

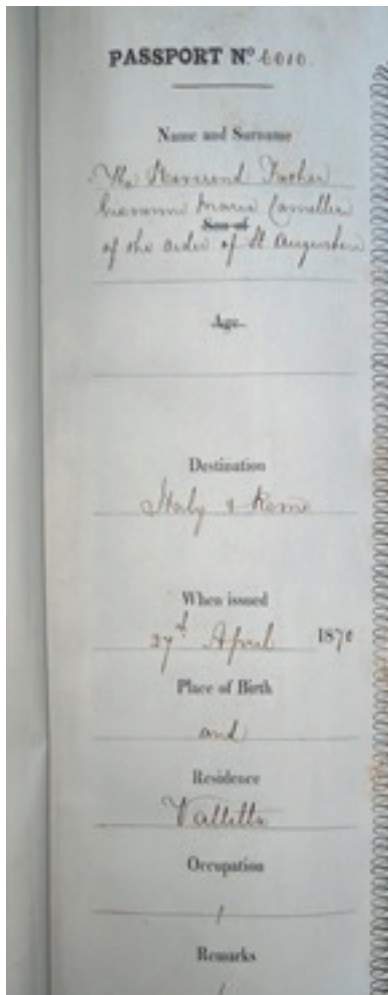
Who Were They and Where Did They Go? Gozitan Applicants for Passports 1871-1921

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Emigration is a popular subject with local historians.¹ However, few, if any historians, have focussed on Gozitan nineteenth century migration. Admittedly, this lacuna is difficult to fill because of the paucity of primary material concerning the smaller of the Maltese Islands. Nevertheless, persistent research could yield some interesting results. One source that could repay laborious mining is, of course, the Passport Records at the National Archives of Malta. An added bonus is the possibility to browse through the passport applications on line.² These records can be supplemented by an internet site listing, in database form, the passports issued in Malta and which allows for searching/sorting through the various records.³ Despite some glaring mistakes in the latter site, the two together allow for some preliminary thoughts on the subject of Gozitan migration during the period under review here (but not only). Of course, it is not correct to lump together under the title of ‘migrants’ all the persons listed in either site. Some, no doubt, applied for a passport to visit particular localities for touristic, business or other (non-migratory) purposes. Thus, for example, when Giovanni Maria Camilleri (1843-1924), bishop of Gozo, applied for a passport to visit Italy on 14 May 1919,⁴ his motivation was not the wish to escape the small, economically and culturally backward island but rather to confer with his superiors in Italy, presumably Rome. To some extent, the same could be said in respect of males holding professional qualifications.⁵

This paper proposes to introduce and discuss the subject of Gozitan passport applicants under four principal headings, namely: provenance (i.e. the locality where the applicant resided at the time of the passport application); age at time of application; occupation and/or profession, and, finally, destination. Being a preliminary study, it should be read as such. It is intended as a cautious and early foray into a niche area of Maltese migration studies. It is also intended as an introduction to further in-depth attention to the subject. In this connection, a word of warning and some preliminary observations are in order: (a) the total number of passports issued to persons resident in Gozo at time of application is, according to the internet site referred to earlier, 1,048. Of these, 516 (49%) were issued between 1871 and 1921. Each of them lacks at least some of the information relative to the intended area of analysis. Thus, 447 applications (87%) indicate the place of residence; 480 (93%) give the age; only 98 (37%) the occupation and/or profession and 513 (99%) indicate the destination locality of the applicant. It is within these constraints that the present analysis is carried out. A level of comfort as to reliability – one that will eventually need confirmation through other sources – is provided by the relatively high percentages of the various subjects of analysis (except for occupation); (b) the passport database referred to contains some glaring mistakes and – it is not hard to discover –

- 1 Cf. among others Lawrence E. Attard, *Men and Means. The Great Exodus (1918-1939)*, P.E.G. (Malta, 1989); Maurice N. Cauchi, *Maltese Migrants in Australia*, Maltese Community Council of Victoria (Victoria, Australia, 1990); Lawrence E. Attard, ‘Emigration’ in Henry Frendo and Oliver Friggieri (eds.), *Malta. Culture and Identity*, Ministry of Youth and Arts (Malta, 1994); Lawrence E. Attard, *L-Emigrazzjoni Maltija. Is-Seklu Dsatax u Ghoxrin*, PIN (Malta, 1999); Lawrence E. Attard, *Profiles of Maltese Migration. A series of nineteen biographies covering the period from 1792 to 2000*, P.E.G. (Malta, 2003); Henry Frendo, *Diaspora. Maltese Overseas Settlement*, Midsea Books (Malta, 2020); Michael Refalo, *Among Others. The Maltese in Egypt: Life, Crime and Death (1860s – 1923)*, Kite Publications (Malta, 2021).
- 2 <http://arkivji.org.mt/atom2/index.php/ministry-of-foreign-affairs-passport-applications>; cf. also archivesportaleurope.net [both last accessed 1 Nov. 2021].
- 3 <http://www.geneanum.com/malte/bases/passeports.html> [last accessed 15 Oct. 2021].
- 4 Two passports were issued to bishop Camilleri. The first one on 27 April 1870 at a time when he was described simply as ‘The Reverend Father Giovanni Maria Camilleri of the Order of St. Augustine (1870 NAM MFA01 6010). The passport was granted for travel to Italy, most probably to take up the post of lecturer of dogmatic and moral theology in Bracciano (cf. Michael J. Schiavone, *Dictionary of Maltese Biographies*, Vol. I, PIN (Malta, 2009). On the second occasion, the 76-year-old bishop was, once again, visiting Italy (1919_NAM_MFA01_0877).
- 5 For professional Maltese individuals migrating to (or resident in) Egypt cf. Michael Refalo, *Among Others. The Maltese in Egypt: Life, Crime and Death (1860s-1923)*, Kite Publications (Malta, 2021): 196-203. Among professional persons who applied for a passport without any intention of emigrating were: Dr Giuseppe Cremona LL.D. (on 13 Dec. 1887); Dr Emanuele Mallia (on 8 July 1891); Dr (medical) Alfonso Portelli (28 May 1889) and notary Giovanni Xuereb (on 10 May 1887).



Left: First passport issued to Fr Giovanni Maria Camilleri (later, bishop of Gozo) in 1860. NAM-1870-MFA-6010.
 Right: Passport application of bishop Giovanni Maria Camilleri: 1919_NAM_MFA01_0877 (courtesy The National Archives, Malta).

some omissions. By way of example, one applicant born in Valletta but resident in Rabat, Gozo, named Cesare who applied for a passport on 19 April 1871, is listed under the surname ‘Of’ which is hardly correct.⁶ Similar mistakes can be observed in other cases even if their number is minimal; (c) although a total of 1,048 passports issued to Gozitans for the whole available period (and 516 for the period under review) has been mentioned, this does not mean that it was only those individuals who left Malta’s shores during the period. Indeed, among the passports issued to individual males one frequently finds an accompanying note specifying that the applicant was to be accompanied by family members. Thus, for example, Giuseppe Formosa of Għarb, who intended to go to Algeria, was to be accompanied

(according to his passport) by his 28-year-old wife Liberata and his four daughters aged between six months and six years.⁷

A very short introduction to the demography, and social stratification of Gozo is conducive to a better understanding of the present analysis.

Gozo (1871-1921)

Commenting upon the topography of Gozo, Professor Bowen-Jones and his colleagues noted that ‘[t]hough covering little more than one-third of the area of the main island, Gozo is topographically more varied than Malta.’⁸ The same, however, could not be said for Gozitan society and social stratification. During

6 The issued passport is, in fact, in the name of 19-year-old Cesare De Cesare, born in Valletta and residing in Rabat, Gozo whose passport was issued on 19 Apr. 1891 for travel to Constantinople (1871_NAM_MFA01_7116).
 7 1872_NAM_MFA01_8677.
 8 H. Bowen-Jones, J.C. Dewdney, W.B. Fisher, *Malta. Background for Development*, Department of Geography, Durham Colleges in the University of Durham (Durham, 1961): 39.

the period reviewed here, Gozo was a rural society steeped in illiteracy, lack of hygiene, religious bigotry and fanaticism. The rate of demographic growth in Gozo was much slower than that of Malta,⁹ and there was only one urban centre: Rabat (later named Victoria). There lived the island ‘elites’ consisting prevalently of a small number of professionals (doctors, lawyers and notaries public) together with a substantial number of men of the church (a few of whom rose through the ecclesiastical ranks thus acquiring even greater power and influence over the rest of the population). A wealthy commercial class was inexistent; traders and merchants with ambitions of growth had to migrate to the larger island, particularly the areas around the Grand Harbour.¹⁰ Whereas ambitious traders and merchants settled on Malta and the elites could capitalise on their literacy, on religion and moral influence, the mass of the population was left with two options: remaining within the constricted economic, social and cultural environment that was Gozo, or migrating. A few chose the latter and it is these that concern us here.

Provenance

Life on Gozo centred around the field, the home and the church with clerical or professional occupations being reserved for a small number of men. Such a quasi-static existence could, however, be shaken by periods of extreme economic distress, by epidemics or other similar calamities. One particular such period occurred during, and in the immediate aftermath of, World War I. Then, the island experienced what a local wine merchant writing to his son in Detroit euphemistically called *la grande calma*.¹¹ Migration, although at lower percentage rates than Malta, was the last resort of the mass of the local population aspiring to better prospects.

The figures referred to here need some caution when it comes to their interpretation considering that 68 applicants out of a total of 516 (13.2%) indicate simply Gozo as place of residence. In this context, it is important to note that the number of individuals leaving Gozo was correlative to the size of the

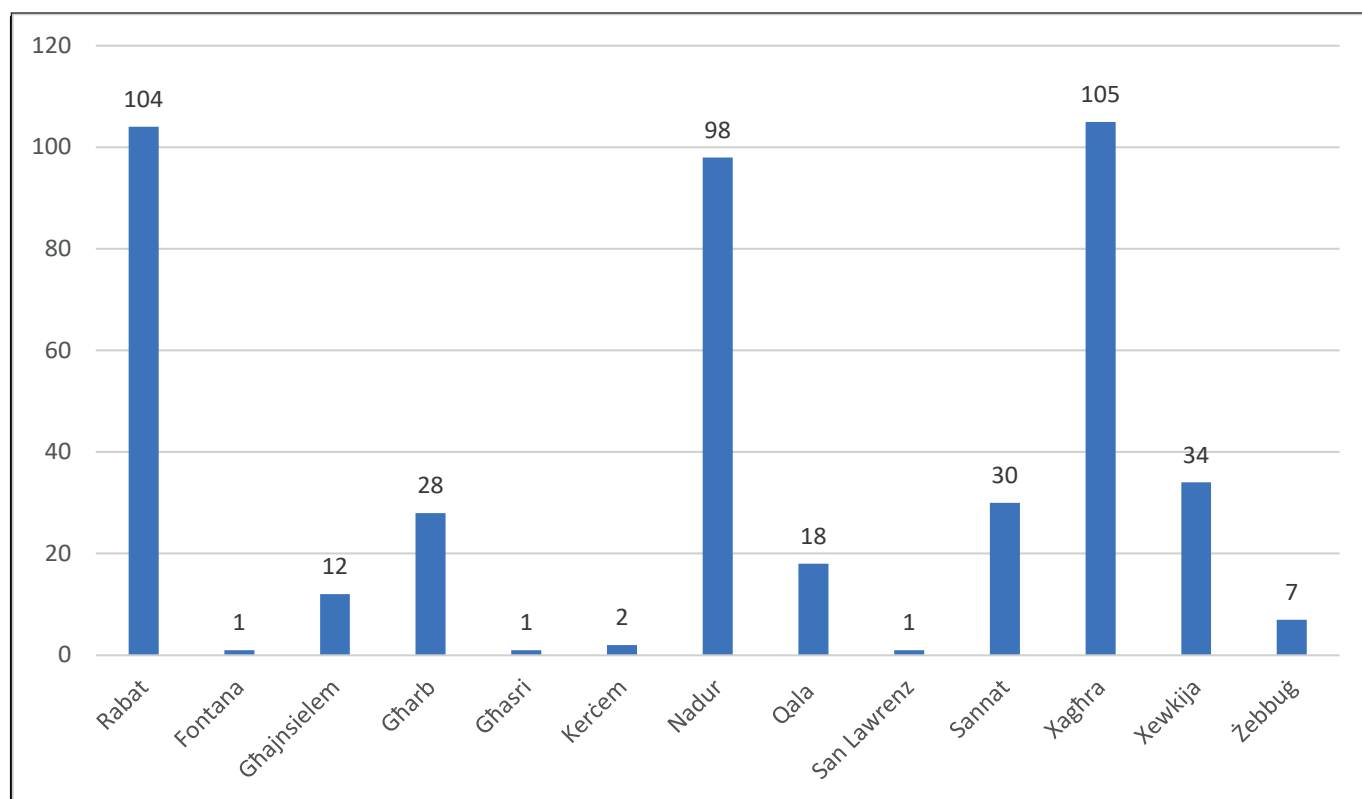


Fig. 1: Provenance of Gozitan passport applicants (1871-1921).

9 Between 1871 and 1921 Gozo’s population increased by just over 30%, that of Malta by over 60%. Bowen-Jones et. al. note that the slower demographic growth ‘is one indicator of the growing socio-economic differences between the two islands’ (ibid.: 140).

10 cf. Michael Refalo, ‘Joining the Fray of Commerce: Gozitan Entrepreneurs in Malta (c. 1870-1914)’ in *Melita Historica*; Vol. XV, No. 3 (2010); pp. 255-72.

11 Michael Refalo, *Giuseppe (De)Brincat. A Gozitan Wine Merchant 1890s-1930*, KITE Publications (Malta, 2018): 121.

respective centres.¹² Thus, Rabat – the only town – together with Xagħra and Nadur sent the largest number of migrants. Surprisingly, however, it was from Xagħra (also then known as Casal Caccia) that the largest number of passport applicants is recorded (105 equivalent to 23.4% of the total) even if it ranked third as a demographic centre. Together, Rabat, Xagħra and Nadur (which, for the early period included Qala) account for over 68% of the total. As Figure 1 well illustrates, the smaller rural centres (Għasri, Kerċem, San Lawrenz) sent only a few individuals away. The four individuals from these latter three centres appear to have left unaccompanied by family members. All four left for North African destinations, a clear indication that emigration was the aim.

It is interesting to examine, albeit briefly, in some detail the typology of passport applicants from one particular locality. Rabat has been chosen for this purpose because it was the only urban centre of the island and hence it can be assumed that there was a greater variety of occupations available to its residents. At the same time, very few applicants declared their occupation to the authorities, presumably because they did not hold any. Among those who did declare their occupation/profession, the majority were not migrants but had other reasons for going abroad. Of the fourteen who did declare their occupation two were lawyers, two doctors and six were churchmen. The rest were a cabman departing for Tunis, a carpenter for Algeria and one merchant.¹³

A few of these applicants were to be accompanied by family members. Lawyer Emanuele Mallia – not a migrant – was visiting Italy and Turkey accompanied

by his wife¹⁴ but Alessandro Grima, 48 years old, intended to go to Algeria with his wife Rosa, two years younger than him, and their two children Antonio (12) and Maria (7),¹⁵ and Barcelona-born Elena wife of Paolo Cachia (who at the time of the passport application was residing at 27 Strada Corsa) was taking her 15-year-old daughter Dolores with her to Algiers via Tunis.¹⁶ Accompanying Elena was also 24-year-old Maria Cachia of the same address,¹⁷ possibly her sister in law.

Age

It will be obvious from Figure 2 that the majority of passport applicants (and hence, necessarily, migrants) were comprised in the age bracket 16 to 30. Together, these account for 70% of the total. In examining the passports of Maltese bound for Egypt during the same time period, it was observed elsewhere that migrants within that age bracket accounted for over 60% of total Egypt-bound migrants, thus confirming that the prime years of life were those when such momentous decisions were taken.¹⁸

What is particularly interesting, however, is an analysis of those applicants who, insofar as age is concerned, were on the fringes of the majority, namely those below 16 years of age and those older than 30 years but more particularly those in their late middle age or beyond. Whereas for the former it could possibly be assumed that they were joining other family members abroad, the same conclusion is not a foregone one for middle-aged migrants. In any case, it certainly takes more than the list examined here to discover the reasons leading one to cut off one's roots.

12 According to the censuses of the period the population changes during the period 1871-1921 (source: 1871 & 1921 Censuses) and the number of passport applicants from some Gozitan centres is the following:

	1871 pop.	1921 pop.	no. of passport app.
Rabat	4615	5219	102
Żebbuġ	857	1006	7
Xagħra	2313	3262	105
Xewkija	1484	2314	34
Nadur & Qala	3425	4710	116

13 Nicola Mizzi, of 28 Strada Arciprete, Rabat, obtained his passport on 13 June 1916 stating as reason for his visit to Algeria as being 'about his inheritance' (1916_NAM_MFA-01_1451).

14 1918_NAM_MFA01_-251. Mallia was not a migrant as proven by his insertion in the list of voters for 1891 at a time when he was resident at 106 Strada San Domenico, Valletta (M.G.G. 26 Feb. 1891 No. 4328).

15 1887_NAM_MFA01_1748.

16 1918_NAM_MFA01_0252.

17 1917_NAM_MFA01_0251.

18 Refalo (2021): 6.

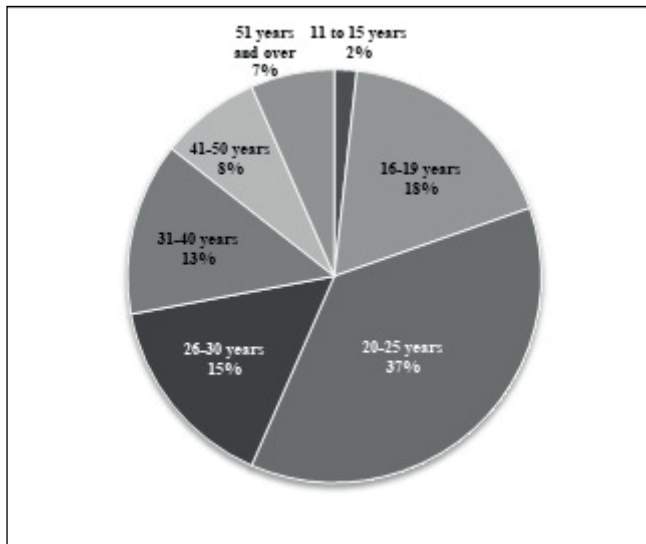
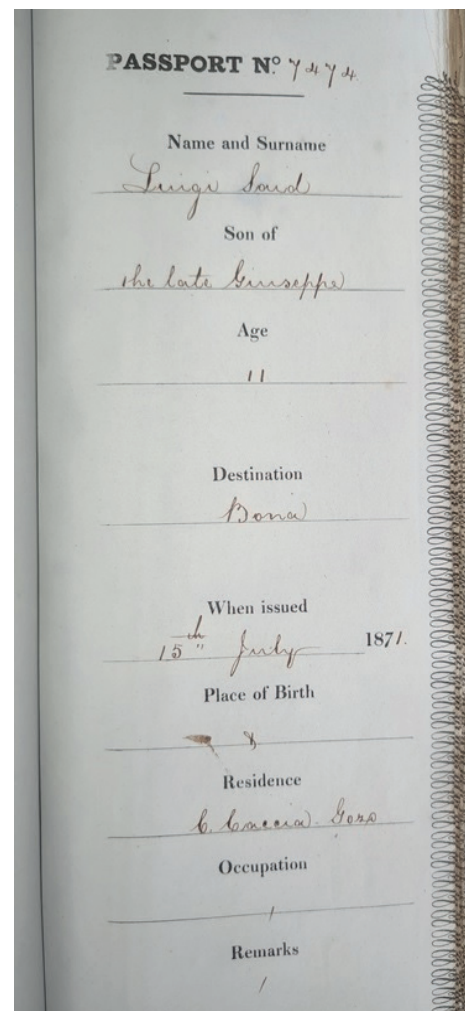


Fig. 2: Age of Gozitan passport applicants (1871-1921).

Children under the age of 15 account for just 2% of the total number of applicants. However, it should be borne in mind that a substantial number of children were included in the passport applications of either of their parents and thus do not figure in the current analysis. It is logical to assume that those children who were granted a passport in their own right (i.e. not being in the company of parents) were migrants rather than mere visitors to foreign lands. Eleven-year-old Luigi Said from Xagħra (whose father was deceased) was granted a passport on 15 July 1871. His destination was Bône, Algeria and he was neither accompanied by an adult nor was there a certificate of parental consent for emigration.¹⁹ The same could be said of Paolo Manuli (13) from Nadur²⁰ and Antonio Buttigieg (14)²¹ from Xagħra both of whom intended to depart for the same destination. However, Maria Rosa Camilleri residing at Gnien Imrik Street, Xagħra, 12 years old, though travelling alone, was joining her father also in Bône.²² The four 15-year-olds who were granted a passport during this period appear to have travelled alone. But Salvatore Carmelo Cassar born on 21 September 1901 who obtained his passport on 15 July 1916 had an uncle waiting for him at Bône.²³ Additionally, he was travelling with parental consent and was determined to leave the island even

if the passport official ‘warned [him] about getting financial assistance from the Consul.’

When perusing the other end of the age spectrum, particularly in respect of applicants who had surpassed fifty years of age (7% of total), it will be seen that the oldest ‘migrant’ was 83-year-old Giuseppe Caruana, son of Nicola from the St George parish of Rabat, who was granted a passport to travel to Lampedusa on 27 August 1887.²⁴ Probably Caruana was not a migrant in the true sense of the word; the small Italian island hardly being – then – a migrant destination. However, Francis Xerri (75) of Xewkija certainly was. He had been residing in Philippville, Algeria for the twenty-five years prior to his being granted a passport



Passport of 11 year old Luigi Said from Casal Caccia issued on 13 July 1871 to travel to Bône, Algeria (NAM-1871-MFA-7474).

¹⁹ 1871_NAM_MFA01_7474.

²⁰ 1871_NAM_MFA01_7543.

²¹ 1871_NAM_MFA_8110.

²² 1920_NAM_MFA01_228.

²³ 1916_NAM_MFA01_1823.

²⁴ 1889_NAM_MFA01_467.

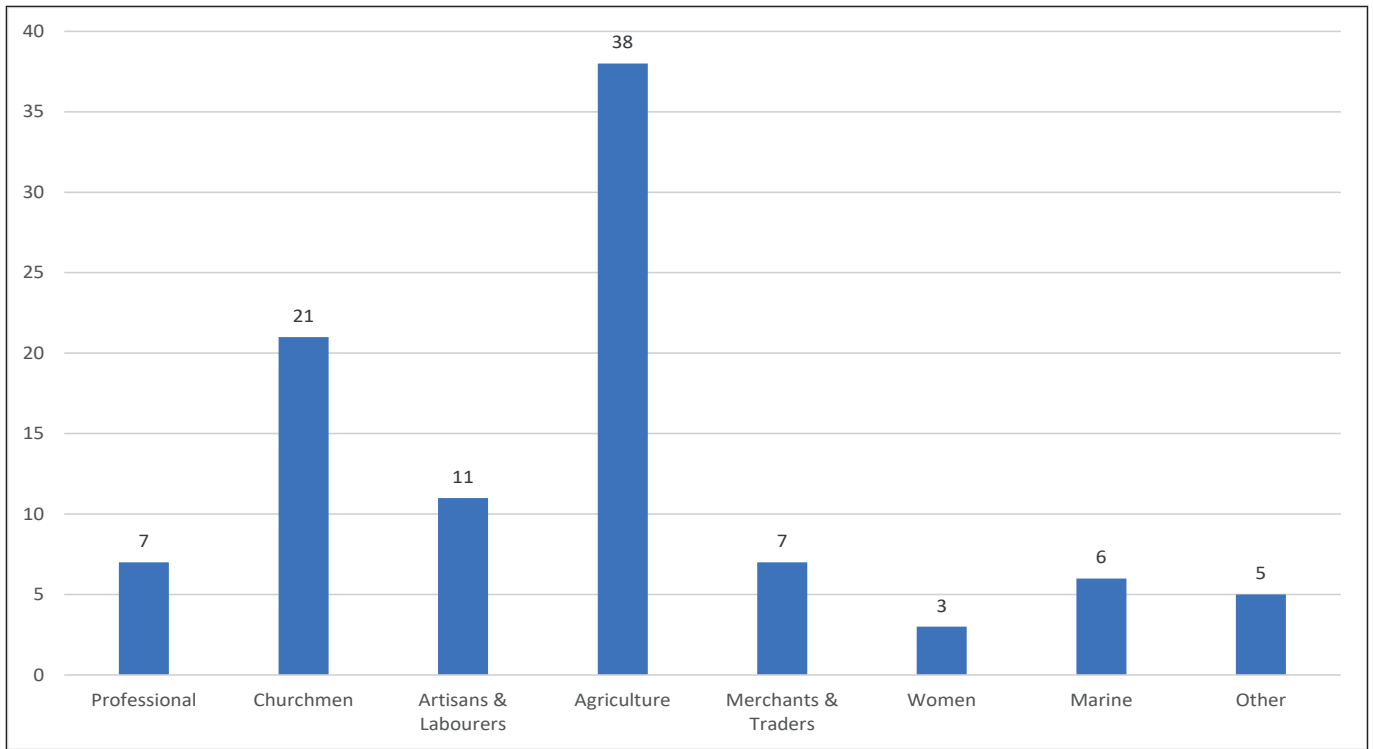


Fig. 3: Occupation of Gozitan passport applicants (1871-1921).

on 17 February 1915.²⁵ He returned to Malta for what appears to have been a short visit ‘to see his relative’ and would be retiring in Philippeville. Two women, respectively aged 64 and 69, both from Xagħra, were also travelling to Algeria. The former, Grazia Grech,²⁶ was unaccompanied but the latter, Vittoria Zerafa widow of Francesco, had her five-year-old grandson Salvatore in her company.²⁷ It does appear (but the scant information available from passport lists is hardly sufficient to confirm) that applicants aged fifty-one and over had been residing abroad and that their passport application was a consequence of a short visit to the island of their birth.

Occupation or Profession

Only 98 individuals (37%) of passport applicants declared an occupation; a clear indication that the majority of applicants held none and were intent on seeking their fortune elsewhere. Nevertheless, insofar as a distinction between migrant and

occasional traveller is possible, one needs to exercise caution in respect of certain professions (e.g. the legal and the medical as well as the men of the church), the destination, and any particular observations noted against each particular passport applicant.²⁸ In the case of the few Gozitan professionals who applied for a passport during this period, it is safe to say that none of them was a migrant. The position is slightly more complicated where men of the church are concerned. We know that bishop Giovanni Maria Camilleri was not a migrant; nor was the archpriest of Rabat, Alphonso Maria Hili (1865-1943) who applied for a passport to visit Italy on 14 May 1919, both of whom intended to visit Italy.²⁹ Where ordinary priests or monks are concerned, however, it is not as easy to distinguish between mere visitors to foreign countries or migrants (including those on pastoral and/or missionary duties). The intended destination might afford some indication. Thus, for example, it is unlikely that Sr Virginia Debrincat,³⁰ Rev. Aurelio Farrugia³¹ and some others were migrants, considering that their destination was

25 1915_NAM_MFA01_0120.

26 1891_NAM_MFA01_7992.

27 1872_NAM_MFA01_8269.

28 Some lawyers, doctors and other professionals did migrate from Malta but they were in a very small minority (for Egypt cf. Refalo, 2021: 196-203).

29 In 1921 he was elected to the Legislative Assembly.

30 1889_NAM_MFA01_626.

31 1889_NAM_MFA01_625.

Italy (most probably Rome). On the other hand, both Rev. Luigi Constantino³² bound for Tunis, and Rev. Francesco Buhagiar (Algeria)³³ intended to perform religious duties among migrants in those localities and could be considered migrants, at least in certain respects. Constantino twice applied for and obtained a passport. The first time on 8 October 1908 when he was 44 years old stating that he would be visiting Tunisia and Algeria at which time his clerical status is not indicated.³⁴ The second time, seven years later, as ‘a religious priest’ his passport issued on 6 May 1915 declared that his destination was Tunis.³⁵

Only in a few cases did the passport authorities feel the need to append observations against the names of the applicants. However, in the case of the three individuals who obtained a passport on 3 December 1912 such a note appears to have been required. This was to the effect that Francesco Muscat (60 years old) of 11 Strada Seguna, Sannat,³⁶ Giovanni Gambin (51 years old) from the same village (109 Strada Reale)³⁷ and Vincenzo Gambin (57),³⁸ also from Sannat (31 Strada Seguna) intended to go to Constantine, Algeria³⁹ ‘in connection with an inheritance.’⁴⁰ These, of course, can hardly be considered migrants.

Figure 3 classifies the various applicants into categories of occupations. It is no surprise that the majority of passport applicants were engaged in agriculture at the time when they obtained their passports (39%). What is perhaps surprising is the fact that only six applicants (6.1%) were sailors or fishermen and 11 (11%) were artisans or labourers. One word in particular should perhaps be devoted to women.

The three women (excluding one nun) who were granted a passport in their own right (i.e., not listed

in their husbands’) included an Antonia Scicluna who was one of the few passport applicants during the period under review, intending to visit the United States of America (possibly to join her husband or other relative there),⁴¹ and Maria Mizzi, wife of Salvatore, from Nadur, Gozo, 39 years old, who was travelling to Bône with her daughters Maria Assunta (9) and Rosaria (5) to join her husband.⁴²

Destination

The years covered here are still far from the surge of migrants to Australia, Canada and the United States of America. Although there had been some form of unorganised emigration/settlement in Australia as early as the first decades of the nineteenth century, it was not a popular migrant destination until later. Charles A. Price notes that ‘a few Maltese availed themselves of one Australian offer in 1883 ... but the great majority of Maltese either displayed complete indifference or else opposed the schemes with all the vigour and bitterness they possessed.’⁴³ As for the United States, the same author, referring to passport records, notes that ‘one or two stray Maltese had gone to America early in the century, but it was not until the sixties that there appeared anything like a regular movement.’⁴⁴ As Figure 4 well illustrates, Gozitans venturing across the Pacific or Atlantic Oceans were few indeed until 1921.

For Gozitans, the most popular migrant destination was Algeria. That French colony accounted for over two thirds of the total number of passports issued to Gozitans during the period under review (and which have the destination country indicated). Algiers, Philippeville (today Skikda), Bône (today Annaba) and Constantine (which some passport authorities placed in Tunisia rather than Algeria) were the more popular destinations even if 42% of the passports

32 1815_NAM_MFA01_391.

33 1889_NAM_MFA01_625.

34 1908_NAM_MFA01_355.

35 1915_NAM_MFA01_391.

36 1918_NAM_MFA01_447.

37 1918_NAM_MFA01_448.

38 1918_NAM_MFA01_449.

39 The note erroneously places Constantine in Tunisia rather than Algeria.

40 For similar instances of Malta residents who sought to pursue possible benefits from inheritance, limitedly to Egypt, cf. Refalo (2021): 325-327.

41 1919_NAM_MFA01_842.

42 1915_NAM_MFA01_580.

43 Charles A. Price, *Malta and the Maltese. A Study in Nineteenth Century Migration*, Georgian House (Melbourne, 1989): 193.

44 *ibid.*: 140. For migrants in the United States of America cf., for example, the sons of wine merchant Giuseppe Brincat (Refalo, 2018).

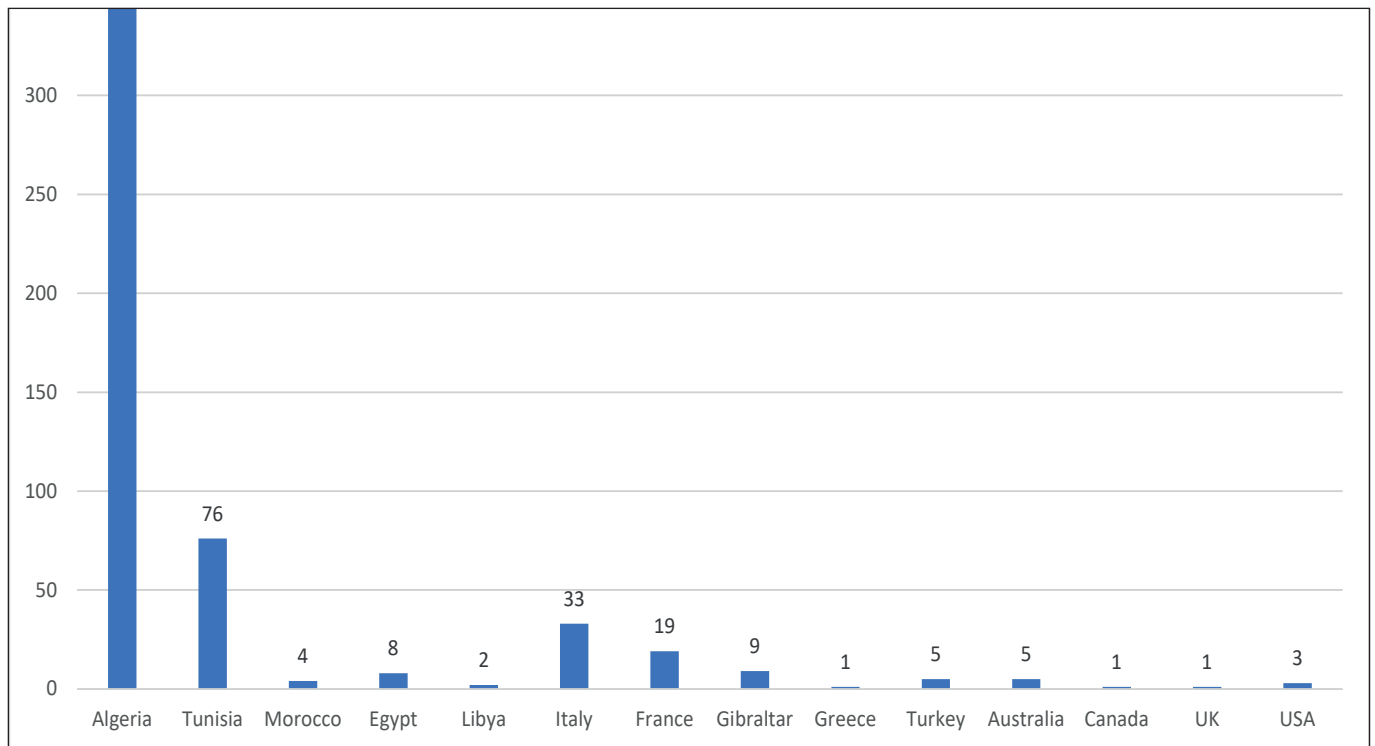


Fig. 4: Destination of Gozitan passport applicants (1871-1921).

merely mention Algeria rather than a specific destination. The next popular destination was Tunisia but only 15% of Gozitan passport applicants mention it as their destination of choice.

Egypt, Morocco and Libya, together with Algeria and Tunisia account for over 85% of destinations mentioned by Gozitan applicants. This confirms that, until at least the early decades of the twentieth century, North Africa was still the preferred migrant destination. This migratory direction was, of course, not limited to Gozitans; Maltese migrants equally preferred the North African or Near Eastern Mediterranean destinations. Although it is not possible in the present context to analyse in depth this phenomenon, vicinity and the possibility of quick return and similarity in language (rendering commerce – particularly the petty one – easier) must have been positive factors encouraging settlement there. At the same time, not all North African centres were hospitable, nor were the possibilities of finding work or trade the same throughout. This is reflected, for example, by the low number of migrants intending to go to Morocco. Three of the four passport applicants intending to go to Morocco

were probably related (or, alternately friends), having all applied for the passport on the same day (31 January 1913);⁴⁵ the fourth, Cospicua-born Antonio Tabone,⁴⁶ a hairdresser, was warned by the passport official that ‘he is not likely to find work.’

According to Charles A. Price, even before mid-19th century, Algeria – a French colony – was attractive to migrants because, among other reasons, ‘the French authorities had come to realize the value of indigent but potentially thrifty Maltese colonists.’ This enabled those who settled there ‘to take advantage of the land settlement and public works programmes of the early forties and later fifties.’ In fact, despite outbreaks of plague and insurrection, Algeria (and later Tunisia, another French colony as from 1881) ‘retained their position as the most popular place of Maltese settlement, attracting in most years some two thirds of all emigrants from Malta.’⁴⁷ Later on, prospective migrants from Gozo (and, of course from Malta) would choose Algeria because of relatives already settled there. This, to a certain extent can be confirmed by the observations noted against passport applications specifying that the applicant had relations or friends there.

45 Salvatore Asciani (1913_NAM_MFA01_089); Emmanuele Azzopardi (1913_NAM_MFA01_088); Giuseppe Farrugia (1918_NAM_MFA01_090); Antonio Tabone (1914_NAM_MFA01_283).

46 1914_NAM_MFA01_283.

47 Price: 112-13.

This was the case with two brothers from Nadur (passports obtained on 28 July 1914) who were warned by the passport official not to expect any help from the British Consul in Algiers. Both stated that ‘his friend told him that he is sure he will find work.’⁴⁸

Insofar as European destinations are concerned, the possibility of distinguishing between tourist and migrant becomes more difficult. Gibraltar (9 applicants), Turkey (5) and Greece (1) would possibly have been migrant destinations. Italy (33), France (19) and the United Kingdom (1) less so even if one could not exclude the fact that at least some of those travelling to France intended to settle in Algeria or Tunisia. For Italy, some clues might be gleaned from the occupation and/or profession of the applicants. Of course, with Libya being an Italian colony (from 1911) and Algeria and Tunisia being French, it cannot be excluded that specifying the colonial power as destination could include also the colony as final destination.

The occupational division of intending travellers to France and Italy is shown in Table 1.

Occupation	France	Italy	Observations
Advocate	1		
Agriculture	11		of whom 3 for Marseilles
Churchman	1	13	of whom 1 for Rome
Decorator	1		
Fireman			
Merchant		1	
Seaman	1	2	
Watch repairer	1		
Not Specified	5	15	of whom 7 for Sicily & 1 for Lampedusa

Table 1

Two conclusions could possibly be drawn, namely: men of the church, the advocate and the merchant would not be migrants but rather travellers on professional duties/work or pleasure. On the other hand, those employed in agriculture or seamen were probably migrants in search of work (as would have been those whose occupation is not specified). Of course, these conclusions are only tentative, it being difficult to determine the

difference between migrants and tourists from the available list.

Conclusion

This short analysis serves as a preliminary step towards a more comprehensive study of migrant flows from Gozo during the latter part of the nineteenth century (and ideally earlier) and the first two decades of the twentieth. Admittedly, what has been written needs much more detailed study and analysis; the available list of passport applicants is far from enough to study the nature of migration from the smaller of the Maltese Islands.

There are many questions that need to be answered, ones that an examination of passport lists alone cannot answer. The present writing can only be considered as a first step, one taken in the awareness not only of the possible faults and lacunae. Nevertheless, there is the certainty that delving deeper into the primary sources, though far from being an easy task, would be fruitful and rewarding.

Michael Refalo, a Notary Public, obtained the BA at the University of Malta – Gozo Campus, and completed his Ph.D. thesis on the Maltese commercial class of the late 19th century.

48 1914_NAM_MFA01_724 (Michele Mifsud) and 1914_NAM_MFA01_725 (Giuseppe Mifsud).