

**ÜÇ FİNCAN ÇAY ADLI ESERDE  
BİREYCİLİK, AZİM VE KAHRAMANLIK**

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*The British policy was 'divide and conquer'.*

*But I say 'unite and conquer'.*

*Greg Mortenson, Three Cups of Tea*

**Özet**

Bu makalede, Greg Mortenson'un *Üç Fincan Çay* adlı eserinde Amerikan değerlerinden belki de ilk üç sırayı alan bireycilik, azim ve kahramanlık konuları incelenmiştir. Misyoner bir aile geçmişi olan Mortenson'un hayatını anlatan kurgusal olmayan bu eseri, K2'ye yapmış olduğu bir tırmanış sonucu ortaya çıkmıştır. Kitabın asıl yazarı David Oliver Relin'dir, ancak olayları yaşayan kişi Mortenson'un kendisidir, bundan dolayı kitapta olan olayları Mortenson'un ağzından tekrar anlatmıştır. Bu çalışma ile bir dağcının nasıl kahramana dönüştüğünü araştırırken, Amerikan değerlerinin, gittiği yere barışı götürmek için okullar inşa etme girişiminin temelini oluşturduğunu göstermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Amerikan Değerleri, Greg Mortenson, Bireycilik, Azim, Kahramanlık

**INDIVIDUALISM, PERSEVERANCE AND HEROISM  
IN THREE CUPS OF TEA**

**Abstract**

This article examines the work of Greg Mortenson titled *Three cups of Tea* in terms of American values, maybe the first three of them such as; individualism, perseverance and heroism. Having a missionary background the book, which is a non-fiction work that tells about

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Mortenson's life, came out as a result of climbing K2. The writer of the book is David Oliver Relin, but the person who has lived all the events has been Mortenson himself, therefore Relin has told everything again as if Mortenson was writing the book. This study aims to investigate how a mountaineer turns into a hero and show that American values form the basis for Mortenson's attempt to build schools to promote peace for the area.

**Key Words:** American Values, Greg Mortenson, Individualism, Perseverance, Heroism

### Introduction

Thomas Jefferson, in the Declaration of Independence once said, "God, who gave us life gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their firm basis?"<sup>1</sup> However, this never leads people to act as they wish. Freedom, truly, means to Dick DeVos thus: "We can do what we want as long as we do what is right."<sup>2</sup> DeVos believes that: "all people have an intuitive sense, a consciousness, of right and wrong. It [is] an integral part of human nature".<sup>3</sup> But one thing needs much attention "[c]itizens of the United States esteem individual liberty. . . . Besides individual liberty, [the] people esteem the authority of law—law that is made in their name by their elected representatives. . . ." <sup>4</sup> In terms of individuality, perseverance and heroism Greg Mortenson's non-fiction travel book *Three Cups of Tea* (2007) is a good example. While using his determination Mortenson became a "monomythic"<sup>5</sup> superhero<sup>6</sup> a term

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Jefferson quoted in Dick DeVos, *Rediscovering American Values: The Foundations of our Freedom for the 21st Century*. (New York: Plume, 1997), p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Dick DeVos, *Rediscovering American Values: The Foundations of our Freedom for the 21st Century*. (New York: Plume, 1997), p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> Dick DeVos, *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>4</sup> Ralph H Gabriel, *American Values: Continuity and Change*. (Westport: Greenwood, 1974), p. 150.

<sup>5</sup> The term monomyth was coined by James Joyce.

<sup>6</sup> For further information see, for example, Lawrence and Jewett (2002).

Joseph Campbell used in his book *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. And from our point of view Mortenson's attempt is just what Emerson called "self-reliance".

As long as mobility is concerned the United States has always been a nation on the go. The flow of people to America has been an ongoing migration within the Nation. Therefore, Americans are a nation of immigrants and of people descended from immigrants. Not only within the nation but international mobilities are also very much alike. These mobilities especially after World War II included different organizations and programs to help rebuild the damage caused by the war. These programs have always been for the sake of the nation taking its values into account. Under these organizations, the aid campaign for the needy was the primary concern. Many of these nations could not produce enough food to feed their people. For example to help the needy, President Lyndon B. Johnson started the "Food for Peace program". The United States has supposed that it had a message for the world. The message, in other words the mission, was democracy.<sup>7</sup>

The Truman Doctrine and The Marshall Plan were other aid programs of the USA. The Truman Doctrine is the name for the Cold War policy of containment moves versus the Soviet Union and the growth of communism. The Marshall Plan of the United States was for rebuilding and forming a stronger economic foundation for the countries of Western Europe. There were 16 countries in the program to bring aid to including Turkey. "Whatever the weather we must move together" was the motto of the program. Turkey was in the program as a result of the competition between the USA and the USSR for world domination at a time when the USA was preoccupied with communism. The USA considered Turkey imperative because of her strategic

<sup>7</sup> For further information see, for example, Wood, Gabriel, and Biller (1975); Potter (1954); Luedtke (1987).

significance, while Turkey sought US assist not only because of the close proximity of the USSR but also through the yearning for economic assistance. This alliance was further strengthened with Turkey's entrance into NATO. Both these aid campaigns included Europe and Japan, and the new independent Asian and African nations, which came into existence as a result of World War II.<sup>8</sup>

The editor of *Making America* Luther S. Luedtke explains the continuation of mobilities thus: “After two hundred years the sources and composition of the “new race of men” have expanded far beyond Europe, but the process of constant uprooting, transplantation, adaptation, and renewal continues”<sup>9</sup> to a great extent. Wood, Gabriel and Biller, on the other hand, think that it is a task rather than a continuation:

Helping West Germany and Japan to set up new governments was only a part of the important tasks Americans undertook after World War II. No new government can succeed whose people cannot earn their living, nor look forward to better ways of life for their children and their children’s children. In Japan, as you have read, Americans did not stop at helping the Japanese people to create a new government. They also helped the Japanese to improve their farms and to re-build their businesses, factories, and cities.<sup>10</sup>

When it comes to the formation of personality or of character, more specifically American character, David M. Potter questions: “What pertinence can such topics as “mobility,” equality,” democracy,” . . .

<sup>8</sup> See, for example, Wood, Gabriel, and Biller (1975).

<sup>9</sup> Luther S Luedtke, “The Search for American Character”. Introduction. *Making America*. Ed. Luedtke. (Washington: US Inf. Agency, 1987. 5-35. Forum 2), p. 8.

<sup>10</sup> Leonard C Wood, Ralph H. Gabriel, and Edward L. Biller. *America: Its People and Values*. 2nd ed. (New York: HBJ, 1975), p. 743.

have in the kind of investigation that [the character] conducts?".<sup>11</sup> When the national character is concerned Potter considers that historians wary in their notion as to what constitutes national character:

to some writers it implies an absolute quality, persisting without change from one generation to another and manifesting itself universally in all the individuals who compose the national group. To others it is little more than a statistical tendency for the individuals in one country at a particular time to evince a given trait in higher proportion than the individuals of some other country.<sup>12</sup>

To frame a good national character the first concept of democracy or democratic faith according to Ralph H. Gabriel is thus:

the individual capable by virtue of his reason of making wise and right decisions; the individual free to make for better or worse his choices; free to think his own thoughts and to express publicly his matured convictions; free to worship with Ralph Waldo Emerson the Over-Soul that pervaded all nature, or with Herman Melville the unfathomable Mystery, or with Sarah Eleanor Royce the ancient God of Horeb.<sup>13</sup>

On behalf of the quest for national character Michael Kammen presents us a vast catalog some of which are: "the interplay of inheritance and environment; economic abundance; immigration and abundance in tandem; migration and mobility; . . . "the American dream": the desire for liberty, opportunity, and land; . . . freedom of

<sup>11</sup> David M Potter, *People of Plenty. Economic Abundance and the American Character*. (Chicago: T U of Chicago P, 1954), p. 190.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>13</sup> Ralph H Gabriel, *American Values: Continuity and Change*. (Westport: Greenwood, 1974), p. 28.

enterprise; the democratic faith or dogma; "the American conscience". . .<sup>14</sup> Therefore, the national character has lots of qualities and mostly it is expected that the national character does always good for the sake of himself as well as of his country. This national (American) character will make decisions. How can people know what is right and what is wrong? And how can these people make wise decisions? Dick DeVos believes that "[r]easoning lends greatly to [the] ability to do what is right, because to "do what is right," we have to know [what right is]."<sup>15</sup> Because "[o]ne of the things that make the modern world "modern" is the development of consciousness of the self"<sup>16</sup> although, ". . . the foundation of a people's character forms far earlier than their self-consciousness about it".<sup>17</sup>

Putting the consciousness of the self or self-consciousness aside, there are other compounds used by Ralph Waldo Emerson; self-trust, self-dependent, self-derived, self-existence, self-sufficing, self-relying, self-culture and self-reliance. Emerson among these compounds chose "Self-Reliance," for the title of his famous essay. He wrote: "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines. With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to do. He may as well concern himself with his shadow on the wall".<sup>18</sup> Emerson goes on to advise us not to worry about being inconsistent or being misunderstood.

"Speak what you think now in hard words and to-morrow speak what to-morrow thinks in hard words again, though it contradict everything you said to-day—"Ah, so you shall

<sup>14</sup> Michael Kammen, *People of Paradox: An Inquiry Concerning the Origins of American Civilization*. (New York: Oxford UP, 1972, p. 97-8.

<sup>15</sup> Dick DeVos, *Ibid.*, p. 82.

<sup>16</sup> Warren I Susman, *Culture as History, the Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century*. (New York: Pantheon, 1984), p. 271.

<sup>17</sup> Luther S Luedtke, *Ibid.* P. 11.

<sup>18</sup> Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Self-Reliance and Other Essays*. (New York: Dover, 1993. Rpt. of Essays by Ralph Waldo Emerson. 1841), p. 24.

be sure to be misunderstood.”—Is it so bad then to be misunderstood? Pythagoras was misunderstood, and Socrates, and Jesus, and Luther, and Copernicus, and Galileo, and Newton, and every pure and wise spirit that ever took flesh. To be great is to be misunderstood”.<sup>19</sup>

We have so far explained the mobilities of the USA, the national character and the self-reliance. In fact the social values of the American people come first in all activities. Ralph H. Gabriel defines the value as:

“. . . an ideal, a paradigm setting forth a desired and esteemed possible social reality. In essence, values are beliefs—beliefs that the idealized ways of living and acting are the best ways for the society. Because values are beliefs, they serve to inspire the members of the society to act in the approved ways. Because values are ideal pictures, they provide a means of judging the quality of actual behavior. In this role they become standards”.<sup>20</sup>

Gabriel writes some of the social values of the American people:

1. The dignity and importance of the individual person.
2. Freedom of thought and action of the individual person.
3. Freedom, and so far as possible equal opportunity, of the individual person to make of his life what he can in accordance with his abilities.
4. Regard for the group and for group activity as a means to the ends of developing individual personality . . .
5. Regard for the family as the basic social institution.
6. Regard for work leading to recognizable accomplishment—professional preferment, the accumulation of property —as a normal aspect of the good life.
7. Concern for the physical and mental health of the community.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 25.

<sup>20</sup> Ralph H Gabriel, Ibid. p.149.

8. Regard for voluntary public service by private individuals.

9. Acceptance of change as a normal aspect of social life . . . .<sup>21</sup>

These are, of course, not all the values of America that people share. Dick DeVos increases the number these values and counts twenty four. However, in terms of core values “[i]n the United States people share six core values to a very great extent—at least in the abstract. These core values are individualism, property, contracts and law, freedom, equality, and democracy”<sup>22</sup>

Greg Mortenson’s book *Three Cups of Tea* is also about mobility. And in terms of mobility the Mortensons all liked it very much, but mainly a kind of mobility that concerns mission. When his father came with the idea to move to Africa, his mother Jerene accepted the offer. In 1958 when Mortenson was only three months old, his parents went to teach in Tanzania to work as missionaries. “Institutions such as the family and the school continually transmit values to oncoming generations”.<sup>23</sup> Thus, he kept his American way of life, “but in one respect, he remained out of sorts with American life. “Greg has never been on time in his life,” his mother says. “Ever since he was a boy, Greg has always operated on African time”.<sup>24</sup>

While they were in Tanzania, his sister Christa caught severe meningitis and never fully got well. After Christa’s death, Mortenson felt very unhappy. He took a necklace from among his sister’s belongings. At that time Dan Mazur, an accomplished climber was planning an expedition to K2 and he needed an expedition medic. Mortenson accepted his offer because he needed a change. He climbed Mount Kilimanjaro at age eleven. This was a way by which Mortenson could

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p.188-9.

<sup>22</sup> Kenneth M Dolbeare and Linda J. Medcalf. *American Ideologies Today: Shaping the New Politics of the 1990s*. (2nd ed. New York: McGraw, 1993), p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> Ralph H Gabriel, Ibid. p.149.

<sup>24</sup> Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin. *Three Cups of Tea: One Man’s Mission to Promote Peace . . . One School at a Time*. (New York: Penguin, 2007), p. 39.



get himself back and to honor his sister, therefore he'd climb to the summit and he'd dedicate his climb to Christa's memory.<sup>25</sup>

In 1993, Greg Mortenson attempted to climb K2, the world's second highest mountain, in the Karakoram Range of northern Pakistan, as a way of honoring the memory of his sister Christa. After getting lost during his descent, he became weak and exhausted, and instead of arriving in Askole, where his porters were waiting for, he came across Korphe, a small village built in a canyon. He was welcomed and taken care by the chief of the village Haji Ali.

As a matter of fact this friendship started with a cup of tea. Haji Ali says "The first time you share tea with a Balti, you are a stranger. The second time you take tea, you are an honored guest. The third time you share a cup of tea you become family, and for our family, we are prepared to do anything, even die. . .".<sup>26</sup> Mortenson was brought up in a family that valued hard tasks, "like building a school and hospital in Tanzania".<sup>27</sup> When Haji Ali the leader in the village said that the village had no school and the Pakistani government didn't provide a teacher. Mortenson forgot his failure and placing the necklace flew away from his mind because there was a much more meaningful sign he could make in honor of his sister's memory. He put his hands on Haji Ali's shoulders: "I'm going to build you a school," he said, "I will build a school," Mortenson said. "I promise".<sup>28</sup>

But America did not keep her promise Sadhar Khan says "We fought with Americans, here in these mountains, against the Russians. And though we heard many promises, they never returned to help us when the dying was done." And faces Mortenson adds: "Look here, look at these hills." . . . "We must turn these stones into schools".<sup>29</sup> With the

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 45.  
<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 150.  
<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 9.  
<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 33.  
<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 330.

desire coming from the local people, and to repay the remote community for their hospitality Mortenson agreed to build a school for the people in the poorest region of one of the world's poorest countries. To achieve his goal Mortenson started a fund raising campaign. He wrote 580 letters to the rich people in America. There were encouraging and discouraging remarks but he just persevered. The first support came from his mother. Her students led a "Pennies for Pakistan" drive. Mortenson says. "And they did it with something that's basically worthless in our society—pennies. But overseas, pennies can move mountains".<sup>30</sup> When Jean Hoerni, the first and foremost donor and the founder of CAI, Central Asia Institute, told Mortenson "[t]ell me, if I give you fund for your school, you're not going to piss off to some beach somewhere in Mexico, smoke dope, or screw your girlfriend,, are you ?" Mortenson said "No sir, of course not. After such an enduring talk he got the money he needed for the school. The letter he got from him read "Don't screw up. Regards, J.H.", which put more burden on his shoulders.<sup>31</sup>

When he was in despair there were hopeful remarks such as: "Pull yourself together, Greg. Of course you've hit a few speed bumps," Lou Reichardt, one of Mortenson's heroes, said and added ". . . what you're trying to do is much more 'difficult than climbing K2".<sup>32</sup> Those words were very meaningful for Mortenson. "You represent the goodness and courage that America is all about. Get out, don't be afraid, and spread your message for peace. Make this your finest hour".<sup>33</sup> These kinds of messages and supports gave Mortenson more strength to keep his promise of building the school. There were also people against himself in the area. For example: "I have heard that an infidel has come

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 276.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. p. 55.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. p. 106.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. p. 280.

to poison Muslim children, boys as well as girls, with his teachings," Haji Mehdi shouted. "Allah forbids the education of girls. And I forbid the construction of this school." Actually Mehdi wanted a price for the school. "I demand twelve of your largest rams".<sup>34</sup>

Mortenson wants to let his readers notice that there is corruption in Pakistan and Afghanistan communities and America is always there to help with the ideal values in the past, even as he exhausted those values in the present.<sup>35</sup> He was against the British policy which was 'divide and conquer.' His policy was 'unite and conquer'. This unification, from Mortenson's point of view, was only possible through education. And with this education Mortenson was trying to fight against terrorism. Syed Abbas says Dr. Greg is—an infidel, but a noble man nonetheless, who dedicates his life to the education of children" (p. 191).<sup>36</sup> His mother's permanent devotion to education was an enormous inspiration for him. And in the book it is already told that education has changed the way of life for girls: "At first, when I began to attend school, many people in my village told me a girl has no business doing such a thing," Shakeela says. "They said you will end up working in the field, like all women, so why fill your head with the foolishness found in books?" (p. 207).<sup>37</sup> However, she stopped thinking about all these rumors and talks and she just focused on her studies.

Mortenson's main idea is to teach the girls of the community. Why girls? Because the "Nobel Prize winner Amartya Sen's idea that you can change a culture by giving its girls the tools to grow up educated so they can help themselves" (p. 234)<sup>38</sup> was the philosophy that Mortenson had and had it written in the book and followed. "Once you educate the

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. p. 152

<sup>35</sup> Richard Lehan, "Lecture and Values: The American Crusoe and the Idea of the West". *Making America*. Ed. Luther S. Luedtke. (Washington: US Inf. Agency, 1987. 177-190. Forum 2), p. 182.

<sup>36</sup> Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin, Ibid., p.191.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 234.

boys, they tend to leave the villages and go search for work in the cities," Mortenson explains. "But the girls stay home, become leaders in the community, and pass on what they've learned. If you really want to change a culture, to empower women, improve basic hygiene and health care, and fight high rates of infant mortality, the answer is to educate girls" (p. 209).<sup>39</sup>

When his father was in Tanzania he said "In ten years, the head of every department at the Kilimanjaro Christian Medical Center will be a Tanzanian. It's your country. It's your hospital," (p. 38)<sup>40</sup> and while Mortenson was in Pakistan he said "I don't want to teach Pakistan's children to think like Americans. . . . I just want them to have a balanced, non-extremist education" (p. 209).<sup>41</sup> But Mortenson was definitely sure that the language spoken in the area, the Balti, did lack a written form and it was an "antique form of Tibetan" (p. 21).<sup>42</sup> Therefore it was so easy for him to convey his message to the children in a written form as well as orally using English. Mortenson's schools were 'independent schools' and the number of these schools was always changing. Because Mortenson did not build one school he has had 131 schools built so far with the aid he collected.

Mortenson's educational philosophy included ". . . none of the "comparative cultures" classes then so popular in the West, nothing conservative religious leaders could point to as "anti-Islamic" in an effort to shut the schools down. But neither would they let the schools preach the fiery brand of fundamentalist Islam taught in many of the country's madrassas" (p. 209).<sup>43</sup> The main subjects to be thought were: "English grammar, formal Urdu, Arabic, physics, economics, and

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 38.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 21.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 209.

history” (p. 312).<sup>44</sup> According to Robert H. Walker the balance between the primacy of individualism and collective action is important even more important than either half of the equation in isolation (p. 378).<sup>45</sup>

Although Mortenson was alone to achieve his goal, he needed money to fulfill; therefore Mortenson asked his countrymen if they would consider doing him a favor. "I was feeling out on a limb in Korphe, operating all by myself," Mortenson says. "And I wanted these people to feel like it wasn't just me, that there were a bunch of other Americans back home concerned about helping them" (p. 123).<sup>46</sup> When the result was prosperous and the supporting remarks were encouraging Mortenson said "I felt like America had spoken. . . My tribe had spoken,".<sup>47</sup>

Because to Mortenson “America is big. Big and powerful”.<sup>48</sup> Nonetheless, his supporters included “police officers, army commanders, local politicians, and board members Jennifer Wilson and Julia Bergman, who'd spent months assembling a collection of culturally appropriate books to create a library for Korphe”.<sup>49</sup> This support led Mortenson to “act like a big boss”<sup>50</sup> because he was nothing more than “a free agent”.<sup>51</sup>

On the way to fulfill his dreams he had some failures to begin with, a summit not reached, secondly; a woman lost (his first girlfriend not Tara), and in third place; a bridge, and a school, not built. He was about to stop his task but he tried to persevere and went on delivering speeches and conferences. At these, in a way formal, meetings he used quotations from Mother Teresa. "What we are trying to do may be just a

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 312.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 378.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 302.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 217.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

drop in the ocean," ... "But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop".<sup>52</sup>

According to Mortenson the only way to defeat terrorism is to teach the people in those countries to respect and love Americans and vice versa. The key to it is education. One of his speeches starts thus:

"I don't do what I'm doing to fight terror," . . . "I do it because I care about kids. Fighting terror is maybe seventh or eighth on my list of priorities. But working over there, I've learned a few things. I've learned that terror doesn't happen because some group of people somewhere like Pakistan or Afghanistan simply decide to hate us. It happens because children aren't being offered a bright enough future that they have a reason to choose life over death".<sup>53</sup>

Another speech continues as thus: "I supported the war in Afghanistan," Mortenson said after he introduced himself. "I believed in it because I believed we were serious when we said we planned to rebuild Afghanistan. I'm here because I know that military victory is only the first phase of winning the war on terror and I'm afraid we're not willing to take the next steps." It finishes with a confession that ". . . [America has] launched 114 Tomahawk cruise missiles into Afghanistan so far. Now take the cost of one of those missiles tipped with a Raytheon guidance system, which I think is about \$840,000. For that much money, you could build dozens of schools that could provide tens of thousands of students with a balanced non-extremist education over the course of a generation. Which do you think will make us more secure?"<sup>54</sup>

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 227.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 292.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 294-5.

In *Three Cups of Tea* Jon Krakauer says: "If the Central Asia Institute were not doing what it's doing, people in that region would probably be chanting, 'We hate Americans!' Instead, they see us as agents of their salvation".<sup>55</sup> While introducing the 'agent' Mortenson Krakauer states: "What Greg has accomplished, with very little money, verges on the miraculous. If it were possible to clone fifty more Gregs, there is no doubt in my mind Islamic terrorism would quickly become a thing of the past. There's only one of him, alas".<sup>56</sup> Christiane Letinger, for example thinks "Mortenson will win the Nobel Peace Prize one day" and further asks "Tara not only allows it, but supports it, because she believes so strongly in Greg's mission. If that's not heroism I don't know what is".<sup>57</sup>

"The hero, therefore, is the man or woman who has been able to battle past his personal and local historical limitations to the generally valid, normally human forms. . . . The hero has died as a modern man; but as eternal man—perfected, unspecific, universal man—he has been reborn" (Campbell, p. 19-20).<sup>58</sup> Joseph Campbell writes about myths. In *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*, Campbell explains the different stages of the adventure of the hero. These stages are comprised of three parts: firstly, the Departure, secondly, the Initiation, and, lastly, the Return (p. 36).<sup>59</sup> For Mortenson's case it is the same. He departed; he had this initiative and came back. "A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a region of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won: the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man" (Campbell, p. 30).<sup>60</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 276.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 277.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 304.

<sup>58</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*. (2nd ed. New York: Princeton UP, 1968), p. 19-20.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 36.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

For example the hero (Mortenson) after some initiation and maturation ventured away from the everyday life into a kind of wonder. After a successful struggle against great forces there, the hero returned to the everyday world to bestow benefits on the people (both in Pakistan and America). "The composite hero of the monomyth is a personage of exceptional gifts. Frequently he is honored by his society, frequently unrecognized or disdained. He and/or the world in which he finds himself suffer from a symbolical deficiency" (Campbell, p. 37).<sup>61</sup>

Nevertheless, the American monomyth has a different plot. Lawrence and Jewett summarize it in this wise: "A community in a harmonious paradise is threatened by evil; normal institutions fail to contend with this threat; a selfless superhero emerges to renounce temptations and carry out the redemptive task; aided by fate, his decisive victory restores the community to its paradisiacal condition; the superhero then recedes into obscurity" (p. 6).<sup>62</sup>

With Mortenson's failure things started to change in Korphe and with his accomplishments and victorious allocations he became famous in his home land. For instance; first Greg Mortenson became Dr. Greg just because he carried some supplies in the expedition's medical kit, and he had his training as a 'trauma nurse'. Later he became an American Hero. For instance, Mary Bono one of the representatives says "Here's someone you need to meet. This is Greg Mortenson. He's a real American hero." . . . He represents the best of America (p. 281).<sup>63</sup>

Then newspaper headlines write about him "He Fights Terror with Books" this changes the life style of Mortenson. His story appeared in *Parade*. The editor-in-chief Lee Kravitz says: "I think it's because people

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>62</sup> John Shelton Lawrence and Robert Jewett. *The Myth of the American Superhero*. (Michigan: Eerdmans, 2002), p. 6.

<sup>63</sup> Greg Mortenson and David Oliver Relin, *Ibid.*, p. 281.



understand that he's a real American hero" (p. 301).<sup>64</sup> He was an infidel and later he became an "American son", his wife even under all those terrible conditions supported Mortenson: "I know you're with your second family and they'll keep you safe," . . . "Finish you[r] work and then come home to me, my love" (p. 254).<sup>65</sup> After Mortenson's kidnapping, and after 9/11, Tara didn't bother trying to talk Greg out of going back home because she knew he'd go no matter what she says. "So I've learned to live in what I call 'functional denial' while he's away" (p. 303).<sup>66</sup>

When he became known in the society Mortenson "rented an office and hired four employees to schedule his speaking engagements, produce a newsletter, maintain a website, and manage CAI's growing database of donors" (p. 303)<sup>67</sup> He increased the salaries of the people working for the schools and for CAI. His reliability in that part of the world depended mostly on his doings especially not being associated with the American government. There came out of a mountaineer, a hero, an individual character and a king, while he was on top of the truck: [he] felt like a king, riding high on [his] throne" (p. 74).<sup>68</sup>

Actually it was Hoerni from whom most of the help came for the schools and for the CAI. When Mortenson showed the first picture of the Korphe School, "Magnifique!" Hoerni said, 181 He did not want to die but while lying in bed, watching a video of Korphe's children sweetly singing, "Mary, Mary, had a, had a, little lamb, little lamb," in their imperfect English, he forgot thinking about his illness. "He told me, 'I love you like a son,' " Mortenson says. Therefore, he endowed the CAI with a million dollars before entering the hospital (p. 182).<sup>69</sup>

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 301.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 254.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 303.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., p. 303.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., p. 182.

Nathan Glazer talks about the double edge of American individualism, not taking the negative image of individualism (rugged individualism as it was called earlier) into account he says “positive image of individualism has emphasized the American as pioneer, moving out into wilderness and among savages, and making his way alone with rifle and axe” (p. 227-28)<sup>70</sup> as Mortenson does with schools and books.

### Conclusion

Basically, Greg Mortenson is not the writer of the book; the writer is David Oliver Relin. Mortenson is the one who has experienced all these things told in the book. He was most of the time alone; therefore he was the agent, the American Myth, the American spirit and the American hero. Even the book cover has been arranged according to the wishes of him. While the hardcover subtitle version of the book was "One Man's Mission to Fight Terrorism and Build Nations ... One School at a Time," and Viking Penguin editor Paul Slovak, who paid attention to the multiple requests, changed it to the present Penguin paperback subtitle, "One Man's Mission to Promote Peace . . . One School at a Time." Mortenson uses “School” because “[t]he word “school” in America covers every type of educational institution. Being at school may mean being at a kindergarten or at Harvard” (Brogan, p. 161).<sup>71</sup>

Therefore, we can consider that Mortenson carrying these values, having such a background, is another ‘hero’ that America has created recently. The whole story stated with just the dedication for his sister. After his promise he wrote letters to ask for money, he delivered speeches and had meetings with the authority. Above all he endeavored and persevered

<sup>70</sup> Nathan Galzer, “Individualism and Equality in the United States”. *Making America*. Ed. Luther S. Luedtke. (Washington: US Inf. Agency, 1987. 226-241. Forum 2), p. 227-8.

<sup>71</sup> Denis W.Brogan, *The American Character*. (New York: Random, 1954), p. 161.

and fulfilled his achievements. The result is now, he demands for a speech \$30,000. For the speaker guidelines see the web page below.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Visit the web page below to see 'Speaker Guidelines'  
<<http://www.threecupsoftea.com/wp-includes/documents/SpeakerGuidelines.pdf>>

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