

Lucian: Hermotimus, The Rival Philosophies

Post by “Cassius” of February 2, 2026 at 9:05 PM

Here is the first draft of something I have been thinking of doing for a long time: an audio version of Lucian's "Hermotimus." It's far from perfect but so far as I know it's the only audio version of this dialog available. If you keep your expectations low the audio is very listenable. Some people are going to interpret this attack on a student of Stoicism as an advocacy of skepticism rather than being specifically Epicurean, but I'd reject that position. We know Lucian regularly showed respect to Epicurus and almost never (if ever) said anything derogatory at Epicurus' expense. The conclusion of this dialog that it would be best to avoid philosophers like mad dogs is based on a clear foundation that advocates being practical about what can be expected from philosophy, and I think that's totally compatible with Epicurus' focus on using the faculties given us by nature rather than unverifiable propositional logic.

As with all these text-to-speech versions please feel free to note issues with the conversion, and I will incorporate those comments into future versions. In the meantime, for the first time in my life I will be able to go to sleep tonight listening to the wit and wisdom of Lucian dismantling Stoicism.

<https://youtu.be/MTtdBczgO30>