

A serious yet entertaining rendering of recent history

The Big Delay

MARC REUGEBRINK

'The Big Delay' is set between 1976 and 1989 and covers the aftermath of '68, coupling the sexual revolution to its political counterpart.

Daniël Winfried Rega, the protagonist, seems incapable of fully understanding what is happening to him. We follow him from his schooldays, influenced by the left-wing spirit of the times in the 'Che' youth club somewhere in the Dutch backwoods, via his time as a vaguely Marxist student, through teacher training in Groningen, to adulthood with vague ambitions and blurred political ideals in West Berlin.

Marc Reugebrink has written a beautiful and important book.

DE GROENE AMSTERDAMMER

Rega sheds his radical plumage more as a consequence of his gullibility than opportunism. He has always been a fellow-traveler. He knows of left-wing guerillas fighting in South America, of Ulrike Meinhof hanging herself in her cell in Stammheim, but he prefers to be involved with his girlfriend, his head trapped blissfully between her legs. It is only fitting that he should eventually end up working in a sex club in Berlin: Das Rote Kabarett. Reugebrink manoeuvres skillfully to the end of the novel as the Wall falls on 9 November 1989.

'The Big Delay' is a serious yet entertaining rendering of recent history, evoked with great precision. A fascinating political novel.

Reugebrink has sublimely combined history, the psychological development of his main character and his sexual yearnings in language that is pretty unique.

NRC HANDELSBLAD



AUTHOR



Marc Reugebrink (b. 1960) is an author, poet and essayist. He was born in the Netherlands but has lived for years in Flanders. His work has been nominated for and crowned with various awards, including the prestigious Gouden Uil for *The Big Delay*. *The Belgian Marriage* is an account of modern Flanders, a novel about identity, differences, being foreign and wanting to belong. *The House of Salmon* is an impressive family novel. *Salt* is a sparkling ecological dystopian fable. *Photo* © Michiel Hendryckx

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