The Grand Tour - Young Noblemen Abroad (1668)

Abstract

Between 1657 and 1661, Christian Ernst, Margrave of Brandenburg (1644-1712) embarked on an extensive grand tour, during which he visited France, Italy and the Netherlands. This kind of travel, which often took several years, was common among the nobility and the conclusion to a young nobleman's education. During their travels young noblemen were meant to further refine their courtly manners, forge connections with other noble families, learn foreign languages, and learn to navigate cultural differences. In 1668, Sigmund von Birken published his account of the young margrave's grand tour under the title "The Most Noble Brandenburgian Ulysses," identifying the young nobleman with Ulysses, the ancient Greek hero who had to brave several adventures during his odyssey. However, the cover page shows two different figures from Greek mythology,. On the left is Hermes, the messenger of the gods, who can be identified by his staff with two serpents winding around it and who was to serve as the young margrave's guide and protector on his travels (he became margrave at the age of 11). On the right is Hercules, the prototypical hero long considered the embodiment of martial virtues until the early modern era.

Source

Source: Hochfürstlicher Brandenburgischer Ulysses: oder Verlauf der Länder Reise, welche der Durchleuchtigste Fürst und Herr Herr Christian Ernst, Marggraf zu Brandenburg, ... Durch Teutschland, Frankreich, Italien und die Niderlande ... hochlöblichst verrichtet ; Aus denen mit Fleiß gehaltenen Reis-Diariis zusammengetragen und beschrieben durch Sigmund von Birken. Author/Editor: Birken, Sigmund von, place: Bayreuth, year: 1669, publisher: Gebhard, Signatur: It.sing. 1480 d , http://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10469850-8

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