articulate (or suggest openings for) these new possibilities. What might alternative relations look like? This failure, however, has long been a downfall of much postmodern theory, and does not detract from the achievements of Fudge’s interrogative task. In terms of the general field, however, more scholarly appreciation is required of the complex problems that these multiple relationships with animals do throw up. For example, the distinction between contradictory western modes of ‘constructing’ nature (from food to pets), and the biological differences between species (which, although often fetishised (in zoos, for example), nonetheless remains part of the impetus behind Baker’s ‘holding-to-form’), requires articulation. These are two different orders of cultural construction, and the interrelationship between them, predominantly as the latter is used to naturalise the former, needs to be pushed further than it has thus far been taken.

Both of these books are highly readable contributions to what is a growing area of scholarship. Fudge’s Animal is a provocative introduction to the animal question in the contemporary west, while Baker’s The Postmodern Animal is a sophisticated elaboration of the place of animals within postmodern theory and art. Developing, among other things, on the plentiful resources they offer, cultural critics interested in the animal question ought now to be able to go beyond pointing out the multiplicity and contradictoriness of the ‘animal’, and attempt to articulate new ways of engaging and living with animals.

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Batavia’s Graveyard is an accessible and lively account of the story of the Batavia voyage and shipwreck based principally on historical records. The book opens with a prologue describing the wrecking of the Batavia in 1628 which left about 200 people stranded on a tiny coral atoll; 70 people clinging to the wreck disintegrating in the rough swells; and 48 people, including the most senior officer Francisco Pelsaert, on a small boat sailing away to seek help. The
narrative then rewinds to the time before the ship’s departure and Dash settles into his exposition of the main characters of the mutiny and their cultural and psychological milieux.

Chapter one deals with Jeronimus Cornelisz, the most senior officer aboard the \textit{Batavia} after Pelsaert. Cornelisz is the chief antagonist of the story and is the ‘Mad Heretic’ referred to in the book’s subtitle. Dash indulges in some liberal speculations about Cornelisz’s possible links with organisations identified as radical, marginal and dangerous by the seventeenth century Calvinist orthodoxy. These groups include Anabaptists, Rosicrucians and groups surrounding charismatic figures espousing heretical antinomian philosophies, but in the footnotes Dash concedes that there is no actual evidence to link Cornelisz with these groups.

Following the conjectural reconstruction of Cornelisz’s background, Dash charts the formation of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) and the background to the voyage of the \textit{Batavia}. Brief biographical sketches of the \textit{Batavia’s} passengers and descriptions of the layout and conditions of the ship are provided in chapter three. Although larger and newer (this was its maiden voyage) than most ships afloat at the time, the \textit{Batavia} sounds like a grimy and crowded vessel whose residents were confronted by a kaleidoscopic variety of dangers and discomforts. At this point Dash describes a series of Cornelisz’s improprieties during the voyage that mark him as a volatile malcontent and foreshadow his extraordinary behaviour following the shipwreck.

The plot thickens in chapter four with Cornelisz spreading amongst the crew his intentions to mutiny and seize the ship. At the same time, Pelsaert fell into an illness that confined him to bed for three weeks. During this time Cornelisz and his circle assaulted a high-status female passenger in an unsuccessful attempt to provoke mutiny by testing Pelsaert’s ability to exercise his authority and punish those involved. To illustrate the determination of the mutineers and the gravity of their actions, Dash describes the imaginative and barbaric punishments prescribed by the VOC that Pelsaert could administer at his discretion. Cornelisz intended to force Pelsaert into taking harsh disciplinary measures that would alienate him from the soldiers and crew. In fact, Pelsaert chose not to discipline or punish the offenders, making his authority over the ship, already weakened by his absence during his illness, now ambiguous though his inaction.

Dash skips over the wreck event, having dealt with this in the prologue, and moves onto describing the situation on the Abrolhos
Islands as the mutiny blossoms into a vicious massacre. Two groups of survivors emerge: the mutineers and majority of survivors on the tiny coral speck now known as Beacon Island, and a group of soldiers (originally sent to find water) on the larger relictual continental surface now known as West Wallabi Island. Twenty-nine days after the shipwreck, Cornelisz and his followers terrorised Beacon Island for a period that lasted about two months and resulted in the death of about 125 people (including infants and pregnant women) through a diversity of violent and devious methods. The terror also included pitched battles between the mutineers and the soldiers. Dash describes the decent into psychotic savagery with cinematic detail and pace; prose that is currently being converted to an ambitious, large-scale feature film for FilmFour by Paul Verhoeven — billed as ‘a real life Lord of the Flies but with adults’.

Chapters five to eight deal with the massacre and in chapter nine Pelsart and some soldiers return from Jakarta to subdue, trial and punish the mutineers. Chapter nine also follows up what became of some of the 116 survivors. The epilogue begins by relating the tale of two mutineers who were stranded on the Australian mainland as punishment and discussing the possibility of their survival and integration with Aboriginal people. This discussion is symptomatic of the book’s greatest weakness, which is its strict reliance on textual evidence at the expense of a richer multidisciplinary approach. In the case of the two stranded mutineers there is some recent linguistic research\(^2\) on the supposed artefacts of Dutch language in mid-west coastal Aboriginal languages that Dash has not cited or discussed.

But this is the least significant omission, given the numerous publications on the archaeological evidence of the \textit{Batavia} shipwreck and massacre. Out of a total of 282 pages of Dash’s narrative, only nine pages discuss archaeological evidence. These nine pages, which equates to about three percent, are clustered amongst the last few pages, suggesting that for Dash, non-textual evidence is less significant than written historical documents. To be fair, Dash is a trained historian and his handling of historical materials is efficient and well-founded, as the hundred pages of notes and references testify. However, over 15 years of archaeological excavation and analysis of the wreck site and the land sites has resulted in more than a dozen publications and undergraduate theses which Dash has only selectively and briefly explored. I would argue that for a detailed and convincing construction of the historical and social context of the \textit{Batavia} events, a critical reading of cultural texts is required, where ‘text’ is not just written documents but also any cultural product.
The text is marred, however, by a few slips of geography. An error on page two has the Batavia steering west after passing Sierra Leone, then crossing the equator and heading towards Brazil and along the coast of South Africa. This account is at variance to the sketch maps in the book and other sources on the ship’s voyage that describe a mid-Atlantic course closer to Africa than South America. In addition, the VOC-prescribed route known as the wagespoor (wagon tracks) is described in the text on page 86 as heading northeast to southwest from the Cape Verde Islands down to the equator but the sketch map correctly shows this section as a northwest-southeast heading. Finally, the sketch map does not show the stopover at Sierra Leone described on pages 85-86, or the route of Pelsart’s voyage from Jakarta to Beacon Island in the Sardam, described on pages 178-180.

Such errors aside, Dash’s book is interesting, entertaining and detailed. The book contains much interesting peripheral historical detail and an encyclopedic collection of background facts relevant to the Batavia that should make it a worthy successor to Drake-Brockman’s book as the standard English-language text on the history of the Batavia. A polymathic interdisciplinary treatment of the voyage and mutiny, however, remains to be written.

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The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Crusades, Jihads, and Modernity by Tariq Ali, prominent Pakistani-born intellectual and editor of the New Left Review, is truly an excellent book. From his insiders’ perspective on Islamic culture and politics, Ali skilfully blends his extensive historical knowledge with personal anecdotes and incisive political commentary, to make an important contribution to the understanding of Islamic history, the rise of militant Islam, and the operation of America’s global empire. The Clash of Fundamentalisms’ attention-grabbing title and cover art (featuring the face of George W. Bush doctored to include an Islamic-style beard and Kufi [cap]) are slightly misleading in regards to the book’s contents. Originally to be entitled Mullahs and Heretics, Ali changed his work’s focus in the aftermath of the 11 September attacks in an attempt to explain