

Document Citation

Title	Adi Shankaracharya
Author(s)	
Source	<i>Publisher name not available</i>
Date	
Type	book excerpt
Language	English
Pagination	
No. of Pages	3
Subjects	Iyer, G. V.
Film Subjects	Adi shankaracharya (The philosopher), Iyer, G. V., 1983

The Panorama

Malayalam

- Akkare
- Koodevide
- Lekhayude Maranam —
Oru Flashback
- Marmaram
- Rachna
- Ente Mamattukutti-
yammaikku

Hindi

- Ardh Satya
- Jaane Bhi Do Yaaro
- Khandhar
- Mandi

Oriya

- Dhaare Aalua
- Maya Miriga

Bengali

- Nayan Shyama
- Phatik Chand

Tamil

- Oru Indhiya Kanavu

Telugu

- Rangula Kala
- Sagara Sangamam



Every year a special aspect of the international film festival hosted by India is its panorama of new Indian cinema. 21 films are chosen to represent the cinematic talent of the country. These films reflect the linguistic, cultural and technical conditions that pertain to the country's film output.

The choice of films range from films in Hindi—the most widely understood language in the country—to films made in languages spoken by a small minority in a distant State. The pages that follow provide detailed film credits, synopsis and director's biodata on each of the 21 films.

Kannada

- Banker Margayya

Marathi

- Smriti Chitre

and

Sanskrit

- Adi Shankaracharya

Adi Shankar- acharya

The
Philosopher

आदिशंकराचार्य

Adi Shankaracharya pays tribute to the ideas and teachings of Shankaracharya, the celibate mendicant who as a saint-philosopher is numbered among the world's greats. He was born over a thousand years ago. This is the first feature film to be made in one of the oldest languages of the world, Sanskrit.



Still: Shankaracharya questions his disciples' concern at his failing health

In recalling Shankara's life and philosophy, veteran director G. V. Iyer avoids the miracles with which later Brahmins embellished his biography, but rather weaves into the script the symbols of the Vedic texts themselves.

Child Shankara's life is given direction when his father dies: 'I am departing, son'. 'Where are you going?' 'To eternity. Within oneself.'

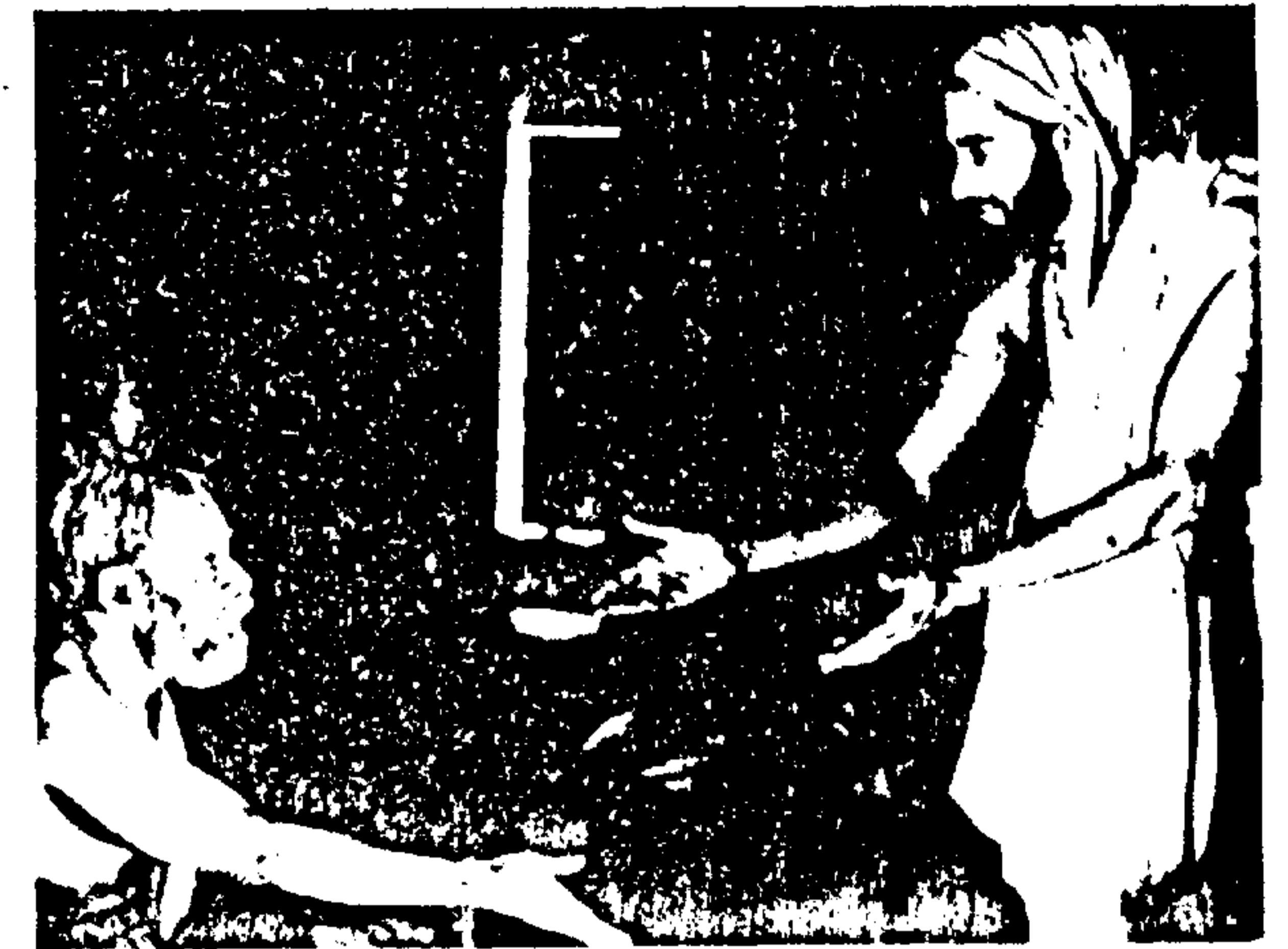
Shankara befriends Death and Wisdom, who are given human forms in this film. To find the real truth that lies beyond worldly existence, the adolescent Shankara decides to become a *sanyasi* (mendicant).

Narrating the life of Shankara and interspacing in its flow sequences using symbols, shooting on the actual idyllic locations where Shankara lived and travelled, Iyer brings great visual charm to the film. The danger of verbosity is avoided by the creative mingling of chanting and singing of Vedic hymns on the soundtrack.

As Shankara traverses the sub-continent, he grows to manhood: he is initiated into the Vedic scriptures; he engages in skillful debate, he collects disciples around him; he experiences misery, superstition, ritualism, man's inhumanity to man. He fights these evils wherever he travels. He preaches his *Advaitist* philosophy (nondualism).

Col/130 mins/Sanskrit
 DIRECTOR/SCRIPT
 G. V. Iyer
 PHOTOGRAPHY
 Madhu Ambat
 MUSIC
 M. Balamurali Krishna
 EDITING
 V. R. K. Prasad
 PLAYERS
 S. D. Banerjee
 (Shankaracharya)
 M. V. Narayana Rao
 (Sureshwara)
 Manjunath Bhat
 (Padmapada)
 Leena Narayana Rao
 (Ubbaya Bharati)
 L. V. Sharda
 (Shankara's mother)
 Bharat Bhushan
 (Shankaracharya's father)
 T. S. Nagabharana
 (Death)
 Srinivasa Prabhu
 (Wisdom)
 ENQUIRIES
 National Film
 Development Corporation,
 13-16, Regent Chambers,
 208, Nariman Point,
 Bombay 400 021.
 Phone
 232218/232183/231861
 Cable
 Filmfinans
 Telex

“ This is the first ever feature film to be made in Sanskrit. It aims at unfolding the manifold personality of this great son of India. Seven years in the making, this film tells the story of Shankara's life and it projects his philosophy. The script is guided solely by religious books—the Upanishads, the Gita and the Brahma Sutras—and how Shankara adapted his teachings to his own life.”



Still: G. V. Iyer and S. D. Banerjee

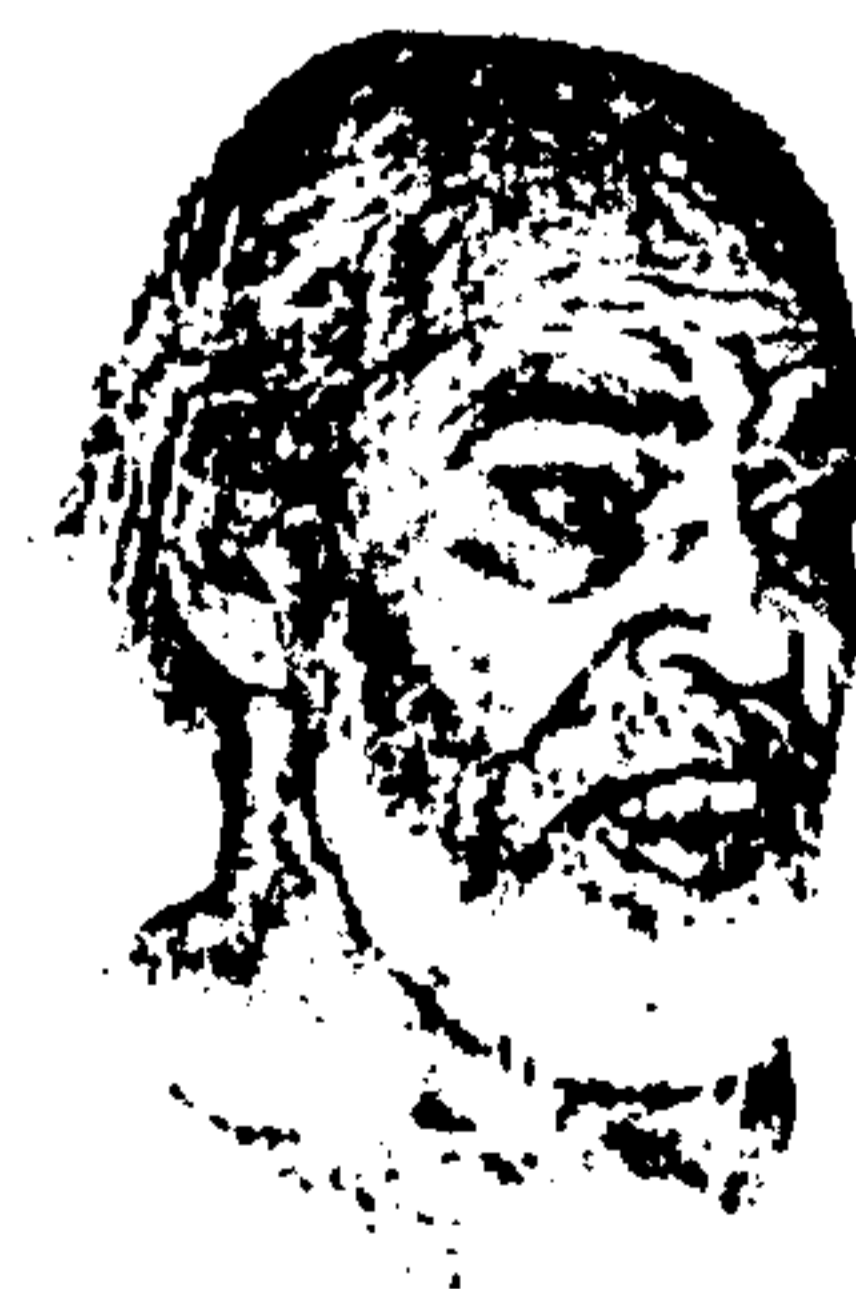
writes his illuminating commentaries on the Hindu religious books, and expertly brings together the then fraying strands of Hinduism.

At the age of 32, in his quest for higher knowledge, and the desire to merge his Inner Self (*atma*) with the Universal Self (*brahman*), Shankara renounces the world. He bids goodbye to Death and Wisdom (or transcends them) and retires to the Himalayas. His teachings remain.

Subash Day

Courtesy:

1984 International Film Guide



GANAPATHY VENKATRAMANA IYER, known as the 'barefoot director', is one of the pillars of Kannada cinema. This highly individualistic director ran away in his youth from his home in Tamil Nadu, to escape the education system he was disillusioned with. Frequenting Pune's Prabhat Film Studios, Iyer slowly imbibed a passion for film-making. Later as part of a professional drama company run by the veteran comedian Gubbi Veeranna, Iyer spent his early working life in the theatre, carrying props and painting signboards.

Iyer has come a long way since his maverick days in Pune. His first film *Chowkada Deepa* (*Light at the Crossroads*) infuriated audience sensibilities and Iyer journeyed to voluntary exile in Delhi.

Iyer today has over 65 films to his credit, many of which are formula films. But the awareness that came with Pattabhi Rama Reddy's *Samskara* (*Funeral Rites*, 1970) was a transforming influence.



Still: Sharda as Shankaracharya's mother

Iyer has repeatedly acknowledged the fact that he has been inspired by the directors of the new cinema, brushing aside his own seniority of age and experience.

At one point, Iyer had sworn that he would only make artistic films. He then collaborated with his protégé, B. V. Karanth, and Girish Karnad (both theatre personalities) to produce their first film *Vamsha Vriksha (The Family Tree, 1971)*.

Iyer has always believed in encouraging new talent. Anant Nag, an established star today, was first featured in *Sankalpa (Intention)*, the award-winning film which Iyer co-directed with another protege, Nangaraj Urs.

At 65, this director who always walks barefoot, is a force to reckon with. His intellect is steeped in learning and religious lore. Ever experimenting with directorial concepts, Iyer has often displayed tremendous courage using inexperienced crews and fledgling stars to make excellent films like *Hamsageethe (Swan Song, 1975)* on a shoe-string budget. *Adi Shankaracharya* is a culmination of this director's prodigious talent.

Address: Ananthalakshmi Films, No. 2, Patel Street, Kodambakkam, Madras 600 024.

FILMOGRAPHY

- 1945
Radha Ramana
 (Radha's Beloved)
- 1948
Bangari
 (The Golden Hearted Woman)
- 1950
Immadi Pulikeshi
 (Historical)
- 1960
Ranadhira Kanthirava
 (Based on Mysore royalty)
- 1962
Bhoodana
 (Land to the Landless)
Thai Karulu
 (Mother's Love)
- 1964
Post Master
- 1971
Vamsha Vriksha
 (The Family Tree)
- 1972
Sankalpa
 (Determination)
- 1975
Hamsa Geethe
 (The Swan Song)
- 1978
Kudure Motte
 (The Horse's Egg)
- 1983
Adi Shankaracharya
 (The Philosopher)
 UNDER PRODUCTION
Singara Masa
 (Erotic Month)
Manavararu?
 (Who is Human?)
Anubhava
 (The Experience)
Havy Yeni Aata
 (Snake and Ladder Game)