**Imagining Lahore**

Lahore is the heart of Pakistan. It has always been known for its architectural monuments, traditional customs and has its significant historical importance as well. It was one of the well-known cities of the subcontinent and has also been the capital during the Mughal era. But that is not all what this city has. Every of its monument and obelisk susurrates a narrative that has the perennial efforts of great leaders hidden behind them. This is what ‘**Haroon Khalid**’ makes us think by imagining Lahore in its most pure form. Lahore, which today is the capital of Punjab and known as the pivot point for development projects of **Shahbaz Sharif**. Putting the educational, infrastructure and health issues at the back, the three times chief minister of Punjab could not find out the ground difficulties of the people of Lahore, even for once, and road development projects remained his only focus. Orange Line, one of the progressive efforts to make Lahore look more developed, is considered as a conquest by Shahbaz Sharif and his party. But standing alongside this sign of progress is the **Chauburji**, which maybe is questioning its very existence. Chauburji, in a dilapidated form, stands there, giving a reason to every trespasser of thinking about the Mughal princess, **Zeb-un-Nisa**. The tomb of Zeb-un-Nisa is at a few distance from the Chauburji, in **Nawakot**. She is considered to be the one who constructed the Chauburji. Much like monotonous condition of Chauburji, was the fate of Zeb-un-Nisa, for she spent the last years of her life in imprisonment after being separated from the man he was betrothed to, **Suleiman Shikoh**, son of **Dara Shikoh**. Lahore has another love story buried in its chest, that of “**Boota Singh and Zainab**”. Boota Singh came to Lahore in search of his beloved wife. But when he couldn’t get the love of his life, he gave his life by walking in front of a running train. Boota Singh was buried in Lahore but the one thing which could neither be buried, nor could it find its place back again was the turret of the Jain Mandir. This life for the Jain Mandir’s turret was decided on the fateful day of December 7, 1992, when a homicidal mob turned towards Jain Mandir and reverentially brought the turret from zenith to the ground where it lied for almost three decades. With as much silence, as the Jain Mandir’s turret was lying on the ground, a poet was lying in his last resting place but he had not been that much quiet during his life. He was **Habib Jalib**. Only Jalib had the dare to raise his voice against the brutal action of Ayub and Zia but he was always condemned for doing so as long as he lived. Not only Jalib, but there was a faction of poets and writers who was denounced for speaking and writing against the man in power. Situated at Mall Road, **Pak Tea House** was one of those places where great poets like Faiz Ahmed Faiz and Manto would sit and discuss their revolutionary ideas. Castigated, though, during their lives they were, poems of these great writers are, but still sung in political processions. These poets at least got their true reputation after their death, but the one who could not even achieve that are the unsung heroes like **Bhagat Singh**, **Lala Rajput Lai** and **Rehmat Ali**. They cannot be considered as pre-partition hero because it doesn’t fit in accordance with the demanding norms of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. Maybe this is the reason why people like **Zafarullah Khan**, who were patrons of Quaid-e-Azam and played a core part in the formation of this country but his community was not provided a single piece of land in this country to live peacefully. Because he was an Ahmadiyya so all the efforts which he and his fellows did have now been safely removed from history to deter the production of any sort of unpuritanical thought in young minds. Non-Muslim kings, like **Maharaja Ranjit Singh**, are called cruel and Muslim ruler like **Aurangzeb** is considered as the real king, for he was the one who imposed Islamic laws – as a cunning ploy. People, in a number of thousand, gather at the grand **Badshahi Mosque** but they would never get to know that the very place was not always meant to be a mosque but in fact, Dara Shikoh wanted to build a shrine for the Sufi saint, **Mian Mir**. Thanks to Aurangzeb, who not only usurped the throne but assassinated his nephew and brother and buried his expression of religiosity forever. Mausoleums of **Jahangir**, **Noor** **Jahan** and **Asaf** **Khan** are present in the same Lahore where the smadh of Maharaja Ranjit Singh is. But this remains to be the only thing that the people of this city and this country are deprived to understand that Mughals were not the only rulers of the subcontinent, Ahl-e-hadith are not the only patriots in Pakistan and that this country was never specified only for Muslims. It was Quaid’s ideology to make Pakistan a homeland for every community. Lahore will always be considered as the heart of Pakistan. **Lahore Fort** will be continued to be visited, but just like the way the screams and shrieks from the dungeon beneath Lahore Fort remained unlistened and unfelt, yet another generation would grow up with this apocryphal history, without knowing about the real makers of this country and without even knowing the raison d'être of Pakistan.