

Page 1: Stupa Symbology and Its Spiritual Application

Good afternoon, everyone. It's a privilege to welcome you to this Triangles Meditation Group Webinar, hosted by the Lucis Trust. My name is Daniel Lumanauw. I have been a student at the Arcane School since November 2021 and am currently beginning the Lighted Way of Integration program.

Let me share a brief background on how these materials came together. My journey began at the Vesak Festival in Lucis Trust Lodge in New York in 2022, where I met Kathy Newburn. During a casual conversation, I mentioned my studies in Tibetan Buddhism. Kathy encouraged me to explore the teachings of Domo Geshe Rinpoche and Lama Anagarika Govinda, noting philosophical parallels with the teaching of Master DK. That suggestion resonated with me, and over the years, I continued my Vesak pilgrimages—visiting Samten Choeling Monastery in Darjeeling, where Lama Govinda's ashes are enshrined in a stupa, and experiencing the rare privilege of visiting Domo Geshe's living quarters, an opportunity seldom granted to foreigners. My learning journey has taken me further to sacred sites in Darjeeling, Borobudur, Mount Kailash, and most recently, the Gobi Desert with common theme of stupa symbolism.

Today, we gather as seekers committed to group service, meditation, and spiritual study. Our focus is the profound symbology of the stupa, especially the five geometrical elements as taught by Lama Anagarika Govinda, and how this ancient language of form can deepen our understanding of Master DK's teachings, as presented in the works of Alice Bailey.

Page 2: Stupa as a Universal Symbol of Enlightenment

The stupa is a sacred architectural form that appears throughout Buddhist traditions. While its origins trace back to ancient burial mounds, the stupa has evolved into a universal symbol of enlightenment—representing the journey from material existence to spiritual realization. Its design is intentional; every element is imbued with meaning, guiding practitioners along their inner path.

More than mere monuments, stupas function as spiritual diagrams. They embody the structure of consciousness and the process of awakening, inviting us to meditate on unity, transformation, and the integration of body, mind, and spirit.

The images here illustrate several prominent stupas found across Asia—in India, Tibet, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. In Kathmandu, I was especially struck by how deeply the stupa is woven into daily life. These structures grace many street corners, remaining vibrant and alive as people gather to offer prayers and make offerings. On the right, you'll see the remarkable presence of stupas throughout the Kailash region. Mount Kailash itself is a place of profound spiritual significance, and I wholeheartedly encourage anyone interested in consciousness work to visit and experience its transformative energy firsthand.

Page 3: Lama Anagarika Govinda and Domo Geshe Rinpoche I

Let us take a moment to recognize two pivotal figures who bridge Eastern and Western esoteric traditions: Lama Anagarika Govinda and Domo Geshe Rinpoche. Lama Govinda, originally from Germany, was a Buddhist mystic, scholar, and author who immersed himself deeply in Theravada and Tibetan Buddhism. His insightful writings on

meditation, symbolism, and the inner journey have introduced Western audiences to the profound depths of Tibetan spiritual practice, highlighting the transformative power of inner symbols and rituals.

Domo Geshe Rinpoche, the esteemed teacher of Lama Govinda, provided exceptional guidance at Samten Choeling Monastery in Darjeeling. Revered throughout Tibet and India, Domo Geshe was renowned for wisdom, compassionate service, and his reputation as an occult healer. His ability to transmit the living essence of Buddhist teachings across cultural boundaries made a lasting impact on all who encountered him.

Both teachers emphasized the universal language of symbols—a bridge between the visible and invisible, the personal and the cosmic. Their work laid the foundation for synthesizing spiritual traditions and practices. For those interested in exploring these figures and teachings further, Lama Govinda's book, *The Way of the White Clouds*, offers a vivid account of this remarkable lineage and journey.

Page 4: Symbolic Meaning of Stupa Geometrical Form

Let's take a closer look at the stupa and break it down into its fundamental geometric shapes, each serving as a powerful symbol for deeper spiritual study. In the center, you see the classic stupa form; on the left, its simplified symbolic components.

Lama Anagarika Govinda identified five essential geometric elements in the stupa's architecture, each representing a stage of spiritual development and a universal principle. These shapes are chosen with intention, reflecting the qualities of their actual physical forms:

- **The Square (Base):** Symbolizes earth, stability, and foundation—groundedness and the starting point of the spiritual journey. In the ageless wisdom tradition, this corresponds to the Physical Body.
- **The Sphere (Dome):** Represents water, wholeness, and the totality of consciousness, inviting us to contemplate unity and inclusiveness. This is associated with the Emotional Body.
- **The Triangle (Spire or Pyramid):** Signifies fire, aspiration, and transformation. Pointing upward, it embodies spiritual ascent and the striving of the soul, representing the Manas or mental body.
- **The Crescent (Moon):** Embodies air, receptivity, and openness to higher influences, encouraging flexibility and the embrace of subtle energies. This relates to the Buddhi.
- **The Flame (Final Jewel or Sun):** Symbolizes ether, enlightenment, and pure consciousness. Crowning the stupa, the flame marks the attainment of spiritual illumination and represents the Atman.

If we return to familiar concepts, the three base shapes—the square, sphere, and triangle—reflect our three lower bodies, or personality. Using the analogy of a blind man carrying a crippled man, illustrated on the right, we see how this dynamic plays out: the lower part of the stupa represents the lower self, which can move but lacks direction, while the upper part symbolizes the higher self or spirit, providing guidance and purpose. Together, these elements form a sacred map—a synthesis of matter and spirit—leading us from the tangible to the transcendent.

Page 5: Triangle Symbolism as Way of Consciousness Expansion

The triangle stands as a potent symbol of spiritual ascent and transformation. In the teachings of Master DK, it embodies the triad of light, love, and power—core principles that underpin much of his work.

If we look closely at the triangle within the stupa, it represents the manas, or mental body, positioned between the crescent (buddhi) and the sphere (emotional body). The mental body is where humanity's current evolutionary work is most focused. We begin with kama manas—intelligence driven by desire and emotion—and, through training and experience, develop our intellect and move toward individualization. Through repeated lifetimes, spiritual study, and the process of satiation, we gradually build the Antahkarana—the rainbow bridge that connects our diverse, personal lower mental body with the unifying upper mental body, transforming life experience into higher wisdom.

Returning to the stupa's architecture, the triangle is a cross-section of our consciousness growth. In Tibetan Buddhism, this is described through three realms:

- **Arupa Dhatu:** The unlimited and immaterial realm, representing Will and the Shamballa concept (Light).
- **Rupa Dhatu:** The limited and immaterial realm, providing Love and Wisdom, and serving as the blueprint for material manifestation—akin to the Hierarchy (Love).
- **Kama Dhatu:** The limited and material realm, where using Active Intelligence we gather dharma through karma journey (Power or Understanding).

Notice how the triangle narrows as it ascends from the emotional body to buddhi, illustrating the one-pointedness of material experiences as they are refined and carried toward monadic consciousness as experiential virtues of the Humanity.

So, by meditating on this triangle's symbolism, we channel our aspiration and spiritual will upward, aligning ourselves with transformative and illuminating forces. The triangle thus serves as a pathway for expanding consciousness and harmonizing the lower and upper aspects of our being.

Page 6: Borobudur, the Living Teacher of Awakening

Borobudur, the majestic Buddhist mandala in stone rising from the heart of Java, stands as a living embodiment of stupa symbolism in sacred architecture. Its spiral path of circumambulation — ascending through successive terraces — becomes a walking meditation, a physical enactment of the soul's journey from the realms of desire (Kama Dhatu), through the disciplined clarity of form (Rupa Dhatu), and toward the formless radiance of spirit (Arupa Dhatu).

This ascending pilgrimage echoes the inner path described by Master DK in *Glamour: A World Problem*. Each level or turning of Borobudur's pyramid mirrors the conquest of the four great inner veils: maya (distortions of the physical

plane), glamour (emotional entanglements), illusion (mental misidentification), and the dweller on the threshold (the crystallized will of the separated self).

As one ascends, the monument becomes a map of the antahkarana — the bridge of light between lower mind and higher soul. Borobudur thus becomes not only a monument to enlightenment but a living teacher, inviting us to walk its wisdom in our own lives, step by step, breath by breath, toward the awakening of the radiant Self.

Page 7: Practical Frameworks of Stupa Symbolism

The stupa, as a sacred architectural mandala, offers a profound framework for visualizing the processes of involution and evolution, as well as the dynamics of the Seven Rays as taught by Madame Blavatsky and Master DK. Beginning with the Primordial Triad — Will, Love-Wisdom, and Active Intelligence — each divine aspect descends into its manifold reflections.

- The **Will** aspect diversifies into countless expressions of the **process of form manifestation (or Ceremonial Magic)**
- **Love-Wisdom** unfolds into myriad forms of **Devotion**
- **Active Intelligence** crystallizes into the richness of **Concrete Knowledge, Science, and Structured thought.**

This descent is mirrored in the involutory arc — from spirit into matter — manifesting through the kingdoms of mineral, plant, animal, and finally human, reaching the nadir of the U-curve.

At this turning point, humanity lives within the tension of **Harmony through Conflict** — the interplay between personal/material energies and impersonal/spiritual forces. It is here that the journey of individualization matures, having gathered the fruits of diversity through the development of the material vehicle.

From this base, the path of evolution begins: the building of the antahkarana, the bridge of consciousness, leading toward unification and synthesis. This ascent transforms accumulated karma into dharma, and the virtues born of lived experience — **love, beauty, and wisdom** — begin to illuminate and enrich the primordial Active Intelligence aspect of the Triad.

The stupa thus becomes a living diagram of the soul's journey: from descent into form, through conflict and integration, toward radiant synthesis and spiritual realization.
