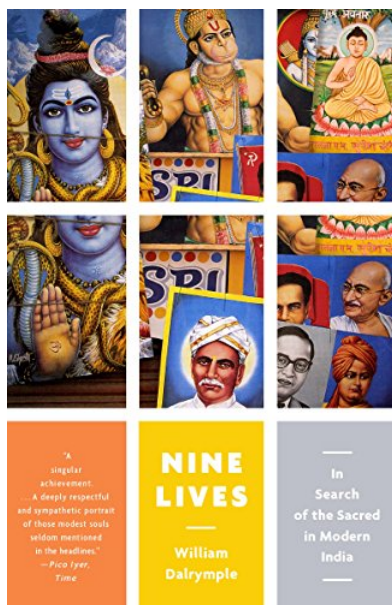


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From the author of *The Last Mughal*, an enlightening book that explores with remarkable compassion and expansive insight nine varieties of religious devotion in India today. In portraits of people we might otherwise never know William Dalrymple distills his twenty-five years of travel in India to explore the challenges faced by practitioners of traditional forms of faith in contemporary India. For two months a year, a man in Kerala divides his time between jobs as a prison warden and a well-builder and his calling as an incarnate deity. A temple prostitute watches her two daughters die from AIDS after entering a trade she regards as a sacred calling. A Jain nun recalls the pain of watching her closest friend ritually starve herself to death. Together, these tales reveal the resilience of individuals in the face of the relentless onslaught of modernity, the enduring legacy of tradition, and the hope and honor that can be found even in the most unlikely places.

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