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# XII.11 On thoughts

- The Spirit of Law - Book XII. On laws that constitute political liberty in its relation to the citizen -

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## XII.11 On thoughts

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A certain Marsyas dreamed he cut the throat of Dionysius. [1] Dionysius had him put to death, saying that he would not have dreamt it by night if he had not thought about it by day. That was a great act of tyranny ; for even had he thought about it, he had made no attempt. [2] The function of laws is to punish only overt acts.

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[1] Plutarch, *Life of Dionysius*.

[2] The thought must be connected to some sort of act.