AN 4.173 — With Mahākoṭṭhita

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Text

Numbered Discourses 4.173

18. Intention

With Mahākoṭṭhita

Then Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita went up to Venerable Sāriputta, and exchanged greetings with him. When the greetings and polite conversation were over, Mahākoṭṭhita sat down to one side, and said to Sāriputta:

“Reverend, when the six fields of contact have faded away and ceased with no residue left behind, does something else still exist?”

“Don’t put it like that, reverend.”

“Does something else no longer exist?”

“Don’t put it like that, reverend.”

“Does something else both still exist and no longer exist?”

“Don’t put it like that, reverend.”

“Does something else neither still exist nor no longer exist?”

“Don’t put it like that, reverend.”

“Reverend, when asked whether—when the six fields of contact have faded away and ceased with no residue left behind—something else still exists, you say ‘don’t put it like that’. When asked whether something else no longer exists, you say ‘don’t put it like that’. When asked whether something else both still exists and no longer exists, you say ‘don’t put it like that’. When asked whether something else neither still exists nor no longer exists, you say ‘don’t put it like that’. How then should we see the meaning of this statement?”

“In saying that, ‘When the six fields of contact have faded away and ceased with no residue left behind, something else still exists’, you’re proliferating the unproliferated. In saying that, ‘something else no longer exists’, you’re proliferating the unproliferated. In saying that, ‘something else both still exists and no longer exists’, you’re proliferating the unproliferated. In saying that, ‘something else neither still exists nor no longer exists’, you’re proliferating the unproliferated. The scope of proliferation extends as far as the scope of the six fields of contact. The scope of the six fields of contact extends as far as the

scope of proliferation. When the six fields of contact fade away and cease with no residue left behind, proliferation stops and is stilled.”