

# **Guide to the Vincenzo Bocchimuzzo Papers**

## **CMS.006**

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

June 13, 2014

Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Center for Migration Studies  
1975

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Center for Migration Studies
<b>Creator</b>	Bocchimuzzo, Vincenzo
<b>Title</b>	Vincenzo Bocchimuzzo Papers
<b>Date [bulk]</b>	Bulk, 1906-1955
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1906-1955
<b>Extent</b>	0.5 Linear feet in one document box.
<b>Language</b>	English

**Language of Materials note** Collection is in Italian.

**Abstract** CMS 006 contains the Italian-language handwritten dramas, essays and poems of Vincenzo Bocchimuzzo, which provide commentary on events in Italy from Bocchimuzzo's involvement in a dispute with the pastor of his church in the 1900s through the death of Mussolini and the end of World War II in 1945.

### Preferred Citation note

Center for Migration Studies of New York; Vincenzo Bocchimuzzo Papers (CMS 006); Box; Folder.

## Biographical/Historical note

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Vincenzo Bocchimuzzo was born February 9, 1871, into a peasant family living in Mangone, province of Cosenza, Calabria. He completed four years of primary schooling and while still a youngster was apprenticed to a tailor. Later he sought to improve his sartorial skills by enrolling in a correspondence course offered by a trade school in Milan. He was an avid reader and enjoyed particularly the ancient classics.

In his hometown he served a president of the Congregazione di Carita' di Mangone, a lay fraternal organization charged with administering the lands of two local "lay chapels." When in 1906 the newly arrived parish priest, Michle Aquino, attempted to appropriate these lands, Bocchimuzzo took the pastor to court. The case, which reached Italy's supreme court, dragged on for years but eventually resulted in a ruling against the pastor.

Shortly after World War I, Bocchimuzzo organized a mutual aid society in Mangone called Giovane Italia, which in turn established a food cooperative for its members.

In 1920, Bocchimuzzo emigrated to the United States, settling in New York City, where he worked as a tailor until his retirement in 1947. Even while working, he wrote, publishing in the progressive paper "La Stampa Libera" under the pseudonym *Il vecchio della montagna*. In retirement he devoted himself to reading and writing, including five of the composition books gathered in this collection. He died February 17, 1960, at the age of 89.

Source: Vincent Bocchimuzzo recounted this information to an employee of the Center for Migration Studies, who composed a brief biography and dated it August 23, 1976. The original, from which this was adapted, is in the original finding aid. The date of emigration can be given with greater certainty following the discovery of Mr. Bocchimuzzo's 1927 naturalization petition on the genealogy website Fold 3: <http://www.fold3.com/document/2013287628> (June 6, 2014).

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## Scope and Contents note

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This collection contains the unpublished, handwritten, Italian language dramas, essays, and poems of Vincenzo Bocchimuzzo, a tailor by trade and a critic of his times by calling. Bocchimuzzo's literary career commenced in his birthplace of Mangone, Cosenza, Calabria, when he became president of a local mutual aid society that administered the lands of two "lay chapels." In 1906, Don Michele Aquino, the new parish priest, tried to appropriate these lands. Bocchimuzzo not only took him to court, but went after him in public with a satire called "Vita e Miracoli di Donno Michele Aquino, Parrocco di Moangone, narrata al popolo," "Life and Miracles of Don Micele Aquino, Pastor of Mangone, as told to the people."

It is unclear with whom Bocchimuzzo shared his satire, as the only known copy is this handwritten one in his files.

Bocchimuzzo migrated to New York City in 1920, where he worked as a tailor until his retirement in 1947. He continued to follow events in Italy, and to comment on them for the newspaper "La Stampa Libera" under the pseudonym Il Vecchio della Montagna (the old man of the mountain). He collected some of his thoughts into two composition books, which he titled "Critica Sociale."

Retirement provided even more time for writing. Bocchimuzzo began a three-volume work on "I Grandi Crimini ed i Grandi Criminali," or "Big Crimes and Big Criminals" in 1950. He also wrote a play, "Benito Mussoli alle Porte del rengo dell'Abbisso, or "Benito Mussolini at the Gates of the Abyss" (i.e.g, Mussolini in Hell) in July 1951, and produced a second handwritten copy in July 1955. His works provide insight into how one working-class migrant living in New York City viewed events in his Italian homeland from the 1920s through the end of World War II.

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## Arrangement note

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CMS 006 consists of three folders, one each for "In Defesa della Congregazione di Carita' di Mangone," "Vita e Miracoli di Donno Michele Aquino" and Bocchimuzzo's photograph, and seven composition books, the titles of which are listed in the inventory.

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## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Center for Migration Studies 1975

### Revision Description

Mary Elizabeth Brown inputted the finding aid for the Vincenzo Bocchimuzzo Papers into Archivists' Toolkit in compliance with DACS. Nicole Greenhouse checked the work. 2014

### Conditions Governing Access note

Open to researchers by appointment.

### Conditions Governing Use note

Copyright is owned by the Center for Migration Studies. Permission to publish materials must be requested before use.

### **Immediate Source of Acquisition note**

Gift of the family.

### **Processing Information note**

In 1975, employees at the Center for Migration Studies prepared a finding aid for CMS 006. In 2014, Mary Elizabeth Brown entered the finding aid into the Archivists' Toolkit in compliance with DACS and folder descriptions were simplified from the original print finding aid. (The original finding aid is available in print upon request). Folder titles in the container list online may vary from the the physical folder titles.

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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### **Personal Name(s)**

- Mussolini, Benito, 1883-1945

### **Subject(s)**

- Anti-fascist movements |z United States.
- Italian Americans |x Intellectual life |y 20th century.
- World War, 1939-1945 |z Italy

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## **Other Finding Aids note**

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The original finding aid is available in print upon request.

## Collection Inventory

	<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>
Alessandro Corigliano, "In Difesa della Congregazione di Carita' di Mangone contro il Parroco D. Michele Aquino," Tribunale Civile di Cosenza, 1st Sezione March 1907	1	1
"Vita e Miracoli di Donno Michele Aquino, Parroco di Mangone, Narrata al Popolo" circa 1934	1	2
CMS 006 Photograph of Vincenzo Bocchimuzzo undated 1.0 document box.	1	3
		<b>Box</b>
"Critica Sociale, Parole, Fatti e Commente" circa 1938		1
"Critica Sociale, La Colpa e' del Re" and "Pio XI Alle Porte del Paradiso" April 1944		1
"I Grandi Crimini ed i Grandi Criminale," vol. 1 1950		1
"I Grandi Crimini ed i Grandi Criminale," vol. 2 1950		1
"I Grandi Crimini ed i Grandi Criminale," vol. 3 1950		1
Il Vecchio della Montagna, "Benito Mussolini alle porte del regno dell'abisso" July 1951		1

"Amore, Odis, Gelsia" (second copy of "Benito Mussolini alle Porte del Regno dell'Abisso") July 1955

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