

Citation:

Manning, Patricia. "La emblemática jesuítica en *El Criticón*" *eHumanista* <<http://www.ehumanista.ucsb.edu>> 9 (2007): 218-40.

Abstract:

While the impact of the humanistic emblem tradition as embodied by Andrea Alciati's work in Baltasar Gracián's three-part novel *El Criticón* (1651, 1653 and 1657) is well documented, the allegorical novel's relationship with the Jesuit emblem tradition has not been considered in detail. This essay explores the relationship between the emblem tradition of the Society of Jesus as developed in the *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu a Prouincia Flandro-Belgica eiusdem Societatis repraesentata* (1640) and *El Criticón*. In engaging with the Jesuit emblem tradition, Gracián makes secular interpretations of established Jesuit imagery. Not only does this intertextual relationship enrich the interpretation of *El Criticón*, but also explains the Jesuit hierarchy's negative reaction to the novel.

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