



The Art of Worldly Wisdom [with active TOC and footnotes]

Balthazar Gracian

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Gracián's style, generically called conceptism, is characterized by ellipsis and the concentration of a maximum of significance in a minimum of form, an approach referred to in Spanish as *agudeza* (wit), and which is brought to its extreme in the *Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia* (literally *The Oracle, a Manual of the Art of Discretion*, commonly translated as *The Art of Worldly Wisdom*), which is almost entirely composed of three hundred maxims with commentary. He constantly plays with words: each phrase becomes a puzzle, using the most diverse rhetorical devices.

Its appeal has endured: in 1992, Christopher Maurer's translation of this book remained 18 weeks (2 weeks in first place) in the *Washington Post's* list of Nonfiction General Best Sellers. It has sold nearly 200,000 copies.

(From Wikipedia)

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