George Guillet de Saint George, a self-educated scholar, published two travel accounts of the Orient in 1675 and 1676. *Athènes* and *Lacédémone ancienne et nouvelle* recount in two parts the whereabouts of Guillet’s brother, a soldier who, after being released from slavery in Northern Africa, travelled through Ottoman Greece.

As a pilgrim who travels back to the roots of his civilization, this man with a keen interest in classical culture describes the places and lands he journeys through as a specialist. Beyond enthusiasm, the list of monuments and ruins discovered regularly leads to lamentations over the decline of modern Greece. But present times are also made of action, and in various passages, the account becomes epic: the author recounts his arrival at the Ottoman army camp in Candia and his involvement, disguised as a Janissary, in the fighting against the Venetians.

Although fascinating and exciting, the publication recounting the first part of this voyage became controversial. Jacob Spon violently criticised Guillet and questioned the authorship of the text along with the veracity of any travel done in the Orient. According to Spon, numerous mistakes and inaccuracies in the descriptions proved that neither Guillet nor his would-be brother had ever been in Greece. Spon claimed the account was fanciful and that the brother did not really exist. The quarrel was heated and lasted several years.

My presentation will address this quarrel over authenticity and describe its development. Putting the texts structures and forms under scrutiny and focusing on the terms of the debate, I will discuss the mixing of truth and fiction and the status of lie and truth in this travel account.

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