

PILGRIMAGE

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New Hampshire State Department of Education

pilgrimage in winter under
a war-torn sky
colors of brown and red
of bankrupt hope and fire
glaze into broken pottery and vacant stares
he passes beneath
tremor shocks and the whistling
whooroos
of flying missiles

pilgrimage into sizzling
firebombed villages
walks never seen passes
winter battalions and grimy parapets
pockmarked and poignant
walks never seen, a shadow
past springtime massacres and pyres

peaceful quiet pilgrimage
he moves softly as whispers and he rolls
he swings his tireless scythe
one falls begrudging, another, and
still again they fall
in quantities unnumbered
but even Death
marvels at the waste

even Death shudders a sigh
at all the waste

* **ROBERT T. McLAUGHLIN, Ph.D.**, chaired Rivier College's education division in 2008. He oversees professional educator preparation program approval for the NH Dept. of Education. His three children, he enjoys telling them, are usually cute and adorable; with his wife he provides a home for four border collies, who all are cute and adorable. He founded and chaired the International Society for Technology in Education's interest groups on innovative learning technologies and digital equity, serves on the national commission on technology and the future of teacher education, and is senior fellow for the Stokes Institute for Opportunity in STEM Education.