Eduardo del Río (Rius) and ‘Los Agachados’: caricature by comic book

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Abstract

Eduardo del Río, better known as Rius, is Mexico’s, and arguably Latin America’s, most famous political cartoonist. Rius was unique among political caricaturists due to his use of the historieta [comic book] to both satirise Mexican politics and society, and to promote awareness of more universal issues, such as U.S. economic hegemony, socialism, global pollution, and race relations, to name but a few of his interests. Rius produced two historietas, Los Supermachos [The Supermachos, 1966-1967], and Los Agachados [The Stooped Ones, 1968-1977]. The paper will concentrate on Los Agachados, examining how the comic book functioned as a forum for Rius’s worldview.

By constructing a “typical” Mexican village, populated with stereotypical Mexican characters, Rius created an alternative version of Mexico to the one constantly promoted by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), and one more akin to the reality of the average Mexican. Thus, Rius was able to raise the consciousness of his readers, promote his own worldview, and mercilessly satirise such Mexican institutions as the PRI, the Catholic Church, and endemic political corruption and repression.