

ARMED FUTURE

Infants trained to become infantry
weaned from the breast are
introduced to the bomb;
out of the womb and into war,
holding guns with two-way barrels
killing and being killed.
Maiming and being maimed.
Men, movements, visions of victory,
creating mirages of liberation
or the long-awaited self-determination.

Fed and filled with patriotic passion
unhesitantly exterminating elements,
fighting and dying for a cause
superseding all other bonding.
forced conscription claiming not only women & men
but also our should-be blooming children.
Mothers we are, rendered barren,
robbed of motherhood, stilled and sterile.

Yet theorists theorize
that our future is in the hands
in the hands that now hold
AK-47s, RPG-7s and M-16s.
What if the hands that hold the future
are blown to smithereens
and are stilled to silence,
and our future dies in infancy
at the hands of the infants in infantry.

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from *Aurat Durbar - An Anthology of
Writings by Women of South Asian
Origin.* (Toronto 1994)