CONTENTS

Preface xiii

Abbreviations xv

Introduction xvii

PART ONE NICHOLAS OF CUSA AND THE POETICS OF CONJECTURE

Introduction to Part One 3

- 1. Learned Ignorance 5
- 2. Controversy and the Art of Conjecture 39
 - 3. Proteus and the Vision of God 67

PART TWO SIR PHILIP SIDNEY AND POETIC FICTIONS

Introduction to Part Two 99

- 4. Italian Renaissance Criticism 103
 - 5. Sidney's Feigned Apology 134
 - 6. Astrophil's Poetics 157

Introduction to Chapters 7 and 8:

Sidney's Two Arcadias 183

- 7. The Old Arcadia 186
- 8. The New Arcadia 212

PART THREE WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE AND DRAMATIC FICTIONS

Introduction to Part Three 253

9. Play and Earnest 259
10. The First Tetralogy 281
The Substance of *Richard II* 306
"King of Infinite Space": Hamlet and His Fictions 334

> Afterword 365 Notes 371 Index 437