

The tortoise and the hare

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Filosofiske spørsmål:

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Sist oppdatert: 15. november 2003

Once there was a tortoise and a hare. They wanted to have a race. The hare was certain he would win; he was so much faster than the tortoise. He told everybody that he would win the race.

Then they started to run. The hare immediately passed the tortoise, and soon the tortoise could no longer see him. But he continued to walk slowly, as tortoises do.

The hare was already half way round the track. When he came to a river, he stopped to drink. Beside the river there was a tree. The hare lay down under the tree. He thought that he had plenty of time before the tortoise would arrive. So he decided to have a nap. Soon he was fast asleep.

The tortoise was still walking. He saw the hare sleeping under the tree, and continued to walk. Finally, when he was about to cross the finish line, the hare woke up. He ran after the tortoise, but he came too late. The tortoise passed the line before him, and won the race.

Philosophical questions

1. The hare knows that he is going to win. He is so convinced that he doesn't take his competitor (motstander) seriously at all. Would you blame (klandre) the hare for:

- being convinced about his superiority (overlegenhet)?
- not taking his competitor seriously?

Or would you say that it is quite all right to be superior and not take your competitors seriously? If not, why is it wrong?

2. The tortoise wins the race. But that doesn't mean that he is the faster of the two. What does this victory (seier) really tell us? What do we learn from this story?

Suppose you were the tortoise and a journalist came up to you after the race and asked you the following question: "How is it possible for a tortoise to beat a hare in a race?". What would you answer?

3. If the hare had woken up from his sleep under the tree just a few minutes earlier (or if he hadn't fallen asleep at all), then he would easily have won the race. Would the story have been the same with such an ending? Why did Aesop let the tortoise win? What did Aesop want to tell us by letting the slow-moving tortoise beat the fast-running hare?