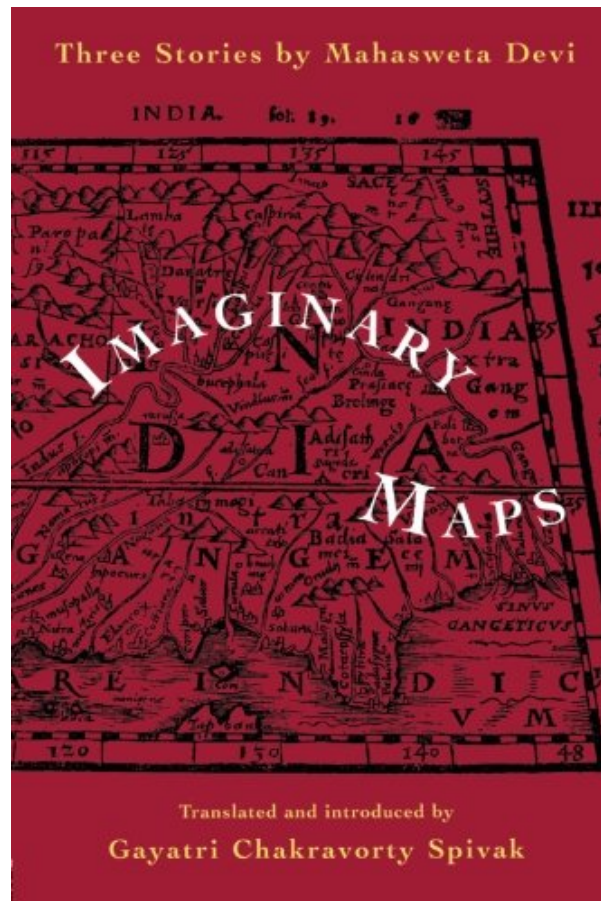


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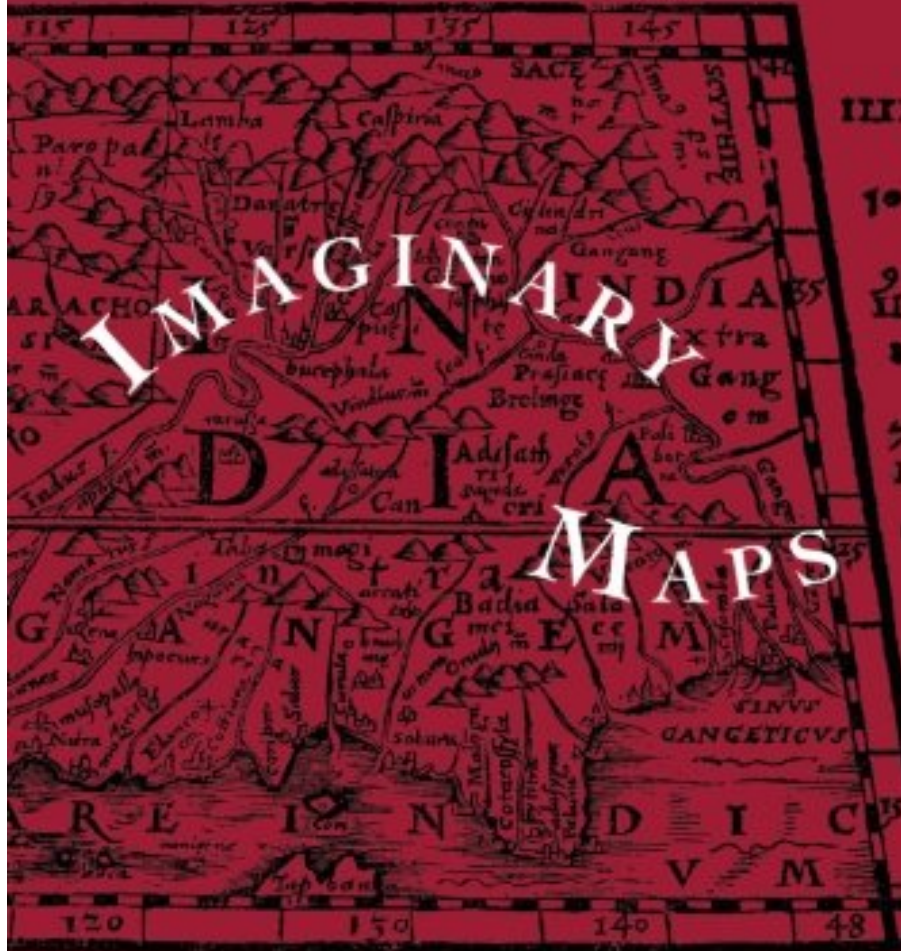


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Three Stories by Mahasweta Devi

INDIA. fol. 19. 18



Translated and introduced by
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak

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From Library Journal

The author of several novels, Devi is best known in India, especially in her native Bengal (Bangladesh). In this collection of three powerful stories, she exposes the conditions of tribal peoples in India. Some readers will not like her journalistic style, but U.S. and Canadian readers will find many painful parallels to Native American fiction in Devi's stories. These three focus on the surviving bonded labor system and its deleterious effects on men and women. In "The Hunt," Devi highlights the role of women resisting not only the destruction of the environment and tribal traditions but also the exploitation of women in postcolonial India. Translator Spivak has published two of Devi's other stories in her collection of essays, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (1987). *Imaginary Maps* features an interview with Devi and Spivak's critical commentary, which is unfortunately not for beginners. Recommended for more scholarly collections.

- Faye A. Chadwell, Univ. of South Carolina Lib., Columbia

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Review

." . . when the world is broadly divided simply into North and South, the World Bank has no barrier to its division of that world into a map that is as fantastic as it is real. This constantly changing map draws economic rather than national boundaries, as fluid as the spectacular dynamics of international capital.."

-Gayatri Spivak, from "Imaginary Maps

From the Back Cover

Weaving history, myth and current political realities, these three stories by noted Bengali writer Mahasweta Devi explore troubling motifs in contemporary Indian life through the figures and narratives of the indigenous tribes of India. Both delicate and violent, Devi's stories map the experiences of the 'tribals' and tribal life under decolonization.

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IMAGINARY MAPS BY MAHASWETA DEVI PDF

Imaginary Maps presents three stories from noted Bengali writer Mahasweta Devi in conjunction with readings of these tales by famed cultural and literary critic, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. Weaving history, myth and current political realities, these stories explore troubling motifs in contemporary Indian life through the figures and narratives of indigenous tribes in India. At once delicate and violent, Devi's stories map the experiences of the "tribals" and tribal life under decolonization. In "The Hunt," "Douloti the Bountiful" and the deftly wrought allegory of tribal agony "Pterodactyl, Pirtha, and Puran Sahay," Ms. Devi links the specific fate of tribals in India to that of marginalized peoples everywhere.

Gayatri Spivak's readings of these stories connect the necessary "power lines" within them, not only between local and international structures of power (patriarchy, nationalisms, late capitalism), but also to the university.

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Most helpful customer reviews

4 of 5 people found the following review helpful.

Globalism and hidden modern slavery

By Bob Tripper

Spivak presents a collection of three of Devi's stories. Devi, a journalist and "organic intellectual" who has focused largely on women's issues and globalization, serves here to detail the intricacies of global capitalism and alienation. Devi's stories are powerful as works of literature, and heartwrenching as stories representative of true-to-life experiences.

Spivak's introduction is informative, dense and jargony, but of course integral to an understanding of the works at hand. She pleads the American reader to not "museumify" the writings that she translates, that is not to view them as representative cultural artifacts to be observed and objectified. This is an important ideal to abandon when reading Devi's work because it is representative of so much more than words on a page, more than painstakingly detailed characters. Devi's writing is historically and contextually complex, and deserves acclaim for its purpose rather than its literary characteristics.

Accordingly, the language seems bland. Perhaps something was lost in translation, or perhaps this functions to strengthen Devi's ultimate purpose as a writer.

2 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Eye opener!

By Swan

This is a powerful exposé of the effects of global capitalism, told in the form of three colorful, sometimes humorous, sometimes painful, highly readable stories. It gives an insider's look at the current realities faced by tribal peoples in India and challenges the privilege of those who look on or look away without committing to making change.

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