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## Book Review

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**Sho Kuwajima, *Muslims, Nation and the World: Life and Thought of Abul Hashim, Leader of the Bengal Muslim League*, Delhi, LG Publishers, 2015, 230 pp., ₹ 595, ISBN 978-93-83723-05-8.**

Partition stories today might have grown dim in our memories. There are, however, some stories which are even missing from the pages of history. One such silent account, of the Bengal partition, has been taken by this book; retelling untold experiences, thereby lending a fresh perspective to the partition narratives. From these faded pages of history, Sho Kuwajima takes a lesser-known individual in Bengal, Abul Hashim. The book hence proceeds from giving a general account of partition to a particular account, from a regional account to an individual account. Bengal of Hashim's times underwent major changes while being turbulently pitted against the question of partition. It was caught between an identity, on the one hand, rooted in religion and on the other, anchored in culture, leading to a major crack in Hindu–Muslim relations.

It is against this backdrop that Abul Hashim becomes visible in the political picture of Bengal. The essence of the book lies in analysing the dynamic engagement of Hashim with the partition of Bengal, thereby exploring the discursive shifts through his personality. The arguments of the book are divided into eight chapters along with an introduction and a conclusion. The book starts by giving us a peep into Hashim's early political trajectory. Born in a feudal family in Burdwan, with a vast expanse of interests, Hashim had interesting political encounters throughout his life. As the General Secretary of the Bengal Muslim League, he was the first person responsible for converting the Muslim League from a party of landlords to a party of the masses. His political vision, especially from 1943–1946, was framed by an idea of nationalism, lingualism, Islamic socialism, cultural attachments and a non-communal political outlook. During his political life, he developed critical as well as friendly relations with the Communists.

The partition, which came along with ruthless politics and bitter experiences, disillusioned Hashim and eventually drove him to isolation. The partition shocked Hashim when he became a victim of communal thinking with his house in Burdwan being burnt down. Soon after the partition, he got more inclined to the philosophy of Rabbaniyat. Moving to Dhakain in 1950, his interest in Islam grew manifold with an eventual deepening of Islamic thoughts in his vision. Religion now brought a change in his general outlook, influencing his political decisions. Hashim, earlier, was a defender of the multi-nation theory in which

