Contents

Acknowledgments ix

1. Symmetry, Asymmetry, and Literary Humanism 1
2. Two Famous Asymmetrists 18
3. Six Claims of Symmetry 37
4. Reading the World: Structural Analogy 67
5. Creating the World: The Performative Principle 83
6. Naming and Renaming the World 108
7. Figuring (Out) the World: Tropes and Tropology 126
8. Style and Virtue 151
   Conclusion: The Love of Words 174

Works Cited 183

Index 191