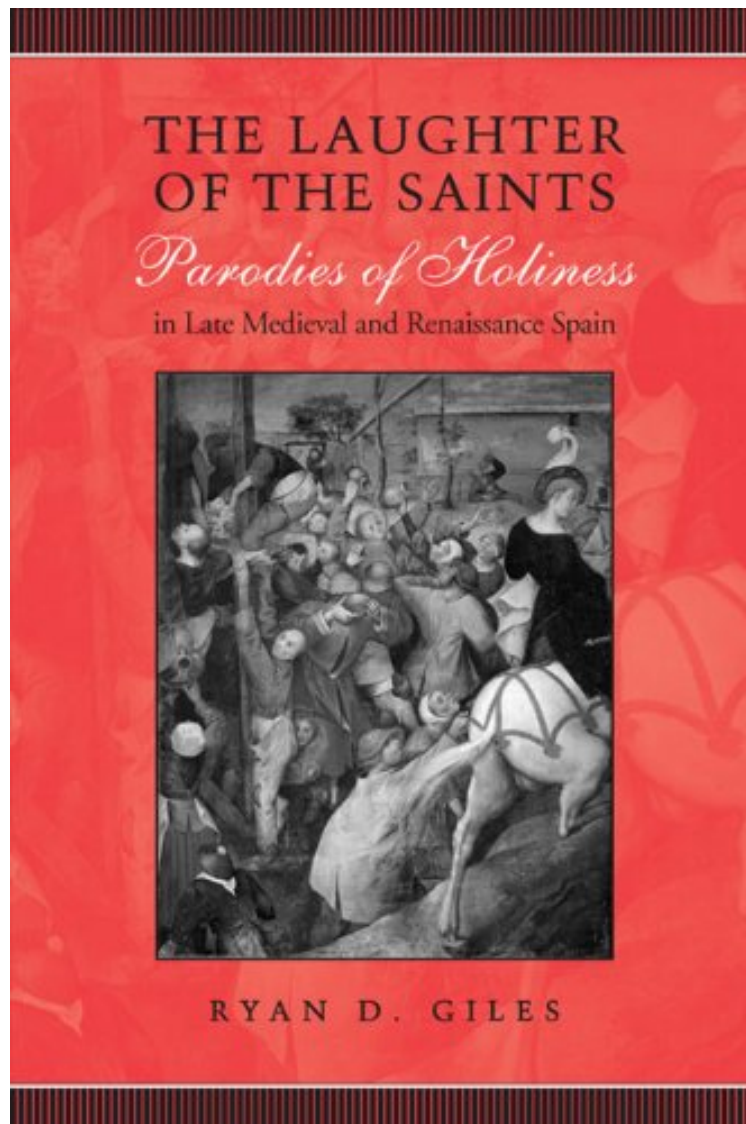


(Download free pdf) The Laughter of the Saints: Parodies of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain

## The Laughter of the Saints: Parodies of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain

Ryan D. Giles

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**Ryan D. Giles : The Laughter of the Saints: Parodies of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Laughter of the Saints: Parodies of Holiness in Late Medieval and Renaissance Spain:

Between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries in Spain, a large number of parodic works were produced that featured depictions of humorous, satirical, and comical saints. *The Laughter of the Saints* examines this rich carnivalesque tradition of parodied holy men and women and traces their influence to the anti-heroes and picaresque roots of early modern novels such as *Don Quixote*. The first full-length treatment of the ways in which Spanish writers imitated religious depictions of saints' lives for comic purposes, Ryan D. Giles' erudite study explores the inversion of oaths, invocations, pious legends, and liturgical devotions. Analyzing a variety of texts from *Libro de buen amor*, to later works such as the *Celestina*, *Carajicomedia*, *Lozana andaluza*, and *Lazarillo de Tormes*, Giles not only sheds light on Golden Age Spanish literature, but also on the origins of the comic novel. A well-argued and convincing work, *The Laughter of the Saints* reveals the uproarious results of the collision of official and unofficial methods of storytelling.

'This volume taught me a lot and had me smiling while I was learning. What more could a reader ask for?' (Ronald E. Surtz, *Speculum: a Journal of Medieval Studies*; vol 86: 04: 2011) 'This is an invaluable work of scholarship which sheds significant new light on the literary uses of saints and their learned and festive connotations in medieval and Golden Age texts... It will allow scholars to appreciate and recreate a prism of reading that was once commonplace but has been eroded by the desuetude of hagiography and the eradication of popular sacred parody.' (Jonathan Bradbury; *The Modern language* : vol 106:04:2011) 'The *Laughter of the Saints* offers a compelling examination of medieval and early-modern parodies of saints... Giles' book is valuable to folklorists in its cultural and textual contextualization of Spanish religious parodies, many of which draw upon rich folklore traditions.' (Steve Stanzak: *Journal of Folklore Research*; June 23, 2011) 'A provocative study... Through interesting analyses, *The Laughter of the Saints* documents how humour and sanctity coincided in medieval and early modern texts without provoking scandal but rather causing audiences, well familiar with the cults of the saints, to reflect upon the link between the sacred and the profane, the saint and the sinner.' (Jane E. Connolly; *Bulletin of Spanish Studies*; vol 88:04:2011) 'Giles's study offers an imaginative and well-researched exploration of 'the kind of humour that was being suppressed and exploited by authorities at the dawn of the modern age', arguing convincingly that the parodic use of saints and religious imagery provided 'a carnivalesque model for the lives of picares and other modernizing anti-heroes.' (Andrea Weisl-Shaw, *Medium Aevum*; vol 80(1) (16)) 'A notable, original work of scholarship, *The Laughter of the Saints* explores the relationship between humor and sanctity. Ryan D. Giles' broad ranging and interdisciplinary work convincingly demonstrates how the sacred and the profane could coexist in secular literary works without provoking scandal, offense, or repudiation. For medieval and early modern readers, the lives of the saints provided crucial points of reference, serving as both critical lens and fun house mirror, through which they could meditate upon and laugh at the intrinsic kinship between sin and virtue. I have no doubt but that this book will mark a milestone in Hispanic Medieval and Early Modern Studies.' (Michael Gerli, Department of Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese, University of Virginia) About the Author Ryan D. Giles is an associate professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at Indiana University, Bloomington.