

HOW TO CITE ARISTOTLE

Background: Why Bekker numbers? In 1831, the German scholar Immanuel Bekker published the most authoritative edition yet of Aristotle’s surviving works in Greek. This edition was in two volumes with continuous pagination (pp. 1-789 in volume 1 were continued by pp. 791-1462 in volume 2). On each page, the Greek text was laid out in two columns. Between the columns line numbers were printed: 5, 10, 15, etc.

“Bekker numbers”—reference to the text by the page number, column (“a” or “b”), and line number of the Bekker edition—became standard for subsequent scholars and students. Because these numbers are printed in every modern Greek edition and in different translations of Aristotle’s work, they enable precise reference to Aristotle, even for someone using a different edition. (Similar standard schemes of numeration exist for most classical authors.) This is why the page numbers of your textbook are not the appropriate form of reference.

Before Bekker, there was already a longstanding traditional division of Aristotle’s works into books and chapters. Bekker retained these divisions, and we continue to use them as well (they are more natural, if less precise).

Two examples of correct citations

(A) “If any person thinks the examination of the rest of the animal kingdom an unworthy task, he must hold in like disesteem the study of man. For no one can look at the primordia of the human frame—blood, flesh, bones, vessels, and the like—without much repugnance” (Arist. *PA* I.5, 645a27-30, trans. Ogle).

Compare how this passage appears on p. 657 of *The Basic Works of Aristotle*. Let’s look carefully at each part of the reference:

Arist. *PA* I.5, 645a27-30, trans. Ogle

(1) author abbreviation, (2) work abbreviation, (3) book and chapter reference, (4) Bekker numbers, (5) translator’s name

1. If you are referring to primary texts by several authors, you need to indicate the author first. In this course, you will usually not need this, because you will have already made it clear that you are writing about what Aristotle says in his texts!
2. The abbreviation of the title is italicized (because it’s a book title). The abbreviations for the works read in this course are: *Met.* (*Metaphysics*), *EN* (*Ethica Nicomachea*, the Latin name of *Nicomachean Ethics*), *Phys.* (*Physics*), *PA* (*Parts of Animals*), *Pol.* (*Politics*), *DA* (*De Anima*, the Latin name of *On the Soul*), and *Rhet.* (*Rhetoric*). This can sometimes be omitted after the first reference if it is very clear you continue to discuss only the single work.
3. Roman numeral for book number and Arabic numeral for chapter number, separated by a period.
4. Bekker numbers, with no spaces.
5. Translator’s name (found on the work’s title page, in this case p. 641). This can be omitted after the first reference to the work.

(B) Aristotle thus says that “a half glimpse of persons that we love is more delightful than a leisurely view of other things, whatever their numbers and dimensions” (*PA* I.5, 644b35-645a1).

ἐκάτεροι τὸς ἀλλήλων λόγος. διόπερ ταχέϊα μὲν ἀτεχνος δ' ἢ ἡ διδασκαλία τοῖς μανθάνουσι παρ' αὐτῶν· οὐ γὰρ τέχνην ἀλλὰ τὰ ἀπὸ τῆς τέχνης διδόντες παιδεύειν ὑπελάμβανον, ὡσπερ ἂν εἴ τις ἐπίσημην φάσκων παραδῶσειν ἐπὶ τὸ μηδὲν ποιεῖν τὸς πόδας, εἴτα σκυτοτομικὴν μὲν μὴ διδάσκει, μὴ δ' ὅθεν διηγήσεται πορίζεσθαι τὰ τοιαῦτα, δόξῃ δὲ πολλὰ γένη παντοδαπῶν ὑποδημάτων· οὗτος γὰρ βεβούθηκε μὲν πρὸς τὴν χρείαν, τέχνην δ' ἔπαρέδωκεν. καὶ περὶ μὲν τῶν ῥητορικῶν ὑπῆρχε πολλὰ καὶ παλαιὰ τὰ

λεγόμενα, περὶ δὲ τῶ συλλογίζεσθαι παντελῶς ὅθεν εἴχομεν πρότερον ἄλλο λέγειν, ἀλλ' ἡ τριβὴ ζητοῦντες πολὺν χρόνον ἐπονοῦμεν. εἰ δὲ φαίνεται θεασαμένοις ὑμῖν ὡς ἐκ τοιούτων ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑπαρχόντων ἔχειν ἡ μέθοδος ἰκανῶς παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας πραγματείας τὰς ἐκ παραδόσεως ἠϋσημένας, λοιπὸν ἂν εἴη πάντων ὑμῶν ἢ τῶν ἠεροαμένων ἔργον τοῖς μὲν παραλειμμένοις τῆς μεθόδου συγγνώμην τοῖς δ' εὐρημένοις πολλὴν ἔχειν χάριν.

ΦΥΣΙΚΗΣ ΑΚΡΟΑΣΕΩΣ Α.

Ἐπειδὴ τὸ εἰδέναι καὶ τὸ ἐπίσασθαι συμβαίνει περὶ πάσας τὰς μεθόδους, ἃν εἰσὶν ἀρχαὶ ἢ αἷτια ἢ στοιχεῖα, ἐκ τοῦ ταῦτα γνωρίζειν (τότε γὰρ οἰόμεθα γινώσκειν ἕκαστον, ὅταν τὰ αἷτια γνωρίσωμεν τὰ πρῶτα καὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς τὰς πρῶτας καὶ μέχρι τῶν σοιχείων), δῆλον ὅτι καὶ τῆς περὶ φύσεως ἐπιστήμης πειρατέον διορίσασθαι πρῶτον τὰ περὶ τὰς ἀρχὰς. πέφυκε δὲ ἐκ τῶν γνωριμωτέρων ἡμῖν ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ σαφεσέρον ἐπὶ τὰ σαφέστερα τῆ φύσει καὶ γνωριμώτερα· οὐ γὰρ ταῦτα ἡμῖν τε γνωρίμα καὶ ἀπλῶς. διόπερ ἀνάγκη τὸν τρόπον τῶτον προάγειν ἐκ τῶν ἀσαφεσέρων μὲν τῆ φύσει ἡμῖν δὲ σαφεσέρων ἐπὶ τὰ σαφέστερα τῆ φύσει καὶ γνωριμώτερα. ἔστι δ' ἡμῖν πρῶτον δῆλα καὶ σαφῆ τὰ συγκεχυμένα μᾶλλον· ὕστερον δ' ἐκ τῶν γίνεται γνωρίμα τὰ σοιχεία καὶ αἱ ἀρχαὶ διαιροῦσι ταῦτα. διὸ ἐκ τῶν καθόλου ἐπὶ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα δεῖ προίεναι. τὸ γὰρ ὅλον κατὰ τὴν αἰσθησιν γνωριμώτερον, τὸ δὲ καθόλου ὅλον τί ἐστίν· 25 πολλὰ γὰρ περιλαμβάνει ὡς μέρος τὸ καθόλου. πέποιθε δὲ

ταῦτο τῶτον τρόπον τινὰ καὶ τὰ ὀνόματα πρὸς τὸν λόγον· ὅλον γὰρ τι καὶ ἀδιορίστως σημαίνει, οἷον ὁ κύκλος· ὁ δὲ ὀρισμὸς αὐτῷ διαιρεῖ εἰς τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα. καὶ τὰ παιδία τὸ μὲν πρῶτον προσαγορεύει πάντας τὸς ἀνδρας πατέρας καὶ μητέρας τὰς γυναῖκας, ὕστερον δὲ διορίζει τῶν ἐπιτέρον.

Ἄνάγκη δ' ἦτοι μίαν εἶναι τὴν ἀρχὴν ἢ πλείους, καὶ εἰ μίαν, ἦτοι ἀκίνητον, ὡς φησι Παρμενίδης καὶ Μέλισσος, ἢ κινημένην, ὡσπερ οἱ φυσικοὶ, οἱ μὲν ἀέρα φάσκοντες εἶναι οἱ δ' ὕδωρ τὴν πρῶτην ἀρχὴν· εἰ δὲ πλείους, ἢ πεπερασμένους ἢ ἀπείρους, καὶ εἰ πεπερασμένους πλείους δὲ μίαν, ἢ δύο ἢ τρεῖς ἢ τέταρτα ἢ ἄλλον τινὰ ἀριθμὸν, καὶ εἰ ἀπείρους, ἢ ὅπως ὡσπερ Δημόκριτος, τὸ γένος ἔν, σχήματι δὲ ἢ εἶδει διαφερούσας, ἢ καὶ ἐναντίας. ὁμοίως δὲ ζητοῦσι καὶ οἱ τὰ ὄντα ζητῶντες πόσα· ἔξ ὧν γὰρ τὰ ὄντα ἐστὶ, πρῶτον ζητοῦσι ταῦτα πότερον ἢ ἢ πολλά, καὶ εἰ πολλά, πεπερασμένα ἢ ἀπείρα, ὡς τὴν ἀρχὴν καὶ τὸ σοιχείον ζητοῦσι πότερον ἢ ἢ πολλά. τὸ μὲν ἔν εἰ ἔν καὶ ἀκίνητον τὸ δὲ σκοπεῖν ἢ περὶ φύσεώς ἐστι σκο-

3. τῆς om D. || 6. διήσθηται BD.

3. ἡμῖν ABD. || 6. ἡμῶν ABD.

Codices EFI. Tit. ἀκροάσεως] ἀκροάσεως ἢ περὶ ἀρχῶν F. om titulum I.

15. πρῶτον διορίσασθαι F. || 16. ἢ om I. || 18. τὰ αὐτὰ F. || 19. τοῦτον τὸν τρόπον F. || μὲν om FI. || 20. τῆ om I. || τῆ φύσει om pr E. || 21. πρῶτον] τὸ πρῶτον FI. || 22. συγκείμενα F. || γίνεται post γνωρίμα I, om F. || 24. ἐπὶ] εἰς E. || 26. ὡς] ὡσπερ E.

2. ἀδιορίστον I et corr E. || 12. τὸ] δὲ τὸ I. || 13. μὲν om F. || ὑπολαμβάνει I, ὑπολαμβάνει προσαγορεύει πατέρας E. || 14. δὲ om F. || 16. ὡσπερ FI. || φασὶ I. || 21. δὲ om F. || καὶ om I. || 23. ζητοῦσι πρῶτον FI. || 26. δὲ] ἔν I.