

East – West discovering *Dharma*

From a Student

Dharma is a Sanskrit word meaning righteousness, moral law, merit, and virtue.

Dharma is a sacred law. *Dharma* is also the natural property of all things. The *Dharma* of fire is to burn, that of a dog is to bark when it “smells” a stranger. In the case of man, *Dharma* is a pursuit of one’s regular duty in one’s stage of life. As the man advances in life, the sense of duty progresses in a continuous process. As one takes up new responsibility, one discovers new duty towards the family, profession, and religious, social, national. At every stage, one makes choices with the best understanding within the limitation of one’s knowledge in the given situation.

As one advances in the understanding of *Karma*, one becomes more conscious and responsible to apply the right thought and action in accomplishing one’s *Dharma*. In others words, there is a continuity from philosophical thought to the application of the correct action in the right way, in a given context, i.e. *Dharma*.

In the Theosophical perspective, *Dharma* has a wider meaning in the sense of a East – West, two complementary and joint approach towards discovering the understanding of eternal verities which form the basis of H.P. Blavatsky’s *The Secret Doctrine*:

“*The Secret Doctrine* was a universally diffused religion of ancient and prehistoric world.” (SD I, xxxiv)

“Rawlinson shows an undeniable Vedic influence in the early mythology of Babylon.” (SD I, xxxi).

Goerges Dumezil, a French modern scholar compares the *Mahabharata* and Scandinavian *Loki*’s story that illustrate a similar pattern of a war between spiritual and opposite forces of the same family. HPB says in the Glossary for *Loki*: