

**Verses in Honour of Peggy Morgan
on the Auspicious Occasion of her 80th Birthday
(With apologies to Samuel Taylor Coleridge)**

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In Xanadu, did Kublai Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree...
In Lancaster did Ninian Smart
Inaugurate a new degree:
Which studied all the faiths of Man,
A term including (then), woman -
(Though 'he' includes no 'she'.)

In thrice three terms, BAs were earned,
True facts, cool theories duly learned,
And yet our Peggy fast outshone them all
Receiving in the graduation hall
The first MA (Religious Studies) conferred
In that distinguished corner of the world.

But oh! by twists and turns of fate
She found herself in Oxford where, we know,
She found religion, singular, on show,
But scarce a hint of all those other faiths
That Lancaster had taught her to embrace.

Agnostic'ly methodic, through and through
She taught her students (and the Fellows too),
That nothing can be truly understood
By viewing one tree only, not the wood.

*The students Peggy tutored – minds expanded
And colleagues she's supported, open-handed,
Regard her with respect and with affection
As 'one of us': a staunch and true campaigner
For scholarship – regardless of one's gender.*

*The attitudes and values she imbibed
In Lancaster, and nourished through the years
Are now in legion hearts and minds inscribed
Through Peggy's skilful nurture of ideas.*

*Life's brief; so much we would experience
May lean to 'I', at selfless 'you's' expense.
So, in conclusion, Peggy, let me state
That you, who've helped so many through,
Should be aware that we appreciate
Not just your many kindly deeds, but You!*

With love
Brian.