

Letter to the Editor—Warning on Plagiarism

By Myer Samra

Dear Editors,

Authors writing on Indo-Judaic matters should be warned that if they are writing about a topical subject, they could find their work being plagiarized.

I was surfing the Web recently looking at fresh material on the Chin-Kuki-Mizo people, whom I have been studying over many years. In the process, I came across an article that seemed interesting to me, with the title "Jewish Movements in the Hills of Manipur and Mizoram," at the following URL: <http://tinyurl.com/mt9mfh>.

After downloading and reading the article, I was amazed to find that it was a poorly typed and edited version of my article "The Tribe of Manasseh: 'Judaism' in the Hills of Manipur and Mizoram," which appeared in *Man in India*, 71 (1) (1991): 183-202.

Sentences written by me appear verbatim in the Kukiform Internet article, though frequently with unchecked errors of spelling. My recounting of interviews with some of my informants appear in the article as if they were those of the "author," S. K. Mukherjee. Almost all the references are in fact documents I'd researched, and I doubt that anyone else would have assembled the very same range of reference materials. The author refers to my article three times in the body of his article, referencing it as "Sarma (1991,)" while in the bibliography my name is given as "Samara, Mayer."

At first I felt flattered that someone liked my work enough to want to use it and claim it as his own. However, I became disturbed after I saw the only references in the bibliography that weren't mine, and the only references that postdated my article, which were ostensibly a paper presented at a conference by Mukherjee, and an article written by him which was published in a book called *Social Movements in North East India*, edited by one Mahendra Narain Karna, published in 1998 by the Indus Publishing Company. Information about the book can be found on the web at <http://tinyurl.com/knd4ac>.

The essays in the book had previously been delivered as papers at a seminar held in Shillong by the North East India Council for Social Research in 1994.

I am concerned at the unauthorized use that has been made of my work, and quite surprised that this could have been allowed to happen, given that my article appeared in a prominent Indian journal.

Yours sincerely,
Myer Samra