

**U DTK**

**Tom Kemp**

**c.1920s-1990s**

**Biographical Background:**

Tom Kemp was born in Wandsworth in 1921 to a working class family. He won scholarships to study first at his local grammar school and later, in 1939, to the London School of Economics (LSE). During his youth he became involved in the Young Communist League and then the Communist Party of Great Britain. In 1940 he joined the Navy and took part in the Dieppe raid. After the war, in 1946, he continued his studies at LSE and rejoined the Communist Party.

As a result of the Stalin-Tito break, Kemp questioned his membership of the Communist Party and in 1956, during the party crisis, Kemp joined the group of Communist Party intellectuals who became known as the Trotskyists. Kemp, in 1950, had also started teaching economic history at the University of Hull, where he would continue teaching for over 30 years. Kemp was heavily involved in the Trotskyist group as well as its successors the Socialist Labour League and the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP). He produced several books and articles both for his academic work and the socialist movement, his key work for the former being his Theories of Imperialism and for the latter his theoretical work of the International Committee of the Fourth International. During the 1970s, Kemp was particularly involved in the educational work of the WRP but during the Party upheaval of the late 1970s and early 1980s Kemp withdrew from major political activity although his commitment to the socialist and communist movement did not wane.

He died in December 1993.

**Custodial history:** Donated by Michael Kemp, Mar 1998

**Description:**

The collection predominantly consists of files of notes and typed manuscripts of Kemp's work on economic history with a focus on transport, industrialisation, engineering and socialism (c.1950s-1980s), his work within the Socialist movement including his activities within the Workers Revolutionary Party (WRP), as well as copies of various Socialist and Marxist magazines and newsletters (c.1940s-1990s).

**Extent:** 29 boxes

**Related material:**

Papers of Harold Laski (and Frida Laski) [U DLA]

Papers of Jock Haston, including records of the Revolutionary Communist Party and other Trotskyist Groups [U DJH]

Papers of Robin Page Arnot [U DAR]

Photocopies of the Revolutionary Communist Party Journal, 'Militant' [U DX/211]

Workers International League [U DP/201]

Papers of Denzil Dean Harber [U DDH]

Papers of Dr. Edward Grant [U DP/213]

Professor John Saville [U DJS - uncatalogued]

**Access conditions:** U DTK (29 boxes, 4.83 linear metres) is currently un-catalogued. In some cases a draft or box list may exist which may allow us to provide access to the collection ahead of the material being catalogued. If you are interested in this collection please contact [archives@hull.ac.uk](mailto:archives@hull.ac.uk) clearly outlining your interest and timescales.