

Aristot. *Retorica* I 4 1359b19-1360a38

σχεδόν γάρ, περὶ ὧν βουλευόνται πάντες καὶ περὶ ὧν ἀγορεύουσιν οἱ συμβουλευόντες, τὰ μέγιστα τυγχάνει πέντε τὸν ἀριθμὸν ὄντα: ταῦτα δ' ἐστὶν περὶ τε πόρων, καὶ πολέμου καὶ εἰρήνης, ἔτι δὲ περὶ φυλακῆς τῆς χώρας, καὶ τῶν εἰσαγομένων καὶ ἐξαγομένων, καὶ νομοθεσίας:

[8] ὥστε περὶ μὲν πόρων τὸν μέλλοντα συμβουλεύειν δέοι ἂν τὰς προσόδους τῆς πόλεως εἰδέναι τίνες καὶ πόσαι, ὅπως εἴτε τις παραλείπεται προστεθῆ καὶ εἴ τις ἐλάττων ἀυξηθῆ, ἔτι δὲ τὰς δαπάνας τῆς πόλεως ἀπάσας, ὅπως εἴ τις περιεργὸς ἀφαιρεθῆ καὶ εἴ τις μείζων ἐλάττων γένηται: οὐ γὰρ μόνον πρὸς τὰ ὑπάρχοντα προστιθέντες πλουσιώτεροι γίνονται, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀφαιρούντες τῶν δαπανημάτων. ταῦτα δ' οὐ μόνον ἐκ τῆς περὶ τὰ ἴδια ἐμπειρίας ἐνδέχεται συνορᾶν, ἀλλ' ἀναγκαῖον καὶ τῶν παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις εὐρημένων ἱστορικῶν εἶναι πρὸς τὴν περὶ τούτων συμβουλήν.

[9] περὶ δὲ πολέμου καὶ εἰρήνης τὴν δύναμιν εἰδέναι τῆς πόλεως, ὁπόση τε ὑπάρχει ἤδη καὶ πόσην ἐνδέχεται ὑπάρξει, καὶ ποῖα τις ἢ τε ὑπάρχουσα ἐστὶν καὶ ἢ τις ἐνδέχεται προσγενέσθαι, ἔτι δὲ πολέμους πῶς καὶ τίνες πεπολέμηκεν. οὐ μόνον δὲ τῆς οἰκείας πόλεως ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ὁμόρων ταῦτα ἀναγκαῖον εἰδέναι, καὶ πρὸς οὓς ἐπίδοξον πολεμεῖν, ὅπως πρὸς μὲν τοὺς κρείττους εἰρηνεύηται, πρὸς δὲ τοὺς ἥττους ἐφ' αὐτοῖς ἢ τὸ πολεμεῖν, καὶ τὰς δυνάμεις, πότερον ὅμοιοι ἢ ἀνόμοιοι: ἔστιν γὰρ καὶ ταύτη πλεονεκτεῖν ἢ ἐλαττοῦσθαι. ἀναγκαῖον δὲ καὶ πρὸς ταῦτα μὴ μόνον τοὺς οἰκείους πολέμους τεθεωρημέναι ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς τῶν ἄλλων, πῶς ἀποβαίνουσιν: ἀπὸ γὰρ τῶν ὁμοίων τὰ ὅμοια γίνεσθαι πέφυκεν.

[10] ἔτι δὲ περὶ φυλακῆς τῆς χώρας μὴ λανθάνειν πῶς φυλάττεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ πλῆθος εἰδέναι τῆς φυλακῆς καὶ τὸ εἶδος καὶ τοὺς τόπους τῶν φυλακτηρίων (τοῦτο δ' ἀδύνατον μὴ ἔμπειρον ὄντα τῆς χώρας) , ἵν' εἴ τ' ἐλάττων ἢ φυλακὴ προστεθῆ καὶ εἴ τις περιεργὸς ἀφαιρεθῆ καὶ τοὺς ἐπιτηδείους τόπους τηρῶσι μᾶλλον.

[11] ἔτι δὲ περὶ τροφῆς, πόση δαπάνη ἱκανὴ τῇ πόλει καὶ ποῖα, ἢ αὐτοῦ τε γιγνομένη καὶ ἢ εἰσαγωγίμος, καὶ τίνων τ' ἐξαγωγῆς δέονται καὶ τίνων καὶ παρὰ τίνων εἰσαγωγῆς, ἵνα πρὸς τούτους καὶ συνθῆκαι καὶ συμβολαὶ γίνωνται: πρὸς δύο γὰρ διαφυλάττειν ἀναγκαῖον ἀνεγκλήτους τοὺς πολίτας, πρὸς τε τοὺς κρείττους καὶ πρὸς τοὺς εἰς ταῦτα χρησίμους.

[12] εἰς δ' ἀσφάλειαν ἅπαντα μὲν ταῦτα ἀναγκαῖον δύνασθαι θεωρεῖν, οὐκ ἐλάχιστον δὲ περὶ νομοθεσίας ἐπαίειν: ἐν γὰρ τοῖς νόμοις ἐστὶν ἡ σωτηρία τῆς πόλεως, ὥστ' ἀναγκαῖον εἰδέναι πόσα τέ ἐστι πολιτειῶν εἶδη, καὶ ποῖα συμφέρει ἐκάστη, καὶ ὑπὸ τίνων φθειρεσθαι πέφυκεν καὶ οἰκείων τῆς πολιτείας καὶ ἐναντίων. λέγω δὲ τὸ ὑπὸ οἰκείων φθειρεσθαι, ὅτι ἔξω τῆς βελτίστης πολιτείας αἱ ἄλλαι πᾶσαι καὶ ἀνιέμεναι καὶ ἐπιτεινόμεναι φθείρονται, οἷον δημοκρατία οὐ μόνον ἀνιέμενη ἀσθενεστέρα γίγνεται ὥστε τέλος ἦξει εἰς ὀλιγαρχίαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπιτεινομένη σφόδρα: ὥσπερ καὶ ἡ γρυπότης καὶ ἡ σιμότης οὐ μόνον ἀνιέμενα ἔρχεται εἰς τὸ μέσον, ἀλλὰ καὶ σφόδρα γρυπὰ γινόμενα ἢ σιμὰ οὕτως διατίθεται ὥστε μηδὲ μυκτῆρα δοκεῖν εἶναι.

[13] χρήσιμον δὲ πρὸς τὰς νομοθεσίας τὸ μὴ μόνον ἐπαίειν τίς πολιτεία συμφέρει, ἐκ τῶν παρεληλυθότων θεωροῦντα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς παρὰ τοῖς ἄλλοις εἰδέναι, αἱ ποῖα τοῖς ποίοις ἀρμόττουσιν: ὥστε δηλὸν ὅτι πρὸς μὲν τὴν νομοθεσίαν αἱ τῆς γῆς περίοδοι χρήσιμοι (ἐντεῦθεν γὰρ λαβεῖν ἔστιν τοὺς τῶν ἐθνῶν νόμους) , πρὸς δὲ τὰς πολιτικὰς συμβουλὰς αἱ τῶν περὶ τὰς πράξεις γραφόντων ἱστορίαι: ἅπαντα δὲ ταῦτα πολιτικῆς ἄλλ' οὐ ῥητορικῆς ἔργον ἐστίν.

Now, we may say that the most important subjects about which all men deliberate and deliberative orators harangue, are five in number, to wit: ways and means, war and peace, the defence of the country, imports and exports, legislation.

[8] Accordingly, the orator who is going to give advice on ways and means should be acquainted with the nature and extent of the State resources, so that if any is omitted it may be added, and if any is insufficient, it may be increased. Further, he should know all the expenses of the State, that if any is superfluous, it may be removed, or, if too great, may be curtailed. For men become wealthier, not only by adding to what they already possess, but also by cutting down expenses. Of these things it is not only possible to acquire a general view from individual experience, but in view of advising concerning them it is further necessary to be well informed about what has been discovered among others.

[9] In regard to war and peace, the orator should be acquainted with the power of the State, how great it is already and how great it may possibly become; of what kind it is already and what additions may possibly be made to it; further, what wars it has waged and its conduct of them. These things he should be acquainted with, not only as far as his own State is concerned, but also in reference to neighboring States, and particularly those with whom there is a likelihood of war, so that towards the stronger a pacific attitude may be maintained, and in regard to the weaker, the decision as to making war on them may be left to his own State. Again, he should know whether their forces are like or unlike his own, for herein also advantage or disadvantage may lie. With reference to these matters he must also have examined the results, not only of the wars carried on by his own State, but also of those carried on by others; for similar results naturally arise from similar causes.

[10] Again, in regard to the defense of the country, he should not be ignorant how it is carried on; he should know both the strength of the guard, its character, and the positions of the guard-houses (which is impossible for one who is unacquainted with the country, so that if any guard is insufficient it may be increased, or if any is superfluous it may be disbanded, and greater attention devoted to suitable positions.

[11] Again, in regard to food, he should know what amount of expenditure is sufficient to support the State; what kind of food is produced at home or can be imported; and what exports and imports are necessary, in order that contracts and agreements may be made with those³ who can furnish them; for it is necessary to keep the citizens free from reproach in their relations with two classes of people—those who are stronger and those who are useful for commercial purposes.

[12] With a view to the safety of the State, it is necessary that the orator should be able to judge of all these questions, but an understanding of legislation is of special importance, for it is on the laws that the safety of the State is based. Wherefore he must know how many forms of government there are; what is expedient for each; and the natural causes of its downfall, whether they are peculiar to the particular form of government or opposed to it. By being ruined by causes peculiar to itself, I mean that, with the exception of the perfect form of government, all the rest are ruined by being relaxed or strained to excess. Thus democracy, not only when relaxed, but also when strained to excess, becomes weaker and will end in an oligarchy; similarly, not only does an aquiline or snub nose reach the mean, when one of these defects is relaxed, but when it becomes aquiline or snub to excess, it is altered to such an extent that even the likeness of a nose is lost. [13] Moreover, with reference to acts of legislation, it is useful not only to understand what form of government is expedient by judging in the light of the past, but also to become acquainted with those in existence in other nations, and to learn what kinds of government are suitable to what kinds of people. It is clear, therefore, that for legislation books of travel are useful, since they help us to understand the laws of other nations, and for political debates historical works. All these things, however, belong to Politics and not to Rhetoric.