

SIMON SCHAMA

FOREIGN BODIES

‘With the aplomb of a young AJP Taylor, Schama neatly balances the obligation to disparage empire with the historian’s love of valorous action. He pricks the pretensions of the Raj, whose grandees thought they had materially bettered the lives of Indians; but he handsomely acknowledges the human efforts expended, in crowded slums and roadside clinics, pursuing that fond vision.’

FINANCIAL TIMES

‘Superb ... The historian brings his considerable literary talents to this study of how blame, often mixed with antisemitism, has attended disease and vaccination through the ages.’

OBSERVER

‘A splendid and often moving work of history ... Schama has a gift for combining novelistically colourful detail, serious analysis, and wryly amusing asides.’

TELEGRAPH

‘Schama makes an urgent case for building a better future on our toxic past.’

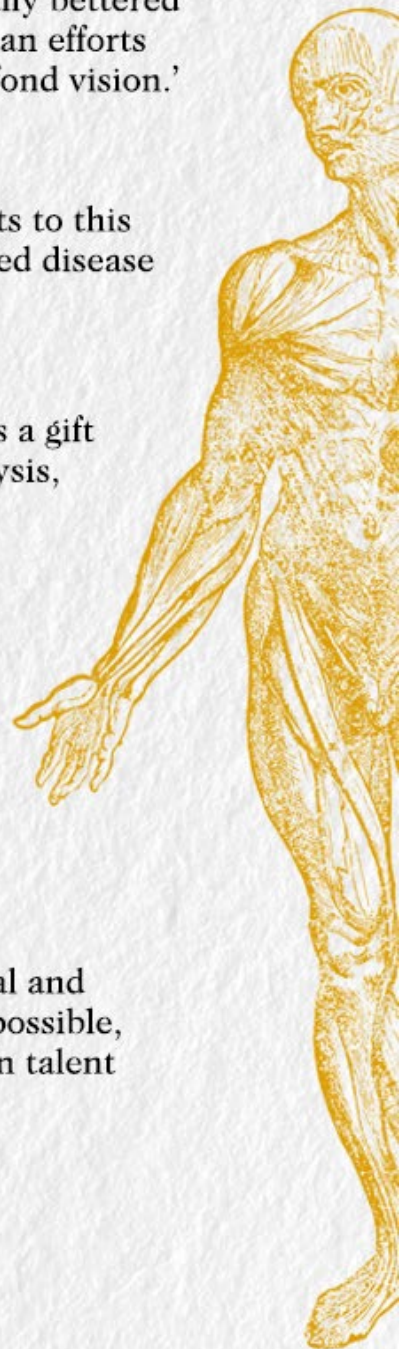
GUARDIAN

‘This is history of the best sort – humanly engaged but never sentimental.’

MAIL ON SUNDAY

‘The histories Schama weaves together in this very personal and rather wonderful book should encourage us to know what is possible, in astonishingly short periods of time, if compounding human talent is channelled to good and universal ends.’

LITERARY REVIEW



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‘Schama’s now-familiar approach, with its over-the-shoulder perspective and deluge of local detail, gives a pleasing verisimilitude to his stories of jostling individuals, ideas and institutions. It is Haffkine’s political fall that provides the book’s strongest passages. The colonial administration – a bureaucratic machine for misery, terrified of resistance – was willing to mobilise against what it saw as a foreign threat, even with millions of lives, and its own legitimacy, in the balance. We see the reactionary drive towards both self- and collective harm repeat on the scale of the nation, institution and individual, in Haffkine’s world as well as our own. History suggests there are other paths, imperfect and difficult though they might be, if we could only recognise them.’

NEW STATESMAN

‘Do yourself a favour, buy this book ... It’s vast and terrifying and somehow beautiful, and it reads like a Ted Talk all-timer, but instead of a blank screen you’re left with this beautiful bow to untie and book to read.’

IRISH TIMES

‘Delves into the history of pandemics and their cures, through the gripping personal narratives of some fascinating individuals.’

RADIO TIMES

