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## Book Review

*The Inconvenient Indigenous: Remote Area Development in Botswana, Donor Assistance and the First People of the Kalahari*, by Sidsel Saugestad. Uppsala, Sweden: The Nordic Africa Institute, 266 pages. ISBN 91-7106-475-3. [Swedish Crowns 220, or Pula 90 on sale from the Basarwa Research Administrator's Office, University of Botswana, Gaborone, phone 355 5034].

Copies of the doctoral thesis on which this book is based have been circulating in Southern Africa since 1998, but in limited supply and one hundred pages longer. It is therefore most welcome that the study has now been published and is available in an edited form, with changes that bring it up-to-date to 2001, with an index and many excellent colour photographs and plates. The three additional years covered have not contained events that have challenged or altered the basic approach and conclusions drawn by the author.

The extra time has allowed for more in depth discussion of issues such as community ownership, the events surrounding the removals from Xade in the Central Kalahari Game Reserve (CKGR), and so on. While this study does not cover developments in the CKGR during 2002 and the continued controversial removal, there is clear evidence, most recently from the research of Arthur Albertson, that the CKGR could support up to 4,000 Basarwa and their goats and donkeys, Botswana continues to fail to recognize primordial land and hunting rights, and does not comprehend the legitimate concerns of those outside Botswana over these issues. The author presents the international issues most thoroughly and competently.

Sidsel Saugestad is a social anthropologist who has been working on and off in Botswana for over a decade. This book is based on her thesis at the University of Tromsø in northern Norway. She was resident in Botswana in 1992 and 1993 carrying out her research. She has taught at the University of Tromsø for over 20 years. There research on indigenous peoples is a priority as Tromsø is caught up in issues related to the Saami ethnic minority (formerly known as the 'Laplanders'). In 1986 she studied Maori-Pakeha (whites) relationships in New Zealand. Her academic career began with a masters dissertation on Northern Ireland.

Dr Saugestad is an astute observer of the situation in Southern Africa. Her involvement in majority-minority relations in Europe, Asia and Africa allows her to comprehend the dynamics of what is happening in Botswana from a unique perspective. Though her 'bias' may seem to be with the cause of minority peoples, she also has a keen awareness and comprehension of the majority perspective. Her treatise is balanced; not one sided. It is her skill of being able to recognize the many facets of a complex situation that make this volume most worthwhile.

This is a complicated, multifaceted, inter-disciplinary study. As the title reflects, it is concerned with nation-building, rural development, the role of aid donors and the perspective of the 'First Peoples' or the San/ Basarwa/ Bushman of Botswana. But this study goes beyond these confines, as it is cross-cultural and comparative. It explores concepts of ethnicity, ethnic relations and ethnic incorporation with great care. It also places changes in Botswana in the context of major international trends; the development of indigenous organizations worldwide, their links, and the establishment of pan-First Peoples' organizations.

Botswana's refusal to recognize the UN Year of the Indigenous Peoples [the Minister justified this by saying; "We are all indigenous"], and Botswana's failure to ratify a number

of key international conventions [ILO Convention 169; the UN Covenants on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Civil and Political Rights] signed by over 134 nations, is explained in a clear manner. She says "though contemporary legal thinking on the position of indigenous peoples in democratic states is not binding for Botswana in any formal sense, global trends have provided a conceptual framework and a moral standard that are not easily ignored".

Dr Saugestad presents the 'call for positive' discrimination (affirmative action) for minorities in a very articulate manner. She explains clearly the development of new perspectives and codes by the United Nations and the International Labour Organization that have altered the world situation. Contrary to 'received truth' in Botswana, no country can continue to claim immunity for international concern over their policies by crying that it is an 'internal affair' only. The world community has established clear guidelines for the recognition and treatment of indigenous peoples. How long a country can continue to flout these new international standards is a different issue.

In this study there is also a re-assessment of the Remote Areas Development Programme. Its relationship to perceptions of what constitutes 'rural development', and the problems of land rights, wildlife management and 'settlement' are considered. The involvement of foreign donors (especially NORAD) is evaluated and subtle changes in objectives analyzed. Her anthropological studies cover adaptation, social and economic change, the shifting sands of relationships between the Bantu and San peoples, and problems of constructs, classification and discourse from an historical perspective.

A unifying theme that runs through the book is the impact of the Botswana Society's 1992 symposium on 'Sustainable Rural Development' as a transformative experience: for her, for the San/Basarwa/Bushmen, for those 'working with' minority peoples and the nation of Botswana. An impressive Naro elder, Komtsha Komtsha, Chairperson of the Kuru Development Trust, spoke in Naro (translated by the late John Hardbottle) to the gathering about his life experiences and the meaning of his slogan 'for land, culture and a dignified livelihood'.

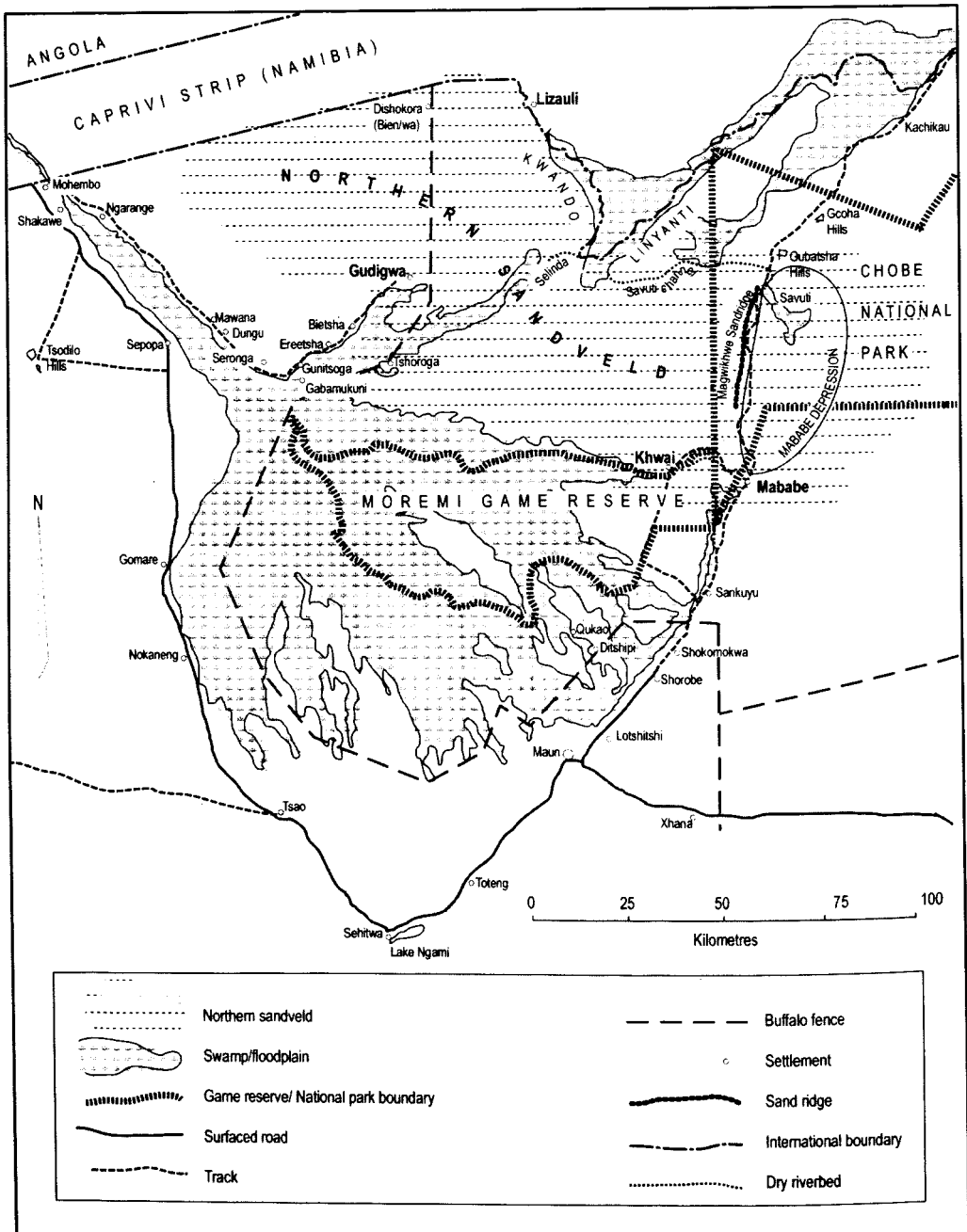
In this volume there are capsule profiles of the Kuru Development Trust, the First People of the Kalahari, WIMSA (The Working Group of Indigenous Minorities), summaries of major international meetings, and a discussion of the controversy over the Central Kalahari Game Reserve.

Is it really 'inconvenient Indigenous' or the imposition of an 'inconvenient state' on First Peoples? In Papua New Guinea, with 856 languages (and 'Tribes') for four million people, a constant refrain from local groups was that; "we were independent *before* we were colonized" (by the British and Germans). "Independence was not achieved in 1975, we had it before colonialism and then lost it".

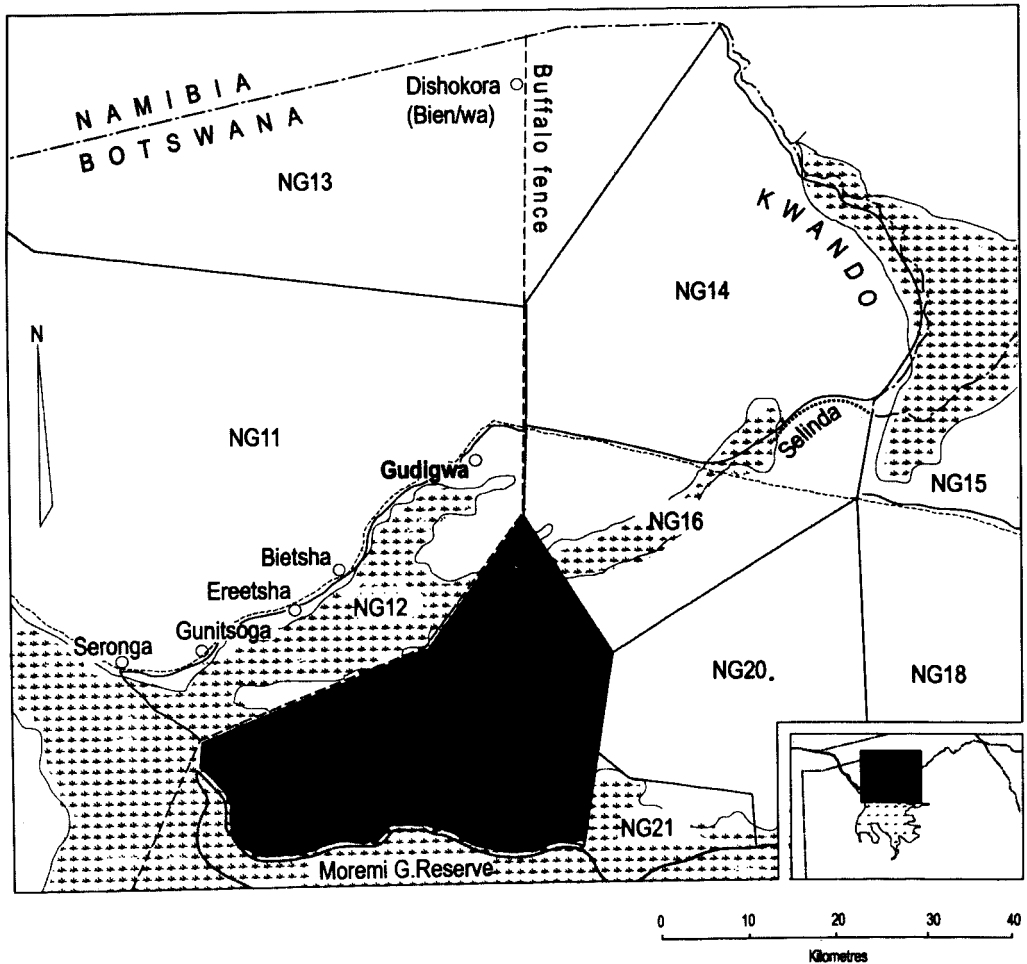
This is a very thorough and thoughtful book that deserves reading. It will serve as a major resource for a long time for the many people interested in these issues. Let us hope that the major bookstores in Southern Africa choose to carry it.

**Sheldon G. Weeks**  
Gaborone

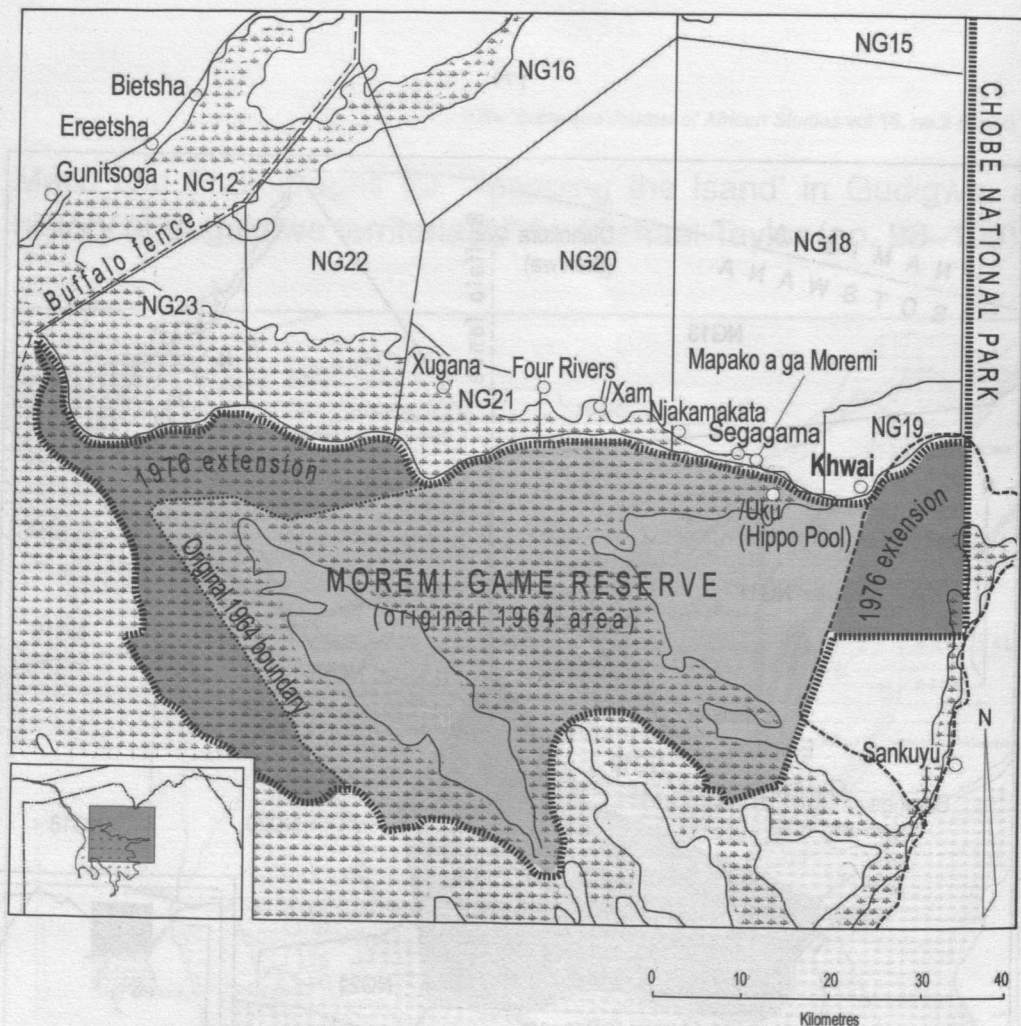
Maps and Photographs for “Mapping the Isand’ in Gudigwa: a history of Bugakhwe territoriality” by Michael Taylor (pp. 98–109)



**Map 1: The Okavango Delta and northern sandveld**



**Map 2:** Gudigwa with other Okavango Community Trust villages and surrounding Controlled Hunting Areas (CHAs allocated to OCT shaded).



Map 3: Map of the northern sandveld produced from the land mapping exercise

Name	Territory size (km <sup>2</sup> )
Taetso	587
Khwarako	719
//Ae/exo	761
Rapula	974
Goo	1387
Amos and Sangando (combined)	1978
Average	915

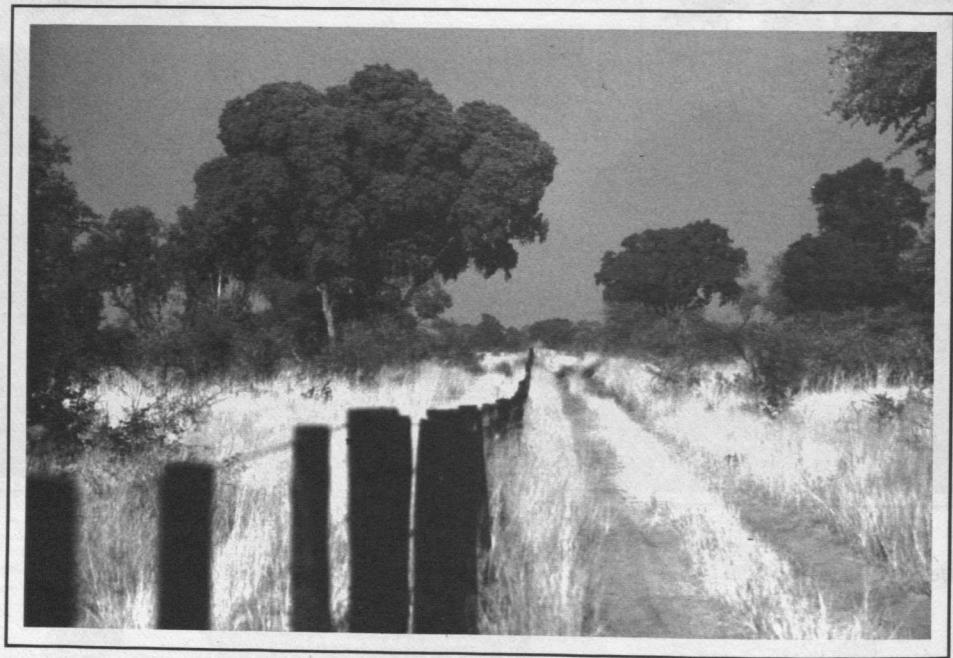
Table 1: Family land size for seven of the ten main families that now live in Gudigwa.



*Plate 1: Entering Gudigwa.*

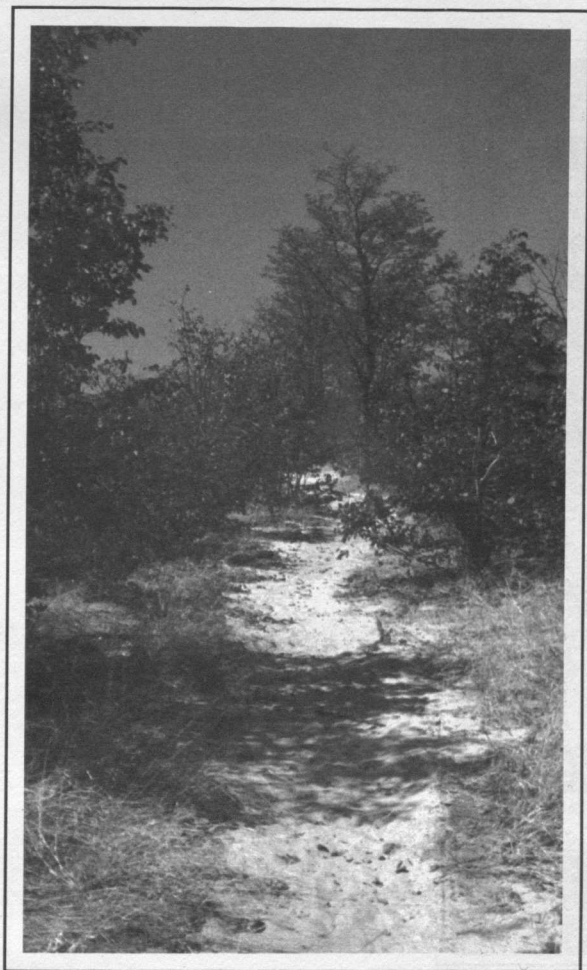


*Plate 2: Old village site in the northern sandveld (Tsekugwa).*

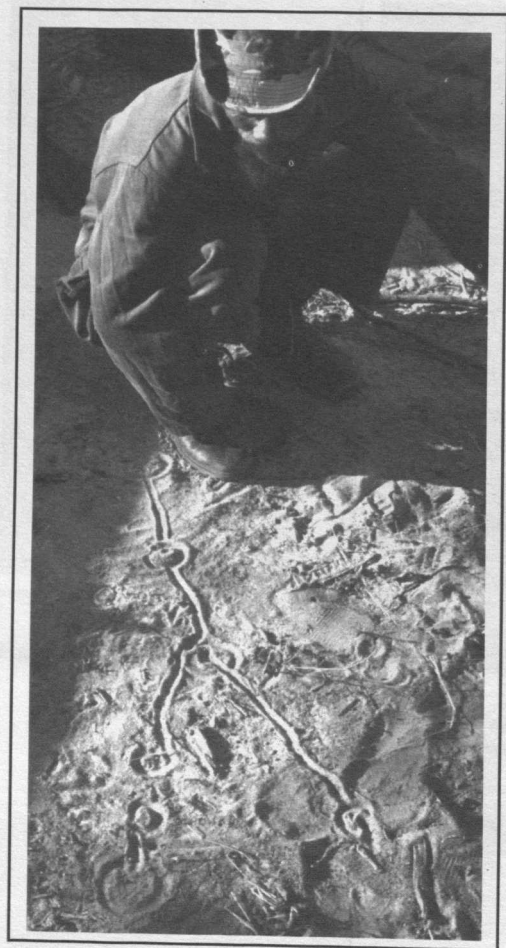


*Plate 3: Buffalo fence near Gudigwa.*





*Plate 4: Elephant path through the bush (oo dao)*



*Plate 5: Amos drawing maps in the sand; a network of waterholes (oro) connected by elephant paths (oo dao).*