Mil 3.3.5 — 5. Question on the Production and Development of Fabrications

English translation by John Kelly.
Source: https://suttacentral.net/mil3.3.5/en/kelly
Source revision: da23a8afdd1be12267ecf4a0ff94af5187093702
License: CC0-1.0 — https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/

Text

Milinda’s Questions

Examination Chapter

5. Question on the Production and Development of Fabrications

The king asked: “Venerable Nāgasena, are there any fabrications which are produced without development?” “Your majesty, there are no fabrications which are produced without development. Fabrications are only produced with development.”

“Please give me an analogy.” “What do you think, your majesty, was this house that you are sitting in produced without development?” “There is nothing here, venerable sir, produced without development; it is produced only with development. These pieces of wood were in the forest, and this clay was in the ground, and thus this house was produced by the appropriate effort of women and men.” “In the same way, your majesty, there are no fabrications which are produced without development. Fabrications are only produced with development.”

“Give me another analogy.” “Just as, your majesty, whatever seeds and plants thrown on the ground gradually attain to growth, development, and maturity, and would give flowers and fruit, no trees would be produced without development, and trees would only be produced with development.” “In the same way, your majesty, there are no fabrications which are produced without development. Fabrications are only produced with development.”

“Give me another analogy.” “Just as, your majesty, a potter might take clay from the ground and make various bowls, those bowls are not produced without development, and bowls would only be produced with development.” “In the same way, your majesty, there are no fabrications which are produced without development. Fabrications are only produced with development.”

“Give me another analogy.” “Just as if, your majesty, there were no sound-board for a lute, no parchment, no belly, no arm, no neck, no strings, no plectrum, and no suitable effort from a person, would sound be produced?” “Certainly not, venerable sir.” “But if, your majesty, there were a sound-board for a lute, parchment, a belly, an arm, a neck, strings, a plectrum, and suitable effort from a person, would sound be produced?” “Yes, it would be produced, venerable sir.” “In the same way, your majesty, there are no fabrications which are produced without development. Fabrications are only produced with development.”

“Give me another analogy.” “Just as if, your majesty, there were no lower piece of wood, no twirling stick, no string for the twirling stick, no upper piece of wood, no bark, and no suitable effort from a person, would fire be produced?” “Certainly not, venerable sir.” “But if, your majesty, there were a lower piece of wood, a twirling stick, string for the twirling stick, an upper piece of wood, bark, and suitable effort from a person, would fire be produced?” “Yes, it would be produced, venerable sir.” “In the same way, your majesty, there are no fabrications which are produced without development. Fabrications are only produced with development.”

“Give me another analogy.” “Just as if, your majesty, there were no crystal glass, no heat, and no cow-dung, would fire be produced?” “Certainly not, venerable sir.” “But if, your majesty, there were a crystal glass, heat, and cow-dung, would fire be produced?” “Yes, it would be produced, venerable sir.” “In the same way, your majesty, there are no fabrications which are produced without development. Fabrications are only produced with development.”

“Give me another analogy.” “Just as if, your majesty, there were no mirror, no light, and no face, would an image be produced?” “Certainly not, venerable sir.” “But if, your majesty, there were a mirror, light, and a face, would an image be produced?” “Yes, it would be produced, venerable sir.” “In the same way, your majesty, there are no fabrications which are produced without development. Fabrications are only produced with development.”

“You are clever, Venerable Nāgasena!”

Question on the Production and Development of Fabrications fifth