



Analysis: Autoimmune Disorders: An Overview of Molecular and Cellular Basis in Today's Perspective

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Letter to Editor

A notorious case of plagiarism was brought to our attention by a PhD student at Edinburgh University. A review article by Sayantan Ray, Nikhil Sonthalia, Supratip Kundu and Satyabrata Ganguly, Department of Medicine, Medical College and Hospital, Kolkata, West Bengal, India entitled "Autoimmune Disorders: An Overview of Molecular and Cellular Basis in Today's Perspective" was published in J. Clin and Cell Immunology 2012, S10 [1]. We were astounded by the extent of similarity of this publication to a previous paper we published four years earlier in autoimmunity [2]. Large sections and whole paragraphs were copied and pasted without any change or reference of the source. So we subjected the article to analysis by iThenticate software, and we were stunned to discover that the authors had indulged themselves without any restraint, not only in copying and pasting sections from the paper of Atassi and Casali [2], but also took similar license with other published literature. The extent of plagiarism in the article of Ray et al., as determined by iThenticate, is 69%. The color highlighted text in the attached supplement shows the sections that were copied from previously published immunology sources. Three sources [2-4] accounted for about 52% of copied-pasted text. The remainder was copied from several other sources [5-15].

Of course it is not entirely inappropriate to borrow ideas and, if absolutely necessary, some text from the published literature provided that the source is duly acknowledged and the authors are properly credited. The action of Ray et al. is clearly not due to an accidental contamination or an error in experimental design or interpretation of results. It is obviously an intentional act and this trend sets a dark cloud on human knowledge, and serves no scholarly or scientific purpose. It would further seem that perhaps in order not to arouse any suspicion, none of the source publications from which they copied and pasted copiously is even cited by Ray et al. in their reference list. So it would appear that they had hoped that the reader will believe that they created the material or had taken the bulk of it from previously published sources subconsciously and their copying was entirely inspired by some divine power because they had not heard of or seen these publications.

The article by Ray et al. [1] is an exhibition of extreme Plagiarism. It is an unacceptable attempt to undermine scientific pursuit. It vitiates the investigational spirit of hard work and creativity and helps only to set back advances in science. The authors, Ray, Sonthalia, Kundu and Ganguly, by publishing their plagiarized material displayed gross

disregard to basic scientific integrity and lack of respect to the prominent scholarly repute of the Journal of Clinical and Cellular Immunology.

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