In *The Politics at God's Funeral* (1983), Michael Harrington says that his "Democratic- Marxist account of the death of God . . . sees the spiritual crisis of the late twentieth century as an essential part of the societal crisis and . . . ends with a call for a united front of believers and atheists in defense of moral values." Robert Bellah and co-authors in *Habits of the Heart* (1985) suggest much the same, predating the possibility of success for such a defense of moral values upon a diminishment of our use of "how it makes me feel about myself," individualistic criteria in making valuations and upon a recovery of languages, in particular those of the republican and Biblical traditions, which are capable of handling ethical issues given that these on occasion call for acting with self-denial. These languages, the authors argue, are now clearly secondary for us, and this is a major reason why individuals are at a loss in dealing with larger societal issues. One conclusion that could be drawn from the analysis in *Habits of the Heart* is that the effectiveness of the animal rights movement might be increased if somehow people in the movement could also address themselves to the recovery of such languages. The recent increase in interest in what may be the potential of religion in the animal rights movement may be seen in part as somehow an awareness on our part that the Judeo-Christian tradition perhaps does employ a language that can impact the issues more significantly than have the languages the movement has been using.

Perhaps . . . Some of us, of course, like to think that we abandoned the use of these languages, not because we didn't know them well enough to use them, but rather precisely because they could not be made to provide for crucial ethical outcomes. Thus, with respect to animals we might say, and perhaps correctly, that the Judeo-Christian tradition simply carries too heavy a burden of speciesism to ever be resurrected for decisive use on behalf of animals.

I think that both these views of religion have much to recommend them. The Judeo-Christian tradition is made up of many sub-traditions (including the Franciscan). So what we probably in fact have at hand is the potential for "a united front of believers and atheists in defense of moral values," in which several languages are employed.

That is one matter. There is, however, another kind of thinking going on about religion and secular culture, seeing both as embodying a monotheistic/monocultural impulse, the core of which is domination. Camus, in *The Rebel* (1951) already elaborates such a view in his critique of the demand for totality, which he saw as involving the annihilation of nature, urging instead a philosophy of limits. It is from a critique of unquestioned, but in fact likely monocultural, "tolerance" or "cultivation" or "celebration" of diversity, I believe, that Hillman asks us, in *Between the Species* 1/2: 8, "Could you move . . . from becoming a project (which requires 'execution' and must be achieved by will power)?" Even Teilhard's thought is in important respects monocultural. Michael W. Fox ("The Bio-politics of Socio-biology and Philosophy," BTS 1/4: 6) offers a criticism of much thought that takes its departure from Teilhard's notion of the "hominisation" of Earth. Fox, while appreciating Teilhard on many grounds, says that he "has been rightly criticized . . . for not incorporating concern for the biosphere." The situation is in this respect improved with the conference initiated not long ago by

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Michael J. Cohen on the theme, "Is the Earth a Living Organism?" In this question, however, Hillman would certainly find the same Gaia "who today is tending to replace old Jahweh with a new and fanatical monotheistic consciousness" (BTS I/2: 7). (I think that in this particular conference the consciousness manifest had little or nothing of the fanatical about it, although its role in a new religion of Gaia remains open to examination.) The presence of a prevalent monoculturalism is the kind of thing Marcuse taught us about in One-Dimensional Man (1966) and about which Illich continues in all his works to educate us. It is the kind of thing Hillman was talking about when, again in BTS I/2: 4, he replied to another of my questions by saying, "Support for variety is not the crucial aspect of polytheistic consciousness.

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After all, Noah's Ark also supported variety."

This other way of thinking about religion and society, the reader will have surmised, is a polytheistic way of thinking. It may be found developed especially in David L. Miller's The New Polytheism (1981) which appendes a very important essay by Hillman entitled "Psychology: Monotheistic or Polytheistic" (1971). It is this polytheistic view which informs Hillman's essay, "The Animal Kingdom in the Human Dream" (Bravos Yearbook, 1982). In a different way this manner of thinking is present in Joseph Meeker's The Comedy of Survival (1974), which is subtitled "In Search of an Environmental Ethic." In Many Dimensional Man (1977), James Ogilvy, employing a careful study of Nietzsche, develops a polytheistic critique of society.

Polytheism may be more compatible with continued life for the planet's species than would be any singleminded approach no matter how compassionate, for universal love may cover a multitude of sins. Can we think of a polytheistic habit of the heart? Yet one that does not exclude Jesus?

None of this has immediately to do with that possibly impending united front of atheists and believers. We are looking forward to the increased effectiveness for animals that will come with the new interest in them taken by the religions, and Tom Regan's new film "We Are All Noah" will hasten the further development of that interest. What I am saying does, however, have to do with values that are carried by our language of "united fronts" and the like. Those values are more monocultural than we realize. Even while we work our hardest at projects in defense of animals, at the societal level there is sometimes a component of "dialectical" reversal present until and unless a kind of polytheistic "inner" relaxation can occur and the dominating ego become one among many others. It could not be argued that any of this has any importance for the animals were it not for the connection with hierarchy and domination, exclusivity of kind, and the means of dissolving speciesism.

So, in welcoming religion back, both our own best hope and our best hope for the animals will be that religion be polytheistic—and that we will be polytheistic in welcoming religion back.