

'Feeling' (Vedanā) in the Mahānidāna sutta and in the Carakasamhitā : A Comparative Study

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It may be noted, in brief, that all the systems of Philosophy, religion and medicine have been originated out of the search of the method to relieve the feeling, which is un-delight. The Buddha says, "Health is the greatest of gifts" (*Ārogya paramā lābhā*).¹ Ayurveda came into existence to eliminate pain and suffering of the living being.² Charaka says that the cause for all the pursuits: *Dharma* (religion), *Artha* (wealth), *Kāma* (desire) and *Mokṣa* (liberation) is the health.³ Therefore, it is an interesting fact that there is a similarity, on the concept of *Vedanā*, between the Buddhism, being a religion and a philosophy based on the theory of cause and the *Carakasamhitā*, being a medical treatise based on Hindu philosophy, especially *Vaiśeṣika* philosophy. The discussion has been made here, to examine the similarity between both Buddhism and the *Carakasamhitā*, on *Vedanā*. Sources are mainly, for the study, has been treated as the *Mahānidāna sutta* of *Dīghanikāya* and *arīrasthāna* of the *Carakasamhitā*. Besides, some passages like from *Vedanāsamyutta* of *Samyuttanikāya* and *Sūtrasthāna* of the *Carakasamhitā* also have been cited for further clarification.

The *Mahānidāna sutta* is a discourse of the Buddha, included in the *Dīghanikāya*, which takes the factors of reliant co-arising in sequence from effect to cause, tracing them down to the mutual dependence of name-and-form (mental and physical activity) on the one hand, and awareness on the other. The *Mahānidāna sutta* has also prescribed how to overcome the feeling. "Now, Ananda, in as far as a monk does not assume feeling to be the self, nor the self as oblivious, nor that 'My self feels, in that my self is subject to feeling,' then, not assuming in this way, he is not sustained by anything (does not cling to anything) in the world. Un-sustained, he is not agitated. Un-agitated, he is totally unbound right within. He discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'"⁴

The *Carakasamhitā* is one of the great trio (*Vṛddhatraya*), the basic texts of Ayurvedic medicine, the work of the physician Caraka, which reached its present