

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-72373-2 - University Politics: F. M. Cornford's Cambridge and his Advice to the Young Academic Politician

Gordon Johnson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

UNIVERSITY POLITICS

This entertaining account of Cambridge around the turn of the twentieth century contains the centenary edition of the complete text of F. M. Cornford's famous satire of 1908 on University politics, *Microcosmographia Academica*, together with a full account of the controversies which gave rise to it.

Cambridge during this period was being subjected to pressure for reform from within and outside the University, forcing it to change the content of the existing syllabuses and to extend the range of subjects taught; to alter the balance between teaching and research, and the relationship between the Colleges and the University; to develop modern science in the curriculum; to widen University membership, above all by admitting women; to question the influence of religion; and to raise funds without compromising the University's independence to do what it liked. All these matters, many of which remain in debate at the beginning of the twenty-first century in Cambridge and in the wider academic community, provoked fierce debates and provided a rich context for Cornford's pamphlet. The book is illustrated with a selection of contemporary photographs and portraits.

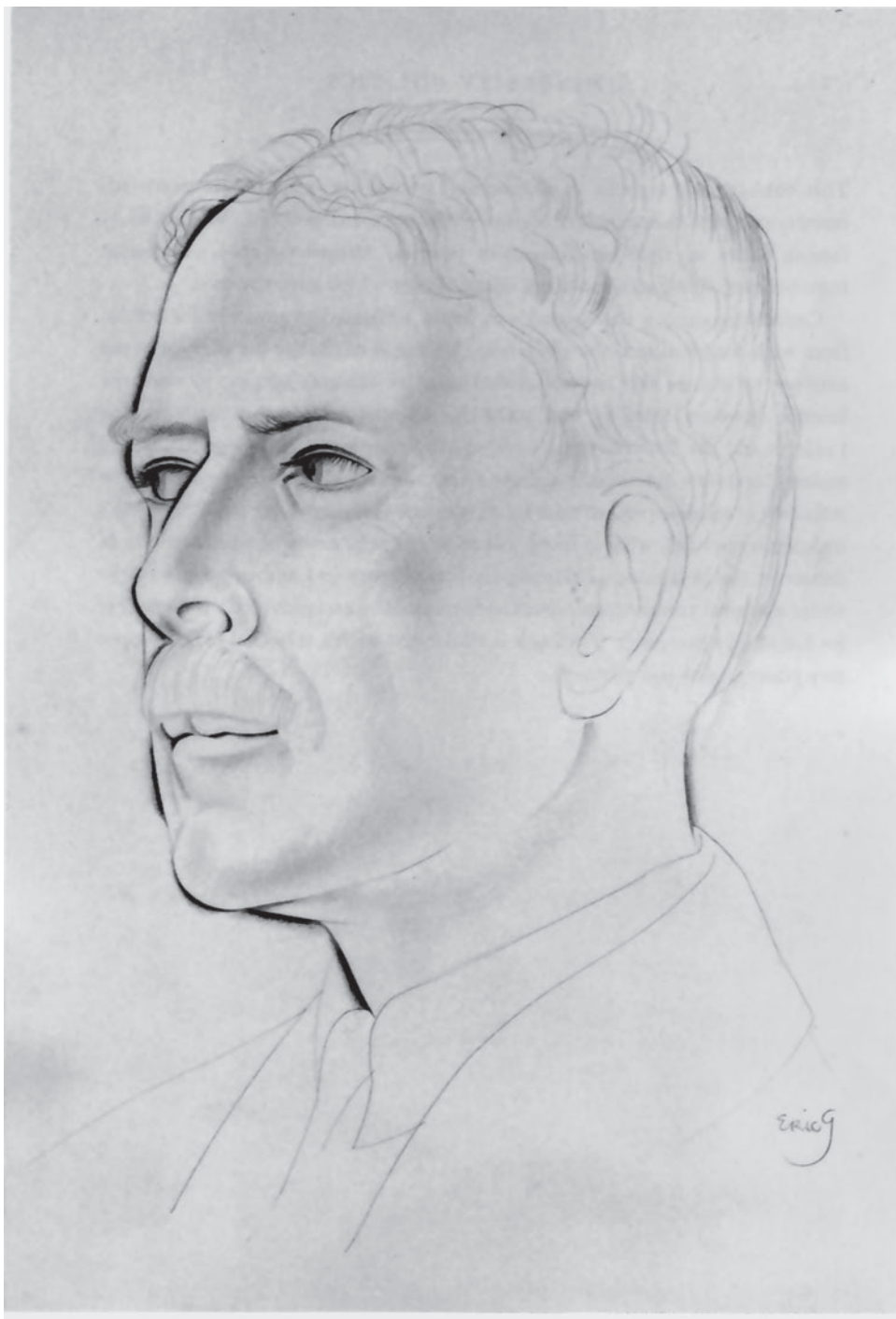
Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-72373-2 - University Politics: F. M. Cornford's Cambridge and his Advice to the Young Academic Politician

Gordon Johnson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)



Francis MacDonald Cornford, LittD, FBA (1874–1943), by Eric Gill. Cornford came up to Trinity College in 1893, was elected to a Fellowship in 1899 and became Laurence Professor of Ancient Philosophy in 1931. The drawing dates from 1929.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-72373-2 - University Politics: F. M. Cornford's Cambridge and his Advice to the Young Academic Politician

Gordon Johnson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

UNIVERSITY POLITICS

*F. M. Cornford's Cambridge and his advice
to the young academic politician*

GORDON JOHNSON



Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-72373-2 - University Politics: F. M. Cornford's Cambridge and his Advice to the Young Academic Politician

Gordon Johnson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Cambridge University Press

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 8RU, UK

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521723732

© Cambridge University Press 2008

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without the written
permission of Cambridge University Press.

First edition published 1994

Second edition published 2008

First published 2008

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

ISBN 978-0-521-89789-1 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-72373-2 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or
accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in
this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is,
or will remain, accurate or appropriate. Information regarding prices, travel
timetables, and other factual information given in this work is correct at
the time of first printing but Cambridge University Press does not guarantee
the accuracy of such information thereafter.

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-72373-2 - University Politics: F. M. Cornford's Cambridge and his Advice to the Young Academic Politician
Gordon Johnson
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

FOR
FAITH JOHNSON

Contents

| | |
|--|----------|
| <i>List of illustrations</i> | page vii |
| Preface to the centenary edition | ix |
| Introduction | i |
| Cornford's Cambridge | 9 |
| Cover to the first edition of <i>Microcosmographia Academica</i> | 85 |
| Dedication to the second edition | 87 |
| Preface to the second edition | 89 |
| Advertisement | 91 |
| <i>Microcosmographia Academica</i> | 93 |
| <i>Acknowledgments</i> | 111 |

Illustrations

| | | |
|----|--|---------------------|
| | Francis MacDonald Cornford | <i>frontispiece</i> |
| 1 | Jane Ellen Harrison | <i>page</i> 3 |
| 2 | Honorary degrees, 1892 | 10 |
| 3 | The Senate-House viewed from the south | 12 |
| 4 | Honorary degrees, 1894 | 15 |
| 5 | Proclamation of King Edward VII | 19 |
| 6 | Laying the foundation stone of Selwyn College Chapel | 26 |
| 7 | The vote on the admission of women to the titles of degrees | 37 |
| 8 | The declaration of the ballot on the admission of women to the titles of degrees | 38 |
| 9 | Plan of the New Museums and Downing sites | 40 |
| 10 | Cavendish Laboratory, 1944 | 44 |
| 11 | Inside the Cavendish Laboratory | 45 |
| 12 | The King and Queen enter the Senate-House, 1904 | 46 |
| 13 | The Botanical School, 1904 | 47 |
| 14 | The University Library | 50 |
| 15 | Henry Jackson | 58 |
| 16 | Henry Montagu Butler | 69 |
| 17 | Sir William Ridgeway | 71 |
| 18 | Francis Henry John Jenkinson | 80 |
| 19 | 'Caught in the Act' | 101 |

Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-72373-2 - University Politics: F. M. Cornford's Cambridge and his Advice to the Young Academic Politician
Gordon Johnson
Frontmatter
[More information](#)

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-72373-2 - University Politics: F. M. Cornford's Cambridge and his Advice to the Young Academic Politician

Gordon Johnson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface to the Centenary Edition

Francis Cornford's *Microcosmographia Academica: Being A Guide for the Young Academic Politician* was published in 1908 by Bowes and Bowes of Cambridge and was on sale in their bookshop at the corner of Trinity Street and the Market Place by the last week in February of that year. It has hardly ever been out of print since.

The author, whose identity was not disclosed in the first edition, broke cover for the second edition, published in 1922. He had been persuaded to put the book back into print, he wrote, because, despite the best hopes that human nature might be changed, perhaps for the better, after the experience of the First World War, he found that academic human nature remained true to the ancient type. Moreover, his experience in a Government department during the war confirmed a view that the play of petty politics was not confined to academia. And friends knowledgeable about goings-on in the Church Congress had admitted that 'they sometimes turn to the pages of this guide for help'.

The 1922 edition became the standard text. It appeared in 1933 dressed in rather pretty boards, and in December 1945 the University of Chicago Press published an elegantly printed and bound edition 'limited to 1500 copies, only fifty of which are for sale'. A more serviceable reprint was issued in 1949, with a Preface by Professor W. K. C. Guthrie, who succeeded to Cornford's chair in 1952. This edition held the field until the early 1990s. Then, in a great glut, came a simple facsimile of the second edition by Sainsbury Publishing Ltd, and, in 1993, a somewhat brash edition published by MainSail Press.

This latter publishing house was the brainchild of two students at Queens' College, Cambridge, who had already tested the water with a little book entitled *Shakespeare's Insults, Educating Your Wits*. They persuaded the Revd Professor Henry Chadwick – successively Dean of Christ Church, Oxford, and Master of Peterhouse, Cambridge, and at some time Regius Professor of Divinity in both of England's ancient universities – to write a new Preface. They marketed Cornford's tract, however, as 'Cambridge's Classic Guide to Success in the World'. 'This sage satire', they wrote on the dust jacket, 'handed down from mentor

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-72373-2 - University Politics: F. M. Cornford's Cambridge and his Advice to the Young Academic Politician

Gordon Johnson

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PREFACE TO THE CENTENARY EDITION

to protégé for over 85 years, has remained virtually secret outside this select few. Now is the time to offer it far beyond Cambridge, England, to those who urgently need its counsel in business, professions, government, academics, and organisations of every kind.' And they had one Ray Bell, 'Head of Strategy Development, British Telecom', give the book a puff: 'For every young MBA in a hurry, it will save you years of struggling to find this out for yourself.'

Cambridge University Press's edition came out in 1994. In this book, I attempted to set the satire into its historical context. I enjoyed doing the research for my Introduction, and I have been delighted that so many new readers have shared my admiration for what started out as an ephemeral tract. Although the University which gave birth to Cornford's pamphlet has changed beyond recognition since 1908 (and, indeed, again since 1994), Cornford's own perception of human political behaviour remains as sharp as ever and as deserving of study. So let us salute him as *Microcosmographia* turns 100 and looks set fair to be a guide to human nature in the century to come.

GORDON JOHNSON

February 2008