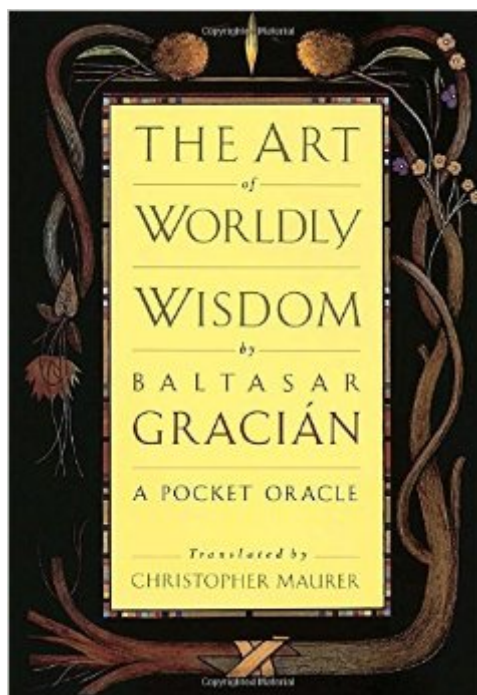


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The Art Of Worldly Wisdom: A Pocket Oracle



Synopsis

The remarkable best-seller -- a long-lost, 300-year-old book of wisdom on how to live successfully yet responsibly in a society governed by self-interest -- as acute as Machiavelli yet as humanistic and scrupulously moral as Marcus Aurelius.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 starsÂ Â See all reviewsÂ (108 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Gracian's "Oracle" as it has been known through the past four centuries has its admirers and detractors, but none may honestly deny its charisma, and, as far as we can tell, eternal, relevance. Gracian himself was an apostate Jesuit, in fact, an early associate of Loyola, i.e., a disenfranchised charter member. One gets the feeling that Gracian was simply too much for his fellows - his insight into their 'sins' too penetrating even for the putatively penitent. In the deepest Augustinian sense - where 'sin' is that which brings us misery - Gracian turns his great insight - that sin is folly & folly is sin - to its most beneficial application in his economic, witty, utile, most often profound guide to prudentia (practical wisdom), that venerable, yet too often elusive, lynchpin of virtue... and success. As Maurer tells us in his informative introduction to what is in my opinion - the definitive English translation (I can vouch only for its impact) - that Gracian learned from his former illustrious associate Aphorism 251: "Use human means as though divine ones didn't exist, and divine means as though there were no human ones". I claim that Gracian uses both - to the most efficacious extent in this slender, but ever deeper masterpiece. To the aphorisms, themselves! I can't list all my favorites. I'd end up hand-copying almost the entire work, and it would take a lifetime to begin

sorting out what might be best. Besides, I'd rather spend my time attempting to apply the wisdom found here, though I can but hope to master the bulk of it, try as I might. More hopefully, bits and pieces of a few will encourage you to pick up a book we might all do well to read more in."The art of moving people's wills involves more skill than determination.

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