

Journey to Jerusalem by Francisco Guerrero

A summary in English by Richard May-Miller (Seventh edition, March 2023)

In a “Zoom” meeting of early music enthusiasts in July 2021, Dr David Allinson lamented the lack of an English translation of Guerrero’s book in spite of its being a best-seller in Spain: Six editions were published in Guerrero’s lifetime and more than 20 by the end of the 17th century, making it at least as popular as “Don Quixote” (1605). But whereas “Don Quixote” was translated into English within a few years, we could not trace an English edition of Guerrero’s work. The reason might be the Roman Catholic nature of the content. After I had prepared this summary, it came to my notice that there might be a modern English translation by Raymond Calcraft published by Exeter University in 1984 as “Exeter Hispanic Text no. 37”. That uses the original title with no mention of a translation, so the few academic libraries that hold a copy have it catalogued as being in Spanish!

It was surprisingly easy to find and download a modern Spanish edition and a scan of a 1593 edition (the third), enabling me to confirm that the modern edition does not change Guerrero’s words beyond modernising the spelling. The modern edition fills little more than 50 pages, Guerrero did not pretend to be a verbose man of letters. The early editions were pocket size with about 100 pages, intended to be a guide for travellers as much as an account of Guerrero’s own experience. My original intention was to note a few salient points or phrases “not to be missed” when I had an opportunity to talk about the book - but I found the work so fascinating and well written that I have translated quite a few sections and paraphrased others including nearly as much detail as is in the original. The only area where I have omitted much is the central section describing quantities of biblical sites that he visited in the Holy Land. Even there, I have extracted a few phrases that reveal the humour, reverence or character of the man or of his time.

One important biographical point to clarify (I think the English Wikipedia has/had it wrong) is that Guerrero’s imprisonment for debt was not due to ransom payments, but for inability to repay a loan that he had taken out for the printing of his Liber Vesparum in Rome in 1584. His trial and imprisonment was in August 1591, two years after his return from Jerusalem. Money management was not his strong point: A contemporary biographer (Pacheco) says that the archbishop, knowing that he gave away all his income to charity, invited him to dine - and when he could not come because he lived inside the cathedral which was locked up early - sent him food from his own table that was posted through a specially cut gap in the grille of a window.

My own comments are in italics. Direct translations are between inverted commas and written in the first person. My broader summaries of content are in the third person.

References:

Modern edition

[https://www.uma.es/victoria/guerrero/Francisco Guerrero - Viaje de Jerusalem.pdf](https://www.uma.es/victoria/guerrero/Francisco_Guerrero_-_Viaje_de_Jerusalem.pdf)

1593 edition

[https://www.uma.es/victoria/guerrero/El viage de Hiervsalem que hizo Francisc.pdf](https://www.uma.es/victoria/guerrero/El_viage_de_Hiervsalem_que_hizo_Francisc.pdf)

Background

Pacheco, Libro de descripción de verdaderos retratos de ilustres y memorables varones, Sevilla, 1599

Pedrell, Hispaniae Schola Musica Sacra Vol II Franciscus Guerreo, Barcelona, 1894

<https://s9.imslp.org/files/imglnks/usimg/e/ec/IMSLP362791-SIBLEY1802.5169.eced-39087013468881v2intro.pdf>

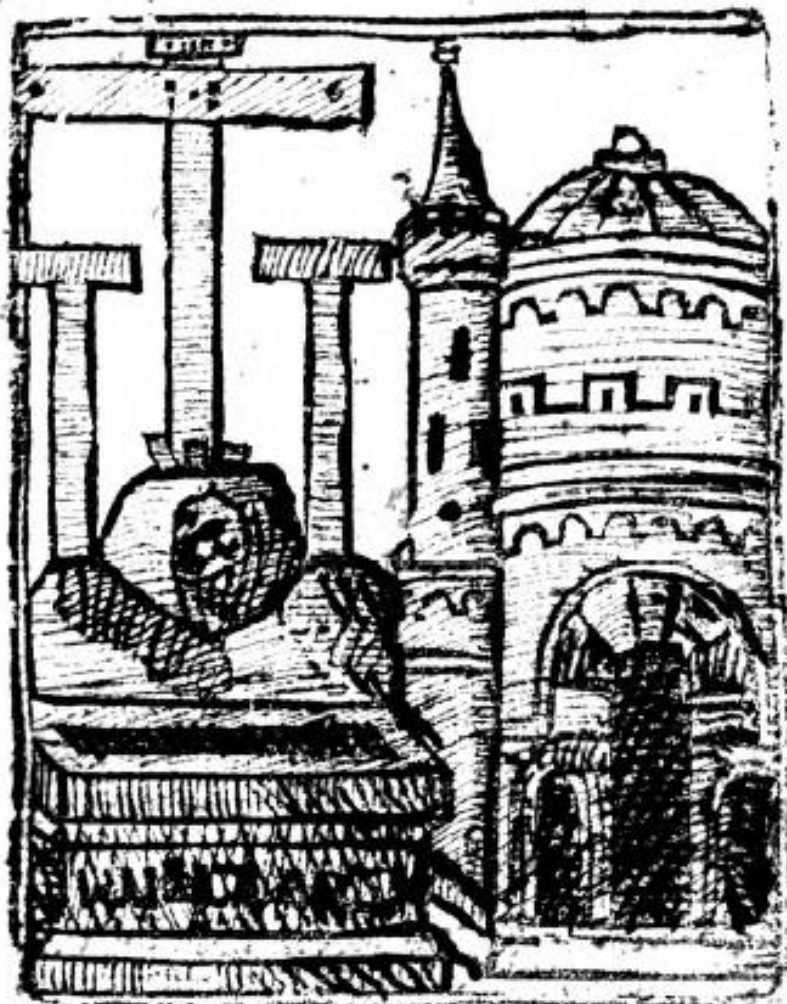
Stevenson, R.M. Spanish cathedral music in the golden age, U. California Press, 1961. ISBN 9781258649074

López-Caló, J. La Música en las catedrales españolas, ICCMU, Madrid, 2012. ISBN 978-84-89457-48-5

EL VIAGE DE HIERUSALEM QUE HIZO FRAN-

cisco Guerrero, Racionero, y Maestro
de Capilla de la santa Iglesia
de Sevilla.

*Dirigido al Illustrissimo y Reuerendissimo señor Don
Rodrigo de Castro, Cardenal y Arçobispo de
la santa Iglesia de Sevilla.*



Impresso con licencia en Valencia, en casa de
los herederos de Joã Nauarro: Año 1593.

e. La Maltre
Google

The Jerusalem journey made by Francisco Guerrero, prebendary and master of the music of the holy Church of Seville

Seville (and Málaga) cathedrals are always referred to as “holy church” whereas the smaller one at Jaén is called “cathedral”. Seville’s was the largest in the world in Guerrero’s time and remains the biggest gothic cathedral.

In the 1593 edition we are reminded of the political atmosphere in Spain by the three obligatory censor approvals that appear before Guerrero’s text.

1. State approval from the King, represented by the Marquis of Aytona. The licence for this edition printed in Valencia is in the local language, a dialect of Catalan.
2. Roman Catholic Church approval by the archbishop of Valencia’s representative finding “nothing that might be repugnant to our Holy Catholic faith”.
3. The separate statement by Dr Pedro Joan Assensio who has actually read it on behalf of the Church. He not only “found nothing repugnant ... but rather it is a book to awaken the devotion of the faithful ... and deserves to be printed”. He signs with the Latin version of his name “Petrus Ioannes Assensius”.

At last we come to Guerrero’s own work and the dedication to Cardinal Rodrigo de Castro, archbishop of Seville. Rodrigo de Castro was noted as a great patron of church music, not only encouraging music financially but also taking a benevolent interest in the well-being of the musicians.

“To the illustrious and most reverend lord Rodrigo de Castro, Cardinal and Archbishop of the holy Church of Seville

Nothing could I offer to your illustrious Lordship with more justification than the work that is in your illustrious hands ... for without your generosity and favour ... I could not have done that which I have wished for all my life. ... Here I describe what I saw ... and not all that there is to be seen, because it is enough to have seen the most precious. ... You will have to pardon the poor style because my talent will go no further. ...

The least of your illustrious lordship’s servants
Francisco Guerrero.”

Prologue

“Having (by the mercy of God) been to and returned from the holy city of Jerusalem, and visited that which is there and the rest of the Holy Land ... many curious and devout people have persuaded me that I should write about this most holy journey, to fire their spirits to undertake the same route and to inform them of that which they need to know.”

“... And to justify my motivation to make this pilgrimage it is necessary to start from the time when I first wanted to see such wonderful things. Since the first years of my infancy, I inclined to the art of music and was taught by my brother Pedro, a very learned master. And he so hurried me with his teaching and punishment, that, with my eagerness to learn and aptitude for the art, he was somewhat satisfied with me within a few years. Then, in his absence I ... followed the teaching of the great and excellent master Cristóbal de Morales who gave me considerable direction in composition so that I could aspire to any post as teacher. And so at the age of 18 I was accepted as master of the music of the cathedral church of Jaén, with a prebend, where I stayed for 3 years.”

I use “prebend” for the Spanish “ración” (and “prebendary” for “racionero”) which I understand to mean a post with an endowed income and analogous to academic tenure – the holder cannot easily be deprived of it; whereas a musician’s salary, however high, was at the whim of his employer. In some

establishments a “racionero” was automatically a member of the Chapter, the governing body of the cathedral, but this was not the case in Seville or Jaén.

Visiting his parents in Seville, he was persuaded by them and ordered by the Chapter to remain as salaried cantor, reluctantly leaving the Jaén post. Within months he was called to be a candidate for master of the music (with prebend) in Málaga where he was examined with five other candidates and was named the winner by the bishop who sent his nomination to the King – this being approved he was ordered to Málaga. As he prepared to go, the Chapter of Seville would not allow him to leave. They ordered the master of the music of Seville who Guerrero calls “master of the masters of Spain”, Pedro Fernández, to retire and gave him half a prebend, the other half being for Guerrero, in addition to his salary as cantor, but with the charge of teaching and providing for the needs of the choirboys. For 25 years they worked together before Fernández died and Guerrero got the full prebend in perpetuity with papal bull.

Stevenson calculates that Fernández was at least 60 and in poor health when he retired, so he far outlived expectations!



Portrait of Guerrero from Pacheco’s “Memorables varones” published in 1599 (the year of Guerrero’s death from plague, aged 71)

Before the age of 25 Guerrero has a post requiring approval by the King and another that provides an income for life endorsed by the Pope! It is recognition of his extraordinary ability, but it also serves as a reminder to be aware of the historical-religious context: Málaga had only been reconquered from the Moors a century earlier (1487) when its churches would have been built (mostly converted from mosques) by royal command. Seville was reconquered in 1248 so they had more independence. Practising Jews and Muslims were expelled from Spain soon after the conquest of Granada in 1492 and the Inquisition was in full swing, torturing and executing those suspected of remaining. Protestants were as bad – Guerrero started his pilgrimage the very year of the Spanish Armada. The matter of the papal bull was quite different – a part of the offer to attract Guerrero to stay in Seville, it made his terms of employment legally binding on the Chapter which might otherwise change its mind arbitrarily.

“As holders of this office, one of our principal tasks is the composition of villanellas and carols in praise of the holy birth of Jesus Christ our Saviour and God and of his most holy mother the Virgin Mary, our Lady. Every time I was occupied in composing these villanellas and Bethlehem was mentioned, the desire increased in me to see and celebrate the songs in that holy place, in the company and memory of the angels and shepherds who there first taught us of that holy feast.”

... so he planned to go (but did not make a vow, he states) when he might be free. With the death of his parents, he felt he had completed the greatest part of the way. In 1588 “our most holy and pious father Pope Sixto V sent for the illustrious and most reverend Cardinal Rodrigo de Castro, archbishop of Seville”. Guerrero asked to go with him and for Rodrigo to intercede with the Chapter to release him. First to Madrid where the King delayed the Cardinal and Guerrero could see he would not go farther until after the heat of the summer; so asked and got permission and “necessary assistance” (*funds*) to travel to Venice to get some of his music printed. This in the knowledge that the Duke of Florence’s galleys were in Cartagena. (*The importance of which is probably that he avoided pirates on the way out!*) (*Seville-Madrid-Cartagena is more than 600 miles/960 km on modern motorways, but that part of the travelling does not rate a mention in his book.*)

Galley to Genoa, overland to Venice arriving 8th August. Straight to business, found it would take 5 months to do the printing – leaving the supervision in the capable hands of Joseph Zerlino (Gioseffo Zarlino), maestro di capilla of San Marco – enough time to pop over to the Holy Land – got advice on how much to pay for passage on the (“good and new” *i.e. unlikely to leak or break up*) boat to Tripoli in Syria. 5 escudos for the boat and 7 per month to eat at the captain’s table.

The publications were Mottecta and Canciones y villanescas espirituales, both Venecia 1589. The latter is particularly interesting as it is a collection of around 60 choral songs in Spanish. Some originally had secular words but Guerrero insisted on religious contrafacta for publication. Most were composed early in his career and one justification for this publication was to correct corrupted versions that were circulating. Although not strictly liturgical music, these pieces would have been useful for Guerrero’s task of teaching the choir boys and for processions through the streets. There was already a tradition of including vernacular carols in church services in the newly reconquered areas as a means of attracting and educating the new converts to Christianity.

“I brought with me from Spain as my companion on the whole journey, my disciple Francisco Sánchez. And so we embarked cheerfully on 14th August 1588 in the 60th year of my age without fear of the sea nor of the many nations of enemies that are to be met on this pilgrimage, because my pleasure in this expedition was so great as to make everything easy and smooth.”



Cartagena to Venice where Guerrero considers that his journey really starts (1569 Portolan map Wikimedia Commons)

Chapter 1 Of the journey we made from Venice to Jaffa, the gateway to the Holy Land

Sailed on 15th (Assumption) 15 days to “Zante” (Zakynthos), a Greek island ruled by Venice. Greek church for majority and also Latinos’ church for Venetians and visitors from the West. (*Guerrero uses “Latino” throughout to distinguish R.C. from other Christian sects.*)

“Zante is well provided with all that is needed for human life, especially wine which is abundant and very excellent. Many ships come from East and West to stock up and there is plenty for all.”

Said Latino mass in a small convent of Franciscan friars and observed a Greek style mass in “very simple and ignorant” plainsong. Describes some of the mass – “devout and ceremonious”. Is surprised that the people are on their knees adoring the passage of the bread and wine in procession before it has been consecrated. He observes that Zante is near Corinth where St Paul sent two of his letters.

They sailed 500 leagues (*a league is approximately 3 miles or 5 km*), passing Crete without landing, and arrived at Limassol, Cyprus, “beautiful and fertile”, 27 days after leaving Venice. It had been conquered by the Turks from the Venetians 20 years before. Latino residents remain in their homes but the rulers are Turks. At first afraid to go out, they soon found they could look around and greet people without fear as they are now at peace with Venice and any Latino pilgrims are considered to be honorary Venetians. Limassol largely ruined by the recent war. The consul for France and Italy acts as middle man between Turks and Christians. Hints that the Turks are now distracted by war elsewhere... Guerrero reflects that from experience “what these barbarians have conquered they are slow to lose again”.



Venice to Jaffa via Zante and Cyprus (1572 portolan chart by Diogo Homem, Wikimedia commons)

The captain advises them that he will be there 20 more days before continuing to Tripoli and pilgrims would do better to sail to Jaffa - only 12 leagues from Jerusalem - so they contract with a boatman taking a cargo of carob to Egypt and 32 days out from Venice they arrive in Jaffa.

Chapter 2 Of the city of Jaffa and of the way thence to Jerusalem

Jaffa obviously once a great city, by then largely ruined, celebrated in scripture e.g. where Jonah sailed from before being swallowed by the whale; here St Peter saw a vision ...



Jaffa. Note the prevalence of ruins as mentioned by Guerrero

(Zuallardo Il Devotissimo Viaggio Di Gerusalemme (1587))

They anchor and a boat approaches. Their boatman hides the wine, just leaving enough to share a meal. 8 or 10 arquebusiers and archers escort the Subashi (Turkish regional governor) who asks “Christiani? Christiani?” They bow. After eating, the Turks take them to land, laughing at one Turk who has got drunk. They pay the Subashi and beg him to find them a guide/interpreter and mounts for the journey to Jerusalem which he does. Atala appears 3 days later with donkeys for them, by which time there is quite a collection of other pilgrims. Guerrero describes the watermelon, presumably unknown in Spain then. They go to Rama staying in a partly ruined house said to be that of Nicodemus. It belongs to some friars (*throughout, I translate “fraile” by “friar” and this should be understood to mean anyone in religious orders regardless of rank*) who provide good food, “especially the chicken”, and hire them mats to sleep on the floor. They pay a Turk to guard them as they rest. Atala, who speaks Italian, tells them he is a Christian but later confides that he is a Christian when he is with Christians, a Moor when he is with Moors and a thief when he is among thieves! (*Throughout, Guerrero seems to use “Moro” - Moor as a general term for Muslim unless they are specifically Turks, the rulers by conquest of the region. The term “Alarab” which I translate as Arab seems to be reserved for thieves and bandits.*)

Various times on the route to Jerusalem they have to pay Arab bandits to let them pass peacefully. They threaten with bow and arrow right against one’s chest so that one expects to be shot but then out of respect for Atala who previously spoke to the local chief, let them go when they have paid a modest sum rather than robbing one of everything as they might easily do. They are actually very poor and this is their only income. Nearing Jerusalem they stopped in a rocky area where there was a spring and olive trees, to eat what they had brought with them – a Turk appeared on horseback; without dismounting he ate what Guerrero handed him, affording a chance for observation: He was of good figure and graceful and carried a lance, a scimitar, an arquebus, bow and arrows and a club with 8 knives and a dagger and a hammer – it seemed to Guerrero that he could take on 10 enemies and still kill them. “If you want to fight these people you’d better be well prepared.”

This is the area where David fought Goliath and Guerrero imagines David choosing the stones for his sling from the nearly dry riverbed.

Jerusalem is surrounded by hills and a good view is only to be had from the Mount of Olives but some scraps of wall and towers became visible and all the pilgrims jumped off their mounts, kissing the ground many times and praising God with a thousand sighs of reverence repeating “Urba beata Hierusalem”.



Jaffa to Jerusalem, (avoiding the sea cow!)
c. 1570 Map
Wikimedia commons

A Christian named Baptist came out to meet them. He was spokesman for the friars with the Moors and Turks and spoke Italian. The Guardian – the Pope’s representative – had been warned they were approaching. They sat and waited at a gate of the city and after half an hour two Italian friars appeared, told them they were most welcome but to wait a bit more as they had to advise the Turks to allow them to enter. The Turks examined their baggage “which was very little as befits the pilgrims’ safety”. They were charged some money again and permitted to enter, but the Latinos had to wait longer, while the Greeks were taken to their patriarch first – they have priority being more in favour with the Turks. Finally the friars come back for the Latinos and:

“We entered the Holy City on St Maurice’s day, the 22nd of September 1588 so that it had taken us 37 days from Venice.”.



Hierosolyma Urbs Sancta, Braun and Hogenberg 1582 Wikimedia commons

Chapter 3 Which treats of the holy city of Jerusalem, and the sacred Mount Sion, and their holy sites

“The two friars took us to San Salvador, the principal convent of the Holy Land where all the religious of the convent awaited us and we processed, singing the Te Deum, to the church and after prayers were said, a friar addressed to us a devout speech in Italian about the great goodness of the Lord in bringing us to these holy places and that we could expect many indulgences, confessing and taking communion. Then we were taken to a room, still in procession, where they washed our feet with great reverence, singing hymns and psalms. After the washing, they gave us a good supper and took us to some guestrooms where they showed each of us his bed where we slept and rested most happily for God having granted us such favour, as he does not give to all, though princes and kings desire it.”

“The next day we prepared to confess and the father Guardian gave authority to the confessors to give plenary absolution, as he stands in place of the Pope. We showed him our dimissorials and he gave us licence to say Mass.” (A “dimissorial” or “dimissory letter” is from one R.C. authority to another to say that the titular is approved for ordination.)

“There are 3 altars in this church and they are so privileged that a soul is released from purgatory.”

“Mass said, we were assigned a virtuous and holy Italian friar to take us round the sites ... with Baptist, mentioned above, who is our interpreter with the Moors and their Arabic language, and who also protects us from many bad boys who throw stones at us in the streets, and advises us on how to behave – not to cough or spit because the Moors will think we are laughing at them.”

remainder of Chapter 3 Which treats of the holy city of Jerusalem, and the sacred Mount Sion, and their holy sites

Chapter 4 In the valley of Jehoshaphat (Kedron)

Chapter 5 Of the sacred Mount of Olives and Bethany

Chapter 7 Of the church of Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre

This and the next several chapters are a more or less detailed guide or account of visits “with joy and reverence” to biblical sites in Jerusalem and the immediate environs. So I will attempt a general overview.

They visit many sites where incidents in the Bible are said to have taken place, a good proportion of which must be apocryphal. Guerrero reports most of them as fact, but occasionally detaches himself with “it is said that ...” or some similar expression. And a note of scepticism might be detected when he observes that if the thieves’ crosses were so close to J.C.’s they would have been touching. The more important sites have churches built over them, but the churches are often at least partially ruined. At one point he states that something could easily be repaired, but the Turks will not permit it. Some of the non-ruined churches have been robbed of their marble cladding and paving to decorate mosques. In fact much of Jerusalem seems to be ruined and when viewing the whole city from the Mount of Olives, Guerrero notes that its population then (he estimates 4,000) must be much less than in its heyday.

Bethany he notes as having once been great, but then “only 60 houses and they partly underground and more like a rabbit warren than human dwellings. ... we entered the house of Simon the leper, which is two chapels of nicely worked stone in the place where Christ dined with the resuscitated Lazarus and Mary Magdalene anointed him. There is an intact altar where they say mass on the day of that Gospel reading; now it is a stable for goats and oxen. They must have to give it a good clean when they celebrate here. And although it is saddening to see the poor treatment of these places because they are in the power of the Moors, the reverence and faith of the Catholics are not dismayed ... it is permitted by God in his secret wisdom.”

Sites associated with O.T. prophets are venerated by the Muslims and mostly have mosques built over them which it is death for Christians to enter, unless they are converting. Even the monastery of the community that hosts Guerrero was confiscated 30 years earlier forcing them to move to a new location. They suspect Jews of having told the Turks that it was the site of David’s tomb.

Each site offers indulgences but Guerrero does not seem to be totting them up nor does he quantify them for the reader, he just notes it as a generalization.

“You should know that at each sanctuary that is visited in the entire Holy Land, the first thing that you do is to say a hymn with its antiphon and verse and prayer – a book is carried for all of this. Then you have to pray the Our Father and Ave María, then they tell you the mystery of that place.”

(In the valley of Jehoshaphat) "... near here they showed us the place where the unfortunate Judas hanged himself. Right next to that are the sepulchres of the Jews so that it looks as though they take him as their patron to accompany him to hell."

Bethlehem is within walking distance: setting out at daybreak they fall on their knees singing hymns and prayers when it comes in sight. They stop at a monastery and process from there, bearing candles. "I, as a musician, had a thousand desires to have there all the best musicians in the world, of voices as well as instruments, to say and sing a thousand songs and carols to the baby Jesus and his most holy mother and the blessed Joseph in the company of the angels and kings and shepherds who found themselves at this inn, which, though seeming so poor, exceeded all the riches one could imagine."

Many sites are locked with the Turks holding the keys and usually they are minor places and cheerfully opened for a modest sum. But this is also the case of the whole precinct of Calvary and the Holy Sepulchre, and there they pay quite a large sum to enter the first time, much less for readmission. Guerrero gives a false name (Alberto, "which sounds German") and speaks Italian so that they don't suspect he is a Spanish spy and enslave him. Within, there are separate areas and closely guarded privileges for each of the eight Christian sects that operate there, and the Turks enforce the arrangements. E.g. you could be heavily fined for relighting a lamp that is the responsibility of another sect, even though all move freely between the various sacred sanctuaries and sites. Friars from each sect and even pilgrims may eat and sleep as well as pray inside with food and other necessities passed through a barred window in a door, through which outsiders may also pray. "Our Latino Franciscan friars have the best place with a refectory and dormitory and everything needed for 30 people"

"We said mass in the place of the Crucifixion (*precisely, where Christ was nailed to the cross, a few paces from where it was erected*)... on the Friday following our entry there; the Gospel was the Passion according to John. It is impossible to express the great reverence that was to be found there, contemplating the fact that everything that gospel tells us, happened in that most holy place."

"And during the four days and nights that we remained shut in, we repeated those stations many times alone and in procession. In the middle of the night it is a great happiness to hear all these sects saying Mattins, each with their own language and chant."

Before they could commence their return journey they had to wait for their guide and interpreter, Atala. During that wait, four Franciscans arrived from Cairo – two Italians and two Spanish bearing rich gifts and money including a precious chalice from King Philip of Spain. The bearer was glad to have Guerrero as witness that he had delivered his trust. With the newcomers they revisited the sites over another 10 or 12 days "because going to and from them is never tiring" and then discussed their return. One of them refused to sail from Jaffa because of the approaching winter and so Atala was asked to take them to Tripoli via Damascus.

Before leaving, they made the offering they saw fit and the Guardian gave them a certificate on parchment with the seal of the Upper Room.

Chapter 8 Of our departure from Jerusalem

Their first night was in a mostly ruined city where they fell in with a caravan of 33 camels. They continued to see biblical sites. The second night at Sichar, known to the Turks as Nablus, where they slept on the ground in the street. The next at Sebaste, by then reduced to about 50 houses but formerly capital of Samaria, home of many kings and with the remains of a fine church where John the Baptist is said to have been beheaded. There they heard that the caravan, which had lagged far behind them, had been attacked and robbed by Arabs. Whether true or not, they did not see the caravan again and gave thanks for having escaped.



The way from Jerusalem to Damascus and the coast South of Tripoli (Map: jw.org (many historical maps exist but not accurate enough to show the route!))

Now in Galilee, with innumerable biblical sites, they saw the ruins of Nazareth but their escort would not let them go there. Guerrero is able to console himself because of the translation of the BVM's house by angels to Loreto in Italy where it is a much easier pilgrimage.



Translation of the Virgin Mary's house to Loreto (Francis Xavier Weninger, 1876)
<https://catholicarboroffaithandmorals.com>

At Bethsaida on the sea of Galilee (the whole area very beautiful and fertile):

“We ate the fish from this lake which we knew to be very good as coming from where our Redeemer ate on several occasions, and from its tasting really good, and from the devoutness with which we ate, and from the hunger that we brought to it. Another day, after a very early start we crossed rough mountains to arrive before midday at the blessed River Jordan. Although this was not the point where Christ our God was baptised, yet being the same river its sight gave us joy and excited devotion. We all dismounted (to the disapproval of the Moors) and rushed eagerly into the water, drinking as much as we could, washing our hair, our faces, our hands, it looked as if we wanted to become fishes so as to avoid having to leave this blessed water.”

As they approached Damascus through rich and fertile country they saw quite a few travellers, including gentlemen with their wives and goods, heading for Cairo. “On this road a Turkish footman dealt me a hard blow with a stick, just for the fun of it, and went back to his companions, all laughing.”

“The day we arrived in Damascus and the evening before, we saw more than a thousand camels entering and leaving with supplies for the city. It is easy to spot, with many towers and lying at the foot of Mount Lebanon.”



Reception of the Venetian ambassadors in Damascus 1511 (Wikimedia, Louvre)

They enter on foot as Christians are not allowed to ride in the city.

“In every street there is at least one spring (*or fountain or well*). There is abundance of everything: food and merchandise. ...”

“The best bread that I have ever eaten and as many kinds of fruit as there are in the world, and one of them, which is called *musa (banana)*, tastes very good.”

“The population would be a little less than that of Seville. The exteriors of the houses are not very good, but many are splendid inside. They say there are 400 mosques, all well built with water at the entrance where they wash before praying.”

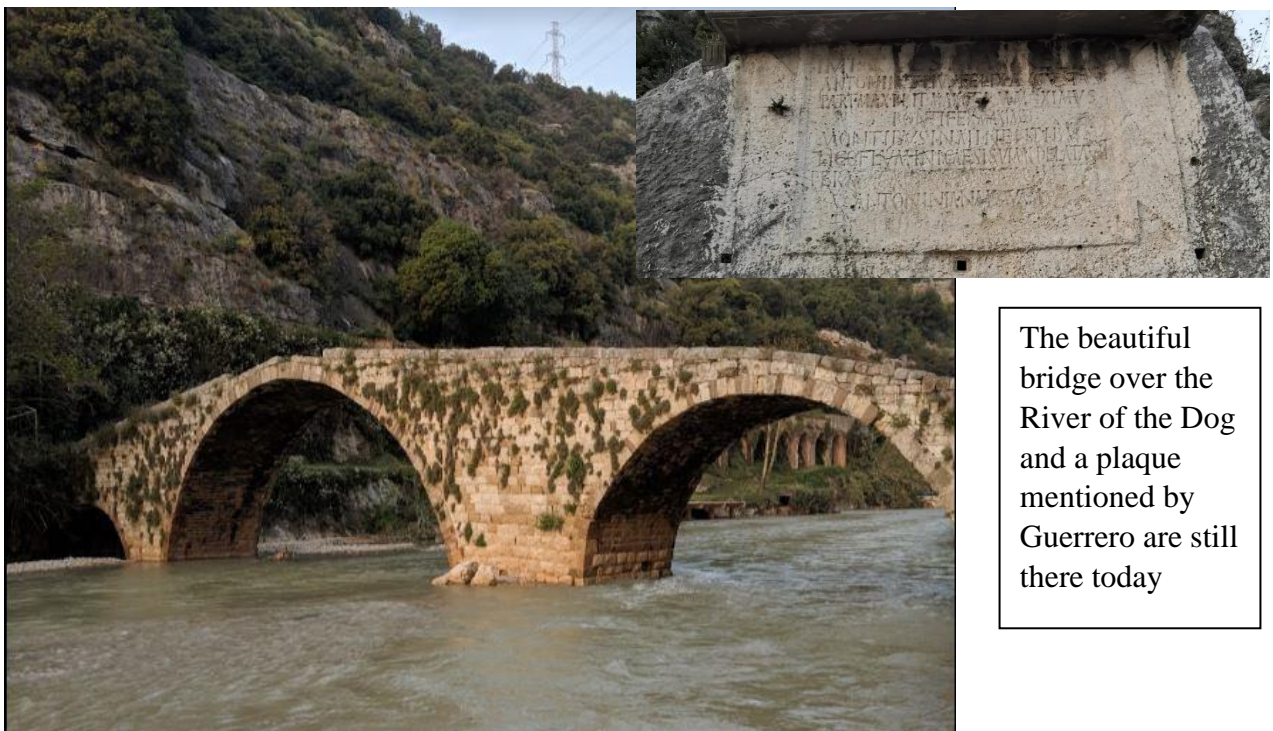
They were generously fed by the Venetian/Italian consul but poorly lodged, sleeping on the floor so that most of them became ill, but Guerrero, by the mercy of God, remained healthy. This consul and a Franciscan - who was tutor to the children of the Viceroy, preferred over Moors and Turks for this job - took them walking round most of the city many times, buying things for the journey. It was a feast time for the Moors lasting 3 days. "One day I was walking along a street when a Turkish soldier came charging along on horseback with a drawn cutlass in his hand. He was drunk and I had to be very dextrous to dodge him and hide myself amongst the Moors. He had already split open the head of a Moor and would doubtless have liked to deal another cut, to a Christian."

"They showed us a stone with a fence round it which they said was where St George mounted his horse when he went to fight the dragon; what I saw and what they told me – that is what I write."

"The feast of All Saints arrived while we were in Damascus and on that day and on All Souls we said mass in the Consul's residence while outside on the patio Moors, Jews and Turks who came on business patiently waited without disturbing us."

The Consul provided them with guides to Tripoli, it being in the same country - Syria. At the last minute they decided not to go the shortest way over Mount Lebanon as a recent arrival reported it already snowy with many thieving Arabs about.

On reaching the sea they followed the coast, crossing the so-called "River of the Dog" on a beautiful bridge built by the Romans. There were two great slabs engraved in Latin and Arabic in which Mark Anthony and Marcus Aurelius are named as emperors. "The river is so named because of a fable of the Gentiles who say that this dog, which was made of stone, spoke to the people of this world when there was going to be war or something and afterwards they threw it into this river. I sell this at the price I paid for it, believe it if you will."



The beautiful bridge over the River of the Dog and a plaque mentioned by Guerrero are still there today

"Tripoli is like the other cities, populated by Moors, Jews and Turks, but the Turks are the rulers."

On arrival at Tripoli, the rain was so heavy that it delayed the departure of a great ship, allowing them to get passage on it directly to Venice. Tripoli was a major merchant port "a stopover for half the world". "We were seven pilgrims joining the ship."

Chapter 9 Of our return, from Tripoli to Venice

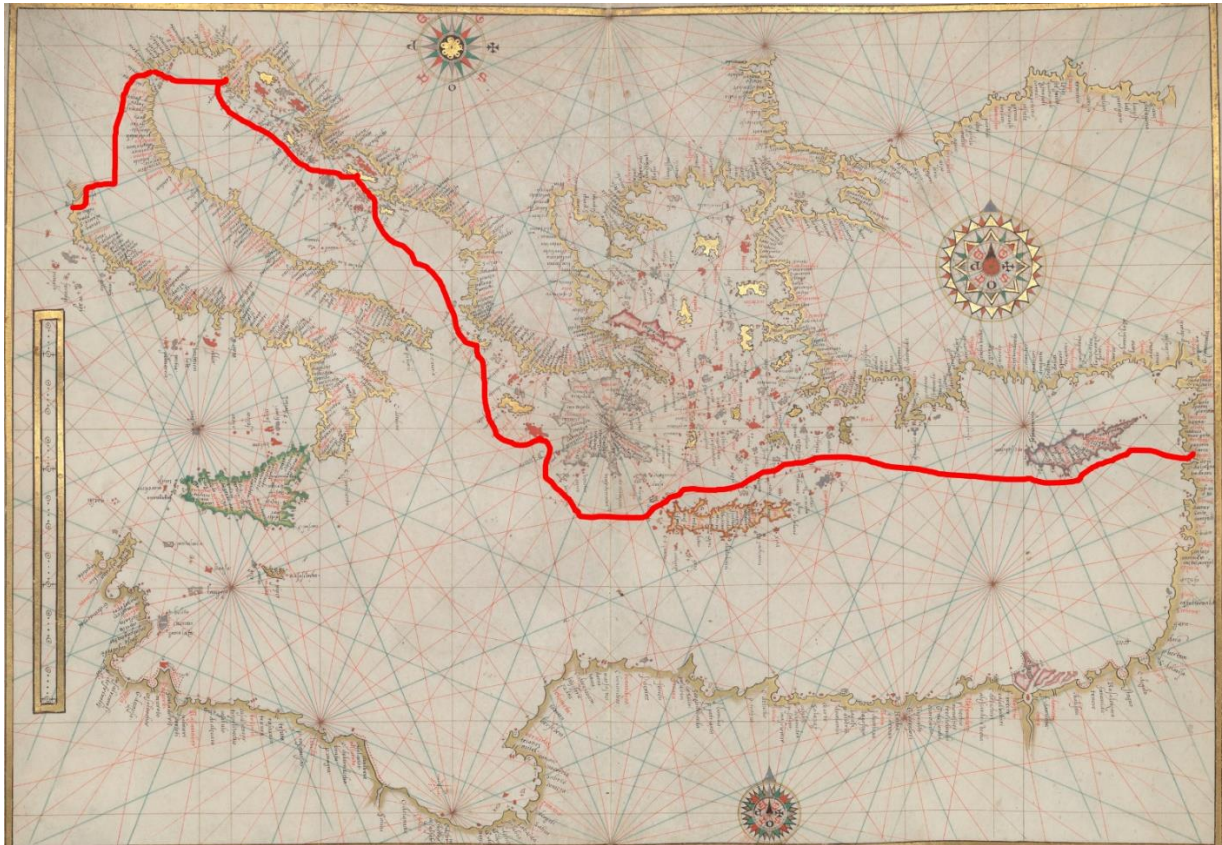
“On the ship were 8 or 9 Italian merchants returning from India which is more than 2,000 leagues overland, travelling for 40 days across deserts, they told us, mostly sandy plains where neither food nor water was to be found, so that they had to carry everything by camel, often there were as many as a thousand camels together.”

On Corfu they celebrated Christmas and Guerrero observed the military importance of this island, occupied by Venice, the gateway to Italy.

They boarded a smaller vessel for the last 40 leagues to Venice, 66 days from Tripoli. On 19th January 1589 they entered the city, 5 months and 5 days after leaving it.

Chapter 10 Of the way we went from the city of Venice to Seville

Stayed in Venice for a month and a half to repair health and to collect and to correct the music which he found printed. “I stayed with a cantor of the nobility there called Antonio de Ribera who treated me with as much love as my parents could have done, so that I was fully restored to health.”



The route from Tripoli to Livorno on 1572 chart (op. cit. Wikimedia)

Via Ferrara, Bologna, Florence, and Pisa to Livorno seeking the galleys of the Grand Duke of Florence which were going to Marseilles to collect his wife. The Grand Duke himself allowed Guerrero to kiss his hands and ordered that he be given accommodation and a place on the Pope's galleys as his own had already left. They joined the ships from Genoa and Malta, so that there was a flotilla of 16, gaily decked out as would befit the wedding of such a great prince. The Pope's Captain General obeyed the Duke so well that Guerrero, free of charge, had his own table and poop cabin and travelled so well that he did not miss terra firma at all.

They arrived in Marseilles in Holy Week and celebrated Easter there. They bought passage to Barcelona on a brigantine (*Prior to the 18th century, a brigantine had from 10 to 15 oars on each side as well as sails.*), 2 Genoese, 2 Italians and 3 Spaniards were the passengers. They met heavy weather and made little progress leaving Marseilles and took shelter in a bay where they had scarcely set foot on land when another boat approached, at first they thought also just seeking shelter but soon they found it was full of “thieving arquebusiers and even some Lutherans” pointing their weapons in their faces. Heavily outgunned, they surrendered and had to hand over their keys and allow everything on their boat to be turned over while they watched from on land. With little hope of remaining alive, they looked at one another in silence.



Livorno to Barcelona via Marseilles and two unplanned stops. 1569 chart

(From this point, I translate all the rest of the book.)

“They made us board their boat and took us another league to near their fortress whence they went out to make these attacks. They put us in a room with much straw on the floor and firewood while they talked in their French tongue outside so that we thought we were to be burned alive and commended ourselves to God. God was willing to save us from this fear and danger. Then they took us inside the fortress and gave us supper and their poor beds and we began to lose our fear. We gave the captain’s wife a few gold escudos and she assured us that our lives were not in danger.

After 3 days kept in the fortress in this way, where they also held our sailors, we negotiated for our freedom through a French third party who went to and fro between the sides. The captain asked for 100 escudos each and we all said that we did not have it, whatever he might do.

At this time one of the band arrived from Marseilles and we never knew what funds he brought, only that from that time the captain said he wanted nothing of us, because they were Christians, but that poor soldiers have their needs. Each of us gave the money that we could. It cost me 25 escudos to get my luggage back. We had given it all to them on the day they captured us, to save our lives. *(In Jerusalem it had little value but here presumably included his printed music? Stevenson reports that in 1594, Alonso Lobo paid Guerrero 12½ escudos to get copies of the two 1589 publications for Toledo Cathedral. Compare with 12 Escudos for passage from Venice to Tripoli including a month eating at the captain’s table.)*

We were there for 8 days and we embarked with their good will. The captain and his men accompanied us in their brigantine, and we in ours, for 3 or 4 leagues. When we separated he told us not to go back to Marseilles, that if we turned they would cut our heads off. He was not mistaken because if we could, we would have gone back to Marseilles to complain about them.

We continued along this coast of France for two days and in the province of Languedoc one morning, rowing, we saw a brigantine in a great hurry take on men from the land and emerge from a river, coming after us. At the cost of some sweat on the part of our sailors, we drew away from them; and just as we thought we were safe, we saw a sailing boat coming downwind towards us. At first we thought they were en route to the East, but then they drew alongside our brigantine, slowed down and ordered us to stop, and we could see another dozen thieving arquebusiers and Lutherans, and with arquebuses in our faces we surrendered and they entered our brigantine and turned over our luggage just as the others had, after we had each given them all the escudos we had in our bags. They tied our boat to theirs and took us about a league up a river, near a village called Cirignan (Sérignan, near Béziers). This second imprisonment made us fear more for our lives than the first. One of the soldiers told Juan Ansaldo (*a Genoese passenger*) he had his arquebus in my face to fire it and kill me and he did not know how he ended up shooting into the air. We attributed this to our spending all this time commending ourselves to Our Lady of Montserrat, vowing to visit her house and say masses. When we had been more than four hours in that river a French gentleman arrived, the official for the region and looked over our luggage and ordered that it be kept on the boat. He took us to a town about a league away, insisting that I should ride his horse as he was the younger. We all thanked him profusely for his help. When we got to the place everyone was given lodgings. He had me taken to his house where I dined with him and was comfortably lodged.

In this area lives a gentleman, the governor of two places; he received us cheerfully the following day and, promising us safety (for he was a Catholic), said that he would write to Duke Memoransi (*Montmorency*), who is the lord of this province of Languedoc.

At that time the Duke's secretary was a Genoese, a relative and friend of our Juan Ansaldo; and as soon as he knew of our imprisonment he made every effort to secure our release. And so the Duke ordered that we should be released and sent a passport so that if we encountered other boats of his province we should be safe. With this we got out cheerfully although we left a few escudos with the soldiers.



Barcelona to Seville via Montserrat, Valencia, Murcia, Granada
Map by Abraham Ortelý 1586
www.ign.es

From there we came to Barcelona in 4 days, where we gave thanks to God for having rescued us from those French, and also from the many Turkish galleys that were around the coast of Catalonia – Nine of which were taken by one of Andrea Doria’s sons. I say in truth that having gone amongst Turks, Moors and Arabs we had no real sorrow or danger until we came to France.

From Barcelona we went to Our Lady of Montserrat to thank her for the many favours that God had given us through her intercession. From Montserrat we went by our direct route (*a mere 700 miles/1120 km*) through Valencia, Murcia and Granada to the longed-for homeland of Seville; I and my companion Francisco Sánchez in good health. There we met signs of pleasure at my arrival, especially from the most illustrious Cardinal Rodrigo de Castro and from the Chapter of Seville’s holy church.



Seville c.1580 - Wikimedia, Museo de América (museodeamerica.mcu.es)

In this work I have given an account of my journey to the Holy Land in full Christian truth for whoever may wish to know of this way. From Seville to Jerusalem is 1,400 leagues on the outward journey and as I made the return via Damascus, I find that there and back is 3,000 leagues. It is easy to travel them – seeing that I did it aged 60 years. I do not see why strong youngsters who have the opportunity should hesitate to undertake so holy and delightful a journey; for I promise them that when they have done it they would not trade the pleasure of having seen it for all the treasures of the world.

THE END”

Viage de Hierusalẽm.

mino . Ay desde Scuilla hasta Hierusalẽm,
 mil y quatrocientas leguas de yda; y por la
 buelta que hize por la ciudad de Damasco:
 hallo que de yda, y buelta, son tres mil le-
 guas. Es facil andartas: que pues yo las an-
 duite siendo de sesenta años, no se porque
 los moços rezios, y que tienẽ posibilidad,
 emperẽzã de hazer este viage tan Sancto,
 y gustoso : que yo les certifico, que quan-
 do lo ayan andado, no truequen el
 contento de hauerlo visto por
 todos los tesoros del mundo.

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FIN.



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