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Letters

Chris Follett purports (vol. 1, issue 18) to give an account of Kare Holt's most recent novel, *Kappløpet*. (Please observe the spelling; the reviewer had both the author and the book's title wrong). *Kappløpet* is a repulsive novel. Frequent references to recorded incidents serve the purpose of lending it an unearned air of documentary objectivity. Facts and fiction, half-truths and lies, mixed with the author's biased interpretations, are employed to paint an ugly picture of Roald Amundsen. Chris Follett commits the error of literally swallowing Holt's product hook, line and sinker. Uncritically, even gleefully, he accepts the wildly-distorted image of Roald Amundsen which Holt presents.

Kåre Holt's motive for writing this book is easy to comprehend. He wants to be a leveller. The very idea of Greatness is deplorable and unbearable to him. In Holt's ideal universe of anti-heroes, drop-outs and losers there could be no place for an individual with such exceptional qualities as Amundsen. Holt had to cut Amundsen down to his own proportions. So it's understandable – although by no means excusable – that he wrote the book.

One sees no rational explanation, however, for Follett's conduct. He actually manages to out-Holt Holt himself in mastering the ignoble Art of Smearing. Where is the motive? Why this weird display of such malice, ignorance and stupidity?

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