

# Guide to the Casimir Zagourski African Postcards

MS 1573



compiled by Larissa Leclair

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## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	3
Requesting Instructions .....	3
Administrative Information .....	4
Immediate Source of Acquisition .....	4
Conditions Governing Access .....	4
Conditions Governing Use .....	4
Preferred Citation .....	4
Associated Materials .....	4
Biographical / Historical .....	4
Scope and Contents .....	4
Collection Contents .....	6
<a href="#">Postcards</a> , 1924-1941 .....	6
Selected Search Terms .....	7

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## Collection Overview

**REPOSITORY:** Manuscripts and Archives  
Yale University Library  
P.O. Box 208240  
New Haven, CT 06520-8240  
(203) 432-1735  
(203) 432-7441  
beinecke.library@yale.edu  
<http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/>

**CALL NUMBER:** MS 1573

**CREATOR:** Zagourski, Casimir Ostoja, 1880-1941

**TITLE:** Casimir Zagourski African postcards

**DATES:** 1924-1941

**PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:** 0.5 linear feet

**LANGUAGE:** Captions on verso of postcards are in French and English.

**SUMMARY:** The collection consists of approximately 250 postcards made from photographs taken by Casimir Zagourski in Africa between 1924 and 1941, which formed a part of his overall project, "L'Afrique Qui Disparait" (Disappearing Africa). The photos are set in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo (formally known as Belgian Congo), Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Chad, Kenya, Central African Republic, Cameroon, and Congo Brazzaville. The postcards depict a variety of aspects of everyday life in these different settings, including housing styles and traditional grave sites of the Belgian Congo, Bakumu dancers, and Bongelima dignitaries. He also highlighted the beautification marks of the Gombe, the Bwaka, the Banza, and the Bapende of the Belgian Congo. Zagourski also focused on women at work, depicting them carrying goods home from market, collecting firewood, taking care of children, and preparing meals. Digital facsimiles of postcards in this collection, accompanied by more detailed descriptions, are available in the Manuscripts and Archives Digital Image Database (MADID) from the Manuscripts and Archives web site.

**ONLINE FINDING AID:** To cite or bookmark this finding aid, please use the following link: <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1573>

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## Requesting Instructions

To request items from this collection for use in the Manuscripts and Archives reading room, please use the request links in the HTML version of this finding aid, available at <https://hdl.handle.net/10079/fa/mssa.ms.1573>.

To order reproductions from this collection, please go to [http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr\\_copy\\_order.html](http://www.library.yale.edu/mssa/ifr_copy_order.html). The information you will need to submit an order includes: the collection call number, collection title, series or accession number, box number, and folder number or name.

Key to the container abbreviations used in the PDF finding aid:

b.      box

f. folder

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## Administrative Information

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### Immediate Source of Acquisition

Transferred from the African Collection Curator, 2002, 2004, and 2013. Transferred from the African Postcard Collection (MS 1575), 2003 and 2007.

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### Conditions Governing Access

The materials are open for research.

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### Conditions Governing Use

Copyright status for collection materials is unknown. Transmission or reproduction of materials protected by U.S. Copyright Law (Title 17, U.S.C.) beyond that allowed by fair use requires the written permission of the copyright owners. Works not in the public domain cannot be commercially exploited without permission of the copyright owners. Responsibility for any use rests exclusively with the user.

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### Preferred Citation

Casimir Zagourski African Postcards (MS 1573). Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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### Associated Materials

African Collection, MS 605; Pamphlet Collection, MS 1351; African Postcard Collection, MS 1575. Manuscripts and Archives, Yale University Library.

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## Biographical / Historical

Casimir Zagourski was born in Poland in 1880. After a military career in the Russian air force and the Polish army, he left Eastern Europe and moved to Africa in 1924. He settled in Leopoldville, which is now Kinshasa, Congo, where he began his career as a photographer. During the next seventeen years, until his death in 1941, Zagourski traveled around Central Africa photographing its people, places, and local traditions. At the same time, he established and maintained a store in Leopoldville to sell these images as postcards and large prints. He also exhibited his work at the Paris World's Fair in 1937.

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## Scope and Contents

The collection consists of approximately 250 postcards made from photographs taken by Casimir Zagourski in Africa between 1924 and 1941, which formed a part of his overall project, "L'Afrique Qui Disparait" (Disappearing Africa). The photos are set in what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo (formally known as Belgian Congo), Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Chad, Kenya, Central African Republic, Cameroon, and Congo Brazzaville. The postcards depict a variety of aspects of everyday life in these different settings, including housing styles and traditional grave sites of the Belgian Congo, Bakumu dancers, and Bongelima dignitaries. He also highlighted the beautification marks of the Gombe, the Bwaka, the Banza, and the Bapende of the Belgian Congo. Zagourski also focused on women at work, depicting them carrying goods home from market, collecting firewood, taking care of children, and preparing meals. Digital facsimiles of postcards in this collection, accompanied by more detailed descriptions, are available

in the Manuscripts and Archives Digital Image Database (MADID) from the Manuscripts and Archives web site.

## Collection Contents

### [Postcards, 1924-1941](#)

b. 1, f. 1-7

## **Selected Search Terms**

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the Library's online catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically therein.

### **Subjects**

Postcards -- Africa

### **Geographic Names**

Africa -- Description and travel

Burundi

Cameroon

Central African Republic

Chad

Congo (Brazzaville)

Congo (Democratic Republic)

Kenya

Rwanda

Uganda

### **Names**

Zagourski, Casimir Ostoja, 1880-1941