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Catalogue

Of

The Papers of Anil Dharker



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UNIVERSITY



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P.O. Rai, Sonapat - 131029, Haryana (India)



**Anil Dharker
(1947-2021)**

Distinguished writer, editor and columnist, Anil Dharker (b.1947-d.2021) was the founder-director of the Mumbai International Literary Festival and Literature Live!

After completing a degree in mathematics in India, he obtained a degree in mechanical engineering from the University of London and joined the academic staff of the University of Glasgow, London but soon after returned to India.

In Mumbai, he became a senior consultant to Pheroze Kandianavala & Associates, one of the country's leading architectural firms. He pioneered the concept and practice of fire safety in multi-storied buildings, such as the use of smoke detectors, sprinklers, and positive air pressure which are now prescribed by law for new buildings.

A multifaceted personality, Dharker donned many hats - an accomplished architect, a prolific writer, art, film and TV critic. He was a keen observer of Indian cinema and wrote extensive articles on cinema. He was appointed to the Advisory Board of the Film Censor Board by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting and later headed the National Film Development Corporation (then called the Film Finance Corporation). He was one of the foremost promoters of the New Wave Cinema movement in Indian cinema (also known as the Parallel Cinema). During this period, several filmmakers of the New Wave Cinema like Govind Nihalani, Saeed Mirza and Ketan Mehta made their first films. Dharker's most significant contribution to NFDC was to enable it to co-produce Richard Attenborough's film *Gandhi*, the multiple Oscar winner. Dharker was also responsible for opening the Akashwani Auditorium in South Bombay as an art movie theatre. Dharker served on the selection committees for India's International Film Festivals and also represented NFDC in overseas film festivals in Cannes, Berlin, Chicago and London. He was a member of the Advisory Boards of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Doordarshan, and the Children's Film Society of India.

Dharker also worked as a TV show producer and anchor and head of a news television channel (India TV) for some time. He conducted hundreds of interviews with prime ministers, governors, Nobel laureates, film directors and actors and several others for Doordarshan.

In 2010, Dharker founded the Mumbai International Literary Festival. This takes place in November at the National Centre for Performing Arts in South Mumbai and simultaneously at Prithvi Theatre in North Mumbai.

Anil Dharker was editor of a variety of publications, starting with *Debonair* (a monthly magazine), *Mid-Day* and *Sunday Mid-Day* (evening papers), the *Independent*, a

morning broad-sheet from the *Times of India* group and the *Illustrated Weekly of India*. He also wrote columns for numerous English dailies, including the *Times of India*, *Economic Times*, *Hindu*, *Asian Age* and *DNA*. His work has also featured in foreign publications such as the *Independent* (London), *Scotsman*, *Khaleej Times* and *Gulf News*.

His publications include *Sorry, Not Ready: Television in the Time of PM Darshan* (Harper Collins, 1997), *The Romance of Salt* (Roli Books, 2005), *Icons: Men and Women Who Shaped Today's India* (ed.), (Roli Books, 2011), *Man Who Talked to Machines: The Story of Om Prakash Jindal* (Eminence Designs, 2005) and *The Possible Dream: The Story of the Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon* (Rupa, 2011).



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I.	CORRESPONDENCE, 1969-2018	
	<u>1969-2018</u>	
	Correspondence received by Anil Dharker from various prominent individuals and organizations, including Gurbachan Singh, Manmohan Singh, Sonia Gandhi, Ratan N. Tata, Mani Shankar Aiyar, Shivraj V. Patil, S.M. Krishna, Jesada Chavarnbhark, Jaya Bachchan, Othmar Hardegger, H.R.F. Keating, V.G. Rajadhyaksha, Dev Anand, Nutan Bahl, Amitabh Bachchan, N.A. Palkhivala, Kiran Nagarkar, Satish Gujral, Bernadette Rodrigues, Mayur Patel, and Richard Gabriel. The correspondence also includes communications from the editors of Encyclopædia Britannica (Chicago), The New	Holographs, autographs, typed, and invitation card English

York Times, Indian Foreign Review (New Delhi), International Music Guide, Bombay magazine, and Foreign Policy, as well as the Programme Director of the London Film Festival, the AiPA of India, and other correspondents. These primarily concerns requests for editorial and article contributions, expressions of appreciation for Dharker's journalism and commentary, invitations to various cultural and literary events, and recommendations for the conferment of the Padma Shri Award upon him. Also, includes an article on utilization of Bollywood's stars in Indian elections (emailed to Rosie Pike, BBC).

II. COLUMNS, OPINIONS, VIEWS AND CRITIQUES, 1974-2015

a) *Debonair* Magazine – *Dharker's Dilemma*

1974-1979

Famous column by Anil Dharker in funny stories to expose political corruption, strict censorship, and the struggles of city life in Bombay. Also, featured artistic icons like Girish Karnad, using his writing to promote serious Indian theatre and art over cheap entertainment. Additionally, letters to the editor to the *Times of India* (1974-75).

Press Clippings/ English

b) *The Sunday Observer* – Television Critiques

1983-1987

Weekly television review columns by Anil Dharker feature open-letter critiques addressed directly to state broadcasting officials, targeting the rigid programming of the state-run 'Doordarshan' monopoly. The articles cover themes of state media censorship, political sycophancy, and the overwhelming appearance of the Prime Minister in daily telecasts.

Press Clippings/ English

c) *Mid-Day* Columns

1989-1990 & 1998

Social and political commentary under *Out of my Mind*, columns provide a sharp, liberal perspective on urban governance, politics, and socio-cultural life in India.

Press Clippings/ English

1998-1999

Dateline Mumbai – social and political commentary featuring objecting mania as national characteristic, valentine's day, religious nationalism debates, regional culture, PIL and civic crusaders, yellow journalism, and critique on urban governance.

Press Clippings/ English

1999-2001

Mid-Day – *Bottomline* columns by Anil Dharker covered topics include business culture, financial foundation of Mumbai, consumers' thinking, urban culture and life in the city. These mainly relate to transition of Indian media into commercialized private sector, shifting foreign policy, new trends in geopolitics, changing elite culture in the cities (Mumbai), underworld, political plight, etc.

Press Clippings/ English

2001

Mid-Day – *Opinion* columns by Anil Dharker feature inclusive analysis and sharp societal critique on issues of Mumbai metropolitan governance, security needs, public action in the face of government apathy, public works committee management, questions for Mumbai colleges, communication services, city transportation, status of city development projects, state political turmoil, etc.

Press Clippings/ English

2002-2004

Anil Dharker's *Mid-Day* columns *Opinion* addressing themes such as political hyper-nationalism, the plight of Bollywood technicians, and public health, urban infrastructure challenges in Mumbai, including the water crisis, poor road conditions, and chaotic traffic regulations. Also, includes critical commentary on Indian urban societies.

Press Clippings/ English

d) *The Independent Sunday*

1990

Anil Dharker's *Private View* column in *The Independent* features contemporary commentary on the V.P. Singh government's collapse, the Mandal Commission, the rise of right-wing groups, prime ministerial candidates, privatizing Maharashtra's civic services and defending painter M.F. Husain.

Press Clippings/ English

e) *Sunday Times of India*

1994, 1997 & 1999-2002

Tube Watch Sunday weekly review articles feature television criticism and critical analysis of media trends, cultural shifts, and the evolution of broadcasting on Doordarshan and satellite networks in post-liberalization India.

Press Clippings/ English

2002-2005

Couch Potato, *Sunday debates*, *Channel curry* columns feature cricket and television critiques, and essays on bureaucratic nature of state programming, yellow journalism of 24 hours news, and Indian political, social, and cultural trends.

Press Clippings/ English

f) *Bombay Times of India – Dharker's Dilemma*

1999-2005

The column highlighted the socio-political, cultural, and local contradictions of a fast-growing India, covering crucial topics like Gujarat riots, systemic corruption, and urban life, while offering incisive commentary on political indifference, realities of public health policy, and profiles of performing artists.

In four parts/ Press Clippings/ English

g) *Times of India*

1999-2014

Special articles, essays, commentaries and reviews covering topics relating to cricket sports, music, movies, political pandering, urban lifestyle, fashion, etc.

Press Clippings/ English

h) *Businessworld*

2000

Living Life Kingsize columns profile Ratikant Basu, Raj Koneru, Manoj Tirolkar, and Bharat Bala as key pioneers of India's media, technology, and entertainment boom.

Press Clippings/ English/ pp.

i) *Sun Magazine*

2001-2002

Analytical essays on topics, such as vital characteristics for modern leadership, emotional maturity, urban rave culture, the rise of recreational drug use among Indian youth, the intersection of ancient Indian heritage and modern physics, the plight of Afghan citizens, and the Godhra incident (2002).

Press Clippings/ English

j) *TopGear*

2005-2007

Faces – a back-page column featuring automotive lifestyles, reviews of cars and travel.

Press Clippings/ English/
pp.

k) *DNA (Daily News & Analysis), Bombay*

2005-2010

Articles written by Anil Dharker as a social commentator in his columns, *Second Serve*, published in the English daily newspaper *DNA (Daily News and Analysis)*, provide critical insights on a broad range of contemporary Indian issues, with a focus on urban politics, governance, civic infrastructure, and cultural shifts in Mumbai and the nation.

Press Clippings/ English

l) *24K MAGAZINE*

2005-2010

The exclusive quarterly luxury publication including relevant excerpts from the magazine features Dharker's sharp, structural critiques on elite gastronomy, luxury culinary travel, fine dining, and personality like Neville Tuli, along with closing essays.

Press Cuttings/ English

m) *Asian Age*

2010 & 2015

Socio-political commentary and critiques on critical national security and policy issues, including strategic approaches to dealing with terrorism, the government's official attitude towards gambling, and the intersection of corruption and the media. Also, includes interpretation on operational landscape of micro-finance institutions, and an analytical review of Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay's biography of Narendra Modi.

Press Clippings, and typed
copy/ English/ 7 pp.



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