cranial breadth or *euryon-euryon*, **ba-b** = *basion-bregma* height, **b-n** = *basion-nasion* length, **b-pr** = *basion-prosthion* length, **n-pr** = *nasion-prosthion* distance, **n-ns** = nasal height or *naso-spinale*, **al-al** = nasal breadth or *alare-alare*, **obh** = orbital height, **zy-zy** = bizygomatic breadth or *zygion-zygion*.

functions obtained accounted for most of the variance (91.1% in total) (Table 9.6).

Their canonical correlations (above 0.5) also reflected a relatively high degree of association between the discriminant scores and the groups. For the first two functions, the four variables that presented the highest standardized canonical discriminant function coefficients (above 0.6) were basion-nasion length (b-n) and nasal breadth (al-al) for Function 1, and basion-bregma height (ba-b) and basion-prosthion height (ba-pr) for Function 2 (Table 9.7).

Finally, the classification results of multiple discriminant analysis II are summarized in Table 9.8. In total, 63.4% of the cases were correctly classified into their group of origin after cross-validation. This indicated slightly less overlap between the groups in comparison to Analysis I (Figure 9.3). According to the highest posterior probabilities, the Gladstone unknown individuals were again mainly classified as belonging to Bantu-speaking groups (Sotho/Tswana, Zulu, Basuku and Bahutu) (85.9%), owing to a relatively high vault and prognathic face, with the majority again being classified as having greatest affinity with the Zulu comparative sample (52.6%). Slightly more individuals were classified as having a possible Khoe-San and Riet River ancestry (5.3%) owing to a lower

vault and flatter face, but less were classified as being of possible North African descent (8.8%) as characterized by a narrower nose.



**Figure 9.3** Discriminant scores plot for analysis II. Two functions account for 77.5% of total variance. 95% confidence ellipse with centroid shown for each group (for Gladstone, individual cases shown instead of centroid). Highest standardized discriminant function coefficients put into brackets for each function.

**Table 9.8** Multiple discriminant analysis II: classifications in counts (and %) for both unknown group (Gladstone) and known groups. Total correct classification after cross-validation = 63.4%.

Groups under Study <sup>1</sup>	Predicted group membership							n
	STW	ZUL	KHS	RRV	BAS	BAH	BAFR	
<b>GLD</b>	11 (19.3)	30 (52.6)	1 (1.8)	2 (3.5)	6 (10.5)	2 (3.5)	5 (8.8)	57
STW	<b>7 (22.6)</b>	12 (38.7)	1 (3.2)	3 (9.7)	3 (9.7)	3 (9.7)	2 (6.5)	31
ZUL	8 (14.5)	<b>33 (60)</b>	1 (1.8)	0	8 (14.5)	1 (1.8)	4 (7.3)	55
KHS	3 (7.3)	1 (2.4)	<b>30 (73.2)</b>	3 (7.3)	2 (4.9)	2 (4.9)	0	41
RRV	2 (13.3)	0	6 (40.0)	<b>3 (20)</b>	2 (13.3)	1 (6.7)	1 (6.7)	15
BAS	1 (2.3)	8 (18.2)	4 (9.1)	1 (2.3)	<b>28 (63.6)</b>	1 (2.3)	1 (2.3)	44
BAH	1 (4.5)	1 (4.5)	2 (9.1)	0	2 (9.1)	<b>14 (63.6)</b>	2 (9.1)	22
NAFR	0	3 (5.3)	1 (1.8)	0	0	0	<b>53 (93.0)</b>	57

<sup>1</sup>Groups coded as follows: **GLD** = Gladstone, **STW** = Sotho/Tswana, South Africa, **ZUL** = Zulu, South Africa, **KHS** = Khoe-San, Southern Africa, **RRV** = Riet River, South Africa, **BAS** = Basuku, Democratic Republic of Congo, **BAH** = Bahutu, Rwanda, **NAFR** = Gizeh, Egypt. N = number of individuals investigated.

## 9.4 Discussion

The possible ancestry of the unknown individuals excavated from alongside the fenced Gladstone Cemetery, based on the craniometric results, should be discussed with caution, as morphological similarities, even in probabilistic terms, do not necessarily equate directly with biological affinity. In fact, morphological similarities should always be interpreted in relation to the present worldwide variation (clinal in nature with low inter-population differences) in association with historical records for the population under study. However, it is clear that considerable morphological variation is present within the Gladstone sample.

According to the general manager of De Beers, “nowhere else on the face of the earth ... [could be found] an assemblage of workers of such varied types of race, nationality, and colouring as ... [on] the South African Diamond Fields” (Williams, 1902: 407). Contemporary documentation indicates that “native Africans [came] from the Transvaal, Basutoland, and Bechuanaland, from districts far north of the Limpopo and the Zambesi, from the Cape Colony..., Delgoa Bay and countries along the coast of the Indian Ocean... from Damaraland and Namaqualand” to pursue opportunities for wage labour on the mines. The workers often travelled thousands of kilometres to the Diamond Fields, mainly on foot, and those coming from far off were often weak and emaciated by the time they arrived (Williams, 1902:413).

A government official, the ‘Registrar of Natives’, kept records of black labourers arriving at the mines (Smalberger, 1876; Williams, 1902), noting their identity as “Hottentots, Basutos, Soshaganas (Zulus from North of Delagoa), Mahawa (the Pedi or Secocoeni Basuto), Colonials, Kaffrarians, Mantatees, Batlapin, Swazis, Coolies, Baralongs, Griquas and Mozambique” (Turrel, 1987). While many of the labourers were not registered, the records hence incomplete, the documentation nevertheless clearly shows that the majority of black labourers were of Pedi, Tsonga (also known as the Shangaan), Sotho and Zulu origin. In contrast to what one might expect, African communities closest to the mines (including the Rolong, Tlhaping, Griqua and Koranna) contributed least of the workforce (Kallaway, 1981; Worger, 1987; Turrell, 1987).

The craniometrical results obtained in this study for both the worldwide (Analysis I) and African (Analysis II) comparisons, largely concur with historical information available for this population sample. Looking at the morphological variation in a broad perspective, the majority of individuals in this sample population was most probably of (Bantu-

speaking) sub-Saharan African descent (at least 80%), and especially of southern African origin correlating with the Zulu (at least 50%) and Sotho/Tswana (at least 10%) samples. As corroborated by the historical information cited above, the composition of the mine worker population represented by the Gladstone skeletons clearly reflects a particular southern African context with a high rate of inter-regional migration in the form of migrant labour. In fact, the observed morphologies do not resemble the geographically closest population (including Khoe-San) but rather the more distant Zulu sample. While there is a great degree of overlap between the Bantu-speaking sub-Saharan African groups, other possible origins, such as Central African (Basuku: at least 10%) or even to a lesser degree East African (Bahutu: at least 3%), cannot be excluded. Only a small percentage (1–5%) of individuals buried in the Gladstone cemetery were of possible Khoe-San descent.

In some cases possible ancestry could not be specified as the specimens in question presented with a combination of traits reflecting various possible population affinities (perhaps owing to gene flow between various regions). The fact that six Gladstone individuals fell within the range of variability of North Africans (GLD N31.E, GLD N38.8, GLD NOP3, GLD S2.1) and/or Indonesians (GLD N34.7, GLD N34.1) does not necessarily mean that individuals from those regions were present in the sample. It might suggest a wider range of possible origin and/or mixed ancestry in relation to more northern and eastern parts of the world (in addition to sub-Saharan Africa). For example, the morphological similarities observed between the Khoe-San and North African populations (often related to gracility) do not reflect a common origin (Morris & Ribot, 2006). It therefore remains difficult to systematically specify the origin of an individual on morphological grounds alone. However as suggested above, it can indicate some possible gene admixture within the Gladstone population, involving possibly a minimal number of Khoe-San individuals.

Although there are some obvious limitations regarding the assessment of ancestry through metric analysis of skeletal remains, owing to the inherent nature of human variation (which is highest within a ‘population’), this study has indicated that the interpretation of craniometric data can be of great value, particularly in the light of contextual data available for a historical ‘unknown’ group.

While the inter-group variation is highly overlapping on different geographical scales, all results are in accord with historical documentation describing the cosmopolitan nature of the workforce on the diamond mines of Kimberley. High wages were initially one of the

main reasons for individuals to travel up to thousands of kilometres from within Southern Africa to Kimberley to work on the mines (previously, many had exploited work opportunities in the Cape and Natal Colonies and the Free State). Attempts by the mining companies to lower the wages resulted in the almost immediate exodus of workers (Worger, 1987). Their earnings supported and began to transform rural economies in a variety of ways. Some migrant workers (such as the Tsonga) came to Kimberley mainly in order to earn cash for bride-wealth, some to buy farming equipment, for example ploughs and wagons, while others (especially the Pedi and South Sotho) worked in order to obtain a firearm, which was readily available in Kimberley during the early mining years, but forbidden to be sold to Africans from 1877 (Turrell, 1987; Worger, 1987). Much of this activity, at the start, was subject to chiefly control and other existing social obligations. Thus, for instance, young men returning from the mines would often owe a tribute or a tax from their earnings to the chief (Turrell, 1987). This relatively easy chiefly income came at a high price, however, since migrant labour in return also provided labourers with a window of opportunity to challenge chiefly control and to accumulate wealth independently (Turrell, 1987). Slowly but surely sterling began to displace cattle as payment for brides, leading to bride-prices being increased to above migrant labour wages, resulting in heightened social and political dissatisfaction within rural societies (Worger, 1987; Turrell, 1987).

The Gladstone burials relate to a later period, however, when rural autonomy had been considerably eroded throughout much of southern Africa. The loss of land and the imposition of hut taxes were amongst factors that compelled men from rural areas to seek wage labour. Those obtaining work on the mines were recruited for longer periods and at a lower wage (Worger, 1987; Pakenham, 1992).

Economic factors were the main reason why local populations around Kimberley, such as the Griqua, Kora and Tlhaping, did not generally participate in work on the mines, although small numbers did sell their labour in this way. Instead, they had the means, initially at least, to retain relative independence by selling firewood and fresh produce such as milk, meat and vegetables to the mines and the towns that grew up around them (Kallaway, 1981; Turrell, 1987; Worger, 1987). Here it should be mentioned that very little in the way of vegetables and other fresh produce reached the labouring classes on the mines, since scurvy was a major problem among them, with historical sources indicating

that labourers in the compounds were mostly fed with maize and occasional coarse meat (Cape of Good Hope Votes and Proceedings of Parliament, 1899; Harries, 1994).

With time, however, the depletion of resources (or denial of access to them) forced individuals from these groups increasingly to sell their labour, on farms, in towns or indeed on the mines, albeit in low numbers in proportion to migrant workers recruited from further away. The coming of the railway to Kimberley in 1885 brought in cheaper grain, coal and other products which undercut still further the local trade in fresh produce and firewood (Worker, 1987).

Thus, although the Kimberley mines brought new opportunities to the area it is obvious that, just as was observed in the communities providing migrant labour from further afield, it also resulted in social and political changes for the communities in the region around Kimberley itself. The Griqua and the local Khoe-San peoples benefited least of all from the discovery of diamonds in their proximity, and it appears that relatively few of them were taken up in the workforce.

In conclusion it can be said that the craniometric study on the 59 adult males excavated from alongside the Gladstone Cemetery has given substance to the historical records concerning migrant labourers coming to work in the Kimberley mines. They indicate that the greater proportion of labour at the Kimberley mine was provided by migrant workers from beyond Kimberley's immediate hinterland and that the local African communities (including Khoe-San) contributed much less to the labour force in the mines. Many of the labourers came from elsewhere in southern Africa (the relatively high correlation with the Zulu comparative sample suggests the north eastern side of South Africa as one region of origin), even as far afield as the east coast of Africa (possibly even as far as Asia). The relatively heterogeneous nature of the Gladstone sample (as seen in the high degree of morphological diversity) probably reflects the varied geographical origins of the workforce in Kimberley as well as some possible genetic admixture. Owing to the considerable overlap, as can be seen in Figures 9.2 and 9.3, however, it remains difficult to specify possible regions of origin more precisely. Nevertheless, this study reiterates the value of craniometric analyses as a tool to determine the probability of biological affinity of unknown individuals when viewed in the light of contextual historical information.

Further research combining both the morphometrical approach and ancient DNA analysis could expand on these results and provide more precise data on the ancestry of the people buried in these unmarked graves.

## References

Cape of Good Hope Votes and Proceedings of Parliament. 1899. Hospitals and Asylums Report for 1898 Appendix I.

De Villiers, H. 1968. *The skull of the South African Negro*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Franklin, D., Freedman, L. and Milne, N. 2004. Sexual dimorphism and discriminant function sexing in indigenous South African crania. *HOMO - Journal of Comparative Human Biology* 55(3): 213-228

Froment, A. 1992. La différenciation morphologique de l'homme moderne: congruence entre forme du crâne et répartition géographique du peuplement. *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Sciences de Paris*, 315 (series III): 323-329.

Giles, B., Doyle, M., Johnston, M., Wood, I. and Harding, D. 1997. *Peoples of Southern Africa*. New York: The Diagram Group, Facts on file Inc. p.112.

Harries, P. 1994. Work, culture and identity. *Migrant laborers in Mozambique and South Africa, c 1860 - 1910*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Howells, W.W. 1996. Howell's craniometric data on the internet. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, 101: 441-442.

Kallaway, P. 1981. Tribesman, trader, peasant and proletarian: the process of transition from a pre-Capitalist to a Capitalist mode of production in the immediate hinterland of the Kimberley Diamond Fields during the nineteenth century. In Bonner, P. (ed) *Working papers in Southern African studies*, Volume 2. Johannesburg: Ravan Press: 8-30.

Knussman, R. and Barlett, H.L. 1988. *Anthropologie*. Fischer: Stuttgart.

Konigsberg, L.W., Algee-Hewitt, B.F.B. and Steadman, D.W. 2009. Estimation and evidence in forensic anthropology: sex and race. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 139(1):77-90.

L'Abbé, E., Ribot, I. and Steyn, M. 2006. Tracing the origins of the Venda. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 61(183): 19-25.

Maggs, T. 1971. Pastoral settlements on the Riet River. *South African Archaeological Bulletin* 26: 37-63.

Morris, A.G. 1992. *The Skeletons of Contact*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Morris, A.G. and Ribot, I. 2006. Morphometric cranial identity of prehistoric Malawians in the light of sub-Saharan African diversity. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, 130: 10-25.

Morris, D., van Ryneveld, K. and Voigt, E.A. 2004. Outside Gladstone Cemetery: first thoughts on unmarked late nineteenth century graves, Kimberley. In Morris, D. and Beaumont, P. (eds) *Archaeology in the Northern Cape: some key sites*. Kimberley: McGregor Museum.

Olson, J.S. 1996. *The Peoples of Africa. An Ethnohistorical Dictionary*. London: Greenwood Press. p.681.

Pakenham, T. 1992. Rhodes, Raiders and Rebels. *The Scramble for Africa*. London: Abacus. p. 497–498.

Pietrusewsky, M. 2008. Metric analysis of skeletal remains: methods and applications. In Katzenber, A.M. and Saunders, S.R. (eds), *Biological anthropology of the human skeleton*. New York: John Wiley & Sons Inc. p.487-532.

Relethford, J.H. 2009. Race and global patterns of phenotypic variation. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 139(1): 16-22.

Relethford, J.H. and Harpending, H.C. 1994. Craniometric variation, genetic theory, and modern human origins. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, 95: 249-270.

Ribot, I. 2002. *Craniomandibular variation in sub-Saharan Africa: sexual dimorphism, geography, ecology and history*. PhD dissertation. Cambridge: University of Cambridge.

Ribot, I. 2003. Craniometrical analysis of Central and East Africans in relation to history. A case study based on unique collections of known ethnic affiliation. *Anthropologica et Praehistorica*, 114: 25-50.

Ribot, I. 2004. Differentiation of modern sub-Saharan African populations: craniometric interpretations in relation to geography and history. *Bulletins et Mémoires de la Société d'Anthropologie de Paris*, 16(3-4): 143-165.

Roseman, C.C. and Weaver, T.D. 2004. Multivariate apportionment of global human craniometric diversity. *American Journal of Physical Anthropology*, 125: 257-263.

Smalberger, J.M. 1976. The Role of the Diamond-Mining Industry in the Development of the Pass-Law System in South Africa . *The International Journal of African Historical Studies*, 9(3): 419-434.

Stynder, D.D. 2009. Craniometric evidence for South African Later Stone Age herders and hunter–gatherers being a single biological population. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 36(3): 798-806.

Swanepoel, S. 2003. *Gladstone Cemetery, 1880s to 1900s*. Archival report.

Turrell, R.V.1987. African labour in the early days In: *Capital and Labour in the Kimberley Diamond Fields 1871 – 1890*. Cambridge University Press. London, p.19 – 27.

Van der Merwe, A.E. 2007. *Human skeletal remains from Kimberley: An assessment of health in a 19th century mining community*, MSc. thesis, University of Pretoria.

Van der Merwe, A.E., Morris, D., Steyn, M. and Maat, G.J.R. In Print. The history and health of a nineteenth-century migrant mine-worker population from Kimberley, South Africa. *South African Archaeological Bulletin*.

Von Bonin, G.1931. A contribution to the craniology of the Easter Islanders. *Biometrika* 23 (3/4): 249-270.

Worger, W.H. 1987. *South Africa's City of Diamonds. Mine Workers and Monopoly Capitalism in Kimberley, 1867 – 1895*. Yale University Press, London.

Williams, G.F. 1987. The workers in the mines In: *The Diamond Mines of South Africa, Some Account of their Rise and Development*. The Macmillan Company, London.

