

"Habeo non Habeor" (Associated With Aristippus?)

Post by "Cassius" of August 22, 2025 at 8:10 AM

In some reading I am seeing reference in the work of P.E. More to this Latin phrase and that it may be associated with Aristippus, but it's new to me.

From More:

Habeo non habeor, was the challenge of Aristippus to the world; the master of the Garden will be content with the more modest half : *Non Habeor*. There is something to startle the mind in this defensive conclusion of a philosophy which opened its attack on life under such brave and flaunting colours. There is much to cause reflection when one considers how in the end hedonism is forced into an unnatural conjunction with the other monistic philosophy with which its principles are in such violent conflict.

Also:

If, however, the good things of this world which wealth can purchase have come my way, I have enjoyed them, as I have enjoyed such little scraps of literary or worldly success as fate has allotted to me. But my motto has always been the wise one of Aristippus of Cyrene, [Greek: echo, ouk echomai], *habeo, non habeor*, or, to translate it into idiomatic English, "I am taken by these things, but they do not take me in," and to sacrifice one's life for them seems to me absurd.

I post this to follow up on later and evaluate whether there's any merit to More's attribution of this to Aristippus and the contrast he draws to Epicurus.