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0521617014 - A History of the Bible as Literature: From 1700 to the Present Day, Volume Two

David Norton

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Early eighteenth-century literary critics thought the King James Bible had ‘all the disadvantages of an old prose translation’. But from the 1760s on criticism became increasingly favourable. In the nineteenth century it welled into a chorus of praise for ‘the noblest monument of English prose’. This volume, the second of a two-volume work, traces how that reversal of opinion came about and helped to shape the making and reception of modern translations such as the Revised Version and the New English Bible. At the same time the story of the development of modern literary discussion of the Bible in general is told. From the Augustan discovery of Longinus’ comments on Genesis through such major figures as Robert Lowth to modern critics such as Frank Kermode and Robert Alter, this story reveals a fascinating world of original insights and repetitions of received opinions. It shows not only how criticism has shaped understanding of the Bible, but how the Bible has shaped literary criticism.

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VOLUME TWO

From 1700 to the present day

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PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain

Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

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First published 1993

First paperback edition 2004

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress cataloguing in publication data

Norton, David.

A history of the Bible as literature.

Includes bibliographical references and indexes.

Contents: v. 1. From antiquity to 1700 – v. 2. From 1700
to the present day.

1. Bible as literature. 2. Bible – Criticism, interpretation,
etc. – History.

3. Bible – Versions. I. Title.

BS585.N67 1992 809'93522 92-1034

ISBN 0 521 33398 9 (v. 1) hardback

ISBN 0 521 61700 6 (v. 1) paperback

ISBN 0 521 33399 7 (v. 2) hardback

ISBN 0 521 61701 4 (v. 2) paperback

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For Aaron, Isaac and Benny – one day.

And for Ruby

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Abbreviations

AV	Authorised Version or King James Bible, 1611
ASV	American Standard Version, 1901
CHB	<i>The Cambridge History of the Bible</i>
DNB	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
KJB	King James Bible or Authorised Version, 1611
NEB	The New English Bible, 1970
NKJV	The New King James Version, 1982
NT	New Testament
OED	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
OT	Old Testament
PB	The Book of Common Prayer
RSV	Revised Standard Version, 1952
RV	Revised Version, 1885