

Critical Thinking in Milind Panho

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Abstract

Milind Panha (The Questions of King Milinda) is one of the classical texts in India and is known for its philosophical discussions between King Milinda and the Buddhist sage Nagasena. The dialogue is about the need to think critically and have self-knowledge. One of the sutras in the book is on critical thinking. During the dialogue, King Milinda asked Nagasena, "What is the characteristic mark of reasoning and wisdom?" To which Nagasena answers, "Reasoning has always comprehension as a mark, but wisdom has cutting off". In this paper, I would like to elaborate upon this answer. One common interpretation is that knowledge involves "cutting down" or eliminating ignorance and delusion. This interpretation is consistent with the Buddhist notion of knowledge as a means of gaining insight into the true nature of reality and overcoming the illusions and attachments that obscure it. This understanding of knowledge forms the basis of the Indian concept of intellectuality, which emphasizes the ability to think critically, analyze information, and achieve insight into the realities of the world.

Keywords: Indian philosophical system, reasoning, critical thinking