

Jojo Tullloh: *The Modern Peasant: Adventures in City Food*: Chatto & Windus, 2013, 320 pp., paperback, £12.99.

We have always approved of everything that Jojo Tullloh has written: you can follow her columns in *The Week*. As time went by she obviously got bored with just journalism and took to an allotment in east London: and don't think that this is just a five minutes a week job. Her first book was enlightening and this one takes the business of food production up a notch. It kicks off (one very good reason for notice here) with a portrait of Patience Gray and her life in southern Italy. She went down to Spigolizzi, wrote a lovely article on her trip and re-cycled it for her preface here. The book takes us through most aspects of subsistence cookery: there's a good chapter on pickling; helpful instructions on salting cod or bacon, although she stops short of smoking salmon, visiting instead Ole-Martin Hansen in Stoke Newington who has set up his own smokehouse. Peasants don't mess about, so we have recipes for brains, for faggots, for rillettes, and lots of wild mushrooms. Moving on to the brewhouse, ginger beer, *sauerkraut* and *kimchi* are usefully described, as well as an instructive section on making tofu. She's pretty instructive on cheese too. The writing is clean, sensible and enthusiastic enough to give you heart. What Steven Poole (above) would make of it, I am not sure, but it does not resort to hyperbole.

Jan Gross: *Jam Dreaming*: Sid Harta Publishers Pty Ltd., 2011, 382 pp., paperback.

Australian readers may already have seen this book published in Victoria and other subscribers have read a couple of pieces between these covers. This is a novel with food, a Bildungsroman where young Eileen (an aborigine) pursues marker-dishes through the agency of Mama Jocsdi, a deli owner in Melbourne. Jan Gross's writing is ever readable, nicely allusive and usually full of memory. Of course, she has a lot to remember, having lead a full and rich life in worlds far distant from writing mere novels.

Roberta Gilchrist: *Medieval Life. Archaeology and the Life Course*: The Boydell Press, 2012, 336 pp., hardback, £30.00.

This is a material culture book. I had hoped for information about food and cookery, but didn't get much. It is an extended discussion of archaeological discovery and the way in which the things discovered relate to the human life span (and beyond). That is to say, birth, sex, everyday life, death. The