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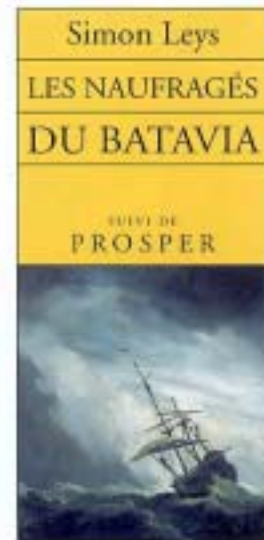


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Simon Leys

Born in 1935, he is an internationally renowned sinologist as well as an essayist and novelist. Member of the Académie Royale de Littérature, he has received many awards for his work.

The *Naufragés du Batavia* relates the story of a Dutch vessel shipwrecked off Australia in the 17th Century. What intrigues Simon Leys about this tragic adventure is not the shipwreck as such but rather the astonishing fate of the survivors. For although there were few casualties, the tyranny under which the survivors lived was exceptionally vicious. Simon Leys believes that in this story he has discovered all the ingredients necessary to any future totalitarian regime: the persuasive madman, a handful of crooks willing to do anything and a preponderance of nice people. This is followed by *Prosper*, an account by the author of his involvement in a fishing trip to Brittany undertaken when he was a young man.



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