

which necessarily draws me many times into a by-path concerning Arianisme, to find out *Athanasius*, where the neglect of Writers have left him out of mind.' Secondly, although the truth of the matters related depends upon 'the credit of the several Authors quoted thereunto', Bacon claims full responsibility for the 'order' or sequencing of those matters, since none of the original authors achieved 'such a method as will give any satisfaction to an intelligent Reader'.¹¹ Throughout the work judgements are made upon the events, usually in the form of comparisons with Bacon's own times, and these taken together not only create a fine understanding of his character but also further define what he means by an 'intelligent Reader'. Such a person should be well educated; he particularly notes that one of the Emperor Julian's most pernicious actions against Christians was his 'strictly inhibiting all manner of instruction of the Children of Christians in any Humane Literature', and he develops this observation in a revealing association of ideas: 'Its very true that humane Learning adds no strength to the Gospel, yet as to natural men of parts it addeth light, and renders them more capable of conviction of the weaknesse of the principles of nature, and prepares them for better grounds; which also slide more gently into their understanding, when they see the correspondency between the principles of Religion and Philosophy explained. And therefore it is a matter of wonderment to see men that would be eminent for Religion in these dayes to be enemies to a Learned Ministry.' Such a reader is also to be distinguished from 'the people' who are highly susceptible to persuasion to heretical opinions because they 'understand little beyond common sense; lesse beyond common reason; and least of all in the deep Misteries of Religion'. Such people have 'unstable souls' in contrast to the self-discipline, intellectual and moral, which Bacon implies is characteristic of his 'intelligent Reader'. Ultimately of course, it is Athanasius himself who provides the positive model and who offers, I believe, a clear reflection of Bacon's understanding of his own behaviour and principles: 'in a Bishop', Bacon observes at one point in a sharp-edged comment, 'as *Athanasius* was, may be an excellent temperature of a speculative tranquillity on the one part, and of practical morality in political affairs on the other'. The other explicit statement occurs in the preface and offers as well a perception of the environment in which such a man lives: 'the Glory of Gods grace [carried] *Athanasius* his Faith and Spirit, and person, through a raging Sea of temptation and persecutions, to a quiet Haven, notwithstanding his enemies stormed upon him even to his grave'.¹²

In these statements we have, in summary form, a clear notion of Bacon's ideal citizen: a man utterly convinced that he bears the truth