

Introduction

It has been a pleasure and a privilege for us to be the editors of this Festschrift to celebrate the remarkable career of Muhammad Ikram Chaghatai. It is impossible to do justice to the variety and depth of his work, or to adequately express our regard for him. But we hope this volume goes some way towards doing both. For those who do not know him, it will be an opportunity to learn something about him.

It is unfortunate that the editors of this volume have never had the pleasure of personally meeting Mr Chaghatai. We have had numerous telephonic conversations with him during the last year since we began to email invitations to the contributors of this Festschrift. We were only the listeners during these conversations with Mr Chaghatai as the powerhouse of his intellect led him to speak copiously in order to benefit people like us, and we enjoyed it thoroughly.

Those of us who have had the chance to collaborate with Muhammad Ikram Chaghatai know that he is not only passionate about research but also a truly patient and dedicated scholar. During recent decades, Mr Chaghatai has made significant contributions to several fields of studies. His research has resulted in many books and articles published in peer-reviewed journals. An analytical mind, and an ability to communicate in several languages are among the qualities making him a successful researcher. He is a reviewer and referee for a multitude of journals. He has acted as an external reviewer for research projects. Therefore, it was no surprise to us that all the contributors gladly accepted our invitation to contribute to this Festschrift.

We would like to sincerely thank all of the contributors for generously giving their time and ideas and adhering to the deadlines. Our apologies to those whom we did not manage to contact and who would also have liked to be part of this celebration.

We also thank Syed Shahid Hashmi, Izharul Haq and Ali Husain, the senior management of the Islamic Research Academy Karachi, who encouraged us to embark upon this research project. The academy was founded by Maulana Syed Abul Aala Maududi in 1962.

We are also very grateful to Prof Dr Moinuddin Aqeel, Prof Dr Arif Naushahi and Prof Emeritus Syed Tanvir Wasti for sharing their experiences about producing and editing a Festschrift.

We are also indebted to Muhammad Kashif, an art teacher, a renowned calligrapher, and a promoter of home-based calligraphy, for creating an elegant rendering of Loh-e Tasmiah (both sections: Urdu and English) and also the title of this Festschrift.

We are also grateful to everyone who submitted a note either to recognize the work of the honoree or the efforts of the editors. Thank you for sharing your memories, and good wishes for the future.

Lastly, we really thank Mr Waseem for publishing and making arrangements for the delivery of copies of this Festschrift to the foreign contributors.

Editors