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**Cartography of Cultures and Languages:
Burnt Shadows by Kamila Shamsie**

Burnt Shadows, last in the oeuvre of Kamila Shamsie's novels is an attempt to portray the fragmented turbulent world of today- the way historical events, more than disrupting political ease create permanent fissures in the lives of the people, displacing them and marking them with the catastrophe forever. Moving from one historical disaster to another it links the catastrophes that the last century witnessed and shows how the present disintegrated world of today owe to the global events- at how hatred borne out of world politics, callous, insensitive selfish decisions of the great powers have bred violence and given birth to further hatred and fragmented the world dangerously.

Burnt Shadows distils much of the most notorious history of the past 65 years into its pages. Tracing the shared history of two culturally different families with members from varying nationalities - a German, a British, a Japanese and an Indian. Konrad-Weiss and Tanaka-Ashraf, from the bombing of Nagasaki, India on the brink of Partition, Pakistan in the early 1980s, New York post 9/11, Afghanistan in the wake of US 'war on terror' campaign and the horrifying images of Guantanamo Bay is a disturbing reflection on the conflict of attitudes and cultural divides that span everything from the loyalty of taste buds