

Kanji Dwarkadas papers

Ms. Coll. 1239

Finding aid prepared by Rive Cadwallader.

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University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2016 December 20

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Summary Information

Repository	University of Pennsylvania: Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts
Creator	Dwarkadas, Kanji, 1892-
Title	Kanji Dwarkadas papers
Call number	Ms. Coll. 1239
Date	1914-1968, undated
Extent	7.2 linear feet (18 boxes)
Language	English
Abstract	<p>The papers of Kanji Dwarkadas, an Indian politician and activist born in 1892, contain correspondence and writings by both Dwarkadas and some of his contemporaries, dating from 1914 to 1965. Active in Mumbai (then Bombay), Dwarkadas began his career alongside Annie Besant, Jawaharlal Nehru and Muhammad Ali Jinnah in the Indian Home Rule movement. Letters to and from these individuals and many other important figures in twentieth century Indian politics are included in this collection, along with a number of interviews conducted by Dwarkadas. Beginning in the 1920s, Dwarkadas was actively involved in organizations to promote social welfare in Mumbai, such as the Prostitution Inquiry Committee and Children's Aid Society (meeting minutes, resolutions and reports from these and other groups are included in the collection). Dwarkadas withdrew from politics in 1933 and focused his energies on labor organization and worker's rights.</p>

Cite as:

Kanji Dwarkadas papers, 1914-1968, undated, Ms. Coll. 1239, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania

Biography/History

Kanji Dwarkadas was born into a wealthy family in Mumbai (then Bombay) on May 1, 1892. Dwarkadas attended the University of Bombay where he earned a master's degree in English and French. At age twenty-two, Dwarkadas spent a year as a weaving apprentice in a cotton textile mill, an experience which seems to have had a great influence on him (Dwarkadas spent much of his career working for labor reform in the textile mills of his home city). It was during this early period in Dwarkadas' career that India was shifting from an agricultural to an industrial economy, and in 1917, as Indian nationalist sentiment increased, Dwarkadas became involved in the Indian Home Rule movement alongside Jawaharlal Nehru, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Annie Besant and other influential political figures of the period. Dwarkadas became very close to Annie Besant and Maryam "Ruttie" Jinnah (the wife of M. A. Jinnah), both theosophists, and soon converted to the religion himself. Dwarkadas' professional and social milieu also overlapped with that of David Graham Pole, a British Labour Party politician, Member of Parliament for three years and theosophist. Dwarkadas served as treasurer and then secretary of the All India Home Rule League, was a contributor and assistant editor of Besant's newspaper, *New India*, and acted as general secretary at a special convention of the Indian National Congress in 1918.

For three terms from 1921 to 1923, Dwarkadas served as a member for Labour in the Bombay Legislative Council. In this period, he successfully moved resolutions through the Council which resulted in the establishment of a Prostitution Inquiry Committee and an Industrial Disputes Committee (1922). These organizations became a focus for Dwarkadas in subsequent years, along with the Bombay Vigilance Association (he was a founding member in 1924 and secretary for the next seven years), the Infant Welfare Society (he served as secretary from 1926 to 1927), and the Children's Aid Society (he was a founding member and first treasurer in 1927, and secretary later). Dwarkadas also was a member of the Bombay Municipal Corporation, the entity that manages the city's civic infrastructure and administration, from 1922 to 1935.

After Besant's death in 1933, Dwarkadas withdrew from politics and focused his energies on labor organization and worker's rights. From 1937 to 1950, he was employed as the Chief Labour and Welfare Officer at the E.D. Sassoon and India United Mills Companies, two major textile factories. Dwarkadas made two extended trips to the United States in 1946 and 1951 as the guest of the government to learn about labor and housing issues in the U. S. After 1950, Dwarkadas worked as a labor consultant for a number of companies in India, and, by the 1960s, was considered "the seniormost personnel officer and labour consultant in India." Dwarkadas was a prolific writer and published a number of books including *Forty-five Years with Labour*, *Ruttie Jinnah: The Story of a Great Friendship*, *Gandhiji: Through my Diary Leaves (1915-1948)* and *Women and Children in Industry*.

Scope and Contents

The Kanji Dwarkadas papers contains correspondence and writings by Dwarkadas and some of his contemporaries dating from 1914 to 1965. Researchers will find extensive written communication from Dwarkadas and others; Dwarkadas' writings including letters to the editor, book manuscripts, autobiographical passages, and travel notes (1924-1962, undated); diary entries about current events for his own future reference (circa 1921-1962); transcripts or summaries of interviews that Dwarkadas conducted with other people; meeting minutes, notes and reports relating to the activities and agenda of the Labor Organization (1921-1963); and written works by other individuals, organizations and institutions. Detailed descriptions of the contents of the collection are located at the series level. This collection offers insight into not only the political career of Dwarkadas, but also the personal lives of some of the most important public figures in India's twentieth century history. As a member of the Indian Home Rule movement and as general secretary of the 1918 Indian National Congress, Dwarkadas was closely acquainted with Annie Besant, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Jawaharlal Nehru and other important politicians and activists of his time.

Administrative Information

University of Pennsylvania, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts

2016 December 20

Finding aid prepared by Rive Cadwallader.

Access Restrictions

This collection is open for research use.

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Source of Acquisition

Sold by Kanji Dwarkadas, 1966.

Controlled Access Headings

CORPORATE NAME(S)

- Home Rule for India League.

FORM/GENRE(S)

- Correspondence
- Diaries
- Interviews
- Minutes (Records)
- Transcripts
- Writings (documents)

GEOGRAPHIC NAME(S)

- India--History--20th century
- India--Politics and government--1919-1947
- Mumbai (India)

PERSONAL NAME(S)

- Besant, Annie, 1847-1933
- Pole, D. Graham (David Graham)
- Shiva Rao, B.

SUBJECT(S)

- Housing--India
- Labor--India
- Political science

- Social reformers

Collection Inventory

SERIES I. CORRESPONDENCE, 1914-1965, UNDATED.

Scope and Contents note

The collection's correspondence is organized into subseries for letters written by Dwarkadas and those written by other people (largely to Dwarkadas). Dwarkadas' letters (1918-1965, undated) are virtually all business correspondence, and discuss national and global politics (especially Indian independence and the Second World War), the status of labor organizations, and Dwarkadas' work with the Bombay Millowner's Association. Despite the professional nature of these letters, they reveal the warm relationships that Dwarkadas had with many of his peers in politics and business. To a large extent, the letters written by Dwarkadas are addressed to the same individuals whose correspondence makes up the next subseries (though there are a great number of letters in this series addressed to B. Shiva Rao in particular).

Some of the correspondence written to Dwarkadas, David Pole, and others (1914-1965, undated) strikes a more casual tone than Dwarkadas' own letters, though for the most part, these papers deal with the same subjects as those of the previous subseries. The largest files contain the letters of C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, Annie Besant, David Graham Pole, B. Shiva Rao and P. K. Telang. The files for Clement Attlee, M. Katherine Davis, Maryam (Ruttie) Jinnah, George Lansbury and Tej Bahadur Sapru, are smaller but not insignificant in size. Letters between Dwarkadas and Besant relate mostly to the Theosophical Society and to politics, but they also reveal how close these two figures were. The same can be said for the letters from Ruttie Jinnah, the wife of Muhammed Ali Jinnah and a dear friend of Dwarkadas'. The letters from M. Katherine Davis primarily concern her and Dwarkadas' involvement in philanthropic organizations, specifically the Children's Aid Society. Other noteworthy documents in this part of the collection include a few notes from Mahatma Gandhi (along with copies of a letter in which he explains his belief in celibacy), several short dispatches from Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and a slightly larger set of letters from Jawaharlal Nehru. In most instances, letters written by secretaries on behalf of their employer are filed under that employer's name.

Researchers will find Dwarkadas' letters to editors in Series II. Writings by Dwarkadas.

A. LETTERS WRITTEN BY DWARKADAS, 1918-1965, UNDATED.

	Box	Folder
1918-1935.	1	1
1936.	1	2
1937.	1	3
1938.	1	4
1939.	1	5
1940.	1	6
1941.	1	7
1942.	1	8
1943.	1	9
1944.	1	10
1945.	1	11
1946.	1	12-13
1947.	2	1-2
1948.	2	3-4
1949.	2	5-6
1950.	2	7
1951.	2	8-9
1952.	2	10

1953.	2	11
1954.	2	12
1955.	3	1
1956.	3	2
1957.	3	3
1958.	3	4
1959.	3	5
1960.	3	6
1961.	3	7-8
1962.	3	9-10
1963.	3	11
1964.	4	1
1965-1968.	4	2
undated.	3	4

B. LETTERS WRITTEN TO DWARKADAS AND OTHERS, 1914-1965, UNDATED.

	Box	Folder
Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer (also spelled "Aiyar"), 1931-1965, undated.	4	4-5
N. S. V. Aiyer, 1942-1948.	4	6

Clement Attlee, 1932-1965, undated.	4	7
Annie Besant, 1914-1930, undated.	4	8-9
Ghanshyam Das and Braj Mohan Birla, 1936-1961.	4	10
Chester Bowles, 1951-1963.	4	10
W. B. Bryden, 1941-1962, undated.	4	10
William and Eva Burton, 1947-1956.	4	10
M. C. Chagla, 1959-1962.	4	10
V. N. Chandavarkar, 1932-1950.	4	10
Ramananda Chatterjee, 1934-1939.	4	10
Yashwantrao Chavan, 1957-1963.	4	10
S. Chidambaram, 1932-1959, undated.	5	1
H. Chiswell-Jones, 1948-1954.	5	1
J. N. Cochrane-Barnett, 1954-1963.	5	1
Norman and Eleanor Cousins, 1962, undated.	5	2
Colleen, 1947-1950.	5	2
Jacob L. Crane and Jane Watson Crane, 1946-1964.	5	2
Shripad Amrit Dange, 1928-1943.	5	2
M. Katherine Davis, 1926-1963, undated.	5	3
Morarji Desai, 1937-1962.	5	4

Howard Donovan, 1943-1963.	5	4
Chanda Dwarkadas, 1932, 1948.	5	4
Tricumdas Dwarkadas, 1932-1954.	5	4
Peter and Dorothea Franck, 1948-1951, undated.	5	4
Indira Gandhi, 1955-1961.	5	5
Mahatma Gandhi, 1936-1947, undated.	5	6
A. Henderson, 1945-1947.	5	7
H. V. R. Iyengar (also spelled "Iengar"), 1943-1961.	5	7
Hirabai and Cowasji Jehangir, 1925-1962, undated.	5	7
Curuppumullage Jinarajadasa, 1924-1951, undated.	5	8
Dorothy Jinarajadasa, 1917-1938, undated.	5	8
Muhammad Ali Jinnah, 1927-1964, undated.	5	9
Maryam (Ruttie) Jinnah, 1922-1929, undated.	5	9
Amrit Kaur, 1948-1952.	5	10
B. G. Kher, 1947-1952.	5	10
J. B. Kripalani, 1940-1948, undated.	5	10
Krishna, 1926-1929.	5	10
Jiddu Krishnamurti, 1946-1961.	5	10
George Lansbury, 1917-1939, undated.	5	11

John J. Macdonald, 1947-1949.	6	1
Malcolm MacDonald, 1954-1959.	6	1
Clifford B. Marshall, 1948-1962.	6	1
Jivraj Narayan Mehta, 1925-1962, undated.	6	1
Homi Mody, 1935-1963, undated.	6	1
Frank Moraes, 1938-1965, undated.	6	2
Edwina and Louis Mountbatten, 1947-1962, undated.	6	2
Kanaiyalal Maneklal Munshi and Lilavati Munshi, 1941-1954, undated.	6	2
Gulzarilal Nanda, 1945-1963.	6	3
Jawaharlal Nehru, 1954-1963.	6	4
Arthur Nethercot, 1956-1965.	6	5
B. K., Babubhai J. and Vallabhbhai Patel, 1946-1956.	6	5
David Pole, 1924-1952, undated.	6	6-9
B. Shiva Rao, 1926-1963, undated.	6	10
B. Shiva Rao, 1926-1963, undated.	7	1
Kitty Rao, 1927-1939, undated.	7	2
Stanley Reed, 1922-1947.	7	3
Svetoslav Roerich and Devika Rani, 1936-1964, undated.	7	3
Tej Bahadur Sapru, 1932-1948.	7	4

Victor and Evelyn Sassoon, 1929-1962, undated.	7	5
Raja Maharaj Singh, 1941-1952.	7	5
Sivakamu, 1936-1962.	7	5
Frederick Stones, 1928-1947, undated.	7	5
P. K. Telang, 1916-1925.	7	6
Leonard Woolf, 1933-1946.	7	7
Miscellaneous letters, circa 1930-1960.	7	8-10
Miscellaneous letters, circa 1930-1960.	8	1-15
Miscellaneous letters, circa 1930-1960.	9	1-5

SERIES II. WRITINGS BY DWARKADAS, 1924-1962, UNDATED.

Scope and Contents note

This series contains writings by Dwarkadas, including letters to the editor of newspapers such as the *Times of India*, the *Bombay Sentinel*, and the *Bombay Chronicle* (1924-1962, undated). These letters mainly call attention to social issues like housing deficiencies, prostitution, and bad labor conditions in coal mines, or provide Dwarkadas' opinions on world politics and diplomacy. Researchers will also find the drafted table of contents and manuscript for the second volume *India's Fight for Freedom: an Eyewitness Story*, Dwarkadas' account of the independence movement from 1938 to 1964, which appears not to have gone to press (though the first volume was published by *Popular Prakashan* in 1966). Some isolated chapter manuscripts, outlines and notes for *India's Fight for Freedom*, *Ruttie Jinnah: the Story of a Great Friendship* and perhaps other of Dwarkadas' published works are also included. Passages of text for the blurbs and cover pages of Dwarkadas' books exist, along with some copies of reviews of his literary work. These papers succinctly present biographical and autobiographical

information about Dwarkadas. In 1946, Dwarkadas traveled to the United States for six months as a guest of the State Department to meet with labor leaders in this country. His journal entries and schedules from certain points in this trip are included in box 9, folder 12, along with a few itineraries from later business trips (1946-1955).

	Box	Folder
Articles on great Indian leaders (bound), 1951, 1958-1962.	17	5
Letters to the editor, 1924-1962, undated.	9	6
Book manuscript of "India's Fight for Freedom", probably circa 1960s.	9	7-10
Book manuscript of "India's Fight for Freedom," Volume II (bound), 1964.	17	6
Text for book jackets and cover pages of published works (partly autobiographical), 1939-1962, undated.	9	11
Notes, diaries and itineraries from business trips, 1946-1955, undated, bulk 1946.	9	12
Printed essays and speeches.	18	1
	Box	Folder
<i>Bombay's Slums: Matunga Labour Camp</i> , 1949.	18	1
<i>The Emancipation of the Indian Labourer</i> (two copies), 1938.	18	1
"Government, Trade Unions, and Labour," talk to the Rotary Club, Bombay, 1963 September 24.	18	1
Housing Indian Labour, 1945.	18	1
<i>Industrial Legislation in India</i> , 1955 April 16.	18	1
<i>Looking After the Worker: A demand for better labor relations, more houses, good food</i> , 1950.	18	1

<i>My Work as a Labour Officer</i> , 1950.	18	1
<i>Plan for Indian Labour</i> , 1945.	18	1
<i>Problem of Industrial Housing and Slum Clearance</i> , 1957 May.	18	1
"Rehabilitation of Tuberculosis Patients After Treatment," at the Seventh Tuberculosis Workers' Conference, 1949 November 29.	18	1

SERIES III. "PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND NEWS ACCOUNTS" BY DWARKADAS, 1921-1962, UNDATED.

Scope and Contents note

Between 1921 and 1962, Dwarkadas often recorded his interpretations of the state of Indian politics and his impressions of current events. These diary entries, titled "Personal observations and news" by Dwarkadas, provide detailed, honest, and relatively unfiltered information (or, sometimes, speculation) about Indian politics and politicians at several critical points in the country's twentieth century history. The accounts seem to be for Dwarkadas' personal reference (most are marked "confidential" or "most confidential"), though some copies of his radio broadcasts, lectures, and articles on politics are also included.

	Box	Folder
1921-1927.	10	1
1932-1938.	10	2
1939.	10	3-4
1940.	10	5-7
1941.	10	8

1942.	10	9
1942.	11	1
1943.	11	2
1944.	11	3
1945.	11	4
1946.	11	5
1947.	11	6
1948.	11	7
1949.	11	8
1950.	11	9
1951.	12	1
1952.	12	2
1953.	12	3
1954.	12	4
1955.	12	5
1956.	12	6
1957.	12	7
1958.	12	8
1959.	12	9

1960.	12	10
1961.	12	11
1962.	12	12
undated.	13	1-2

SERIES IV. INTERVIEWS BY DWARKADAS, 1937-1962, UNDATED.

Scope and Contents note

Dwarkadas' interviews with figures in Indian politics, typically in note form or summarized, are included in this series (1937-1962, undated). Some individuals interviewed on multiple occasions are Yashwantrao Chavan, Morarji Desai, Mahatma Gandhi, V. V. Giri, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, B. G. Kher, J. B. Kripalani, Kanaiyalal Maneklal Munshi, Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel, though conversations with many other people are also recorded. In some of these accounts of recalled conversations, Dwarkadas inserts post facto opinions or commentary.

	Box	Folder
1937-1938.	13	3
1939-1940.	13	4
1941-1942.	13	5
1943-1944.	13	6
1945-1946.	13	7
1947-1948.	13	8
1949-1950.	13	9

1951-1952.	13	10
1953-1954.	13	11
1956-1962.	13	12
undated.	13	13

SERIES V. LABOR ORGANIZATION AND OTHER BUSINESS MATERIAL, 1921-1963, UNDATED.

Scope and Contents note

Documents from Dwarkadas' involvement in labor organization and philanthropy comprise this series. The reports, proposals and meeting minutes relating to labor business convey information about disputes, negotiations, workers' strikes, and trade unions. Other papers in this series deal with the working conditions in factories and textile mills, and the social services (or lack thereof) available to low-wage laborers, such as healthcare and childcare. While some of these papers are relatively broad (for example, reports on India's general economic environment) a considerable number relate specifically to labor in Bombay's textile mills.

	Box	Folder
1921-1939.	14	1
1940-1941.	14	2
1942-1943.	14	3
1944-1945.	14	4
1946-1947.	14	5
1948-1949.	14	6

1950-1951.	14	7
1952-1953.	14	8
1954-1963.	14	9
undated.	14	10

SERIES VI. WRITINGS BY OTHERS AND ORGANIZATIONS, UNDATED.

Scope and Contents note

This last series in the collection contains writings by other individuals and organizations. The papers of the Bombay Children's Aid Society provide the meeting minutes of the provisional committee, some financial documents, and reports (usually monthly) of new "cases," that is, children who came under the purview of the Society on account of destitution or petty criminality, and were subsequently placed into the Umakhadi Children's home, a boarding school, or some other institution. David Graham Pole's writings, quite abundant, report on industrial activity in India, relations between India and Great Britain, and general memoranda on Indian economic, political and social practices (a journal detailing one of Pole's trips to India is also included). The meeting minutes of the Bombay Prostitution Committee present the organization's research on prostitution (including data tables giving the number, location and size of brothels in the city) and their plans for gradually abolishing the practice. The several bulletins and manifestos of the Quit India movement urge protest and civic disobedience on the part of Indian workers, and request the withdrawal of the British from the country, a general sentiment echoed in a speech by Annie Besant, included in the next file. The few writings by Iyer relate mostly to the Children's Aid Society and the region of Travancore, and the "private and confidential" reports of the Advisory Committee on Imperial Questions discuss plans for Indian independent sovereignty. The files on Mill Affairs and the Industrial Disputes Committee contain labor agreements and regulations for the mills, and Rao's writings consist of four documents on the topics of Indian legislature and governmental organization. Documentation of the governments of Bombay and India (before and after independence) consist of meeting minutes, reports, budgets, bills, acts and information about some politicians. The writings by other authors or agencies are filed alphabetically, and for the most part concern the same topics discussed above (including labor conditions, philanthropic concerns, and social welfare programs)

along with a quantity of speeches delivered by various dignitaries.

	Box	Folder
Advisory Committee on Imperial Questions, 1929-1946.	15	1
Annie Besant, 29 June 1929.	15	2
The Bombay Children's Aid Society, 1926-1959, undated.	15	3-4
The Bombay Children's Aid Society, Visitors book, 1927-1937.	18	2
	Box	Folder
The Bombay Children's Aid Society, 1926-1959, undated.	107	
	Box	Folder
Government of Bombay, 1938-1955.	15	5
	Box	Folder
Government of Bombay, 1938-1955.	107	
	Box	Folder
Government of India, 1952, undated.	15	6
Government of India under British rule, 1928-1939, undated.	15	7
	Box	Folder
Home Rule for India League, minutes, 1916-1919.	99	
	Box	Folder
Indian Parliamentary Committee, minutes, 1919 July-December.	18	4
Industrial Disputes Committee, 1921-1937, undated.	15	8
C. P. Ramaswami Iyer, 1936-1965, undated.	15	9
Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform, report, 1934.	18	5

Mahatma Gandhi: collection of letters and reply to "Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942-43", circa 1942-1944.	18	6-7
Mill affairs, 1928-1948, undated.	15	10
David Graham Pole, 1923-1947, undated.	15	11
David Graham Pole, 1923-1947, undated.	16	1-2
Prostitution Committee, 25 November 1921-9 March 1922, undated.	16	3
Quit India and other independence movements, 1942, undated.	16	4
B. Shiva Rao, undated.	16	5
Clippings and excerpts from journals and newspapers, circa 1932-1933.	18	3
Writings by others: B. P. Adarkar-W. B. Bryden, circa 1938-1958, undated.	16	6
Writings by others: Centre of Researches in the Science of Man-The Ford Foundation, circa 1929-1963, undated.	16	7
Writings by others: R. G. Gokhale-Lord Irwin, circa 1927-1958, undated.	16	8
Writings by others: "Jana-Gana-Mana"- Bernard E. Loshbough, circa 1922-1961, undated.	16	9
Writings by others: Madras Government Communique-Planning Commission, circa 1924-1955, undated.	17	1
Writings by others: Royal Commission-H. L. Varma, circa 1921-1963, undated.	17	2
Writings by others: N. N. Wadia-World League of Motherhood, circa 1922-1955, undated.	17	3
Writings by others: author unknown, circa 1939-1953, undated.	17	4