PART 3

Berlin System
At a well-known point in Goethe’s *Faust*, the imperial chancellor responds to a suggestion by Mephisto to help him get out of his notorious pecuniary embarrassment by means of the “natural and spiritual powers of a talented man” with the following very pointed words.

Nature and spirit—we do not speak thus to Christians.

We burn atheists,

because such talk is highly dangerous.

Nature is sin, spirit is the devil,

Between them they foster doubt,

their misshapen androgynous child.¹

Both of them will occupy us in what follows, at least in the brevity required here, nature and spirit that is, as Hegel investigates them in the two great so-called real-philosophical (*realphilosophisch*) divisions of his philosophy. They, in that order, nature and spirit, followed logic already in the Jena system drafts, and this order is preserved in the *Encyclopaedia*; but they are also parts of the system that Hegel devoted individual monographs to—such as the *Dissertatio* and the *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* of 1821—as well as discussing them *in extenso* in the great lecture series that proved to be historically so influential.

Hegel reached the zenith of his fame and influence at the Berlin university through his lecture courses and especially with those on topics in the philosophies of nature and of spirit. The lectures on the philosophy of nature supplied a great deal of new and explanatory material adding to the paragraphs of the second part of the *Encyclopaedia*, as can be seen in the *Additions* of the posthumous edition of Hegel’s works produced by his students of the *Association of Friends of the Deceased*.² The lectures on aesthetics must also be mentioned

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¹ Goethe, *Faust II*, act 1, scene 2, lines 4897–5002.