

Steven Poole: *You Aren't What You Eat*. Aurum Press Limited, 2012: 200 pp., paperback, £7.99.

A little firecracker of a book which keeps exploding from start to finish. Highly recommended. There is a little doubt that the foodist world is ripe for ridicule on the one hand, and engagement on the other. There's nothing wrong with liking what you eat, and indeed occasionally thinking about it, but there's plenty wrong with the various hyperbolic statements that accompany these actions. Steven Poole calls us to order. It's interesting to reflect whether there is something sinister in our current preoccupation with food. Although there might be, there probably isn't. You've got to think about something and we lost a lot of thinking matter when we threw God out the window. But there is no need to erect food as another God: God forbid.

Katarzyna J. Cwiertka: *Cuisine, Colonialism and Cold War: Food in Twentieth Century Korea*. London, Reaktion, 2013: 236 pp., illus., hardback, £25.00.

We know the author from her previous book (also Reaktion) on the modern history of Japanese cookery. She is methodical, has an eye for the larger picture, and writes clearly. Her work on Korea is quite similar when expressed as a brief. The twentieth century history of Korea is turbulent, including plenty of wars and invasions, masses of foreign influence, and oodles of change. She lays this out so that even those unfamiliar with the country can understand them. She is very good on the influence of industrial processes on food, and enlightening on things such as the history of soy sauce and other flavourings. Korea of course exerted its reciprocal influence on the invaders (Japan) as well as beginning to export its culinary products and achievements to the wider world: hello *kimchi*. Recommended.

Fiona Bird: *The Forager's Kitchen*. CICO, 2013, 192 pp., hardback, £16.99.

Fi Bird is an energetic agitator for the better nourishment of our children, either by means of education, or better cooking. Her publisher's notes on her state she is 'a graduate of St. Andrews university, mother of six, and a past finalist of the BBC television series Master Chef ... Fiona divides her time between the stunning Scottish glens of rural Angus and the Outer Hebridean island of South Uist, where her husband is the island doctor.' You would think she didn't have time to write books, but no, she has composed this excellent book on wild foods and what to do with them, and