

The man who thinks for himself learns the authorities for his opinions only later on, when they serve merely to strengthen both them and himself; while the book-philosopher starts from the authorities and other people's opinions, therefrom constructing a whole for himself; so that he resembles an automaton, whose composition we do not understand.

The other man, the man who thinks for himself, on the other hand, is like a living man as made by nature. His mind is impregnated from without, which then bears and brings forth its child. Truth that has been merely learned adheres to us like an artificial limb, a false tooth, a waxen nose, or at best like one made out of another's flesh; truth which is acquired by thinking for oneself is like a natural member: it alone really belongs to us. Here we touch upon the difference between the thinking man and the mere man of learning. Therefore the intellectual acquirements of the man who thinks for himself are like a fine painting that stands out full of life, that has its light and shade correct, the tone sustained, and perfect harmony of colour. The intellectual attainments of the merely learned man, on the contrary, resemble a big palette covered with every colour, at most systematically arranged, but without harmony, relation, and meaning.

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