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Nicomachean Ethics

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***Nicomachean Ethics* (Excerpts)**

by Aristotle

Translated by Michael Pakaluk

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Of political justice part is natural, part legal. Natural is that which everywhere has the same force and

does not exist by people's thinking it to be so or not. Legal is:

1. that which originally makes no difference whether it is this way or that, but when it has been set down it makes a difference, e.g.
 - a. a prisoner's ransom is a mina; or
 - b. sacrifice a goat, not two sheep;
2. and again all laws set down for particular circumstances, e.g.
 - a. sacrifice in honour of Brasidas; or
 - b. the provisions of decrees.

To some people it looks as though all justice is of this sort, because that which is by nature is unchangeable and has everywhere the same force (as fire burns both here and in Persia), but they see matters of justice changing.

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