WEARING THE HAT OF AN OTHER: ALTERITY AND SELF-FASHIONING IN GIOVANNI BENEDETTO CASTIGLIONE'S *ORIENTAL HEADS*

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THESIS ABSTRACT

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In the late 1640s, Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione produced two series of etchings, which historians have named his *Oriental Heads*, depicting a variety of figures in exotic headgear. The persistence of Oriental headdresses throughout the series suggests a pervasive interest in costume on the part of both Castiglione and his society. In the seventeenth-century Western European imagination, the turbaned figure represented the epitome of alterity: the Ottoman Turk. Signed "CASTIGLIONE, GENOVESE," the etchings reveal the artist's important Genoese origins as a part of his artistic identity. Castiglione's eccentric tendencies, especially in his own personal mode of dress, coupled with the prevalence of exotic costume in the *Oriental Heads* speaks to the artist's self-fashioned image as a fashionable, yet controversial eccentric persona. These etchings were tools to attract potential patrons, encourage buyers to purchase the etchings, and above all, to fashion his artistic identity in the international art center of Rome.

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In loving memory of my mother, Gayle Lynne Sabitt (1952-2014).

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In the late 1640s, Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione created two curious series of etchings (figures 1-13) that historians retrospectively refer to as his *Oriental Heads*. At first, the small prints appear to be portraits of exotic individuals, whose foreign identities are indicated by the inclusion of exotic costume: feathered caps, jeweled headdresses, turbans, and floppy caps. The individuals are almost exclusively old (and even elderly) men, though Castiglione provides variety by several including young men, as well as one woman. The figures' faces are highly individualized, as if they could have been real people recognizable in the seventeenth century. Yet, their identities remain unknown and were probably meant to be unknowable. Almost all of the etchings in the two series are signed "CASTIGLIONE, GENOVESE," making the artist's identity an unavoidable aspect of the images. The etchings present a window onto a largely ignored aspect of Castiglione and his oeuvre; offering information about the artist, early modern perceptions of the exotic east, and self-fashioned artistic identities. In spite of this, scholarship has yet to adequately address them. This thesis asserts that Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* are, above all, evidence of the artist's self-fashioned artistic identity.

Castiglione was arguably one of the most celebrated Genoese artists of the Baroque era, yet relatively little is known about his life. He is typically thought of as a landscape painter, and is widely credited as the inventor of the monotype print.[1] Castiglione also printed dozens of etchings throughout his career, typically depicting allegorical subjects, biblical narratives, and mythological scenes. Scholars frequently refer to Castiglione as a “second Rembrandt” specifically in relation to his etchings, citing the stylistic parallels between the two artists. The sketchy lines, dark cross-hatching, and the similarities in subject matter between Castiglione’s *Oriental Heads* and Rembrandt’s countless depictions of Oriental figures are more than enough to explain this nickname.

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[1] For a thorough biography of Castiglione and an overview of his oeuvre, see Timothy Standring and Martin Clayton's *Castiglione: Lost Genius* (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2013), Anthony Blunt, *The Drawings of G.B. Castiglione & Stefano della Bella in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle* (London: Phaidon Press, 1954), Paolo Bellini, *L'Opera incise di Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione* (Milan Ripartizione Cultura e Spettacolo, 1982), and

So far, the only sustained scholarship on Castiglione’s *Oriental Heads* appears in the monographs of Anthony Blunt and Timothy Standring. Blunt’s analysis of the two series focuses almost exclusively on the comparison of Castiglione to Rembrandt.[2] Blunt calls Castiglione’s *Oriental Heads* pastiche, asserting that Castiglione directly copied Rembrandt’s work or imitated his style throughout his career.[3] Blunt dismisses all of the *Oriental Heads* as nothing more than mere copies of Rembrandt’s prints, and remains more interested in Castiglione’s red-brown oil sketches, monotypes, and oil paintings.[4] Blunt devotes most of his discussion to providing accurate dates for Castiglione’s life and major commissions, and treats the Oriental Heads as an insignificant part Castiglione’s oeuvre.

Standring acknowledges that Castiglione was inspired by Rembrandt, but also asserts that Castiglione’s residence in Genoa meant he was constantly exposed to foreign traders circulating

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Ann Percy and Anthony Blunt, *Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione: Master Draughtsman of the Italian Baroque* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1971).

[2] Anthony Blunt. *The Drawings of G.B. Castiglione & Stefano della Bella in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle* (London: Phaidon Press, 1954), 6.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Ibid.

around the port.[5] Like Blunt, Standring focuses primarily on Castiglione's drawings as well as his accomplishments in monotype, but also delves deeper into a discussion of Castiglione's larger allegorical etchings.[6] In his treatment of the *Oriental Heads,* Standring asserts that they demonstrate Castiglione's virtuosity and his ability to work in a variety of styles.[7] While both Standring and Blunt provide helpful and insightful analyses of the etchings, they leave readers unsatisfied, as neither author seems to devote enough attention to the series. This thesis addresses that gap, by providing a proper examination of the works, by placing them in a new Roman context, and by delving more deeply into Castiglione's fascination with exotic headgear. Castiglione's emphasis on Oriental costume and his emulation of Rembrandt, as well as his reputation for dressing himself eccentrically, make the *Oriental Heads* far more significant than scholars have so far indicated; the etchings do nothing less than lay out Castiglione's carefully crafted self-fashioned image as an eccentric, exotic, Genoese artist, an image which he sought to promote through these etchings while living abroad in Rome.

Castiglione's emulation of Rembrandt, though notable, was entirely conventional. Castiglione, a Genoese artist, was constantly exposed to the work of Northern artists. The presence of Northern artists in Genoa was pervasive throughout the early modern period, both because artists like Anthony Van Dyck and Jan Van Roos travelled to Genoa to work, but also because Genoese noble families or churches repeatedly commissioned works by Northern artists such as Peter Paul Rubens.[8] Genoa became a sort of microcosm of the European art world due to the coalescence of so many cultures, a consequence of the city's role as a port and entrepôt.[9] Due to this continued presence of Northern tastes in the Genoese artistic mindset, Castiglione's supposed interest in Rembrandt was not a personal obsession, but was in fact completely conventional. By emulating Rembrandt's style, Castiglione asserted that his own artistic genius equaled that of the Dutch superstar. Furthermore, by imitating the style of a Northern artist in the *Oriental Heads*, Castiglione solidified his reputation as distinctly Genoese by referencing the Genoese artistic taste for Northern styles. Additionally, Castiglione's toponymic signature, "CASTIGLIONE, GENOVESE" appears in all but one etching in the *Oriental Heads*, indicating the Genoese identity of the artist. Castiglione's identity as distinctly Genoese also suggests that as a resident of the entrepôt, he was privy to the quotidian sighting of turbaned traders; therefore, his depictions of exotic foreigners carried an apparent truth-value that would have appealed to the Roman audience.

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[5] Timothy J. Standring, and Martin Clayton, *Castiglione: Lost Genius* (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2013), 81.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

Castiglione's fascination with exotic costume, which manifested itself in his own personal style and in the *Oriental Heads*, carried a complex set of implications about the mysterious East, exoticism, and luxury. The pervasive early modern fascination with and simultaneous anxiety about the Orient throughout Europe is a critical framework for understanding the etchings at hand, as this Eurocentric attitude would have had a strong impact on how the early modern audience perceived the works. The headdresses and costumes included in Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* were a key aspect of these types. Although Standring is surely correct that Castiglione would have seen turbaned figures throughout the port of Genoa, this does not require us to assume that they were produced there; this thesis instead follows (and ultimately, supports) Paolo Bellini's assertion that the etchings were created in Rome.[10] The figures in the etchings are the *invenzione* of the artist's own imagination, presented to a distinctly Roman audience, to whom the individuals depicted would have been the epitome of alterity.

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[8] Blunt, *The Drawings of G.B. Castiglione,* 3-4.

[9] For a cultural and political history of Genoa, see Ezia Gavazza et al., *Genova nell'età Barocca* (Bologna: Nuova Alfa, 1992). See also Kate Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade in the Early Ottoman State: the Merchants of Genoa and Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) for an overview of the economic relationship between Genoa and the Ottoman Empire in the Middle Ages.

By selecting the motif of the "oriental," Castiglione participated in a discourse about the exoticism of the East that appealed to the early modern imagination. The persistence of this turbaned type in oeuvres of other artists including Stefano della Bella, Salvator Rosa, and Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo indicates a sustained interest in the Ottoman Turk across the early modern period. Such images, coupled with the proliferation of literature about Turks reveals a persistent fascination with Ottomans among educated Europeans. The turban became a visual symbol of the Ottoman Turk, which carried important implications of militaristic animosity, the threat of Islam to the Christian West, and simultaneously, associations with luxurious materiality and fascinating cultural practices. Castiglione's repeated inclusion of exotic headdresses in his etchings indicates a keen awareness of these attitudes, which would have made his Roman audience all the more likely to purchase his prints.

Castiglione, like many of his contemporaries, supplemented his painter's income by producing and selling etchings. During his time in Rome, he did this in collaboration with the De Rossi publishing company. Selling printed works also allowed Castiglione to promote his artistic persona in the hopes of earning fame and future commissions.[11] Thus, he signs his etchings "CASTIGLIONE, GENOVESE," asserting his Genoese persona in an entirely conventional way. Castiglione signed his other work sporadically, but his known signatures are almost all from his etchings rather than his paintings or drawings. Castiglione's Genoese signature indicates his concern for his artistic identity specifically in the *Oriental Heads*, strengthening the truth-value of the works by allowing the audience to imagine the artist's presence in the international port city.

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[10] Standring and Clayton, *Castiglione: Lost Genius,* 81, and Paolo Bellini, "Italian Master of the Seventeenth Century," In The *Illustrated Bartsch*, ed. Walter L. Strauss, trans. Shara Wasserman, Volume 46 (New York: Abaris Books, 1985), 48.

Evidence suggests that Castiglione cultivated a flamboyant persona. Commonly known throughout the Italian peninsula as "Il Grechetto," Castiglione dressed in fine yet bizarre costume, as his contemporary Raffaello Soprani explains.[12] This nickname is not especially easy to decipher, but it could either allude to the air of classical antiquity surrounding Castiglione's works, or, as Standring argues, could indicate the artist's "ornate and lavish showiness," somehow connected to a Greek or Byzantine "east."[13] Castiglione's reputation for eccentric costume coupled with the prevalence of eccentric costume in the *Oriental Heads* supports the notion that he created the etchings not only as a way to earn a profit, but also as a mechanism of Castiglione's own self-fashioned identity.

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[11] Due to the constant changes in inflation rates and monetary values, it is impossible to say for certain how expensive the *Oriental Heads* would have been during the seventeenth century.

[12] Raffaello Soprani, *Le Vite de Pittori, Scoltori, et Architetti Genovesi* (Genoa*:* 1674), 223-226. "Il Grechetto" translates to "the little Greek guy."

[13] Standring and Clayton, *Castiglione: Lost Genius,* 12. For more on what it meant to be distinctly "Greek" during the seventeenth century, see Estelle Lingo, *François Duquesnoy and the Greek Ideal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007). Though Lingo's book is specific to sculpture, her close examination of artistic perceptions of the *maniera greca* is particularly insightful.

In his seminal study *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*, Stephen Greenblatt argues that in the early modern period there was a heightened awareness of "self-consciousness about the fashioning of the human identity as a manipulable, artful process."[14] This process of crafting a persona Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* speak to the artist's self-fashioned identity, which he constructed through the inclusion of exotic costume and through his prominent signature, "CASTIGLIONE, GENOVESE." By dressing in a lavish way, inserting ornate headgear into his etchings, and asserting himself as specifically *Genovese*, Castiglione crafted his identity in several overlapping ways. His process of self-fashioning was unconventional, but hardly unprecedented; many other artists in *seicento* Italy such as Caravaggio and Salvator Rosa performed in a similar way, often treating the streets as theaters to display their eccentric personas.

Greenblatt aptly argued, "Self-fashioning is achieved in relation to something perceived as alien, strange, or hostile. This threatening Other- heretic, savage, witch, adulteress, traitor, Antichrist- must be discovered or invented in order to be attacked and destroyed."[15] But Castiglione did not define his identity as opposed to an Other, as Greenblatt illustrates. Instead, Castiglione incorporated alterity into his identity, embracing it to demonstrate his eccentricity. In the Western European imagination, the turbaned figure was the epitome of the alien, which had already been invented prior to Castiglione's creation of the *Oriental Heads,* in the many European images of turbaned figures associated with the Ottoman Turk. In the etchings, and in his own life, Castiglione put on the hat of the Other in order to appear eccentric, exotic, and above all, interesting. The complex implications of this convention will be the primary focus of this thesis.

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[14] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 2.

[15] Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning,* 9.

CHAPTER II

VISUAL EVIDENCE OF CASTIGLIONE'S VIRTUOSITY

Before addressing the social and historical context of Castiglione's *Oriental Heads*, a close visual analysis of the works themselves should first be established. Throughout the series, Castiglione presents a wide variety of figures and compositions, revealing his creative genius and technical virtuosity. Some of the figures appear in a traditional portrait-style composition, while others are composed more theatrically. The variety of ways in which Castiglione used line and dramatic chiaroscuro indicate his ranging technical ability with his etching needle. Likewise, the range in emotion across the *Oriental Heads* creates a virtuosic diversity within the series. Examined together, *A Man in an Oriental Headdress* (fig. 2), *A Man in an Oriental Headdress with other studies* (fig. 10), and *Head of a Man Plunged in Shadow* reveal the diversity in the etchings.

In the *A Man in an Oriental Headdress* (fig. 2), Castiglione adopts a traditional portrait-style composition. The man appears in three-quarters view, gazing towards the left side of the work. Castiglione depicts the man in bust, wearing a scarf around his neck. Negative space frames his head, calling attention to the man himself as the central subject of the work. The single bust, in either three-quarters view or in complete profile, was a conventional composition for portraits in the Renaissance and Baroque era; Castiglione's adaptation of this standard composition indicates his awareness of traditional portrait practice.

Looking more closely, Castiglione's subtle variation in line reveals his technical skill as an etcher. The dark crosshatching in the man's clothing extends toward the left side of the composition, and blends into a dark framing device. The crosshatching along this framing device transitions from many short, straight lines to a series of rounded lines that gradually disappear into the negative space. Castiglione's use of crosshatching not only created the illusion of the three-dimensionality of the figure depicted, but also reveals the artist's creativity in his use of the medium.

The man's beard shows yet another way in which Castiglione used the etching needle. The lines that make up the man's facial hair are subtly differentiated from the crosshatched background, and are a series of short, curly marks. These marks distinctly resemble facial hair, almost as if Castiglione intended to represent each individual hair. The figure's beard gently blends into his scarf, which Castiglione rendered through a series of straight lines that echo the folds of the fabric itself. The variety in Castiglione's use of line is evidence of both his technical virtuosity and of his creativity.

In these passages, and throughout the print, Castiglione paid close attention to the details. The man's ear appears almost at the center of the composition, rendered in lightly drawn lines that stand out against the darker shading in the headdress and in the beard. Each individual fold, nook, and cranny in the man's ear is conspicuously depicted, as Castiglione demonstrated his nuanced understanding of the details of human anatomy. In the man's headdress, Castiglione used the etching needle in yet another way. The tassel that hangs in front of the man's forehead appears soft, and is composed of a series of many short lines etched closely together. The tassel at the back of the head is more string-like, and could easily be either a feather or a bit of hair. The fabric of the turban itself has a series of small folds, depicted by long lines that travel in the same direction, indicating that the headdress is made of one piece of fabric, wound many times around the man's head. By incorporating so many different types of line in this etching alone, Castiglione presented a technically complex image that also created an interesting level of variety in the series, which surely would have appealed to the early modern viewer.

In another print, the *Man in an Oriental Headdress with other studies* (fig. 10), Castiglione's composition becomes more playful. The slightly sad facial expression reveals the artist's emotional range, while the detailed lines in the headdress again reveal the artist's technical skill. The short, rounded lines and the strong use of negative space within the feathers of the headdress create a sense of volume. Additionally, the lighter shade of the feathers, suggested by the negative space, indicates a light source somewhere above the man's head. A shadow slightly obscures the figure's face and his downward gaze almost appears melancholic. Unlike many of the other images throughout the series, Castiglione left most of the background untouched, and devotes less attention to darkly-rendered framing devices than in the image previously discussed (fig. 2). Instead, he takes a more spirited approach to this image, treating the space surrounding the man as a secondary space to insert playful drawings.

To the far left of the sheet, a small image of a man in profile appears; the artist depicted this smaller figure through a series of brief, choppy lines that almost make him seem elusive. Castiglione also inserted an image of a horse's head in the wispy lines underneath the bust. To the right of the horse's head, the artist inserted a study of a right hand. These tiny elements of the work could easily be missed without a close examination, providing a more complex, yet equally playful image. The inclusion of hidden images within the composition again demonstrates Castiglione's skill as an etcher, but also creates a greater variety of images within the series.

Some of the etchings throughout the two series are far more theatrical. In Castiglione's *A Man Looking Downwards* (fig.12), the lines verge on chaotic, yet they still indicate three-dimensional forms and depth. The man faces the lower left corner of the work, and wears a feathered headdress that blends seamlessly into the background. The variation in the shape and length of the lines reveal the presence and skill of the artist's hand, and almost seem spontaneous. Throughout the background of the work, Castiglione alternates between straight, short lines, and scribbled, more curvilinear lines. His crosshatching becomes darker on either side of the figure's neck, indicating a recession of space. The form of man's body is barely apparent, as the neck fades into the dark background. The intentionally frenzied lines throughout the work unify the composition, and demonstrate Castiglione's technical ability.

Furthermore, Castiglione's use of negative space in the etching contributes to the sense of drama. A sliver of blank space lingers under the figure's face, calling attention to the emotional expression of the man. The figure squints his eyes, and barely opens his mouth in a slight smile. Castiglione left the upper-left corner of the work untouched, save his signature, effectively framing the man's headdress. The subtle smirk of the man speaks to the variety in emotion throughout the series. The expressive, emotional aspect of the work coupled with the dark, shadowy background creates a theatrical quality about the etching that appears repeatedly throughout the series.

This theatricality takes its fullest form in the series in the *Head of a Man Plunged in Shadow* (fig. 4). The work presents a culmination of Castiglione's dazzling technical skill, theatricality, and above all, his self-fashioned image. The figure's face is difficult to make out due to the dark crosshatching, but upon closer examination, the man appears to gaze directly at the viewer. Like so many of the other images in the series, this man wears a feathered headdress and simple scarf. His long hair extends outward on the left and right side of his head, indicated by wavy lines that create the illusion of curly hair. The hat obscures part of the man's face, creating a sense that he is hiding from the viewer.

The crosshatched background includes long, straight lines, short, curved lines, and overlapping areas of the two. As in *A Man in an Oriental Headdress* (fig. 2), the bust of the figure gradually fades into the dark background. Framed by a careful use of negative space, the man in *Head of a Man Plunged in Shadow* appears confrontational due to the direct eye contact, but also is hidden from view in a theatrical way.

The *Head of a Man Plunged in Shadow* bears striking similarities, as yet unnoted in the scholarship, to the image that most scholars accept as the self-portrait of the artist (fig. 22).[16] The similar type of headdress worn by both figures, the similarly shaped noses, and the equally aggressive eye contact seen in this image create strong parallels between the two images. While it is impossible to assert with full confidence that either (or both) of these etchings is truly a portrait of the artist, both images seem to speak to Castiglione's interest in self-fashioning. The repeated appearance of exotic headgear and the technical skill present in both of these works were important aspects of Castiglione's self-fashioned artistic image, which will be fully explored in Chapter V.

In *Head of a Man Plunged in Shadow*, Castiglione demonstrates the full effect of his artistic ability. As previously described, etching is inherently a linear medium; yet, in this image, the individual lines virtually disappear, and instead become dramatic three-dimensional forms. In the etching, Castiglione presents his dazzling technical ability, as the man shimmers between definition and obscurity. The man's eyes subtly emerge from the shadow, creating an air of mystery about the figure in a playful way. When considering this work along with the presumed self-portrait as allusions to Castiglione's self-fashioned identity, the true significance of *Head of a Man Plunged in Shadow* is easier to ascertain. And if he did include his own face in the series, this has interesting implications that corroborate and enhance the reading of the series as an act of self-fashioning. With or without the self-portrait, through the *Oriental Heads* Castiglione presented his artistic identity as a technically brilliant artist, who, as a resident of Genoa, could present images of turbaned, exotic figures in a more authoritative way than an artist working inland. The exoticism of the figures in the series and Castiglione's reputation for eccentricity were both important components of his self-fashioned persona, which he used to advertise himself as an interesting, Genovese artist while abroad in Rome.

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[16] The latter is referred to as a "presumed" self-portrait because Ann Percy has cast doubt on whether this is Castiglione himself, or a portrait of someone else. Most other scholars tend to agree that this etching is probably a self-portrait, but it should be noted that there is some discrepancy on this issue. For Ann Percy's stance on this image, see Ann Percy, *Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione: Master Draughtsman of the Italian Baroque* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1971).

CHAPTER III

EMULATING REMBRANDT IN ROME

Some scholars call Castiglione the "second Rembrandt" because of the stylistic similarities between the two artists.[17] This comparison, although apt in the context of the *Oriental Heads*, creates two major problems: first, by referring to Castiglione's works as derivative, it suggests that his etchings functioned in the same way as Rembrandts'; second, it fails to address the true significance of this relationship between a Genoese artist and a Dutch artist. Castiglione's fascination with Rembrandt's *tronies* could have been a result of his interest in the Dutch's artist's style and subject matter.[18] Rather, this thesis argues that Castiglione's evocation of Rembrants's *tronies* was far more intentional. Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* reveal the artist's self-fashioned image specifically through the striking similarities to Rembrandt's *tronies*. By emulating Rembrandt's *tronies*, Castiglione suggested that his technical skill was equal to that of the internationally famous Dutch prodigy. The resultant works, moreover, would have appealed to a learned audience who were already aware of Rembrandt's works.

Anthony Blunt and Timothy Standring both compare Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* to Rembrandt's *tronies*, and while this comparison is stylistically true, it creates a few obstacles to interpreting Castiglione's works. Castiglione's works did not function in the same way as Rembrandt's *tronies*, and although Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* certainly resemble Rembrandt's *tronies*, it would be incorrect to apply this same term to the etchings in question. The term is specific to the Northern genre of character heads that often functioned as studies of facial expressions or were preparatory drawings for later paintings, though they later became a popular category of works in their own right.[19] Scholars have not yet established a single cohesive definition of *tronies*, but they generally agree that it was a distinctly Northern phenomenon.[20] The Italian word *teste* ("heads") is more fitting when discussing Castiglione's works, as it acts as a broad umbrella term that can encompass many different types of images.[21] Castiglione's *teste* are not studies of facial expressions, but instead are a series of anonymous, sometimes theatrical near-portraits, which were a more significant part of the artist's oeuvre than scholars suggest.

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[17] See Anthony Blunt *The Drawings of G.B. Castiglione and Stefano Della Bella in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen at Windsor Castle* (London: Phaidon Press, 1954) and Timothy Standring and Martin Clayton *Castiglione: Lost Genius* (London: Royal Collection Trust, 2013).

[18] For more on *tronies*, see Dagmar Hirschfelder's essay "Portrait or Character Head: the Term Tronie and its Meaning in the Seventeenth Century" in *The Mystery of the Young Rembrandt.* (Amsterdam: Museum het Rembrandthuis, 2001), 82-91. *Tronies* are typically translated as "character heads" or "ugly mugs" and were studies of facial expressions. The figures in these types of images are generally anonymous, hence the distinction between *tronies* and portraiture.

First, it is crucial to consider Rembrandt's effect on Castiglione, and what this may reveal about the implications surrounding the *Oriental Heads*. Castiglione's inspiration from Rembrandt is most apparent in a sketched study of heads from between 1635 and 1640 (fig. 14). The five heads on the left of the sheet are copies of figures in Rembrandt's 1636 etchings *Ecce Homo,* clearly demonstrating that Castiglione was directly studying and even copying Rembrandt's works early in his career.[22] The figure on the right in the furred cap is not a direct copy, but is an iteration of Rembrandt's etching after Jan Lievens (fig. 15). The similarities between the two figures are most apparent in the headdresses, both of which are vaguely turban-like, but are topped with what might be feathers or fur. Both figures also have small beards and fur capes, although Castiglione's rendition is less detailed than Rembrandt's. Castiglione thus began studying Rembrandt's busts as early as 1635, and continued to emulate this style in the *Oriental Heads* roughly 10 years later.

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[19] Hirschfelder "Portrait or Character Head," 82-91.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Additionally, the term *tronies* often implies a keen interest in facial expression, and often exaggerated facial expressions. Few images in Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* have explicitly emotional expressions, distinctly separating these Italian images from contemporary Northern *tronies*. Similar to Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* was Salvator Rosa's allegorical figures and 'heads,' which scholars refer to as *teste*.

[22] Standring, *Castiglione: Lost Genius*.

There is a great deal more significance behind Castiglione's interest in Rembrandt than a simple case of stylistic inspiration. Northern artists held a firm grasp on the Genoese artistic imagination during the seventeenth century, and "northernness" was a significant facet of the Genoese artistic identity. As Anthony Blunt briefly mentions, the Genoese routinely interacted with Northern artists, who either travelled to Genoa themselves or received commissions from Genoese.[23] Anthony Van Dyck spent time in Genoa from 1621 to 1627, and worked with a number of Genovese artists during this time, including Castiglione himself.[24] Perhaps more significant for Castiglione was the influence of Jan Roos, who resided in Genoa from 1614 to 1638, and whose pastoral animal landscape type Castiglione quickly adopted.[25] Genoese clergy commissioned Peter Paul Rubens to paint *The Circumcision* 1605 for the Chiesa del Gesù in the heart of the oldest part of the city. As these examples show, the presence of Northern artists in

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[23] Blunt, *The Drawings of G.B. Castiglione,* 1-15.

[24] Ibid., 4.

[25] Ibid. Blunt explains that Jan Roos was in Genoa between 1614 and 1638, and as a result of his studies under Frans Snyders, Roos often painted large compositions dominated by animals. Roos' compositions were dissimilar to those by Genoese artists such as Sinibaldo Scorza or Castiglione, because Roos favored a more grand "baroque manner." Blunt also asserts that Roos' pastoral landscapes were directly adapted by Castiglione, who favored the topos throughout his career.

Genoa was an integral part of the Genoese artistic world by the time Castiglione appeared on the scene.

Rembrandt was not the only artist who had a lasting impact on Castiglione's work. Early in his career, Castiglione studied under Giovanni Battista Paggi, and later under Anthony Van Dyck and Sinibaldo Scorza. Scholars generally agree that Paggi had little stylistic impact on Castiglione, but as his studio became a place of collaboration among many different artists, it exposed Castiglione to a wide array of personalities and styles. Just as Castiglione became fascinated by Rembrandt's etchings, Scorza too found inspiration in the work of Northern artists such as Jan Bruegel the Elder. The adaptation of Northern styles and popular Northern subject matter was a prominent, even defining trend in *seicento* Genoa, and Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* are just one instance of this pervasive pattern. Although no written record of Castiglione's interest in Rembrandt's work remains, the *Oriental Heads* and Castiglione's drawings of heads stand as testimonies to this fascination with his Dutch contemporary.

Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* resemble Rembrandt's *tronies* not only because Castiglione admired Rembrandt's skill, but because he created the *Oriental Heads* specifically to reference his own Rembrandt-ness. According to Blunt, Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* were merely copies of Rembrandt's Oriental busts. Yet, none of the images in the *Oriental Heads* can be directly traced to Rembrandt's work, and therefore it is inaccurate to consider them as copies. Not only was Castiglione himself aware of Rembrandt's work, but so too were many of his contemporaries in the Italian peninsula.[26] Rembrandt's works circulated so widely throughout

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[26] Christopher White, *Rembrandt as an Etcher: A study of the Artist at Work* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 256-257.

Europe that it became difficult for artists to ignore his work.[27] Collectors in Italy and France became keenly interested in Rembrandt's work in the mid-seventeenth century, and a large number of Italian artists greatly admired Rembrandt's skill as a printmaker.[28] Castiglione, Stefano Della Bella, and Guercino were just a few of the artists directly interested in Rembrandt's etchings, the latter writing in 1660, "I have seen divers of this printed works which have appeared in these parts which are very fine, engraved in good taste and in a good manner… I frankly deem him to be a great virtuoso."[29] Clearly, Italian artists admired Rembrandt's technical abilities. Castiglione's imitation of Rembrandt's etchings was a calculated attempt to being recognized as a "second Rembrandt," both in terms of the striking stylistic similarities as well as the continuation of the popular subject of the so-called "Oriental" bust. At the same time, Castiglione's signature attests to his clear intention to not be confused with Rembrandt.

Castiglione's imitation of Rembrandt also provides an interesting indication of what it meant to be distinctly Genoese as an artist in the seventeenth century. Genoa had become an artistic microcosm due to the strong presence of Northern Renaissance and Baroque artists in the city, and the repeated collaborations between Northern and Genoese artists during the early modern period had a powerful impact on the city's artistic identity. In this context, Castiglione's emulation of Rembrandt was a leveraging and multiplying of the conventionally understood artistic identity of Genoa.

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[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] As translated by Christopher White in *Rembrandt as an Etcher*, p. 156. Originally from Corrado Ricci, *Rembrandt in Italia* (Milan: Alfieri & Lacroix, 1918), 30.

Another important but debated aspect of Castiglione's *teste* is the time and location of their creation. Initially, Anthony Blunt stated that the etchings appeared in the 1630s, but did not provide any explanation behind his reasoning for this date.[30] Timothy Standring offers a new date of the mid to late 1640s, which seems more apt because this was the same period of Castiglione's career when he began to work extensively in etching.[31] Standring's dating is far more likely, largely because the *Oriental Heads* demonstrate a mastery of etching, a medium that Castiglione only began to seriously concentrate upon in this decade. The works do not appear to be an early experimentation in etching, but rather the work of an experienced artist with advanced understanding of how to wield his burin. For example, *A Man in an Oriental Headdress* (fig. 1) is a meticulously constructed composition. The negative space evenly frames the man's face, and the scribbled quality of the line darkens its edges to reveal depth. The chiaroscuro of the crosshatching suggests that Castiglione had a great deal of experience with etching, and thus the date of 1645-1650 supports the creation of these works in the middle of Castiglione's career.

Although many of the exact dates of different events throughout Castiglione's life have not been conclusively secured, scholars agree that he spent time in both Rome and Genoa during the 1640s.[32] This later date is corroborated by his publishing of multiple etchings in Rome, including *Diogenes Searching for an Honest Man* (fig. 17) and *The Genius of Castiglione* from

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[30] Blunt, *The Drawings of G.B. Castiglione,* 6.

[31] Standring, *Castiglione: Lost Genius*, 81.

[32] One of the major issues facing scholars of Castiglione's work is the striking lack of primary documentation on the artist's life, works, and career. Much of the primary documents that do exist are court documents, as Castiglione was a rather fiery, sometimes violent individual who at times encountered problems with the law. This noted violence certainly became a part of Castiglione's eccentric character.

1648, both of which were published through the De Rossi Publishing Company (fig. 16).[33] Though some scholars disagree on exactly where the *Oriental Heads* were created, Paolo Bellini has argued convincingly that the *Oriental Heads* were created in Rome upon Castiglione's return to the papal city in 1648.[34] Castiglione worked more extensively in etching than any other media during his Roman residence, and few of his etchings have ever been traced to his time spent in Genoa. Therefore, his shift to working more frequently in etching while in Rome supports Bellini's assertion that Castiglione produced the *Oriental Heads* in Rome.[35] Although the subjects of the series may indeed have been inspired initially by Castiglione's residence in the port city of Genoa as Standring has suggested, they functioned much differently in the Roman context.[36]

Almost every etching from the *Oriental Heads* series is signed "CASTIGLIONE, GENOVESE" which would seem to corroborate the creation of the etchings in Rome, rather than Genoa.[37] Additionally, Blunt too cites this form of signature as one that Castiglione used specifically while abroad.[38] By distinctly identifying himself as specifically "Genovese" in his signature, Castiglione literally stated his national (and thus his artistic) identity.[39] As Creighton Gilbert eruditely demonstrates, artists' signatures can function both as a way to assert their own identities in their artwork, and as a claim of ownership over their work.[40] Furthermore, Castiglione only signed his work sporadically throughout his career, making the consistent use of his signature in the *Oriental Heads* especially notable. Additionally, many of his signed works created in Genoa, his hometown, are only signed "Castiglione." Therefore, the inclusion of "Genovese" in the *Oriental Heads* supports their creation outside of Genoa, and more likely in Rome. Castiglione was fairly well known throughout Genoa at the time the *Oriental Heads* were printed, and a signature that specified "Genovese" would therefore be redundant within the port city, again suggesting Rome as a more likely place of creation.

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[33] Standring, *Castiglione: Lost Genius,* 65. For more on the De Rossi publishing shop, see Francesca Consagra, "The De Rossi family print publishing shop: A study in the history of the print industry in seventeenth-century Rome" (PhD diss., Johns Hopkins University, 1993).

[34] Bellini, "Italian Master of the Seventeenth Century," In The *Illustrated Bartsch,* 48. Bellini is not the only scholar who asserts the Roman-ness of the *Oriental Heads*. However, others such as Anthony Blunt and Bartsch do not go so far as to assert that the works were started and printed in Rome; instead, Blunt and Bartsch offer that Castiglione may have begun the series while in Genoa, and finished the works in Rome. These scholars are in agreement that the works were at least completed and printed in Rome. Additionally, Standring, the only scholar who emphasizes Castiglione's creation of the etching in Genoa, sets forth the assertion without any substantial evidence to make such a claim.

[35] Because no frontispiece for the *Oriental Heads* remains, it is unclear as to whether they were formally published like Castiglione's other etchings.

[36] Standring, 81.

[37] Bellini, 48.

The implications of the design for a Roman primary audience serve as a context for the remainder of this thesis. In a distinctly Roman context, Castiglione's etchings take on a completely new meaning. In them, not only was he aligning himself stylistically with Rembrandt to assert his technical virtuosity, but he was also enforcing the perception abroad of Genoese art as a style distinguished and enriched by its Northern influences. Castiglione's repeated assertion of his Genoese identity in the *Oriental Heads* also meant that his depictions of turbaned, exotic figures were more authoritative than those created by an artist from an inland city. By identifying himself as the resident of a port city, Castiglione made his etchings easier to interpret as eyewitness accounts of real Turks, making the etchings even more appealing.

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[38] Blunt, 6.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Creighton Gilbert "A preface to signatures (with some cases in Venice)" in *Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art*, ed. Mary Rogers (Brookfield: Ashgate, 2000), 79. Gilbert also raises a more broad question of whether artists' signatures in Renaissance works are specific to commissions out of his or her own city of residence. As Gilbert explains, this question is nearly impossible to answer yet, and one can only speculate. Even so, this possibility is especially compelling to consider in the case of Castiglione's signatures, which specify his identity as "Genovese."

Additionally, by signing the Rembrandt-esque busts as “CASTIGLIONE, GENOVESE,” Castiglione cultivated a self-fashioned image of a skilled, specifically Genoese artist who depicted figures in exotic “Oriental” headdress. Although the exotic costume may have seemed normal to Castiglione while residing in Genoa, by producing these works in Rome, his works follow the popular Western perception of turbans as the epitome alterity.[41] Furthermore, just as Castiglione used the conception of Genoa to fashion his identity, at the same time, he also fashioned the identity of Genoa itself. By emphasizing the multiculturalism of the entrepôt, Castiglione’s *Oriental Heads* disseminated images of the hybridity of Genoa itself to a distinctly Roman audience. The turbaned bust participated in a pan-European phenomenon, and functioned as an abbreviated symbol of the complex stereotypes of the Ottoman Turk.

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[41] Throughout the early modern era, artists produced an enormous cache of images of turbaned figures, which were often synonymous with the Ottoman Turk. The scope of this body of images is far too vast thoroughly address here. For more on this topic, see James G. Harper *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye* for a collection of essays that discuss the varied ways in which the Ottoman Turk became the epitome of the Other in the Western mind. Specifically, see Heather Madar’s “Dürer’s depictions of the Ottoman Turks: A case of early modern Orientalism?” in *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye*, ed. James G. Harper (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 155-183, which discusses the image of the turban in printed material.

CHAPTER IV

TURBANS AND TURKS IN *SEICENTO* ITALIAN *TESTE*

Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* are only one example of small busts of figures in exotic headdress produced in Italy in the mid-seventeenth century. Along with these visual emblems of the fascination with exoticism, literature of the period revealed the same Western interest in the figure of the Ottoman Turk. Images of Oriental figures varied greatly during this period. At times, the Turk appears as the Antichrist, bringer of the apocalypse, and ultimate villain.[42] At other times, artists depicted Western Europeans in "Oriental" costume, which had become a fashionable trend in Northern Europe.[43]

The only theme that consistently appears throughout Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* is the inclusion of exotic headdress. Most of the figures wear elaborate turbans or feathered hats, while others wear loosely wound fabric that resembles a turban. The ethnographically recorded facial features of many of the figures as well as the types of costume that appear throughout the series suggest that these Oriental figures conjured up the image of the Turk as the fascinating, exotic Other during the early modern period. Some scholars question the possible physiognomic reading of the images; while Castiglione may certainly have included facial features informed by his understanding of ethnography, the physiognomic aspect of the works is too speculative to pursue in this project.[44] Castiglione does not pass judgment on the characters of the figures in the *Oriental Heads*, as "physiognomy" would imply, but instead simply presents a variety of individuals in exotic costume. This chapter probes the question of how the typical *seicento* Roman viewer may have perceived the inclusion of Oriental headdress in the etchings. Images of so-called "Oriental" figures that treat Islamicate cultures as foreign, exotic and fascinating appeared repeatedly throughout the early modern period; the scope of this body of images is far too great to thoroughly explain here, but a few particularly salient images provide an important context in which to consider Castiglione's etchings.

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[42] For one particularly salient case of images that present the Turk as the antichrist, see Heather Madar "Dürer's depictions of the Ottoman Turks: A case of early modern Orientalism?" in *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye*, ed. James G. Harper (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 155-183.

[43] James G. Harper, Introduction to *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye*, ed. James G. Harper (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 1.

One of the major difficulties for such an inquiry is the state of scholarship on the artistic environment of Genoa. Certainly, art historians have long studied Genoese artists such as Castiglione, yet one major question remains unanswered: what exactly did it mean to be distinctly Genoese in the seventeenth century? As previously demonstrated, the artistic influence of Northern styles had a strong impact on the artistic world of the port city. Additionally, the multiculturalism inherent to any port city is a critical context to consider. The relationship between Genoa and the Ottoman Empire was, in many ways, similar to that of Venice and the Ottoman Empire. The long-standing economic ties between Genoa and the Ottoman Empire had a dramatic impact on how the Genoese perceived the Turk. Just as Venetians developed amicable relations with Ottomans, Genoese merchants had a long history of both travelling to the Ottoman Empire and interacting with Ottoman merchants and agents in Genoa. For Castiglione, figures in

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[44] Anthony Blunt's essay in *Castiglione and Stefano Della Bella at Windsor Castle* and Timothy Standring's monograph *Castiglione: Lost Genius* both mention the possible importance of physiognomy for Castiglione's works, but neither establishes what a physiognomic reading might reveal. Additionally, Castiglione's works do not judge the character or morality of the figures based on their appearance, as physiognomic readings tend to do. For a clear example of how physiognomy was thought to dictate one's character, see Giambattista della Porta's *De Humana physiognomia libri III* from 1586.

Oriental dress would have been an almost banal sight around his hometown, as Ottoman traders came to Genoa consistently since the Middle Ages.[45] However, for Castiglione's intended audience in Rome, the figures depicted in the etchings would have been more exciting, and would have seemed the epitome of alterity. Thus, Castiglione's Genoese origins differentiated him both in terms of his awareness of Northern artists, as the previous chapter highlighted, and in terms of his heightened awareness of turbaned foreigners. His ability to observe real Ottoman Turks around the port city gave his *Oriental Heads* an important truth-value that the early modern viewer would have appreciated.

For much of Western Europe, the Ottoman, whether specifically or generally described, came to stand in for all "Easterners." The Turk became the stereotypical Islamic Eastern figure in the Western imagination, largely as a result of Ottoman expansion throughout the Mediterranean.[46] As Mustafa Sokyut argues in his book *Image of the "Turk" in Italy: A History of the "Other" in Early Modern Europe, 1453-1683*, Europeans typically identified Islam with the Ottoman Empire; for the Catholic European, this association led to the vilification of the Turks as heretics, with Islam itself viewed as a "diabolic degeneration of Christianity."[47] During the seventeenth century, the tremendous quantity of published books, pamphlets, manuscripts and travel accounts presenting information on the Turks indicates that there was a high demand for this type of publication, and a constant interest in the Ottoman Turk.[48] Much of this information was to greater or lesser extent inaccurate, because few early modern authors were genuinely interested in providing truthful representations of Ottomans.[49] Rather, they were motivated by a desire to appear knowledgeable about the exotic East, as were the readers of these publications; by claiming to understand the cultural customs of Turks, Europeans sought intellectual power over the East.[50] Information about Turks was rarely substantially updated, and was almost never the result of a first-hand encounter.[51] Authors often learned from what was previously written by other Europeans, perpetuating a Eurocentric approach to understanding (or misunderstanding) Islamicate cultures. Although Edward Said's seminal text *Orientalism* pertains to a different, later period, his erudite analysis rings true in this context:

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[45] Kate Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade in the Early Ottoman State: the Merchants of Genoa and Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 1-3.

[46] Harper, Introduction to *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye*, 3.

[47] Mustafa Sokyut, *Image of the "Turk" in Italy: A History of the "Other" in Early Modern Europe, 1453-1683* (Berlin: Klaus Schwarz Verlag, 2001), 3-17.

> [The Orientalist attitude] shares with magic and with mythology the self-containing, self-reinforcing character of a closed system, in which objects are what they are *because* they are what they are, for once, for all time, for ontological reasons that no empirical material can either dislodge or alter. The European encounter with the Orient, and specifically with Islam, strengthened this system of representing the Orient and … turned Islam into the very epitome of an outsider against which the whole of European civilization from the Middle Ages on was founded.[52]

Ottoman Turks were by no means the only Islamicate peoples circulating throughout Genoa (and, more broadly, throughout Western Europe) in the early modern period. Yet the turbaned figure was always initially identified as an "Ottoman Turk" for reasons already illustrated, and due to Genoa's important relationship specifically with the Ottoman Empire. During the Middle Ages Genoa earned a reputation as a powerful trade center, both through imports and exports. In her book, *European and Islamic Trade in the Early Ottoman State*, Kate Fleet provides an in-depth examination of the intimate economic relationship between Genoa and the Ottoman Empire, revealing that Genoa established trade posts in Asia Minor to trade specifically with the Ottoman Empire.[53] During the fourteenth century, Genoa established ports throughout the islands of the coast of Anatolia, as well as on the mainland, including posts at Chios, Lesbos, and Phokaea.[54] As the Ottoman Empire expanded in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, these Genoese ports eventually all fell under Ottoman control.[55] Just as Venice developed an intimate connection with the East through trade, the Republic of Genoa relied heavily on its relationship with Ottoman traders to thrive economically. This prolonged period of contact was a critical component of the Genoese identity, and Castiglione's exposure to Easterners in his hometown meant that he knew more about their foreign customs than much of his audience did. Castiglione's portrayal of turbaned figures was therefore authoritative by the standards of the time, and would have been perceived as such in Rome, as residents of the papal city encountered Ottomans much less frequently than the Genovese were thought to do.

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[48] For more information on the Turk in the Western European imagination, see Sokyut's *Italian Perceptions of the Ottomans: Conflict and Politics through Pontifical and Venetian Sources* (Frankfurt: Peter Lang GmbH, 2011).

[49] Sokyut, *Image of the "Turk" in Italy*, 4.

[50] Ibid., 40-49

[51] Ibid., 4.

[52] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), 71.

Yet, the creation of the *Oriental Heads* in Rome implied a different attitude toward the East than Castiglione may have held in Genoa. Rome was a relatively non-commercial culture, and its stock in trade was doctrine and dogma. The long history of military and religious differences between Rome and the Ottoman East meant that for a seventeenth-century Roman, the Turk was not a banal figure, but rather a despicable one. After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, Italians saw the threat of Ottoman, and therefore Muslim, expansion westward as threatening the very existence of Christianity itself.[56] While some of these sentiments also existed in Genoa and Venice, in these mercantile cities the fear of the Ottoman Empire's expansion was balanced by the pragmatic interest in trade.

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[53] Kate Fleet, *European and Islamic Trade in the Early Ottoman State: The Merchants of Genoa and Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 4-6.

[54] Ibid., 4.

[55] Ibid., 9-12.

Sokyut aptly summarizes the range of European response to the Turks:

> For centuries, from the very beginnings of interactions between the Muslims and Christians, Turks represented for the European, the "other" *par excellence*. To the Protestant, it represented the evilness of the Catholic; to the Catholic, the heresy of the Protestant; the man of the Renaissance identified the Turk with the Persians as enemies of the Greek civilization, and of the European civilization per se; to the Church in Rome. They were the archenemies of Christendom to wage war at all costs; and to Venice, an indelible "infidel" commercial partner, with whom amicable relations were of vital importance for its very existence.[57]

In this passage, Sokyut's assertion that Venice needed amicable relations with the Ottoman Empire rings equally true for Genoa. The threat of the Ottoman Turk did not disappear from the European imagination until the Ottoman Empire ceased to be seen as a formidable threat, and was very much alive and well in the seventeenth-century Roman imagination.[58] This sociological background helps in understanding visual material that relates to the Turk, such as Castiglione's etchings.

Castiglione's headdresses functioned as imagined, Eurocentric symbols of the Other, crafted by a European for a European audience. Images of exotic headdress had long functioned in this way. Castiglione, like so many others before him, revealed his use of what Roland Barthes calls a "vestimentary system," in which the language of clothing reveals complex historical messages, which can be deciphered through a close examination of costume.[59] As Heather Madar explains in her essay "Durer's depictions of the Ottoman Turks: A case of early modern Orientalism?" printed material in the fifteenth century explicitly linked turbaned figures with the idea of the Turk, creating and participating in an iconography of the Ottomans.[60] Madar goes on to argue that popular printed material perpetuated this iconography, and distilled the idea of the "Turk" into this type of headdress.[61] She states that:

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[56] Sokyut, *Image of the "Turk" in Italy*, 45.

[57] Ibid., 5.

[58] Ibid., 45.

> …subtleties and nuances in dress variations, visible in some panel paintings and costume studies of this period, tend to be overlooked in the more popular printed propaganda. This is clearest in the depiction of turbans in broadsheet illustrations, which tend to be generic and bear little resemblance to actual contemporary turban types. Indeed, these turbans often appear as haphazard folds of cloth wound carelessly around the heads of their wearers.[62]

Madar's idea of visual "visual shorthand" is explicitly applicable to Castiglione's *Oriental Heads*, which are not the result of careful observation of real turbaned figures, but instead are *invenzioni*, derived from creativity and observations of artistic representations of Oriental costume.

Castiglione was by no means the only Italian artist producing images of unidentified, lavishly clad Oriental figures. Stefano della Bella also produced many drawings and prints of anonymous turbaned figures. For example, his 1662 etching titled *Two Turks in Turbans* (fig. 23) depicts two bearded men in simple garments with beards and massive turbans. Similar to Castiglione's *Oriental Heads*, della Bella's composition features only the two turbaned figures, surrounded by negative space. Their theatrically large turbans speak to della Bella's clear interest in their costume, and specifically in their distinctive headdresses.

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[59] Roland Barthes, *The Language of Fashion,* trans. Andy Stafford (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013), 4.

[60] Heather Madar, "Durer's depictions of the Ottoman Turks: A case of early modern Orientalism?" in *The Turk and Islam in the Western Eye* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011), 159-160.

[61] Madar, "Durer's depictions of the Ottoman Turks," 160.

[62] Ibid.

The artistic fascination with turbaned figures persisted into the eighteenth century and beyond. Around 1770, Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo produced a series of etchings of turbaned men, similar stylistically in quality of line and composition to Castiglione's, with one striking exception: Tiepolo's figures face *away* from the viewer, making the turban the focal point of the work (fig. 20, fig. 21). By turning the sitters in such a way that their faces become invisible, the artist leave the headdress as the only distinct identifying element in the etchings, effectively becoming the very identity of the figures.

Additionally, a striking parallel exists between Salvator Rosa's *teste di fantasia* and Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* (fig. 18).[63] Rosa produced his *testacce* at exactly the same time that Castiglione created the *Oriental Heads* (in the late 1640s), and gave these works as gifts to his friends in Florence.[64] Rosa's *teste di fantasia* varied, and included philosophers, Turks, soldiers and bandits, all of which were types rooted in the *seicento* interest in exoticism.[65] One may easily think of Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* as an extension of this same genre, albeit produced in etching rather than painting and drawing.

As Madar demonstrates, the turbaned figure functioned differently in printed material than it did in more grand-scaled paintings. This trend is distinctly visible in Castiglione's oeuvre, as his paintings often include turbaned figures as peripheral characters, and sometimes as protagonists like the Three Magi. The turbaned figure persists throughout his oeuvre, appearing in later oil paintings and his red-brown oil drawings, but only becomes the sole focus of a composition in etchings.[66] In some of Castiglione's more well-known etchings such as *The Genius of Castiglione* (fig. 16) and *Diogenes Searching for an Honest Man* (fig. 17)*,* some of the same headdresses from the *Oriental Heads* appear again. *Diogenes* could easily be the same old man seen in *A Man in an Oriental Headdress*, as evident in the facial features and headdress with a tassel in front (fig. 2). Diogenes was a Greek philosopher, and Castiglione's treatment of Diogenes as an Eastern, exotic figure speaks to the broader tendency to treat Greeks as Eastern, as Greece was geographically closer to the Ottoman Empire than most of Western Europe, and by Castiglione's time was largely ruled by the Ottoman Empire.

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[63] Helen Langdon, "Portraits and 'Heads'," *Salvator Rosa* (London: Paul Holberton, 2010), 104.

[64] Ibid.

[65] Ibid.

As the previous chapter described, Castiglione's experiences in many different artists' studios meant that he was exposed to a remarkable amount of visual material throughout his career. The body of work visible in the studios of Van Dyck, Paggi, and Strozzi would have been broad. By the time he created the *Oriental Heads*, Castiglione had travelled to Rome, Naples and Florence; thus, the variety of different depictions of Oriental costume Castiglione may have observed, both in artistic representations and real experiences is significant. Rather than questioning the degree of verisimilitude in Castiglione's turbaned figures, it is more productive to consider the individuals as a turbaned *type*, which perpetuated throughout Rembrandt's work as well as the oeuvres of Italian artists including Rosa, Castiglione, and Stefano Della Bella.

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[66] For a complete overview of Castiglione's oeuvre, see Paolo Bellini's catalogue raisonné, *L'opera incisa di Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione* (Milan: Ripartizione Cultura e Spettacolo, 1982).

In the early modern period, Western artists travelled to the Ottoman Empire to create costume books of "Turks," leading to a proliferation of these costume books that claimed accurate knowledge of Ottomans. Many costume books were simply iterations of earlier costume books, and the practice of copying was very much alive and well.[67] In fact, even Ottoman artists eventually began copying from the costume books created by Western artists when depicting sultans.[68] Bronwen Wilson explains that Ottoman artists from the late fifteenth century through the nineteenth century depicted rulers using iconographic types intended to convey physical traits; specifically, Islamic artists believed that overt likeness in portraiture was seen as a "'reflection' of the person, devoid of his soul," and therefore should be avoided.[69]

Yet, the individuals in the costume books never wear the same type of feathered headgear that appears throughout Castiglione's etchings. Therefore, these books were likely not the real inspiration for Castiglione's *teste*, but simply reflect the general interest among the audience in understanding Ottoman customs.[70] In addition to costume books such as *Foggie Diverse di Vestire de'Turchi*, there was also an enormous number of travel books published, written by individuals who had allegedly travelled to the East themselves. For example, Pietro della Valle published his *Viaggi* in Rome in the 1650s after travelling to the Middle East and India; the book quickly became widely popular among educated Italian readers.[71] These literary sources speak to the same captivation with the Orient that led to the production and sale of, Italian *teste*.

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[67] Bronwen Wilson, "Foggie diverse di vestire de'Turchi: Turkish Costume Illustration and Cultural Translation" *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 37 (Winter 2007), 97-139.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

[70] In *Image of the "Turk" in Italy: A History of the "Other" in Early Modern Europe, 1453-1683,* Mustafa Sokyut delves deeper into the demand for information about Ottoman Turks among the intellectuals in Western Europe, evidenced by the proliferation of texts about the costume and style of Turks in fifteenth and sixteenth-century Italy.

Just as the authors and illustrators of travel books and costume books were unconcerned with accurately depicting Oriental cultures, artists too perpetuated turbaned types and continued to copy one another. Castiglione's etchings clearly display this lack of concern for accuracy, and instead reveal the early modern fascination with the exotic East. Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* include images of young men, old (or even elderly) bearded men, androgynous turbaned figures, and a single etching of a woman. The variation in the figures depicted in the series is not because Castiglione observed many different exotic figures, but was a way for him to create a diverting and virtuosic variety throughout the series. As the works were likely produced in Rome, Castiglione would have sought to vary his images as much as possible to appeal to potential buyers and patrons. Additionally, the diversity throughout the series allowed Castiglione to flaunt his technical ability as an etcher, as described in Chapter II. The anonymity of the figures and the persistence of exotic headgear solidify the place the etchings hold in the Western imagination as depictions of Ottoman Turks as generic "Easterners" who constantly captivated the imagination of Western Europeans.

The two images in the *Oriental Heads* series that probably depict the same young man include a fairly simple turban, seemingly constructed from one long piece of fabric wound quickly around the figure's head (fig. 5 and fig. 6).[72] Interestingly, the figure appears much more expressive in the latter of these two etchings (fig. 6). This emphasis on facial expression may indicate any number of things, but most clearly seems to speak to the artist's ability to represent the drama of a man crying out in anger, pain, or sadness. The other image of the same figure (fig. 5) depicts the young man lowering his head, his face half shrouded in shadow; the man's lowered eyes seem more solemn than the previous image. By depicting the same man in two distinct ways, Castiglione revealed his artistic skill as well as his constant concern for headdress evocative of the Turkish type. This simplistic turban is a clear example of Heather Madar's assertion of a "long-established visual shorthand," and the schematic distillation of a complex set of stereotypes and overtly Eurocentric attitudes into a simple hat.[73]

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[71] Langdon, *Salvator Rosa*, 104.

[72] When examining these two images side by side, it becomes quickly apparent that both images likely depict the same young man. The only real difference between the two etchings is the facial expression and the pose of the figure.

In the *teste,* though the older men are more common, Castiglione includes one image of a woman to diversify the etchings (fig. 7). On the most basic level, her gender alone distinguishes her from every other image included in the *Oriental Heads*. Her facial features are entirely disparate from any of Castiglione's other images in the series, and are far less individualized than those of the male figures.[74] Her conical turban extends dramatically, and is covered in tassels, feathers, and jewels. Despite this exotic costume, her facial features do not conform to those of the other figures, but instead appear distinctly Greek, as her subtly elongated nose and heavily lidded eyes conjure images of classical antiquity in a manner similar to many other early modern depictions of the ancient Greek profile.[75] Castiglione's interest in classical antiquity was echoed by other artists working in Rome at the time, such as Poussin.[76] Though, as Estelle Lingo demonstrates, scholars are still unsure how to define the *maniera greca*, Castiglione's indication of his awareness of "the Greek manner" surely fits into the *seicento* taste for all things classical.

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[73] Madar, "Dürer's depictions of the Ottoman Turks," 160

[74] Throughout his oeuvre, Castiglione rarely depicts women as a central subject. Yet, his few other etchings of women resemble the female from the *Oriental Heads* in terms of her facial features. For a good example, see Castiglione's *Circe with the Companions of Odysseus Transformed into Animals*, an etching from around 1650 (fig. 24).

[75] Estelle Lingo, *François Duquesnoy and the Greek Ideal* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 1-5.

Interestingly, other artists such as Stefano Della Bella created vaguely similar depictions of women in exotic headgear. For example, Della Bella's *Sultaness* (fig. 19) from 1649-1650 is a helpful parallel to Castiglione's etching, as they were created at exactly the same time. She too wears a large, jeweled turban, and her facial features give no indication of a recognizable identity as Greek, Ottoman, or otherwise. Della Bella's *Sultaness* is a continuation of the same type of figure as the figure in Castiglione's etching of an exotic woman in headdress, a type which the learned Roman audience of the day associated with exoticism. Yet, the woman in Della Bella's etching does not appear invented, like Castiglione's turbaned woman; instead, she could easily be a real, recognizable person, who happens to be wearing an exotic headdress. She is almost certainly not a Turk. Both Della Bella's *Sultaness* and Castiglione's *A Young Woman wearing a Turban* may also relate to the well-known inclusion of ethnically diverse subject peoples in a sultan's harem. After the Ottoman Empire expanded into Western Europe in the Balkans in the fifteenth century, Greeks became the subjects of the Ottoman Empire. The appearance of a Greek woman in an Ottoman harem in the early modern period was therefore entirely plausible, and even conventional. Moreover, for Western audiences the theme carried a titillating quality. Artists often depicted Western women in harem scenes, imbuing an air of mystery and eroticism surrounding ethnically European women in exotic harems. Castiglione's etching of a female figure may speak to these stereotypes, intensifying the exoticism that he perpetuated throughout his etchings.

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[76] Estelle Lingo, *François Duquesnoy and the Greek Ideal,* 1-2.

Castiglione's, Della Bella's, Rosa's and Tiepolo's images of anonymous turbaned figures all speak to a pervasive interest in Oriental costume, which had come to represent the complex, Eurocentric attitudes towards the Ottoman Empire held throughout much of Western Europe. The distillation of the varied perceptions of the Ottoman Turk into a simple headdress divulges the unambiguous pattern of Western Europeans who sought to intimately understand the Turk, but ended up knowing mostly stereotypes that had been perpetuated for centuries. Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* are merely one example of the countless works of art that reveal much more about the culture in which they were created than the culture they depict.[77] As Edward Said argues, images like this are not accurate because they are not trying to be accurate.[78] This is true for Castiglione, who employs imagery of exotic Others in order to craft his own artistic persona as an exotic eccentric figure.

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[77] Harper, 1.

[78] Said, *Orientalism*, 71.

CHAPTER V

CASTIGLIONE'S SELF-FASHIONED IMAGE

Aside from participating in general European exoticist trends, Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* index the artist's exotic, eccentric identity. Signed "CASTIGLIONE, GENOVESE," the etchings suggest that Castiglione not only sought to establish himself as a virtuoso, but they also reveal a great deal about his self-fashioned artistic persona.

In *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: from More to Shakespeare*, cited in the introduction to this thesis, Stephen Greenblatt describes the early modern phenomenon of "fashioning" a distinct style or persona, asserting that in the early modern period intellectually ambitious individuals created their identity in an explicitly intentional way.[79] He explains this phenomenon as an "increased self-consciousness about the fashioning of human identity as a manipulable, artful process," and specifically defines this creation of identities in his study of Tudor literature.[80] Greenblatt's definition is directly applicable to visual material culture as well, and is consistently at play throughout early modern images. Art historians of early modern European art have extensively studied the phenomenon of self-fashioned identities in recent years, echoing a similar definition of "fashioned" identities in visual material.

In the introduction to a collection of essays about the same topic, Joanna Woods-Marsden delves into artistic self fashioning, stating that "every painter paints the self" and "every artist writes his persona," specifically in the early modern period.[81] She goes on to provide a particularly helpful description of artistic self-fashioning in the following:

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[79] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 2.

[80] Ibid.

> The terms that defined self-fashioning in the Renaissance theatre of life belonged to the same category as those that characterized the production of illusory art, and the emerging human persona was judged as fictional an entity as the emerging work of art. Successful illusion is the best characterization for both the human and the artistic product, whether the living person in actuality, or the persona who continued to live through the art.[82]

Following Woods Marsden's usage of the term "illusion," Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* should be examined as an attempt by the artist to convince his audience that he was just as eccentric as the figures depicted. Furthermore, by treating early modern self-fashioning as illusory, Woods Marsden begins to address the lack of distinction between image and reality so crucial to understanding self-fashioned artistic identities.

During the early modern period, distinctions between art and reality were far more blurry than they are today. Rupert Shepherd illustrates that it is almost impossible to understand exactly early modern viewers would have perceived images at the time a given work was created; yet, he also argues the following in the broad context of Renaissance viewers' perception of art:

> … there was a much greater tendency to conflate a depiction with the thing it depicted than there is nowadays. This conflation could, on occasion be so extreme as to lead to the viewer (mis)taking the image for the thing it depicted. The viewer might even … treat the image as if it were itself alive, as if it *really were* the thing it depicted.[83]

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[81] Joanna Woods Marsden, "Introduction: collective identity/individual identity," in *Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art*, ed. Mary Rogers (Brookfield: Ashgate, 2000), 13. Woods Marsden translates these two quotes from the Italian "ogni dipintore dipinge se" and "ogni artista scrive se."

[82] Woods Marsden, "Introduction: collective identity/individual identity," 14.

[83] Rupert Shepherd, "Art and life in Renaissance Italy: a blurring of identities?" in *Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art*, ed. Mary Rogers (Brookfield: Ashgate, 2000), 64.

This is not to suggest that the buyer of the *Oriental Heads* etchings truly thought the figures were alive, or even that the prints had any sort of *trompe l'oiel* effect. Rather, Shepherd's assertion reveals the strength of the connection between images of exotic Others presented in the etchings and the persona of Castiglione himself. Specifically, Castiglione sought to fashion an exotic, eccentric artistic identity.

Raffaello Soprani's 1674 *Le Vite de Pittori, Scoltori, et Architetti Genovesi* is one of the only surviving documents providing contemporary information about Castiglione's life, reputation, and persona.[84] In a three-page treatment, Soprani praises Castiglione's artistic abilities, and primarily describes him as a skilled painter.[85] Toward the end of Soprani's description of Castiglione, he describes his personality as both plagued by anger, as well as cheerful and humorous, explaining, "When [Castiglione] was not oppressed by his own wickedness, he was truly cheerful and merry, jestful."[86] Additionally, Soprani describes Castiglione's sense of fashion, asserting that he dressed in rich yet bizarre clothing.[87] Soprani's description of Castiglione paints an image of a man driven by intense emotions, both good and bad, with a propensity for eccentric clothing. Soprani's *Vite* thus elucidates the perception of Castiglione as a strange, eccentric figure, which is directly reflected in the *Oriental Heads*.

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[84] Raffaello Soprani, *Le Vite de Pittori, Scoltori, et Architetti Genovesi* (Genoa*:* 1674), 223-226.

[85] Ibid., 223-224.

[86] Ibid. 225. Soprani's brief description of Castiglione's personality readings as follows: "E per non tacere quelle parti cospicue, le quali andavano dal pari con la di lui virtù dirò che la sua conversazione, quando non era oppresso dal male era veramente allegra, e festosa, motteggiava, e godeva di quelli passatempi, che lecitamente si possovo avere. Vestiva in gioventù abiti di valore, e mostrando bizzarria, e presso d'essi, non si scansava di spesa veruna, mentre splendidamente manteneva sua casa."

[87] Ibid.

Castiglione was just one of the countless artists in the early modern period with a reputation for eccentricity. Artists were often thought of as "eccentric," which could mean angry, peculiar, fantastic, bizarre, capricious, whimsical, and even charming.[88] Eccentricity was essentially part and parcel to the persona of the Renaissance and Baroque artist. Many viewed eccentricity among artists as desirable and even fashionable, and in the mid-sixteenth century, artists began to commingle with the social and intellectual elite.[89] By the time Castiglione appeared on the scene, his eccentricity was a key component of his identity as an artist, and his opulence and extravagance also conformed to fashionable expectations of the day.

Additionally, Castiglione's presentation of his eccentric persona through printed imagery was an important component of the artist's self-fashioned identity. Other artists working in Rome in the mid-seventeenth century created prints for a few important purposes; the first purpose was to sell the prints for fairly affordable prices, earning a small income from works on paper rather than relying exclusively on larger commissions. The second purpose was to advertise the virtuosity of the artist, thereby encouraging potential patrons to commission paintings. Additionally, some artists, such as Salvator Rosa, created etchings in the hopes that consumers would believe the print to be a copy of an earlier painting, and may then inquire about the original painting.[90] In Rosa's case, he explicitly signed his prints "Salvator Rosa Inv. pinx. scul."

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[88] Rudolph and Margot Wittkower, *Born Under Saturn: The Character and Conduct of Artists: A Documented History from Antiquity to the French Revolution* (New York: Random House, 1963), 67.

[89] Ibid.

[90] Jonathan Scott, *Salvator Rosa: His Life and Times* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 149.

(Salvator Rosa composed, painted, and engraved), clearly promoting the range of skill which he sought to promote.[91]

It follows that Castiglione would have utilized his skill in etching in a similar way. The *Oriental Heads* reveal Castiglione's technical skill in etching, a medium that he explored to advertise his artistic ability.[92] Castiglione published some of his other larger etchings through the De Rossi family publishing company, one of the leading distributors in Rome at the time, and sold these works for a small sum.[93] For example, one of his most well-known works, brazenly titled *The Genius of Castiglione*, sold for 10 *baiocchi,* a fairly low price compared to other prints distributed by the De Rossi company at the time (fig. 16).[94] The lower price of these works was likely because Castiglione was less well-known in Rome than some of his contemporaries, like Poussin, whose prints sold for much higher prices.[95] Similar to Rosa's prints, Castiglione's etchings were not copies of his paintings, and instead would have been used to advertise his virtuosity, in this case to a primarily Roman audience. While little primary documentation exists on the *Oriental Heads*, one may easily imagine that these small works could have been sold inexpensively, both as a way for Castiglione to support himself monetarily, and as an assertion of Castiglione's artistic ingenuity to attract potential patrons.

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[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid., 153.

[93] Ibid., 151.

[94] Ibid. There were 100 *baiocchi* to the *scudo.* Converting these costs to twenty-first century currency is an impossible task due to constant fluctuations in the value of currency during the early modern period, but Scott indicates that 50 *baiocchi* was a typical price for larger, more elaborate print. Scott's prices come directly from the De Rossi catalogue of stock available in 1700.

[95] See Francesca Consagra, "The De Rossi family print publishing shop: A study in the history of the print industry in seventeenth-century Rome" for more on the publishing company.

As previously discussed, the artist's signature was a powerful tool Castiglione used to craft his artistic identity. During the early modern era, few artists signed all of their works; in most cases, signatures often only appear in a small fraction of an artist's works.[96] Creighton Gilbert explains that signatures can be seen both as an artist's way to convey his or her identity through his or her work, as well as an artist's claim of ownership over the work itself.[97] Gilbert suggests that artists often signed their works they produced while out-of-town, and were less concerned about signatures while working in their hometown.[98] Castiglione may be an example of this phenomenon, especially due to his inclusion of "Genovese." It would seem redundant for Castiglione to sign his works in this way while in Genoa, where his audience is always "Genovese."

Castiglione, who was known around Italy more commonly as "Il Grechetto" in the seventeenth century, never signed his work with this nickname. While there may indeed be some interesting meanings behind this nickname, this was not the name Castiglione necessarily chose himself. Scholarship repeatedly states that Castiglione's nickname "Il Grechetto" was a result of his flair for dressing like an Armenian, meaning he wore a black cassock and a brimless stovepipe hat on occasion.[99] Yet, others argue that the nickname spoke to the classical air that surrounded Castiglione's works, insinuating a direct association between the *seicento* understanding of what it meant to be "Greek," and classical antiquity itself. This is further supported by Estelle Lingo's research, as she explains that artists and collectors did not seem to share a cohesive understanding of what the *greca maniera* truly meant.[100] Rather, as Poussin's oft-quoted passage from a letter states, "Those fine old Greeks, who invented everything that is beautiful, found several modes by means of which they… had the power to arouse the soul of the spectator to diverse emotions."[101] This perception of the Greek manner is particularly relevant to Castiglione himself, who was probably aware of Poussin as a result of the time both artists spent in Rome. To the seventeenth-century audience, "Grechetto" could easily have suggested an affinity for classical antiquity, or alternatively a certain air of exoticism. Additionally, it is notable that the Byzantines had previously occupied modern-day Greece, but during the fifteenth century had fallen under Ottoman control by conquest. The Ottoman expansion during the early modern era may therefore clarify how the *seicento* Roman would have understood the nickname "Grechetto."

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[96] Creighton Gilbert, "A preface to signatures (with some cases in Venice)" *in Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art*, ed. Mary Rogers (Brookfield: Ashgate, 2000), 79-86.

[97] Creighton Gilbert, 79.

[98] Gilbert, "A preface to signatures," 80. Gilbert correctly states that explaining signatures as indications of out-of-town commissions is often done as nothing more than speculation, and also explains that signature studies remain fairly understudied aspect of art history. He advocates for studying signatures as a methodology in and of itself, but also recognizes some of the major difficulties facing such a study. See also Anthony Blunt, *Castiglione and Stefano Della Bella at Windsor Castle*, 6. Blunt hypothesizes that Castiglione's signature as "Genovese" might be indicative of work that he produced while abroad.

Castiglione's nickname could easily have carried both of these implications, conjuring ideas both of classical Greece and contemporary Greece, which was held under Ottoman control during the mid seventeenth century.[102] Because Castiglione signed his works with his proper name rather than "Il Grechetto," and so frequently inserted his identity as specifically "Genovese," his signatures speak more explicitly to his own self-fashioned image than his colloquial nickname, which the artist himself never distinctly identifies with in his work.

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[99] As translated by Timothy Standring in *Castiglione: Lost Genius*, p. 12. Originally from Niccolò Pio, *Le Vite de Pittori, Scultori ed Architetti*, ed. Catherine Enggass and Robert Enggass, (Città del Vaticano : Biblioteca apostolica vaticana, 1977), p. 177. Although it is nearly impossible to establish the exact way in which Roman viewers perceived the nickname, it is certainly possible that it may have simply been a vague, colloquial reference to Castiglione's "Eastern-ness."

[100] Lingo, *François Duquesnoy and the Greek Ideal,* 1-5.

[101] Ibid.*,* 5.

As the preceding chapters demonstrated, the turbaned figure in the seventeenth century evoked images of the Ottoman Turk as the epitome of the fascinating foreigner. If Castiglione's intention was indeed to promote his own artistic virtuosity through the etchings, he was certainly wise about his advertising strategies. Potential Roman buyers (or even patrons) would have been intrigued by the exotic figures depicted, and therefore more likely to purchase the images. Just as contemporaries like Salvator Rosa produced etchings as advertisements, Castiglione probably created the *Oriental Heads* with the same purpose in mind. The etchings were easily reproduced, sold for a low price, and, as some of the figures reappear in the later more valuable etchings, may also have promoted the sale of these later etchings.

The prevalence of exotic costume throughout Castiglione's *Oriental Heads* as well as the personality described by Soprani both elucidate Castiglione's affinity for eccentricity. Castiglione was certainly not the only artist who was distinctly aware of promoting a specific identity; Salvator Rosa was another artist working at the same time as Castiglione, who is often described as an eccentric. Rosa was also known for his affinity for theater and drama, and even publicly *acted* like an eccentric Neapolitan. He was known for parading through the streets of

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[102] Additionally, both the nickname "Il Grechetto" and the artist's signature "CASTIGLIONE, GENOVESE" may simply distinguish between Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione and the writer Baldassare Castiglione, who died nearly one hundred years before Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione was born. Baldassare Castiglione was also fairly well known during the late 1640s, specifically through *The Book of the Courtier*, which was published in 1528 in Venice. This book quickly became the definitive source on the Renaissance court. I have not come across any indication that Giovanni Benedetto was related to Baldassare.

Rome, dressed as a Neapolitan nobleman as if to display himself as a wealthy, distinctly Neapolitan character to the Roman public.[103] Though Castiglione was not necessarily known for parading in a similar manner, his tendency to wear fine yet "bizarre" clothing can easily be seen as a method of what Mary Rogers calls "playacting."[104] Both Rosa and Castiglione were foreigners working in Rome, who sought to establish themselves as more than artists; their eccentric identities manifested themselves in their own lives as well as their art.

Artistic self-fashioning happens most obviously in self-portraiture, so it seems apt to return to Castiglione's presumed self-portrait. This print stylistically and thematically falls into the same category of *teste* that speak to the artist's self-fashioned image (fig. 22). In it, the figure scholars have identified as Castiglione appears wearing a floppy cap with a feather, not unlike the headdresses that appear in the *Oriental Heads*. His intense eye contact with the viewer both suggests this work is indeed a self-portrait, and also reveals the intensely emotional personality Soprani highlighted. Again, Castiglione decidedly depicts himself in the high quality yet bizarre costume described by Soprani. As discussed in Chapter II, there are striking similarities between this possible self-portrait and *Head of a Man Plunged in Shadow* (fig. 4), and it is worth considering the possibility that the latter is also a self-portrait. .

The confrontational gaze of the presumed self-portrait (fig. 22) echoes Soprani's description of Castiglione's personality, as he was known for being quick to anger.[105]

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[103] Helen Langdon, et. al., *Salvator Rosa* (London: Paul Holberton, 2010).

[104] Mary Rogers, "Fashioning identities for the Renaissance courtesan," in *Fashioning Identities in Renaissance Art*, ed. Mary Rogers (Brookfield: Ashgate, 2000). Rogers explains that *fingendo* (from the verb *fingere*) was often used to describe self-fashioning in Renaissance literature about the courtesan. Her English translation to "playacting" is a fitting description of the sort of public acting carried out by Salvator Rosa and Castiglione.

[105] Soprani, 225.

Additionally, as Standring notes, the eccentric, exotic costume present in this etching represented Castiglione's known flair for all things exotic.[106] Early modern self-portraiture is the epitome of artistic self-fashioning. If this chain of speculation is correct, Castiglione literally inserts himself into the *Oriental Heads*, further establishing the series of etchings as emblems of the artist's self-fashioned image.

Castiglione's *teste* present the turbaned figure as the mysterious, alluring and foreign Other, both to entice buyers to purchase the artist's work as well to promote himself as an equally exotic, eccentric artistic personality. Castiglione's affinity for exotic costume, present both in the etchings and the artist's own mode of dress, suggests a keen interest in promoting himself as an eccentric. Soprani attests to this same persona in his *Vite*, which firmly establishes Castiglione's tendency for "playacting." Exotic headdress had become a symbol of the Orient, an association that Castiglione heavily relied upon as he fashioned his eccentric, Genovese identity. The artistic identity that Castiglione fashioned was, as Wittkower tells us, a stylish persona to promote as an artist in the seventeenth century. In this way, Castiglione's self-fashioned image speaks to not only his own eccentricities, but also the tastes of seventeenth-century Europe, and fulfills the expectation that artists at their very best were eccentric figures.

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[106] Standring, 65.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

By re-contextualizing the prints within a pervasive trend of turbaned *teste* in *seicento* Italy and beyond, Castiglione's presentation of his self-fashioned artistic identity within the *Oriental Heads* becomes more apparent.

Castiglione fashioned his own identity using a few important strategies already explicated. By emulating Rembrandt's Oriental busts, Castiglione successfully asserted the Genovese taste for Northern influences through the etchings. Not only was he advertising his ability to emulate Rembrandt's etchings in style and subject matter, but he also signs his works specifically as "CASTIGLIONE, GENOVESE" in order to draw attention specifically to his Genoese origins. Castiglione's images speak to the unavoidable fascination with the Ottoman Turk that permeated throughout early modern Europe, as learned Europeans actively sought to understand the Turk, both through literary and visual means. Castiglione's turbaned figures belong to a long-establish "visual shorthand," which simplified the early modern conception of the Ottoman Turk into a single type of garment.[107]

Soprani's description of the artist's persona supports the idea of Castiglione as an eccentric. Castiglione's tendency to dress in a "bizarre" way was a sort of early modern dress-up, as he sought to convey a specific identity through his fashion choices. This was entirely conventional for an artist at the time, and may have made Castiglione appear all the more appealing to his audience.

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[107] Heather Madar "Dürer's depictions of the Ottoman Turks: A case of early modern Orientalism?" 155-183.

By considering Barthes' idea of a "vestimentary system," one can understand more clearly Castiglione's use of costume to convey complex historical messages.[108] In the case of Castiglione, the *Oriental Heads* suggest a fascination with seemingly exotic or "Oriental" headdress. For Castiglione, costume was a tool to attract potential patrons, encourage buyers to purchase the etchings, and above all, to fashion his artistic identity in the international art center of Rome.

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[108] Roland Barthes, *The Language of Fashion,* trans. Andy Stafford (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2013), 4.

APPENDIX

FIGURES

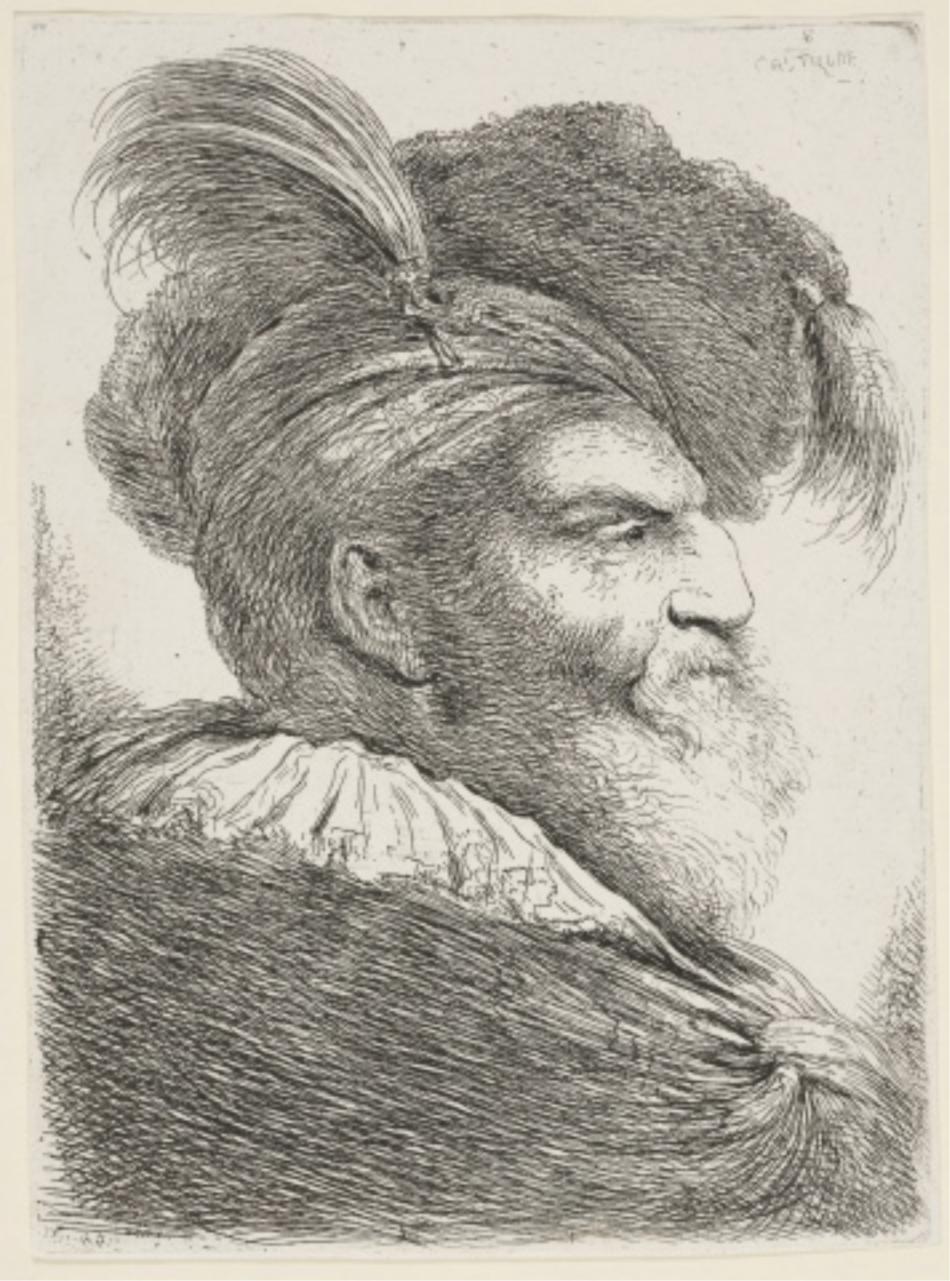

Figure 1. G.B. Castiglione, *A man in an oriental headdress*, from the *Large Oriental Heads* series, late 1640s, etching, 184 x 137 mm, Bartsch 48, Image from Royal Collection Trust. https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830472-a/a-man-in-an-oriental-headdress

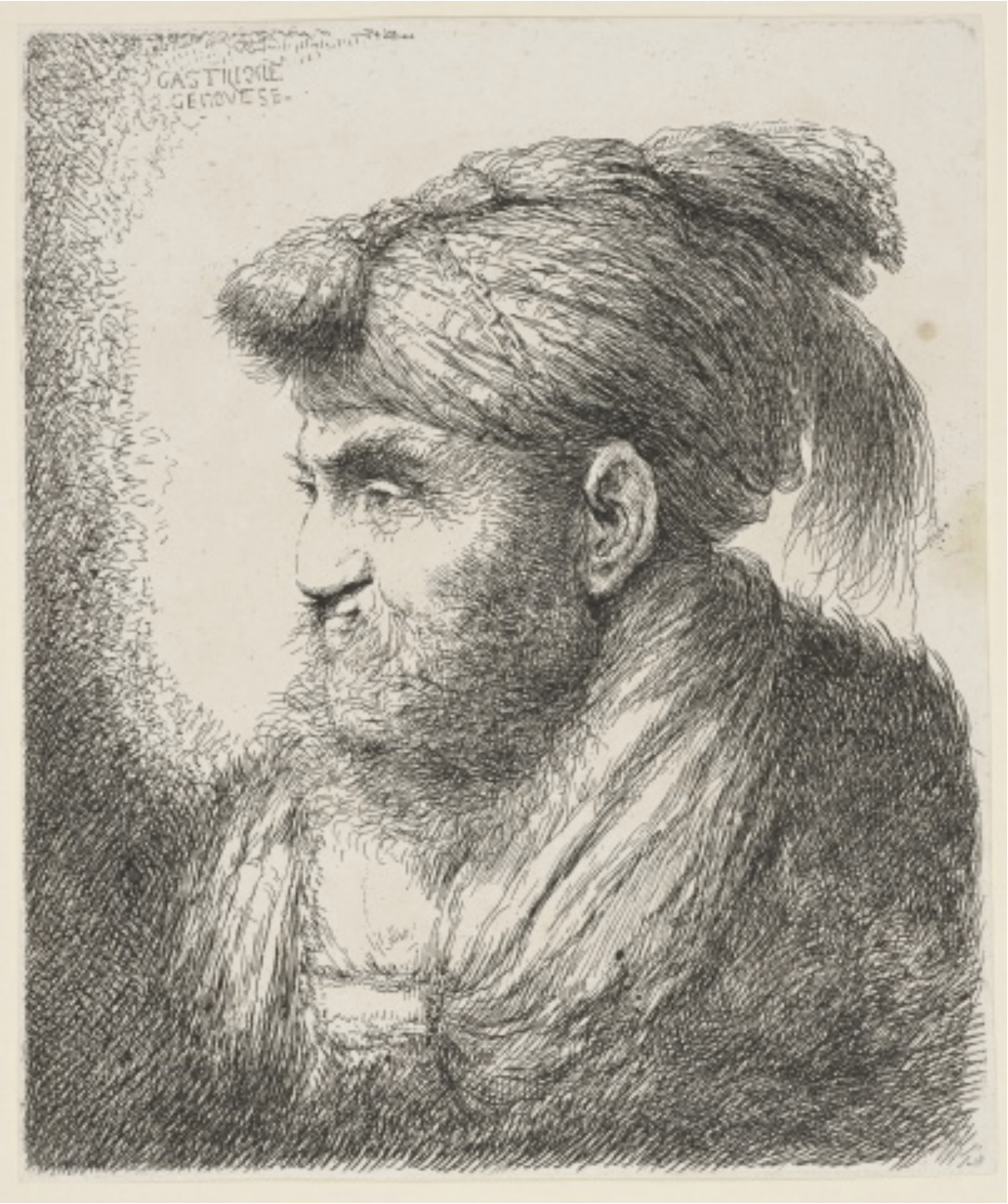

Figure 2. G. B. Castiglione, *A man in an oriental headdress*, from the *Large Oriental Heads* series, late 1640s, Etching, 178 x 148 mm, Bartsch 51, Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830472-e/a-man-in-an-oriental-headdress

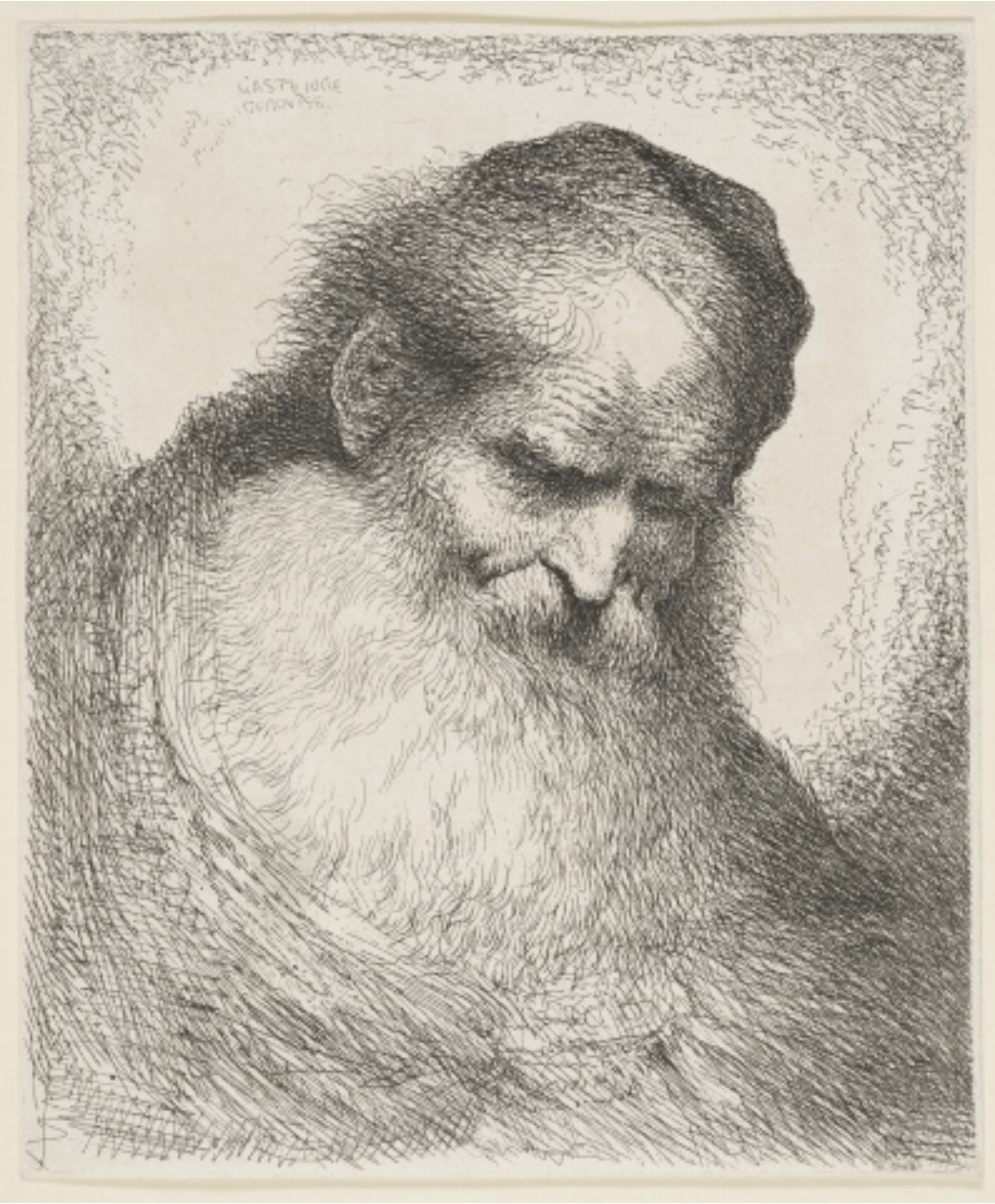

Figure 3. G.B. Castiglione, *A bearded man looking down*, late 1640s, etching, 180 x 151 mm, from *Large Oriental Heads* series (Bartsch 50), Image from Royal Collection Trust https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830472-d/a-bearded-man-looking-down

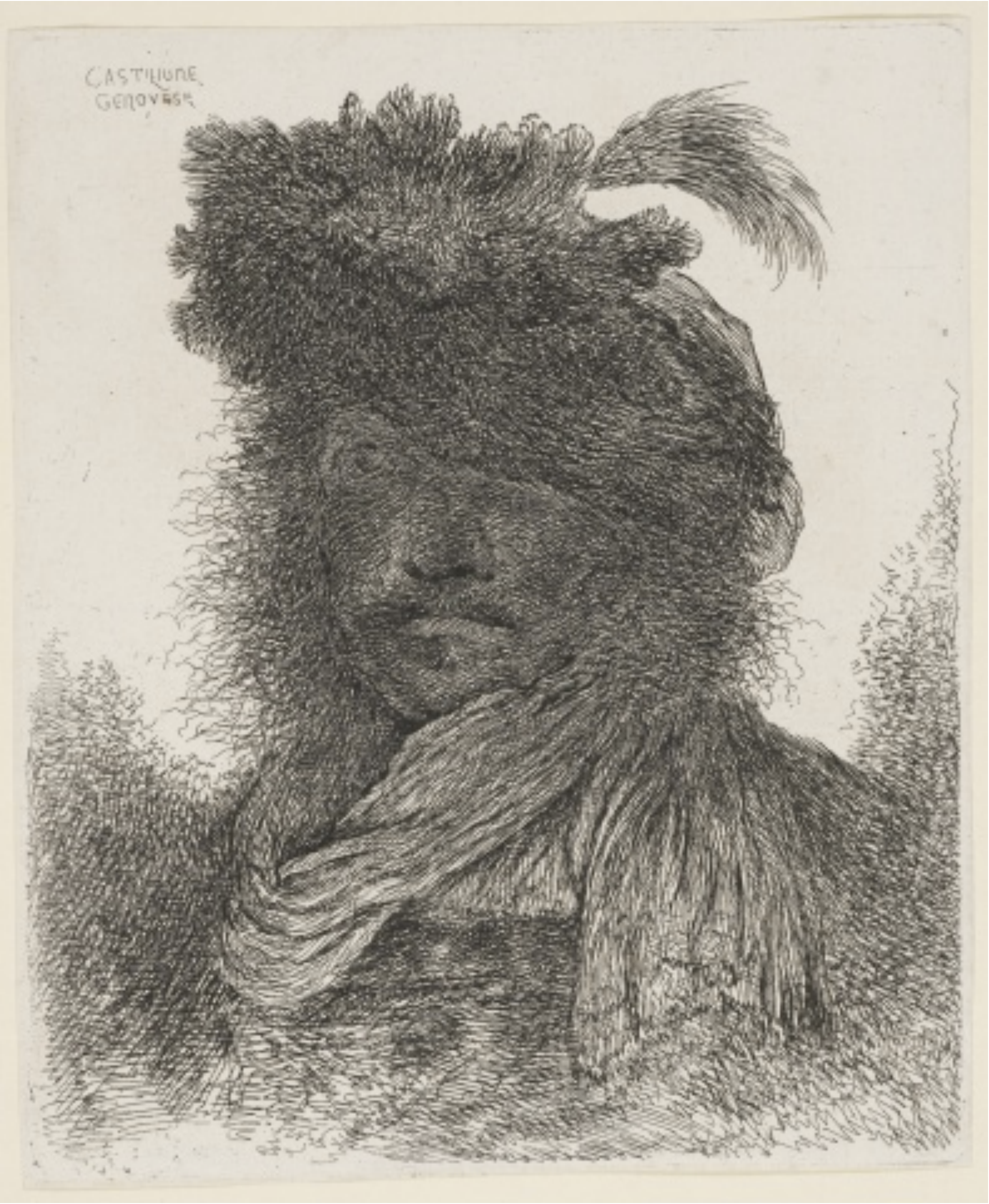

Figure 4. G. B. Castiglione, *Head of a Man Plunged in Shadow,* late 1640s, etching, 180 x 149 mm, from the *Large Oriental Heads* series, (Bartsch 52), Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830472-f/a-man-in-a-plumed-hat-and-scarf-his-face-in-shadow

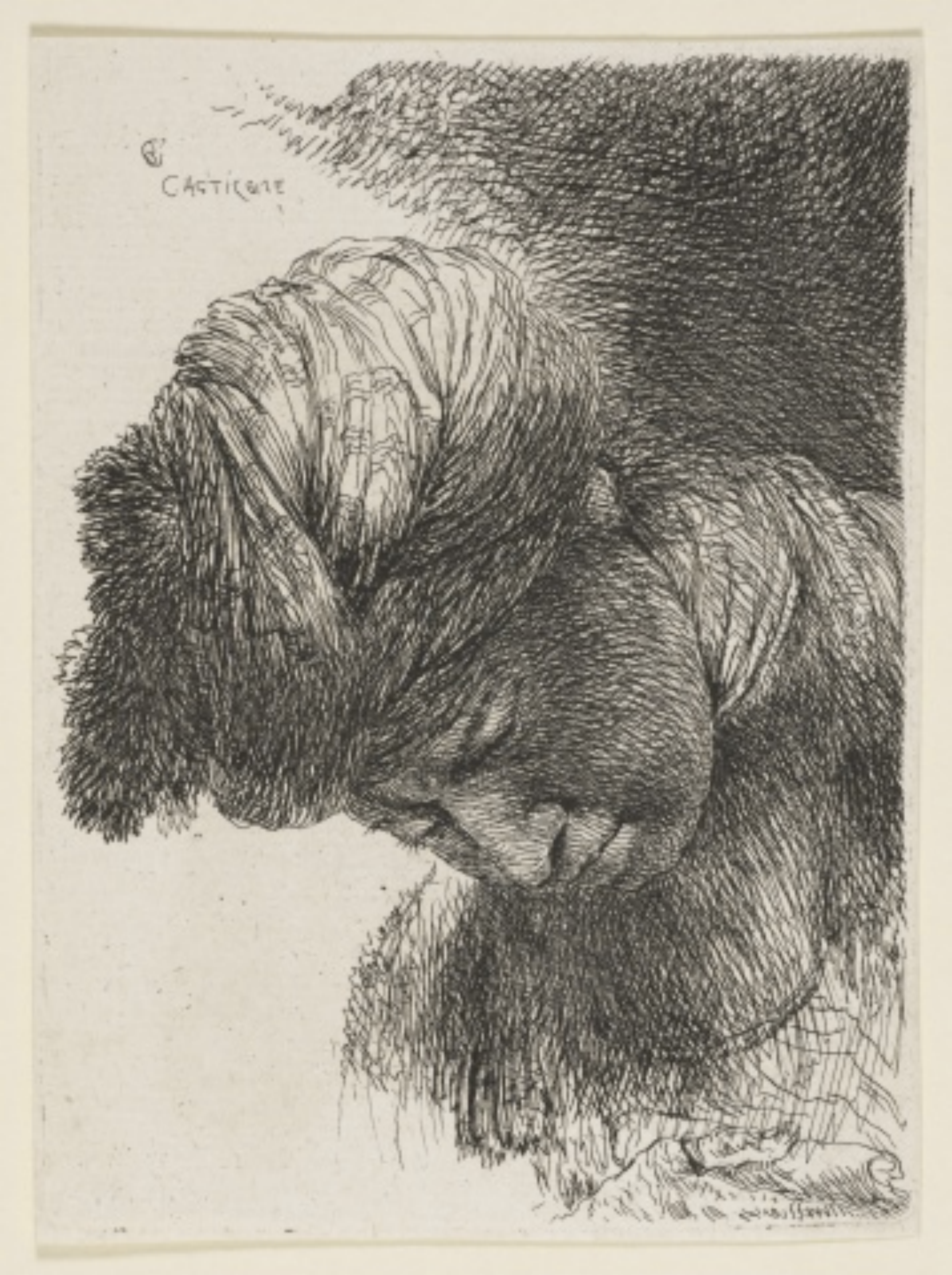

Figure 5. G. B. Castiglione, *A young man with his head lowered,* late 1640s, from the *Small Oriental Heads*, etching, 110 x 80 mm, Bartsch 42, Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830471-k/a-young-man-with-his-head-lowered

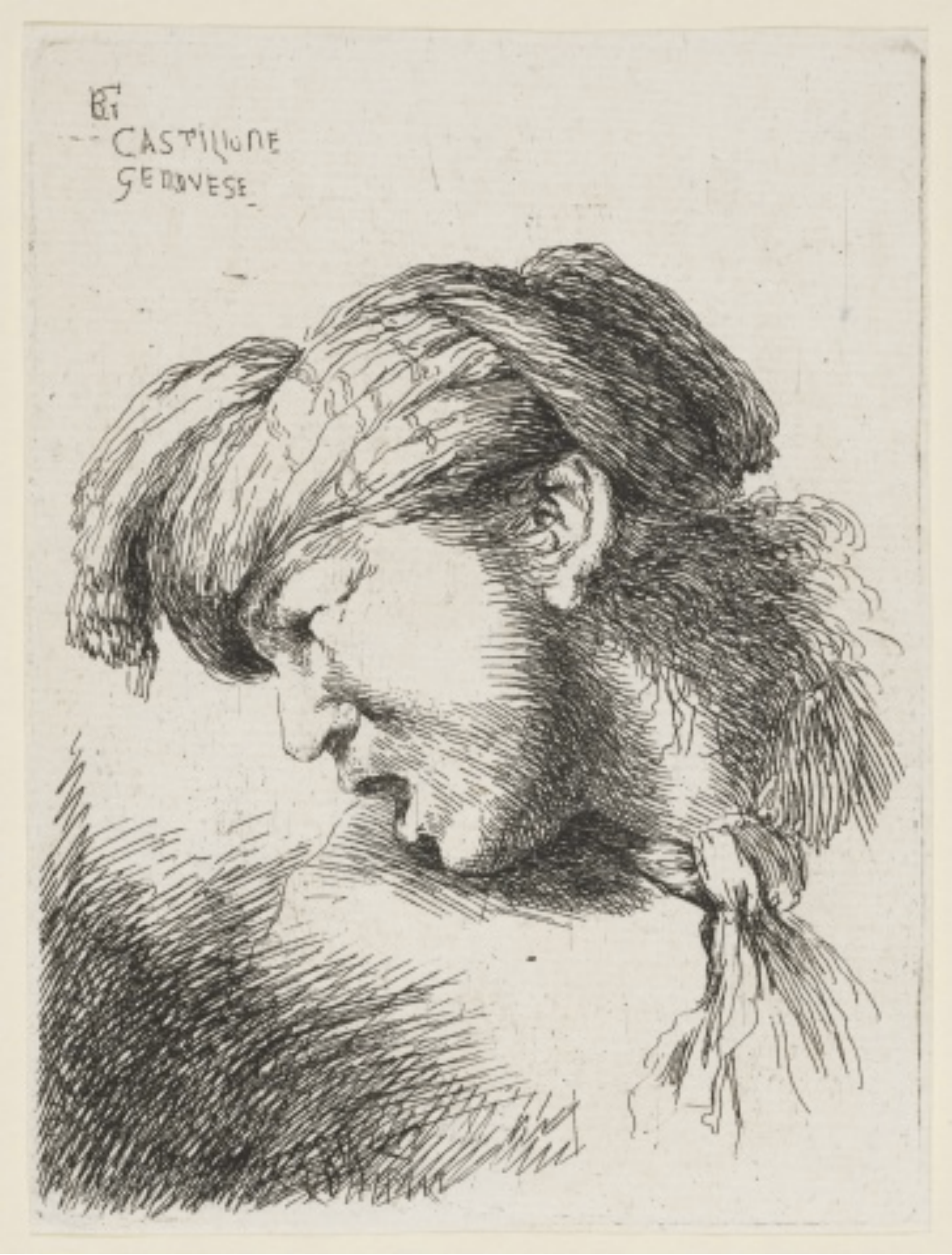

Figure 6. G.B. Castiglione, *A young man in a turban, his mouth open*, 1640s, from the *Small Oriental Heads* series, etching, 102 x 80 mm, Bartsch 41, Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830471-j/a-young-man-in-a-turban-his-mouth-open

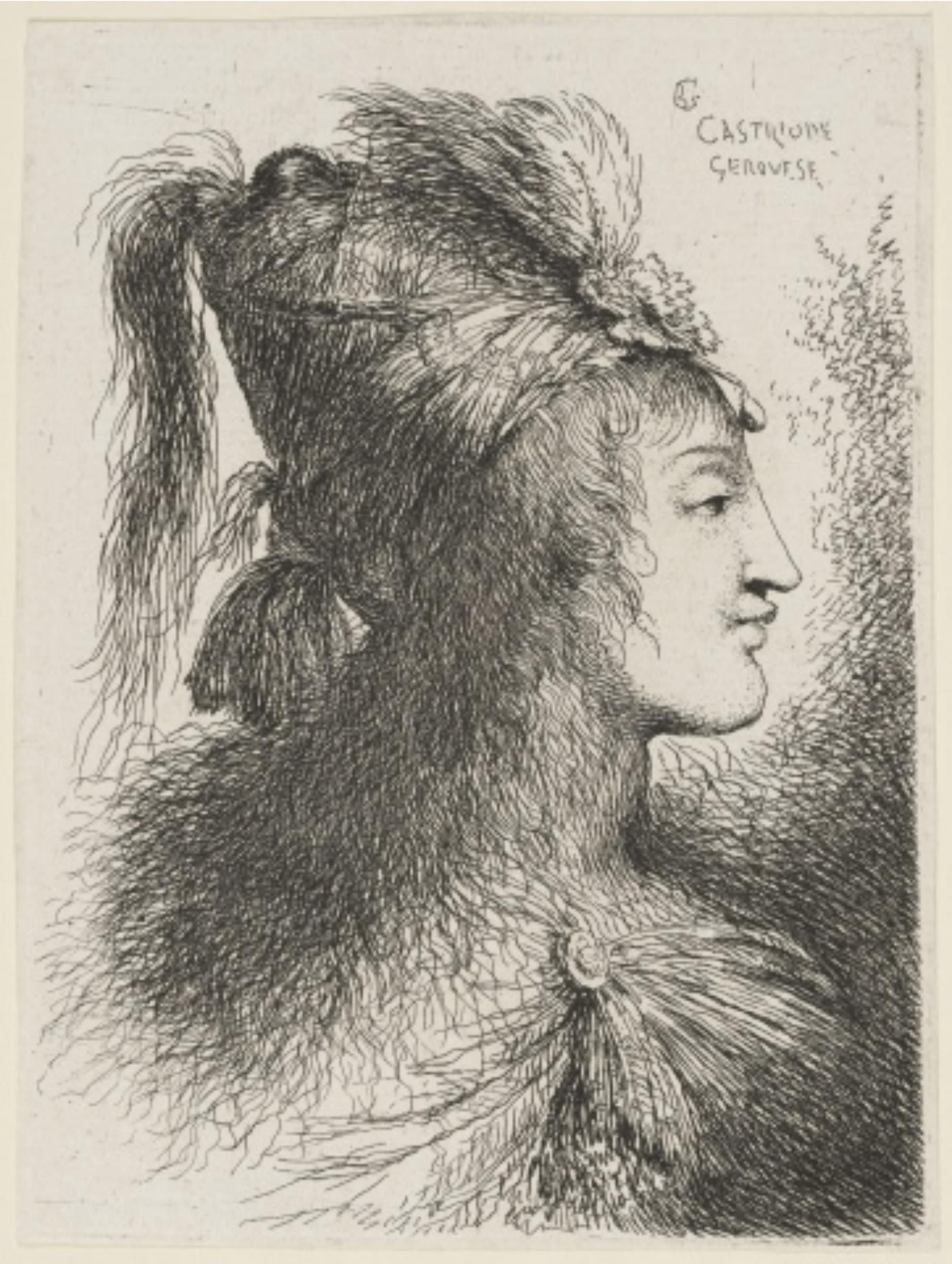

Figure 7. G.B. Castiglione, *A young woman wearing a turban*, late 1640s, etching, 105 x 80 mm, part of the *Small Oriental Heads*. Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830471-p/a-young-woman-wearing-a-turban

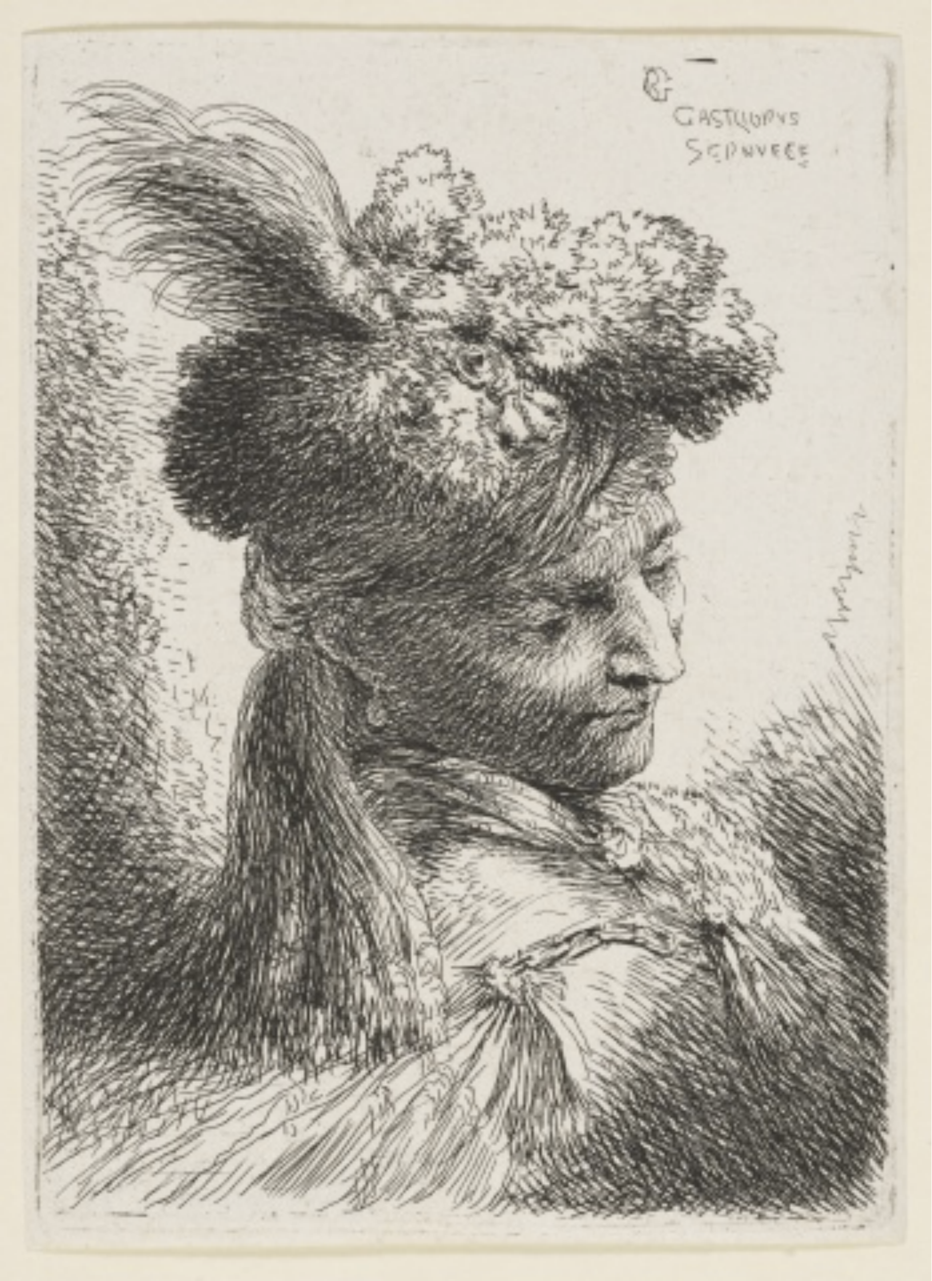

Figure 8. G.B. Castiglione, *A man in a plumed headdress,* late 1640s, etching, 108 x 80 mm, part of the *Small Oriental Heads*. Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830471-h/a-man-in-a-plumed-headdress

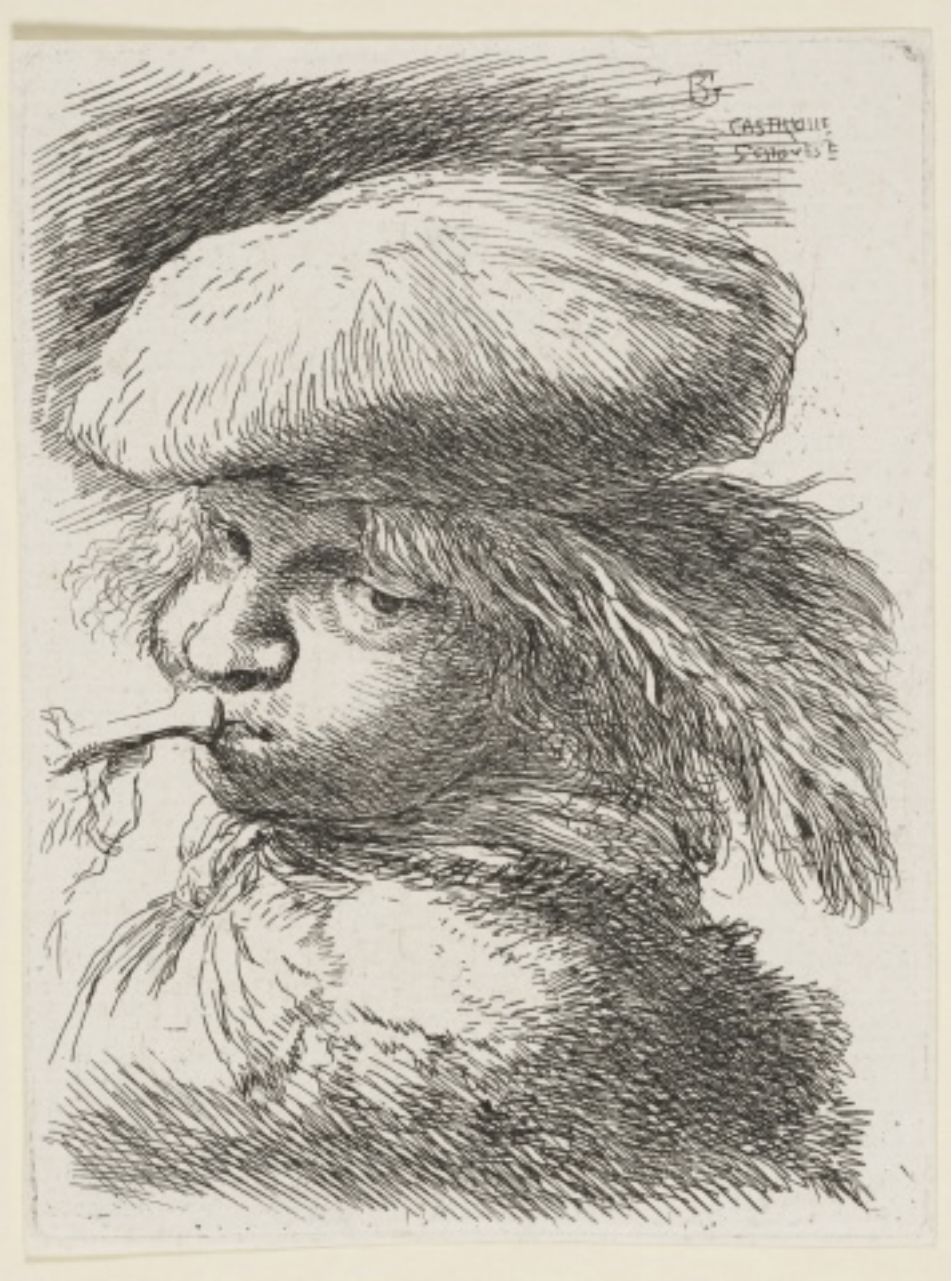

Figure 9. G.B. Castiglione, *A youth blowing a trumpet,* late 1640s, etching, 108 x 80 mm, part of the *Small Oriental Heads*. Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830471-m/a-youth-blowing-a-trumpet

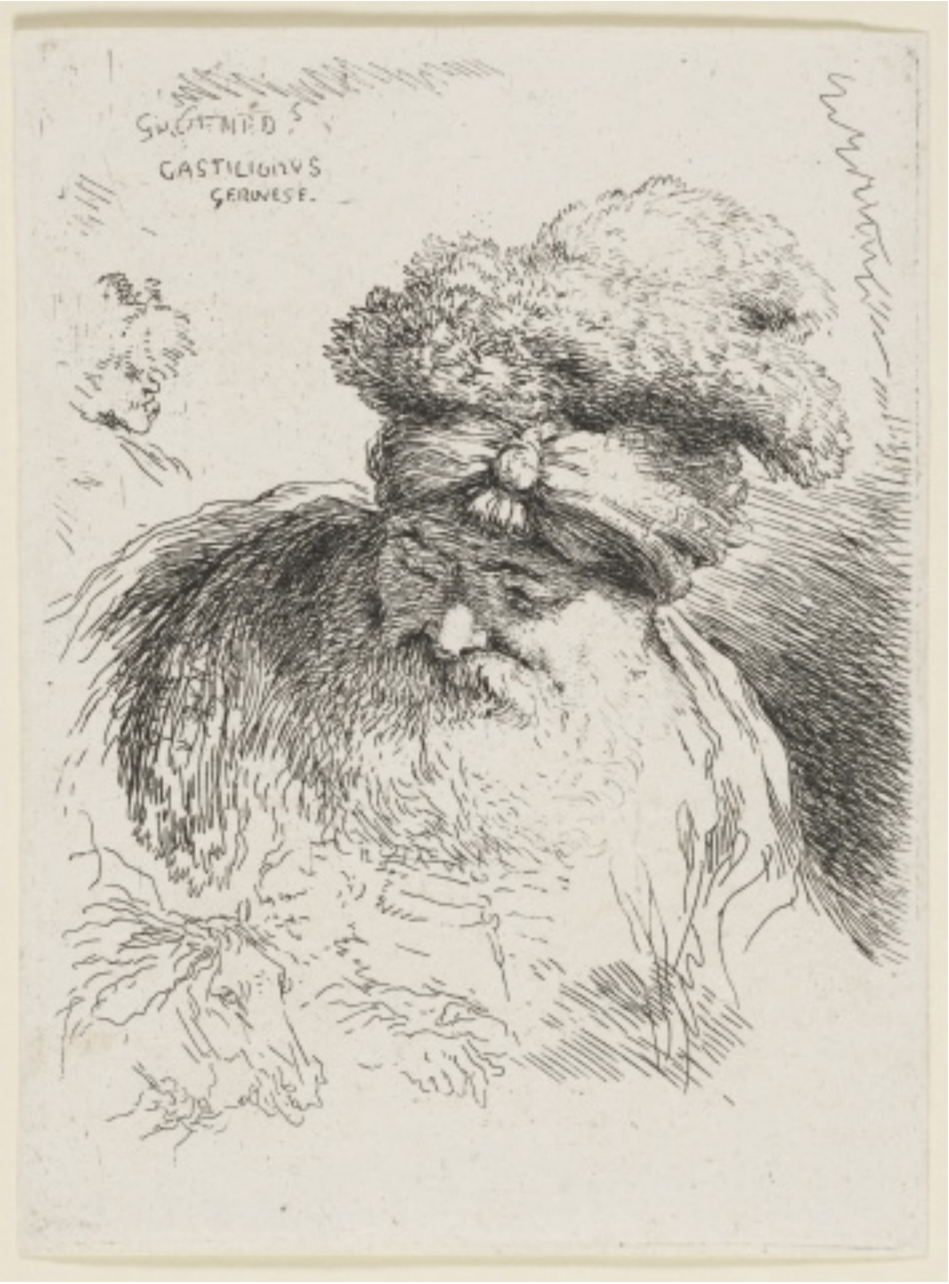
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Figure 10. G.B. Castiglione, *A man in an oriental headdress, with other studies,* late 1640s, etching, 99 x 80 mm, part of the *Small Oriental Heads*. Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830471-n/a-man-in-an-oriental-headdress-with-other-studies

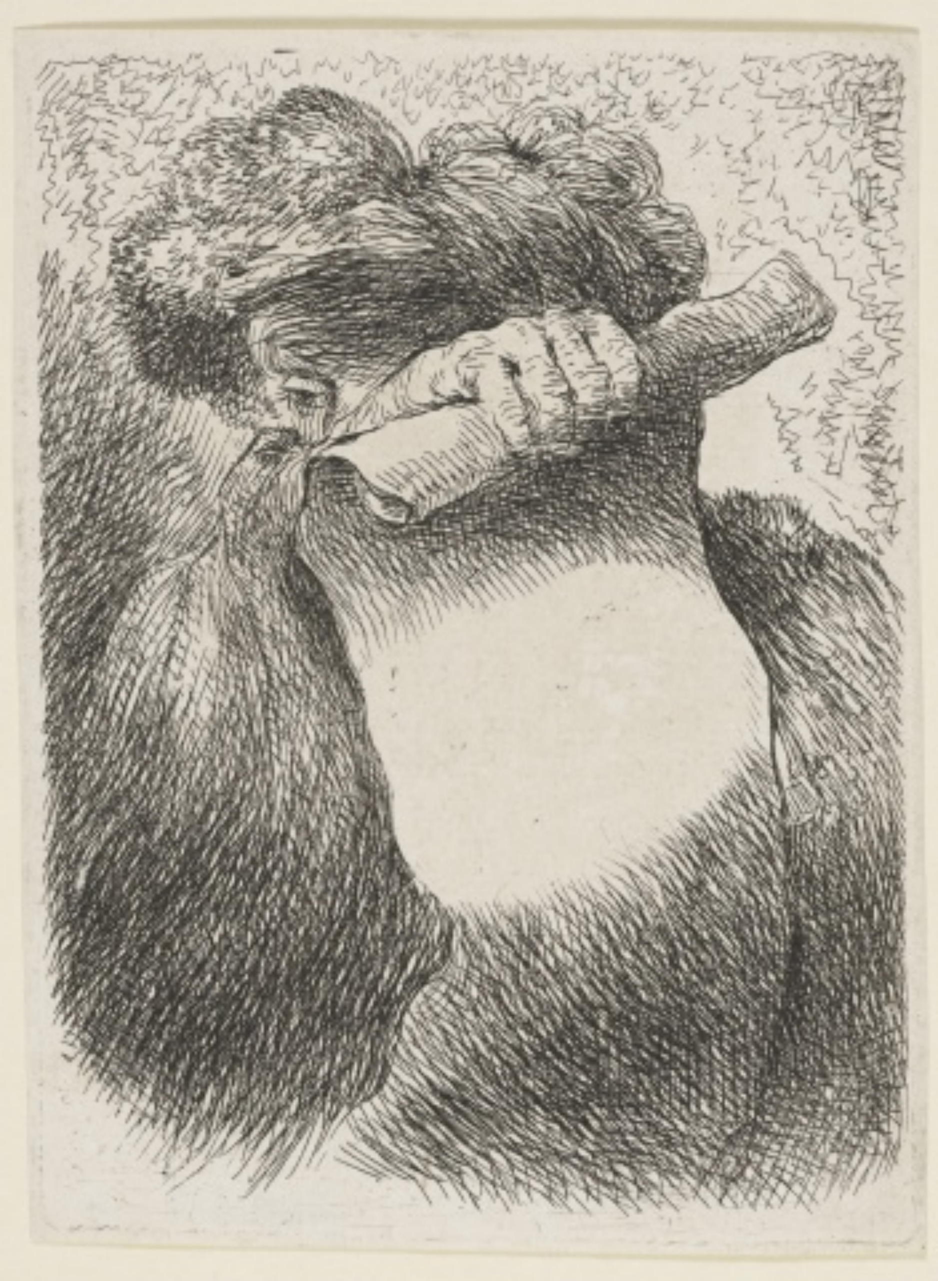

Figure 11. G.B. Castiglione, *A man holding a scroll,* late 1640s, etching, 108 x 81 mm, part of the *Small Oriental Heads*. Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830471-o/a-man-holding-a-scroll

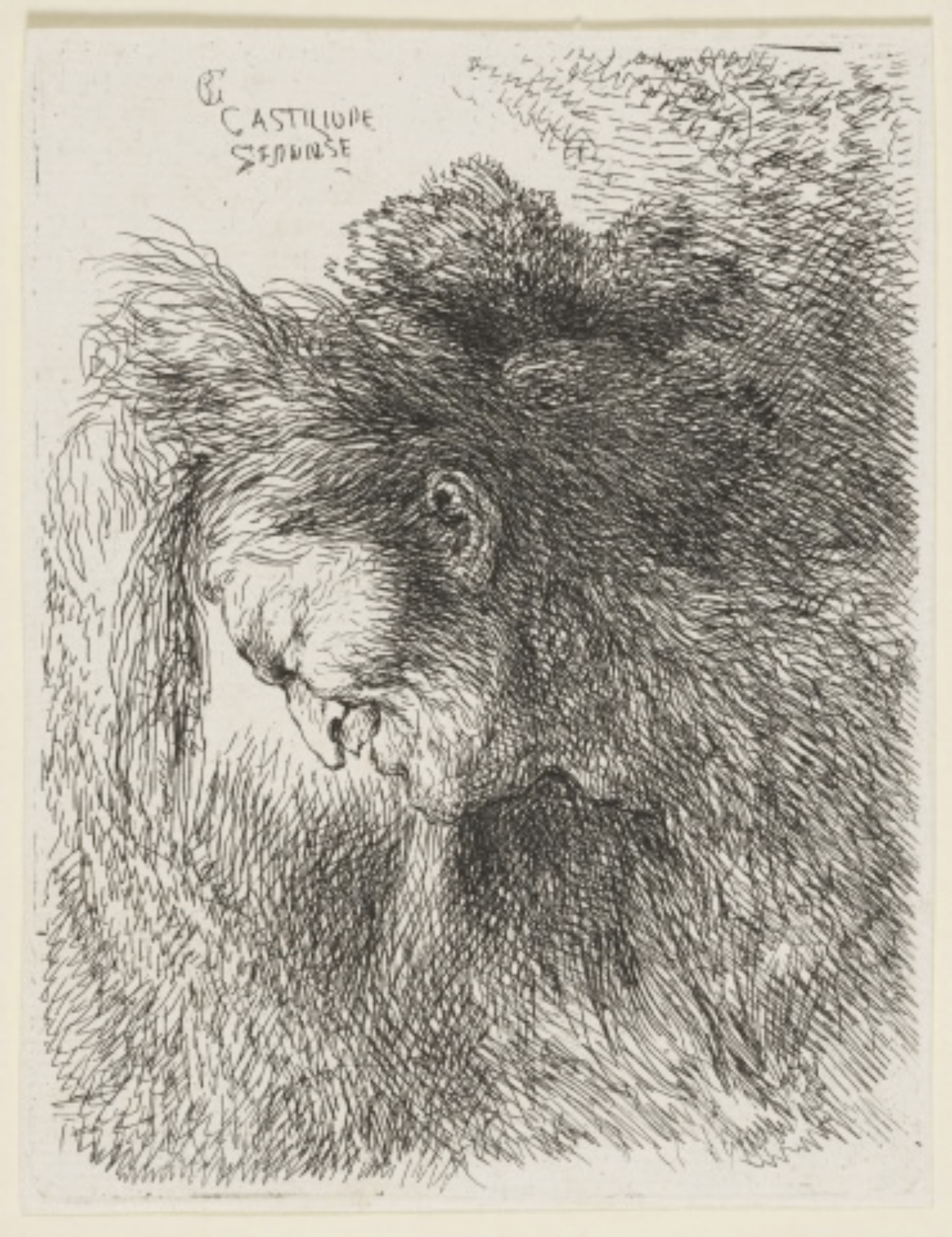

Figure 12. G.B. Castiglione, *A man looking downwards,* late 1640s, etching, 108 x 80 mm, part of the *Small Oriental Heads*. Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830471-g/a-man-looking-downwards

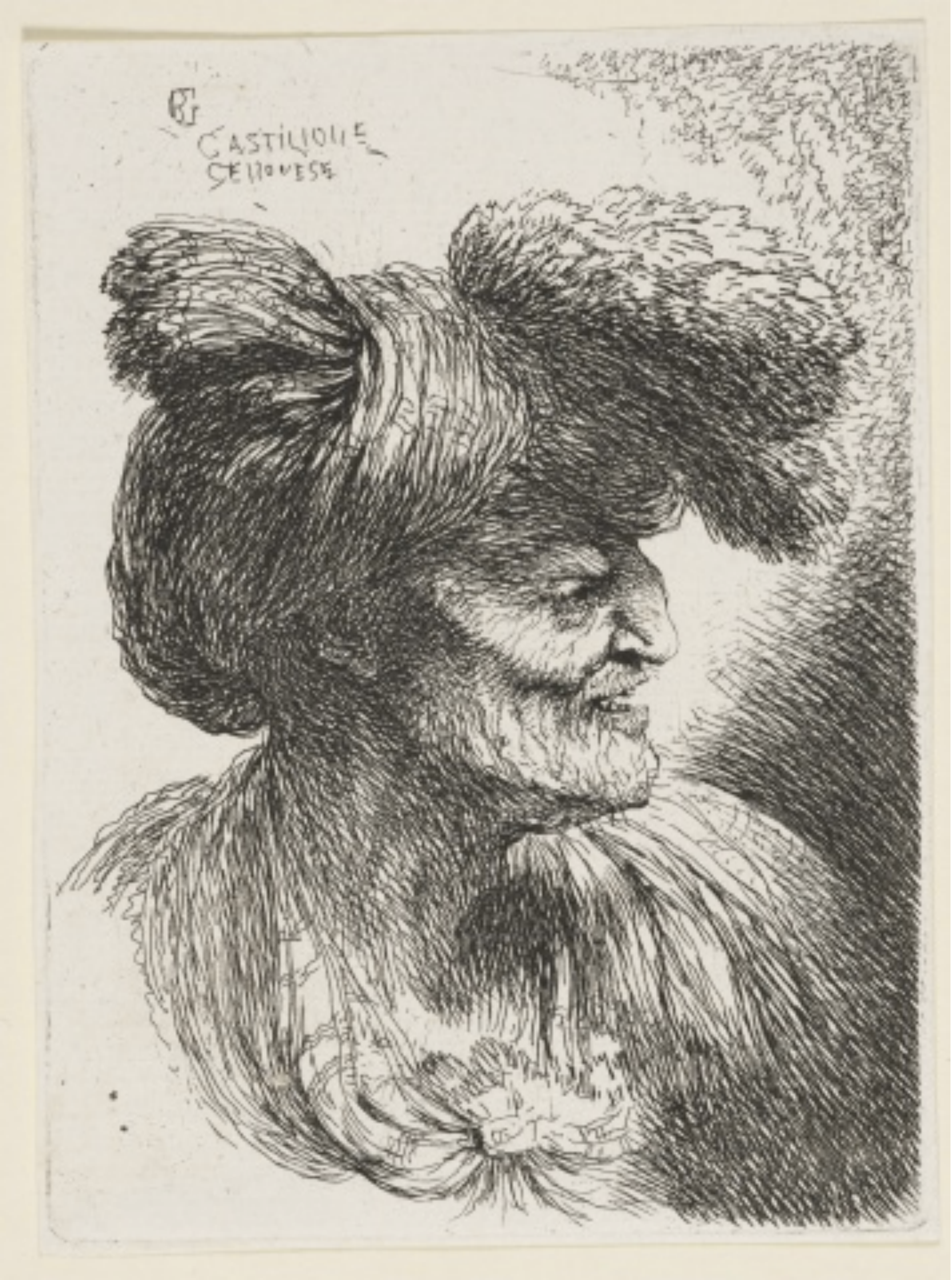

Figure 13. G.B. Castiglione, *An old man wearing a turban,* late 1640s, etching, 109 x 82 mm, part of the *Small Oriental Heads*. Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830471-c/an-old-man-wearing-a-turban

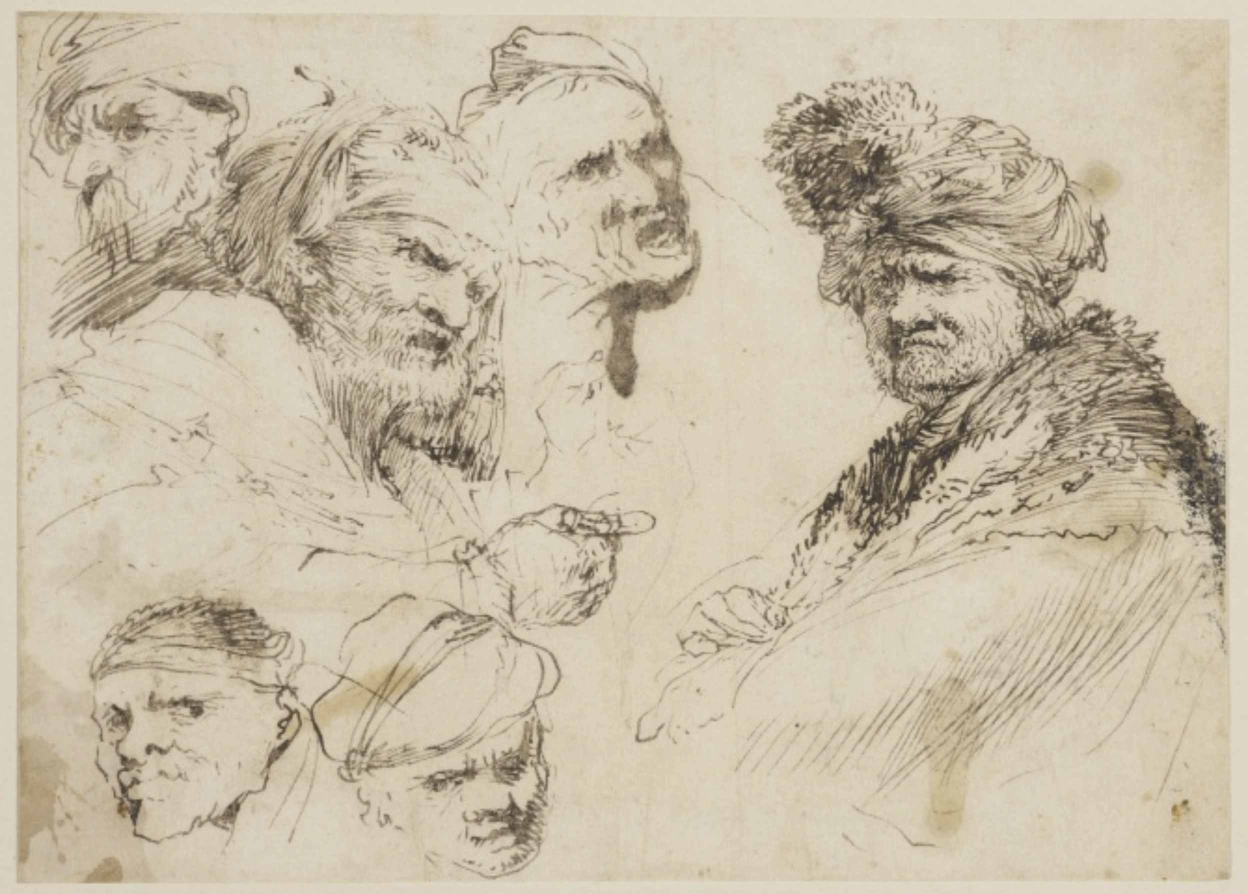

Figure 14. Giovanni Benedetto Castiglione, *Studies of Heads*, 1635-1640, pen and ink drawing, 143 x 199 mm, image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/903944/studies-of-heads

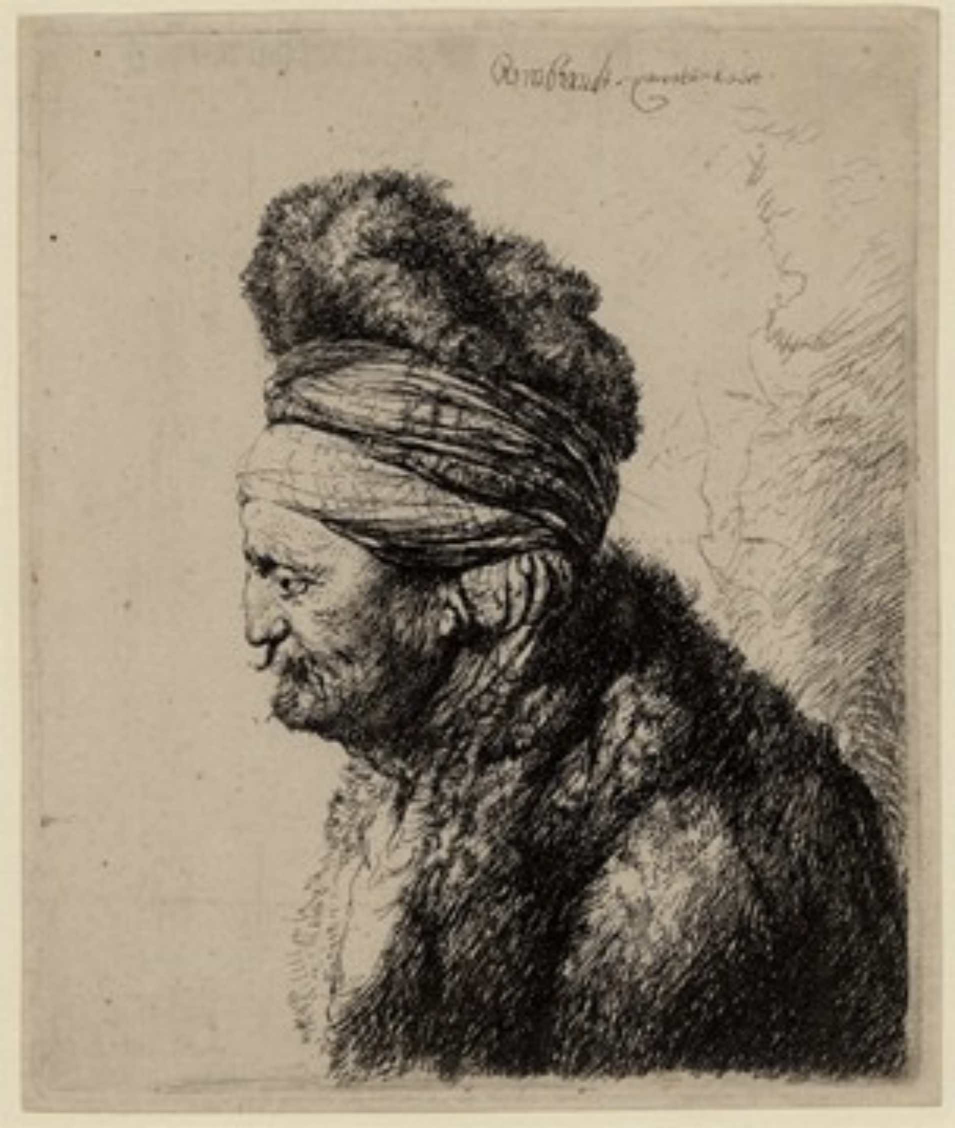

Figure 15. Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn, after Jan Lievens, *The Second Oriental Head*, c. 1635, etching, image from the British Museum online, http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=755358&partId=1

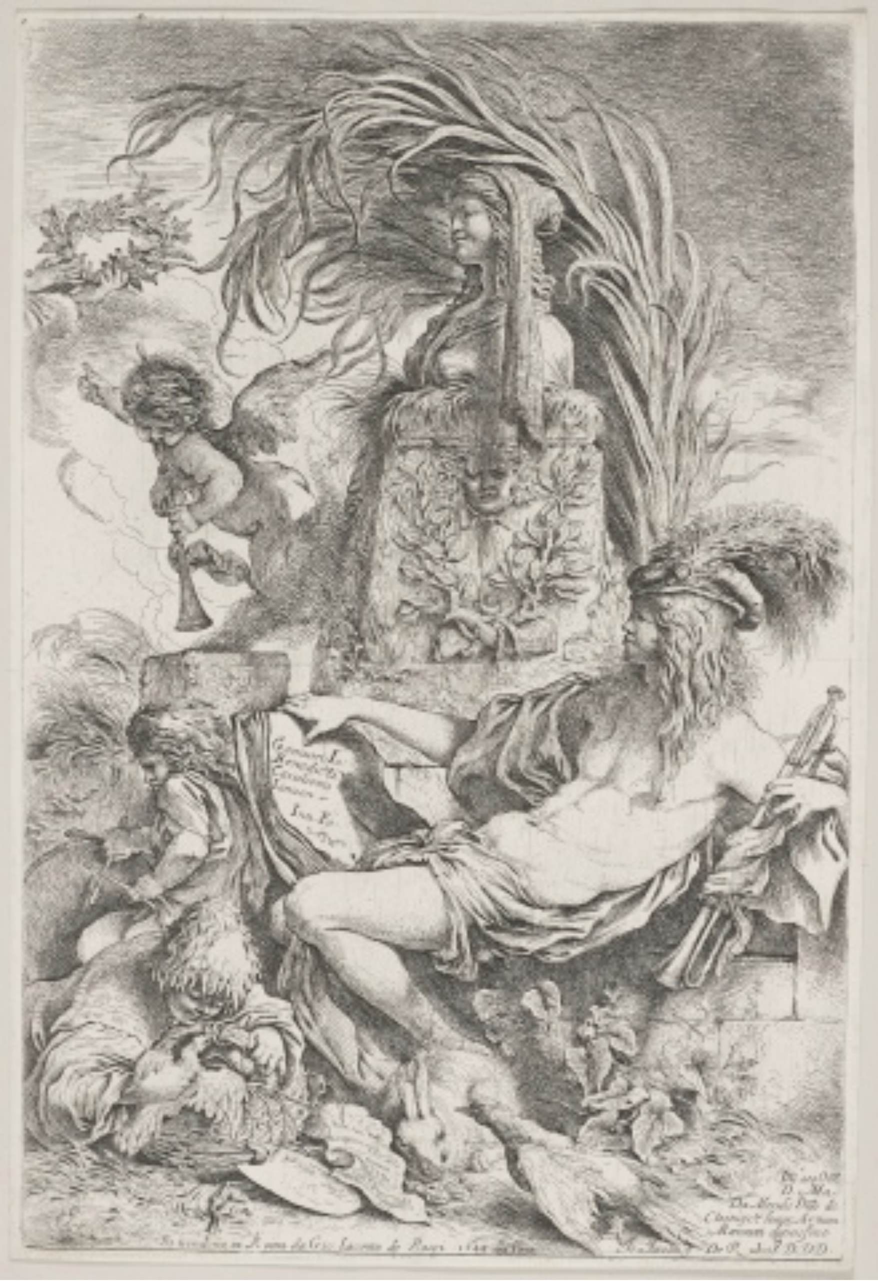

Figure 16. G. B. Castiglione, *The Genius of Castiglione*, 1648, etching, 372 x 250 mm, image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830465/the-genius-of-castiglione

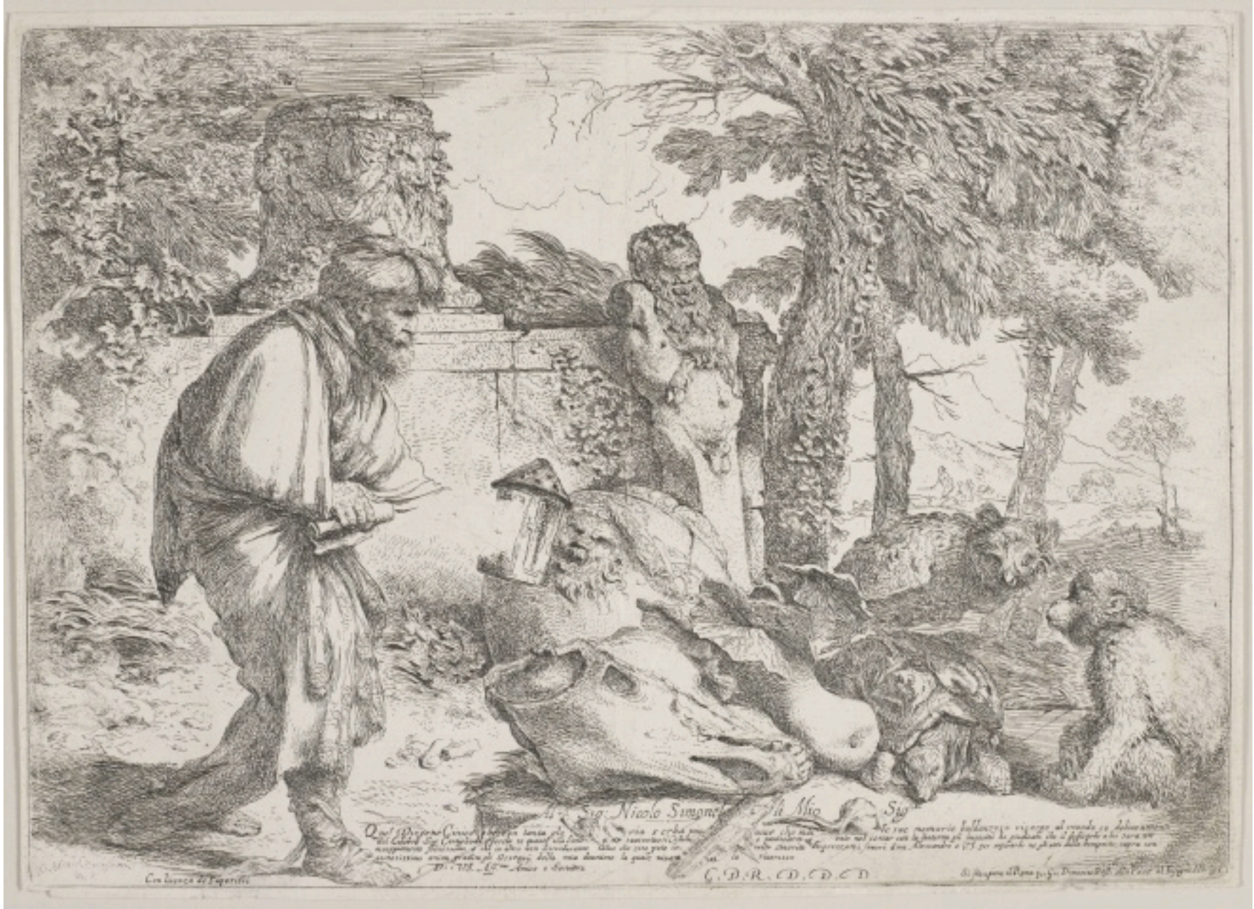

Figure 17. G. B. Castiglione, *Diogenes Searching for an Honest Man*, c. 1647-1650, etching, 220 x 305 mm, Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830463/diogenes-searching-for-an-honest-man

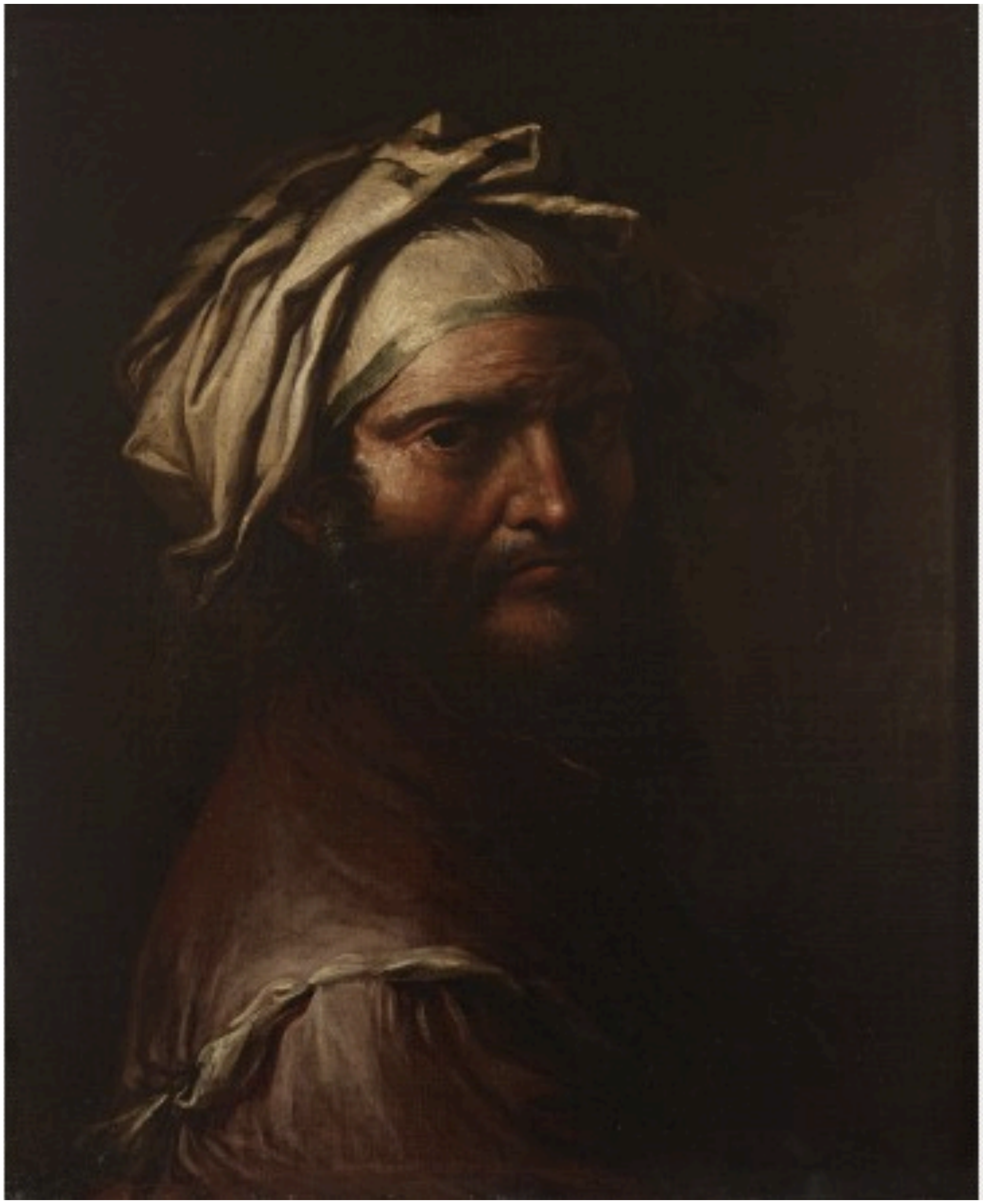

Figure 18. Salvator Rosa, *Head of a Man*, c. 1650, oil on canvas, 59.5 x 49.5 cm, Image from Helen Langdon, *Salvator Rosa* (London: Paul Holberton, 2010).

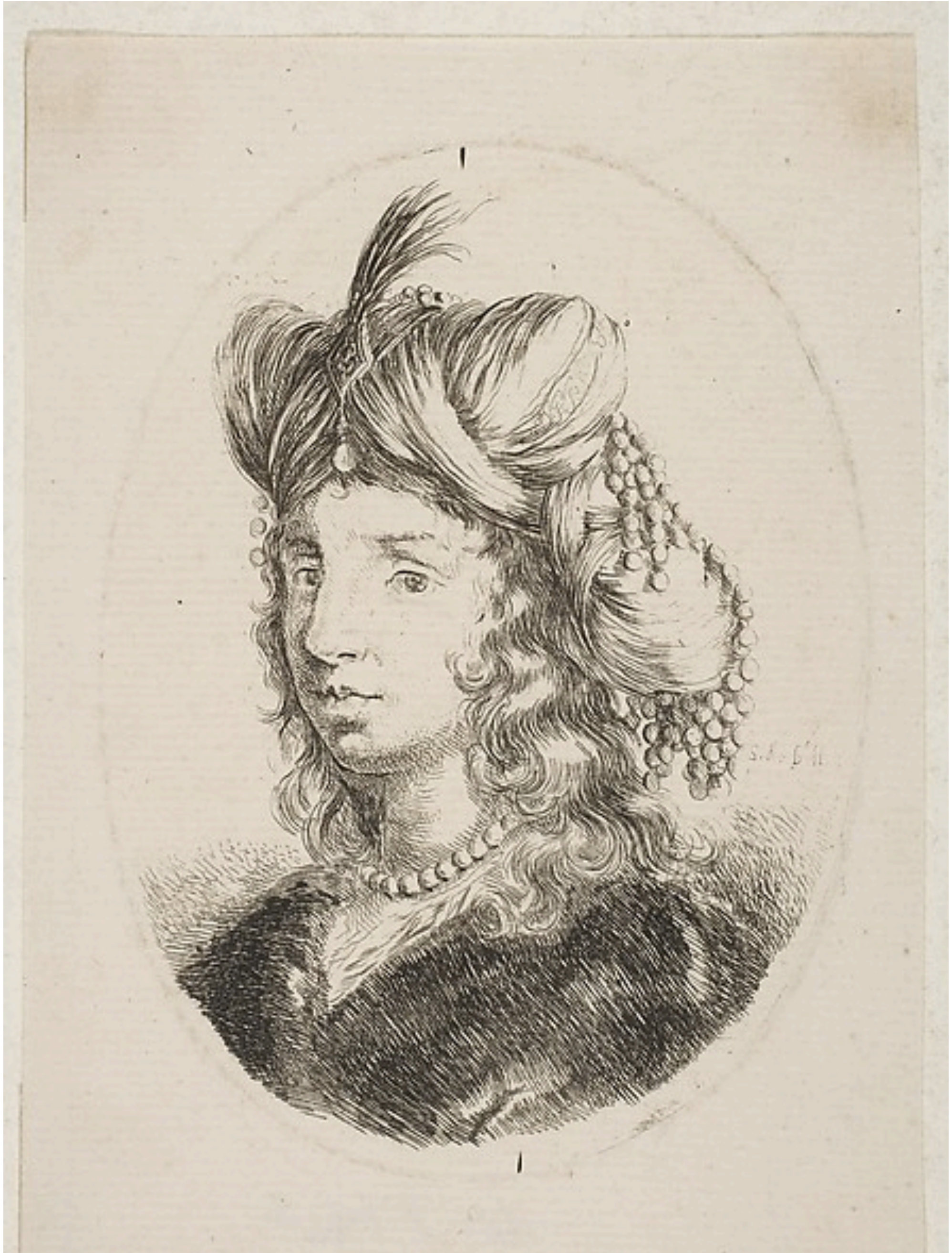

Figure 19. Stefano Della Bella, *Sultana Wearing a Pearl Necklace and a Turban*, 1649-1650, Etching, Image from Metropolitan Museum of Art, http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/376395

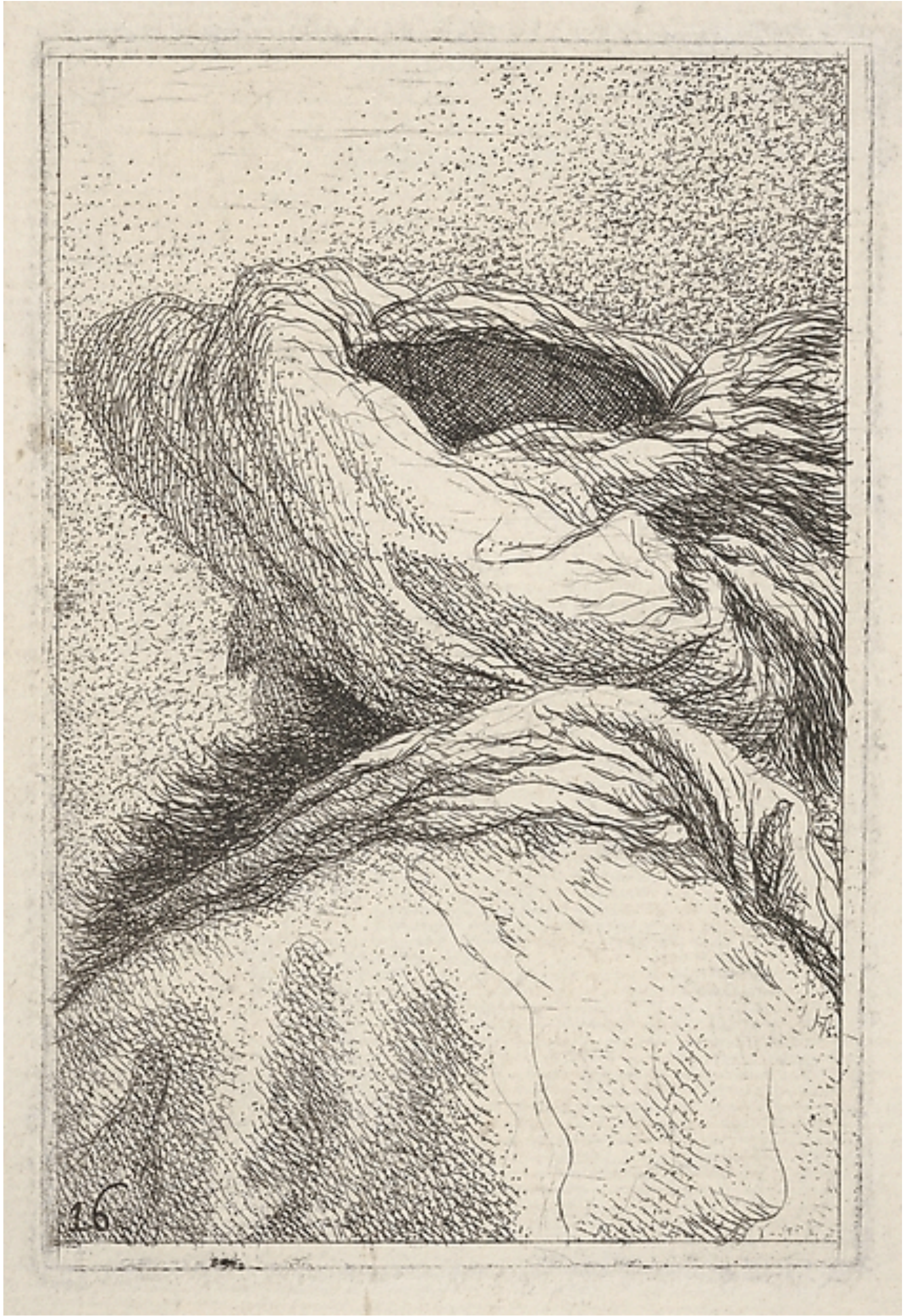

Figure 20. Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, *Man in a turban, depicted in bust length format from behind in three-quarters view*, c. 1770, etching, Image from Metropolitan Museum of Art, http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/397634

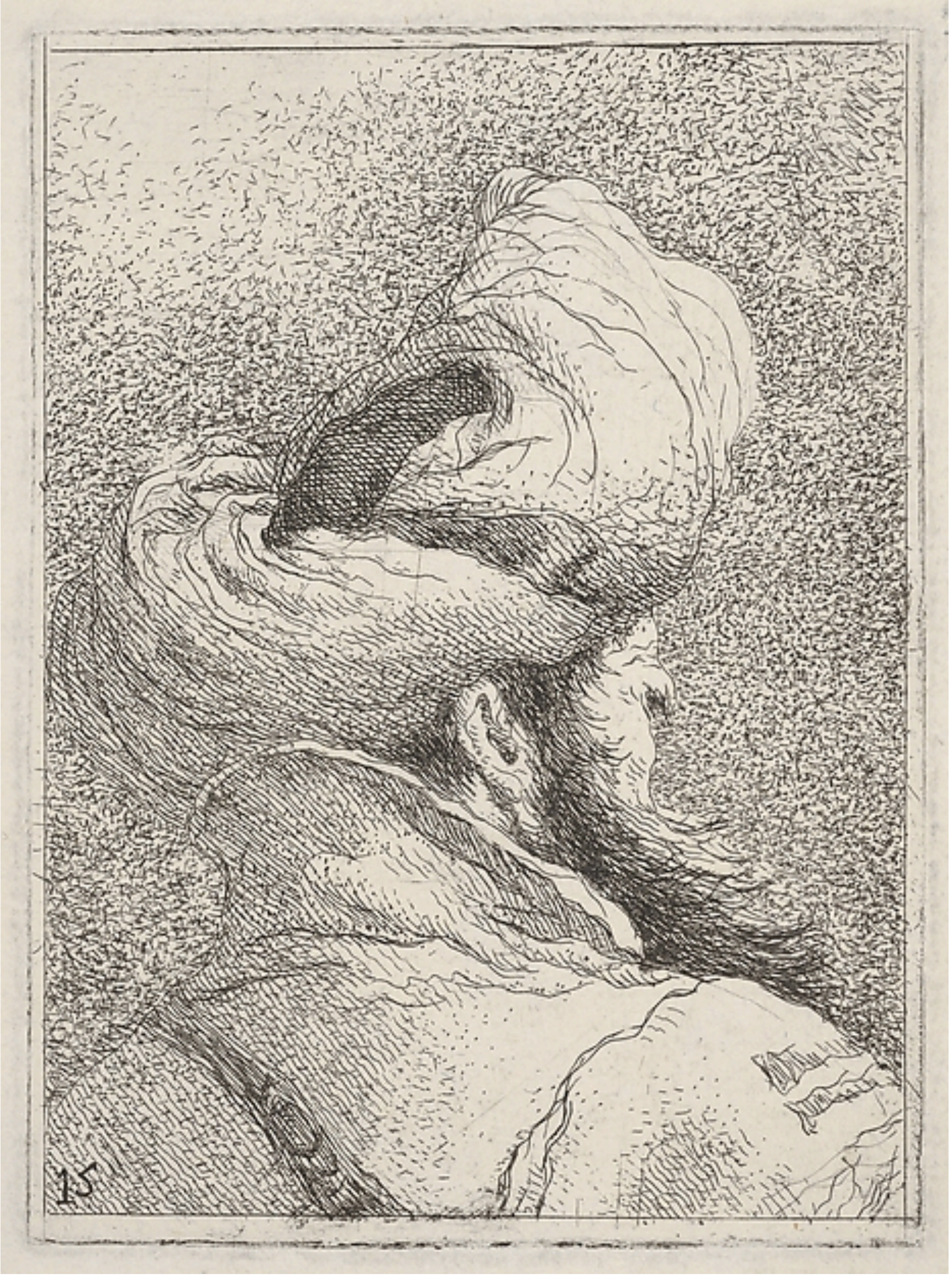

Figure 21. Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, *Bearded man wearing a turban, depicted in bust length from behind in three-quarters view,* c. 1770, etching, Image from Metropolitan Museum of Art, http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/397633

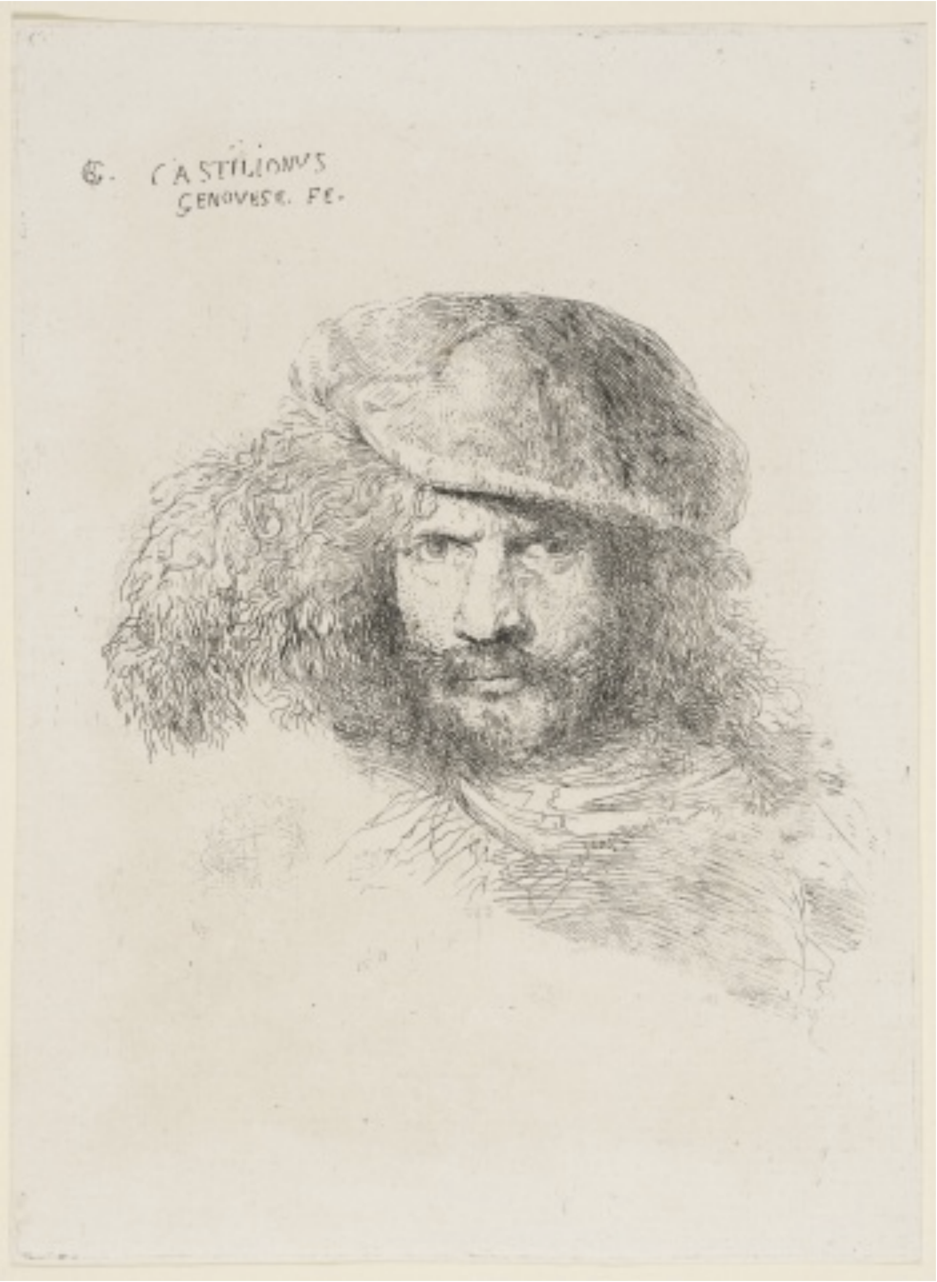
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Figure 22. G.B. Castiglione, *A presumed self-portrait*, c. 1645-1650, etching, 188 x 138 mm, Image from Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830472-g/a-presumed-self-portrait.

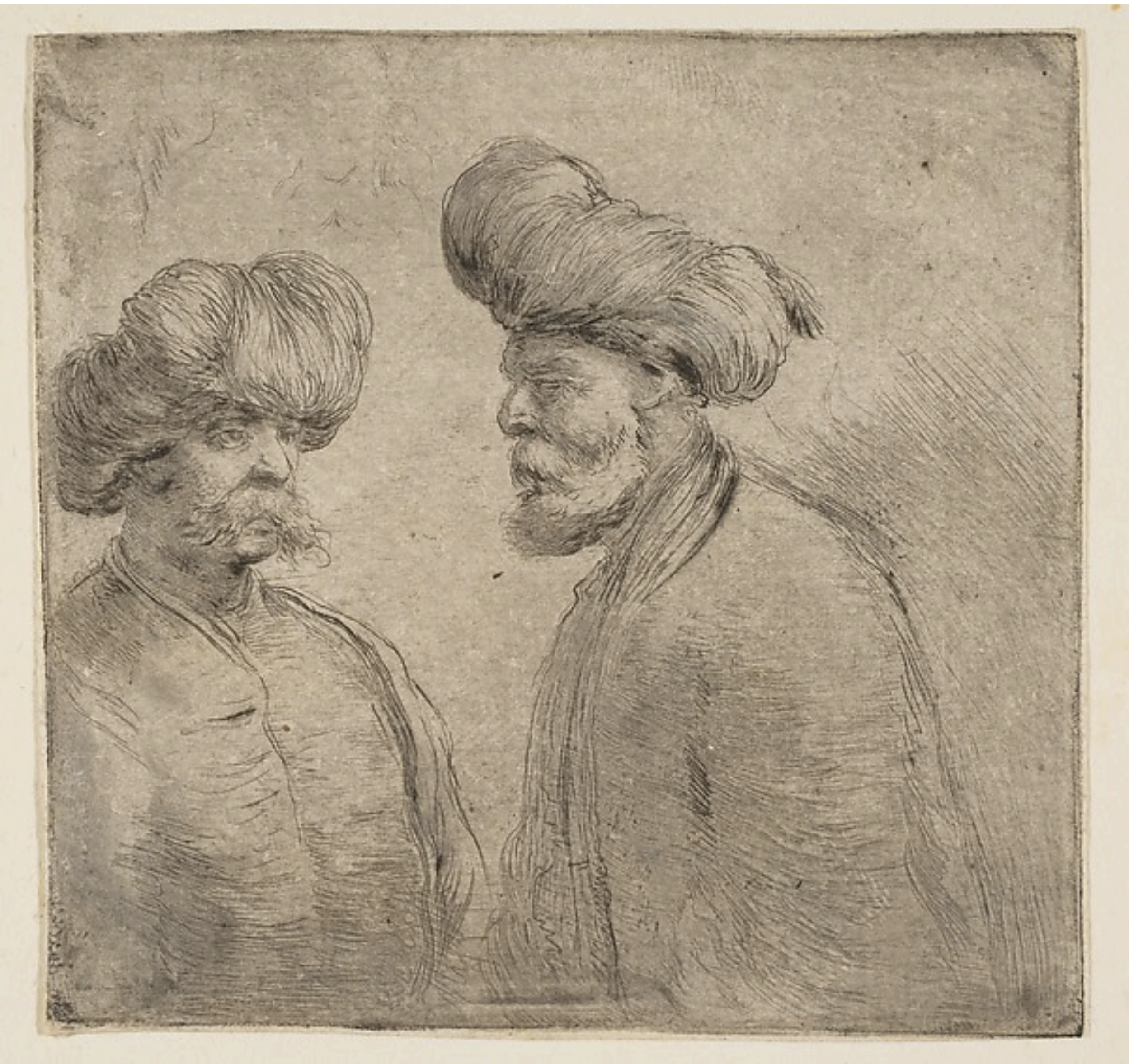

Figure 23. Stefano Della Bella, *Two Turks in Turbans*, c. 1662, etching, Image from Metropolitan Museum of Art, http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/376677.

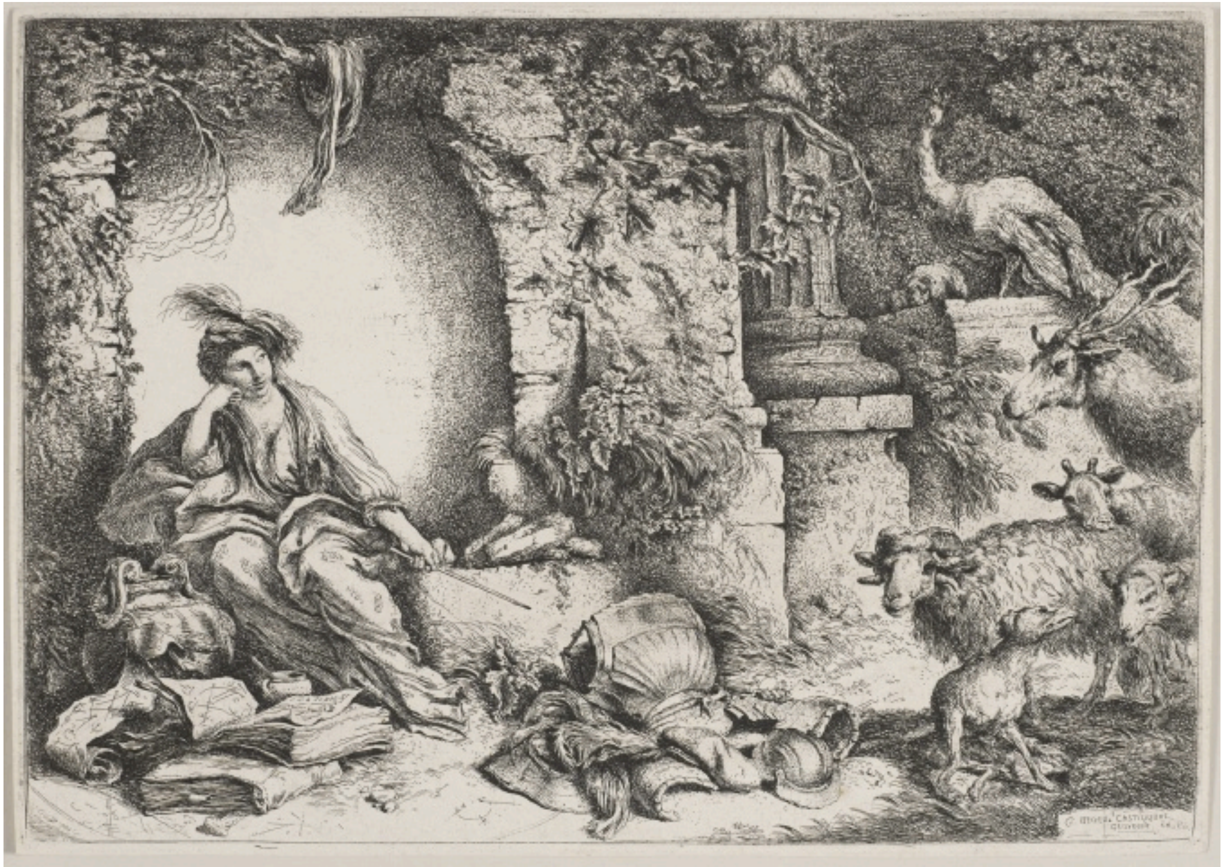

Figure 24. G.B. Castiglione, *Circe with the Companions of Odysseus Transformed into Animals*, c. 1650, Etching, 218 x 311 mm, Image from the Royal Collection Trust, https://www.royalcollection.org.uk/collection/830464/circe-with-the-companions-of-odysseus-transformed-into-animals

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Table 1. Corpus of Oriental Heads

Bartsch #	Title	Dimensions	National Gallery in Washington	British Museum	Metropolitan Museum of Art
32	Head in profile to right with beard and furry hat	111 x 81 mm		1871.0812.26	17.50.17-74
33	Small Oriental Head	108 x 81 mm	1991.135.1	1871.0812.27	41.100.770
34	Old Man Wearing a Turban with Fur, Facing Right	110 x 81 mm (plate)	2004.23.1	1871.0812.28	17.50.17-69
35	Head in profile to right with flat hat and tuft behind	110 x 81 mm		1871.0812.29	17.50.17-77
36	Head of an old bearded Man facing Right	110 x 80			17.3.3313
37	Head to right with beard and two feathers in hat	112 x 81mm		1871.0812.31	17.50.17-66
38	Head Looking Down to the Left	104 x 80 mm		1871.0812.32	17.50.17-65
39	Young Man Wearing a Fur Headdress with a Headband, Facing Right	111 x 81 mm	1996.32.1	1862.0524.14	17.50.17-70
40	Head in profile to left with beard and hooked nose	110 x 81 mm			17.50.17-73
41	Head looking down to left with open mouth	110 x 83 mm		1871.0812.35	17.50.17-78
42	Head looking down to left cast in shadow	111 x 81 mm		1871.0812.36	47.100.771
43	Head looking down to the right with feather in hat	110 x 80 mm		1871.0812.36	17.50.17-67
44	Head looking to the left blowing on the mouth of a trumpet	110 x 81 mm		1871.0812.38	17.3.1810
45	Head looking forwards and down with beard and furry hat	110 x 81 mm		1871.0812.39	
46	Man with a Scroll	111 x 81 mm	2002.157.7	1871.0812.40	17.50.17-63
47	Young Woman Weargin a Plumed	109 x 81 mm		1871.0812.41	17.50.17-72

	Turban Facing Right				
48	Man with a Long Beard and Headdress Facing Right	320 x 229 mm	2014.73.1	1871.0812.42	17.50.17-57
49	Bearded Man in Fur Cap, Facing Left		1996.113.3	1932.0709.53	17.50.17-60
50	Old Man with a Long Beard and Skullcap, Leaning Forward	311 x 229 mm	2014.73.3	1871.0812.43	27.88.1(41)
51	Man with a Beard and Tassled Headdress, Facing Left	320 x 229 mm	2014.73.4	W,6.18	17.3.1802
52	Head of a Man Plunged in Shadow, Possible Self-Portrait	180 x 147 mm	1996.113.2	W,6.16	47.100.774

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