



Nine Lives: Making the Impossible Possible

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"You can cut the flower, but you cannot stop the coming of spring." Malalai Joya, the young member of the Afghan parliament, refuses to let injustice go unchallenged. Her words reflect the irrepressible attitudes and actions of all the women and men who tell their stories here.

As with all the titles in New Internationalist's World Changing imprint, *Nine Lives* sees opportunity in the midst of adversity and presents the life stories of people who have been confronted with seemingly insurmountable obstacles, opposition, and oppression.

Whether it is human rights activist Harry Wu, who spent nineteen years in Chinese labor camps, or Nobel Laureate and President of Costa Rica Oscar Arias Sánchez, each of the nine voices in this collection has confronted an urgent and inescapable need to dig deep, either to rescue themselves or to forge a fresh way forward for others.

To understand the key stories behind the headlines, Peter Braaksma believes that it is essential to feel the personal, intimate experience of people working on the frontline of human rights and humanitarian issues; that the stories, uninterrupted and unpolished, must speak for themselves.

Reading like nine mini-novels, the nine remarkable stories belong to Bassam Aramin (Palestinian National Authority), Monireh Baradaran (Iran), Youk Chhang (Cambodia), Sompop Jantraka (Thailand), Malalai Joya (Afghanistan), Chaeli Mycroft (South Africa), Oscar Arias Sánchez (Costa Rica), and Harry Wu (China).

Peter Braaksma has worked as an editor, communications advisor, and journalist in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

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