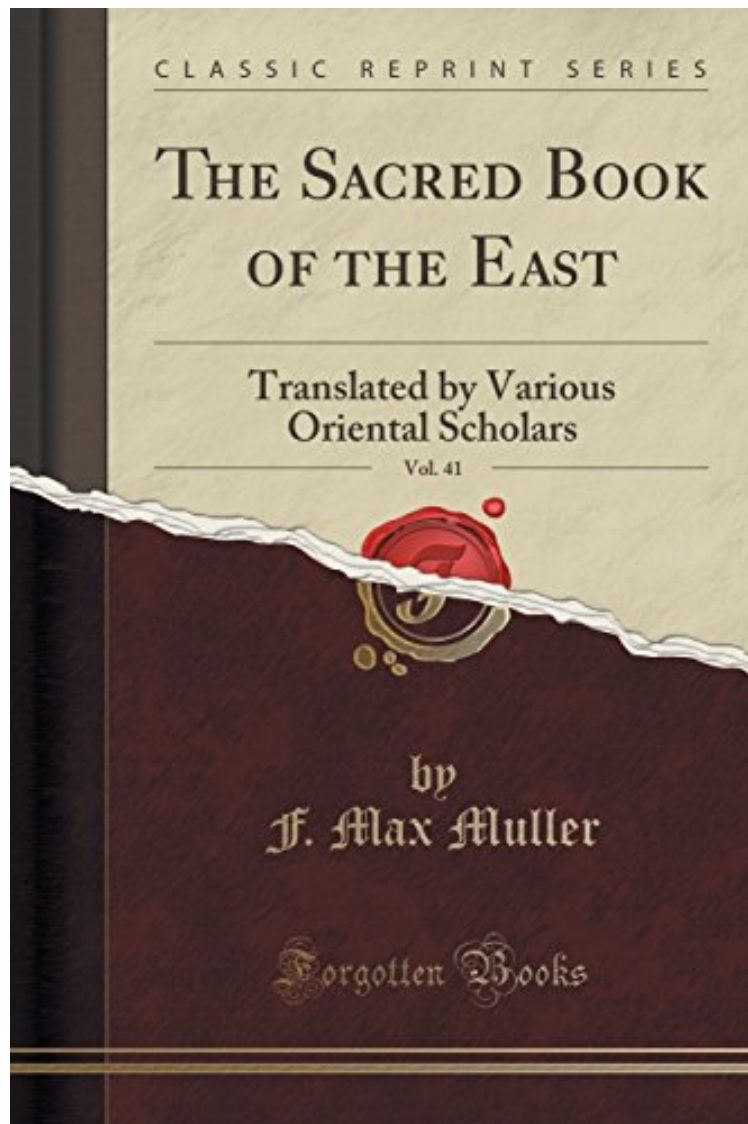


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The Sacred Book of the East, Vol. 41: Translated by Various Oriental Scholars (Classic Reprint)

F. Max Muller

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Excerpt from The Sacred Book of the East, Vol. 41: Translated by Various Oriental Scholars

The first of the three Kandas contained in the present volume continues the dogmatic discussion of the different forms of Soma-sacrifice, in connection with which two important ceremonies, the Vagapeya and Ragasfiya, are considered. From a ritualistic point of View, there is a radical difference between these two ceremonies. The Ragasfiya, or 'inauguration of a king,' strictly Speaking, is not a Soma-sacrifice, but rather a complex religious ceremony which includes, amongst other rites, the performance of a number of Soma-sacrifices of different kinds. The Vagapeya, or 'drink of strength' (or, perhaps, 'the race on the other hand, is recognised as one of the different forms (samstha) which a single Soma-sacrifice may take. As a matter of fact, however, this form hardly ever occurs, as most of the others constantly do, in connection with, and as a constituent element of, other ceremonies, but is almost exclusively performed as an independent sacrifice. The reason why this sacrifice has received a special treatment in the Brahmana, between the Agni shtoma and the Ragasfiya, doubtless is that, unlike the other forms of Soma-sacrifice, it has some striking features of its own which stamp it, like the Ragasfiya, as a political ceremony. According to certain ritualistic authorities 1, indeed, the performance of the Vagapeya should be arranged in much the same way as that of the Ragasuya; that is, just as the central ceremony of the Ragasfiya, viz. The Abhishekaniya or consecration, is preceded and followed by certain other Soma-days, so the Vagapeya should be preceded and followed by exactly corresponding ceremonies.

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