

**DR. JONES' ADVENTURES**

BY ANTHONY MAGNOLI



Prof. Indiana Jones

(NY) The Metropolitan Museum's new exhibit, entitled "Treasures From The Orient", has been expanded to include Dr. Indiana Jones' recent publication on Hindu and Thuggee religious practices.

Funded by the Museum, Dr. Jones has just returned from several expeditions in the Far East. In Shanghai, he had found traces of a rare jewel, called the "Eye of the Peacock", a 160 karat diamond that once belonged to Alexander the Great. Two such diamonds were cut for Alexander to be placed in the eyes of a golden sculpture of a peacock. One of the diamonds had been cut up and sold in antiquity, while legends maintain that the other remained intact.

Shortly after the Great War, Dr. Jones began a search for the jewel after finding an old map supposedly produced by one of the diamond's previous raiders long after the time of Alexander. This particular pursuit resulted in the discovery of a small stone with carvings on it, another piece to the mysterious puzzle.

The rare diamond was to be the centrepiece of the Oriental exhibit, but after searching for over fifteen years, Jones ultimately lost the diamond to Chinese thieves.

Reproductions of both the diamonds and the golden peacock can currently be seen in the British Museum's oriental wing. The Metropolitan is working on its own replica based on ancient artwork under the direction of Prof. Jones and curator Marcus Brody.

**Traces of Thuggee Cult**

After leaving China, Professor Jones, now of Marshall College, spent a few weeks studying the culture and religious practices of several various

castes in India. His recent thesis, A Cultural Study of Hinduism in Antiquity and Today, is the basis of an addition to the Museum's Eastern exhibit.

Dr. Jones believes there exists in certain religious practices that he has witnessed a remnant of the centuries-old cult dedicated to the Hindu goddess Kali. The Thuggee cult was once a religious association of assassins who worshiped their god with human sacrifice.

Jones does not go so far as to claim such atrocities still occur within the boundaries of the British Empire, but he is firm in his statement that many Hindus still follow Kali and believe in the power of "black magic".



One of five reproduction Sivalinga on display at the museum exhibition



Ancient Sanskrit Manuscript showing the priest Sankara approaching the god Shiva

**Hindu Traditions**

Although Dr. Jones brought back few artifacts from the Orient, the Museum's display will include several original pieces, including a piece of an ancient Indian parchment. This manuscript, dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century, is part of a Hindu myth written in ancient Sanskrit. The story tells of a Hindu priest, Sankara, who journeys up Mount Kalis to visit Shiva, a Hindu god. Shiva gives the priest five magic stones which he is to take to the world to combat evil.

The stones, often referred to as Sankara Stones or Sivalinga, were said to contain diamonds. When the stones were brought together the diamonds would give off a

bright glow. The exterior of the stones, however, was quite plain. They would appear to be common river rocks, with the exception of three carved lines painted white, representing the three levels of the world.

Dr. Jones has assisted in the production of a full set of replica stones to be displayed at the Museum. He based his designs on several stones which he saw during his excursions to various local Indian villages, many of which have their own versions of these stones as town centerpieces.

Prof. Jones' paper details many local traditions of the Mayapore villagers and relates them to their ancient roots.

The exhibit will continue until the end of the year and is open to the public.