All the Indian Philosophical Systems agree in having the attainment of moksa as the goal of life and knowledge. Knowledge is sought for attaining complete freedom from the suffering of the worldly life and from the cycle of birth and death by destroying Adrsta forever.

The Vedic idea of Moksa consists in the termination of pain and sufferings of the worldly life and in the attainment of a more happy life here on the earth, as well as in the heaven. It also consists in the attainment of immortality and in enjoying Divine happiness in the Company of Gods. The Vedas hold that it can be attained by sincere prayer and sacrifices.

The Upanisads depict their Moksa as the attainment of immortality by means of self realization. It is an experience of identity of the soul with Supreme Self. The soul experiences a kind of supersensuous happiness by overcoming the limitations and imperfections of Samsara. It transcends duality and relativity. Though Upanisads do not mention clearly and separately the term 'Jivanmukti'. The characteristics of Jivanmukta are clearly stated in it and it is also said that 'Brahman can be known here on earth while embodied.'

It is Sankara, who emphatically hold that one who is free from all attachments, desires, from nescience, karma, finitude who has experienced Supreme Self, he is a jivanmukta, living God on earth. For Sankara Moksa consists in actually experiencing the Brahman, where all distinctions, limitations, dualities, relativity melt away. This can be done by the knowledge of the self, which is Brahman, by means of purification of mind, by self control and yogic practices.

Gaudapada does not use the term 'jivanmukta' or 'jivanmukti', though the supports jivanukti but he uses the terms such as 'muni', 'muninetara' (saint, super-saint), 'dhιr' 'tattvavid' (knower of the Reality) 'mukta' (liberated), 'Visarada' (free from fear), sanatana (ever the same) to denote a jivanmukta. Dukha-Ksaya (destruction of misery), state of Supreme happiness (Uttama-Sukha) abheya (where there is no fear) etc. as the state of 'jivanmukti.'

Post Sankara Advaitins also accept jivanmukti but their approach towards it differs. They accept the concept in their own way. Mandan Misra, In his Brahma-Siddhi, he takes sthitaprajna of Gita as still a
sadhaka and not a Siddha, who has totally annihilated avidya. For with the total annihilation of nescience the body must necessarily fall off.

Suresvara followed the views of Sankara. The views of Sarvajnatman Muni resemble with those of Sankara and Suresvara but he does not give full support to the concept of jivanmukti. Like Mandana, he also does not think the possibility of the concept on logical ground; because according to him, neither avidya nor its products, for example the body, can exist after the down of knowledge. It is all destroyed in its fire. Thus the only mukti acceptable on this ground is, sadyomukti (i.e. immediate deliverance). All other Advaitins like Vacaspati Misra, Prakasatman, Anandanubhava, Chitsu-khacarya, Anandagiri all accept jivanmukti. Vidyaranya not only accepts and supports jivanmukti, but proves it to be a unique concept which leads to the ultimate goal of human life, which teaches a person how to live happily. Giving the proofs from Bhagavadgita, Lagu Yoga- Vasistha, Paramahansopanisad, Mandukyopanisad and many other Upanisads and religious works he proves that a person can get here on earth pure happiness i.e. happiness unmixed with pain. A man can remove his sorrows & there is a path named 'jivanmukti' which leads to the cessation of sorrow. Though jivias in its samsar state suffer various kinds of afflictions, though, it experiences pleasure as well as pain, it is jivanmukti which yields eternal peace and satisfaction to a samsari jiva.

Jivanmukti is rightly called as living liberation. It is a path of Karma-Samnyasa or the path of Karma which are performed for the welfare of mankind, & the maintenance of world order and active participation in removing the sufferings of others. He is called a jivanmukta who has renounced all his desires, passions wealth, property, fame, prestige, who performs selfless activities for others' benefit. He is a 'Niskamakarmayogi' or a 'sthitaprajna' as described in Gita.

To speak of means of the path of living liberation, Sankara holds that it is knowledge alone, the real knowledge of the self, can lead to liberation. As bondage is caused by nescience i.e. defective knowledge of the self, when such defective knowledge is removed by real knowledge of the self, one attains liberation. According to him highest knowledge itself is liberation. All other means are subsidiary means. Devotion helps a person for his cittasuddhi, karma is the remote cause of the rise of the desire to acquire the self- knowledge. Astangayoga, he believes as internal means for the attainment of jivanmukati. Sarvana, manana and nididhyasan also help a mumuksu to proceed towards his goal.
Mandana holds that the direct realization of the absolute unrelated Brahman i.e. Nirguna-Brahman-Saksatkara results from constant contemplation on the knowledge of the Truth received from the Upanisadic texts. Meditation on 'om', Samnyasa all others are subsidiary means.

For Suresvara, knowledge is the sole means to attain jivanmukti. Vacaspati Misra also is of the same opinion that knowledge is the sole means and all other such as performance of prescribed duties, sacrifices, charity, penance is preparatory to the emergence of knowledge. It produces the desire to know Brahman.

Thus nearly all the advaitins hold jnana-karma-sacrifices-yoga-sravana-manana-nididyasana-moral discipline-charity-penance etc. as the means to jivan mukti. Vidyaranya alone holds that yogic practices which is helpful for the Vasanaksaya and manonasa is the whole and sole means to jivanmukti. Knowledge for him is the subsidiary means. In fact all these means are equally important. All these are the different steps which take a person to the ultimate Supreme goal. Each and every step is important. One may arrange them according to his own way. It may be Karma-jnana-Bhakti-Tapas or the contrary to it, it makes no difference. One thing is certain which Vidyaranya states at the beginning of his work 'Jivanmuktiviveka', that - One must renounce the world, the very day one feels complete detachment. I think the journey towards jivanmukti beings from this point. A person who continuously runs after the material things to gain pleasure, at some particular point he comes to known that nothing can make him fully satisfied. A person who loves and sacrifices for his relatives friends and expects from them as well same love and sacrifice, at certain point, he comes to know that all his expectatons were in vain. Thus at certain stage of life, one may feel detachment in his mind of this world. Vidyaranya advises that as soon as one feels complete detachment one must renounce the world, the very day. Such a person goes to his Guru and asks, "Is there not a greater mission in life than eating and drinking, growing and dyeing, earning and spending? Is life only a continuous story of disappointments? Is there greater world of ampler possibilities? Is there any noble field of unbroken peace and joy? and the master asks him to sit near and unwinds gradually all the secrets of these questions and ultimately the disciple reaches at the stage where he knows the falsity of the pluralistic world and eternal truth of the Supreme Self. He Experiences the Brahman. The disciple experiences within himself that Truth which is non-dual and beyond all phenomena. Brahmanaubhava is experienced only by such a thirsty aspirant. An aspirant has to take great pain and persue his goal with a great devotion. Once his goal is achieved i.e. once he become a jivanmukta, all his expectations disappear. He realizes the truth that - expectations are never fulfilled. He becomes a living God on earth. He lives only for the betterment of others, not for himself.
Each and every common man cannot go to asrama and ask his guru the path of 'Jivamukti', but the work 'Jivamuktiviveka' in his hand performs the role of a guru and solves all the questions in his mind. It plays the role of a lighthouse in the darkness of miseries and sorrows. It leads an aspirant to right direction. Thus Vidyaranya's contribution to Advaitic concept of living liberation proves to be valuable one. He proves importance of the concept with the help of Yoga-Vasistha, the philosophical work which deals with Vairagya, mumuksu-vyavahara, Upasana, nirvana etc. He also quotes verses from Gita which guides one how to reach the Brahman-state Vidyaranya also quotes the precious verses and mahavakyas from different Upanisads. Thus though the path of living liberation is called the toughest path to follow, Vidyaranya makes it easier for an aspirant.

Vidyaranya does not differ very much from Sankara regarding the views on J.M. He is more or less the same in treating the subject. Though J.M. is discussed in various Upanisads and Bhagavadgita, it was Sankara who advocated the concept clearly emphasized the importance of Jivanmukti and Videhamukti separately. All other Advaitins accepted the concept but Vidyaranya systematized it. He gave a systematic account of J.M. he has added many new details in the discussion of the problem.

Both Sankara and Vidyaranya agree on the point that the aspirant should strive to attain the state of J.M. In Vivekacudamani Sankara says, "A firm conviction of the mind to the effect that Brahman is real and the universe unreal, is designated as discrimination (viveka) between the real and unreal (20). There is no hope of immortality by means of riches - such indeed is the declaration of Vedas. Hence it is clear that works cannot be the cause of Liberation (7). Therefore the man of learning should strive his best for liberation, having renounced his desire for pleasures from external objects, duty approaching a good and generous preceptor, and fixing his mind on the truth inculcated by him.

Sankara lays more stress on the ethical aspect of the life of a Jivanmukta. In his Atmabodha, the Vivekacandamani, he has explained how a jivanmukta should involve himself in the works of loka-sangraha. His own life itself shows how, after attaining the highest spiritual illumination, he engaged himself in the active service of humanity going about the length and breadth of the vast Indian sub-continents in those days when travelling conditions were extremely difficult. But Vidyaranya thinks that even such a loka-sangraha may create bondage.
Sankara and Vidyaranya differ regarding the exact connotation of videhamukti. Videhamukti according to Sankara is meant as mukti which is attained after the decay of the body, but for the latter, it means the absence of future body (bhavideha). Thus Vidyaranya identifies, in a way, Videhamukti with J.M., because in both these muktis there is an absence of future body. It means the guarantee that there would be no future birth for a jivanmukta. Sankara on the other hand, in his commentaries on Brahmāsutra accepts that jivanmuktas may reincarnate themselves as human beings with a view to help the people in their spiritual journey.¹

Both Sankara and Vidyaranya accept that Prarabdha Karma remains in name for a jivanmukta and that knowledge can not destroy these karmas but Vidyaranya goes a step further and states that the prarabdha, which remains in the name and does not conflict with one's self-knowledge, may be overcome by the practice of yoga in this very life.

Vidyaranya lays more stress on manonasa and vasanaksaya. Sankara also has added many verses in his Vivekacudamani that a Jivanmukta must control his mind. He says :- Attaining purity through a preponderance of discrimination (between self and not-self) and renunciation (of the not-self), the mind makes for liberation. Hence the wise seeker after Liberation must first strengthen these two (175).

In the forest-tract of sense-pleasures there prowls huge liger called the mind. Let the good people who have a longing for Liberation never go there. (176)

But ultimately both Sankara and Vidyaranya emphasize on the knowledge as the ultimate truth. When the aspirant realizes that - There is neither death nor birth, neither bound nor a struggling soul, neither a seeker after Liberation nor a liberated one - this is the ultimate truth, (575) an aspirant attains moksa.

Thus all the Advaitins accept J.M. Not only Advaitins but in Buddhism Arhat is Jivanmukta. He is one who has overcome all sufferings and miseries of life. He has attained the knowledge of truth and is unattached with sense - pleasure and the evils of the ceaseless ocean of life and death. He is also called vitaragi in some Buddhist Texts. An Arhat is Sarvajna. He is mukta. He lives in the world only due to compassion for other people the bound and to experience past karmas. Thus Buddhism accepts Jivanmukti.

Jivanmukti is well depicted in Jainism also. Tirthankaras, who are worshipped by the Jains are Kevali. They have bodies even after attaining Kevalajnan or omniscience. It is with the help of this bodily existence that they are able to preach the dharma (Truth) to the people, because their main function is dharma-pravacana.

Thus jivanmukti is important as it bridges the life on earth with that which is beyond our perception. It shows the path how to live peacefully. He realises that there is neither death nor birth, neither a bound nor a struggling soul, neither a seeker after liberation nor a liberated one - this is the ultimate Truth.

Moksa in Advaita is the eternal communian with Brahman. Brahman which is unmanifest, indeterminate, imperishable, attributeless, self-luminious consciousness. It is a Supreme Reality. Moksa is merging of an individual self in such a Brahman Moksa is eternal peace, freedom from all kinds of sorrow. It is an eternal bliss. The ultimate goal of human beings - Moksa -.