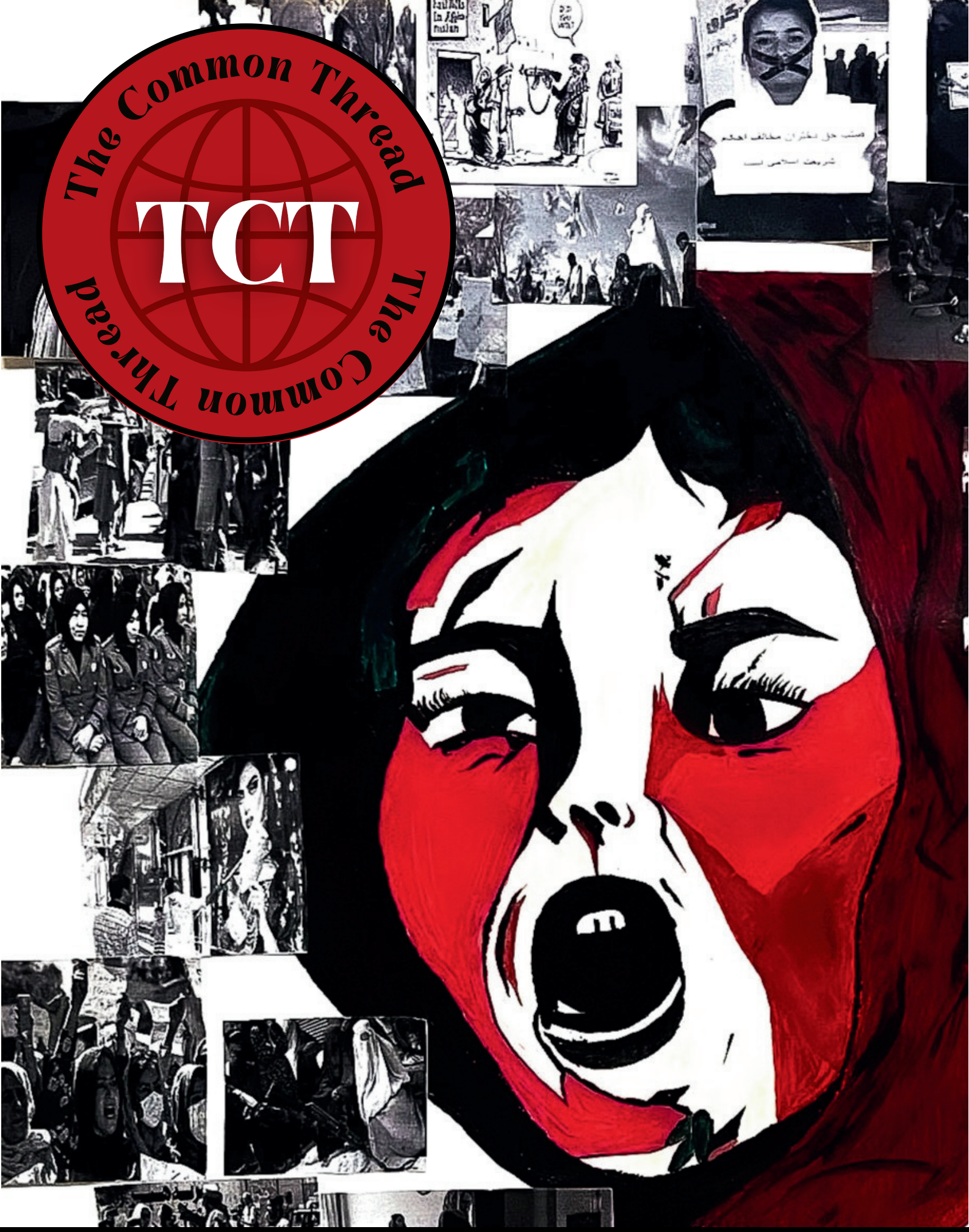



Issue 1.1 - Peace and Conflict Transformaion

Cover Art by:
Yulduz (Grade 11)

# To Move Mountains

To move a mountain, what does it take?
Some strength, grit, a heart,
A whole lot of love, the size of a lake.

You're friends and family, what's at stake
All the things you'd want to guard.
To move a mountain, what does it take?

Doing good for goodness's sake?
And to do that good, with love you part,
A whole lot of love, the size of a lake.

Say goodbye, despite the ache,
Only after all that, that's when it starts.
To move mountains, what does it take?

Your wits and a spirit that won't break,
Precision and accuracy, quick like a dart,
And a whole lot of love, the size of a lake.

When you move mountains, the earth will quake.
So get ready, hold steady, coarse your chart.
To move mountains, that's what it takes,
A whole lot of love, the size of a lake.

Julia (Grade 10)

# Living in War

I didn't have the opportunity to enjoy my last year at my home school, because I was forced to study online. My six-year-old brother spent his school days underground, in a shelter, instead of playing outside with his classmates. My dad was forced to work 16 hours a day in a toxic environment at the nuclear power plant to ensure the functionality of the plant and the safety of the citizens in case of an explosion. Imagine life three kilometres from a ticking bomb, with rockets and shells flying over it every day.

...

My grandmother lost her sister. My aunt lost her husband. They had children. They had dreams, plans, commitments. They were happy, angry, scared. They felt and yearned. They lived. And they no longer live. They do not exist. And will never exist again.

...

What happens in the minds of people who are about to find themselves in the power of the enemy? They are about to hear the sounds of shots, people's screams. They still live in their hometown, but they can lose it at any moment. They are the target. They are a target. And they know about it. Every Ukrainian is aware of this.

...

We are tired. We do not see the end. We sleep, wrapped in a blanket from fear and anxiety. We study in underground vaults, because dust and a small light bulb are more comfortable than classrooms shattered by shells. We work, go shopping, laugh, celebrate, and visit coffee shops. But we are covered in scars. Those who heard the plea will forever remain deaf. Those who saw destruction and fire will forever remain blind. But just as we can never get rid of grief and pain, murderers can never erase their crimes. Drops of congealed crimson blood will forever remain on the hands of those who exterminate us.

Daria (Grade 11)

# Echoes of Conflict on Youth

*[Ever so slightly paraphrased by Kru Amanda]*

**What is the most important thing you would want to tell people about your experiences as a Russian student here at UWC Thailand with the ongoing conflict?**
*So sometimes people talk about the Ukrainian and Russian stuff, and I don't usually mind anything about it because I'm not there and it doesn't affect me since I'm just here.*
*MYP students sometimes ask questions like "who do you think started it?", "why is this happening?" or "Do you know anything?".*
*I don't usually know anything more than what my dad tells me. He is really [invested] in this. It's really big for my dad. He reads the news every single day for so long. He wants to know what's happening and stuff like that. He tells me some things about it. And as I said, I don't mind. He's stressed about it, because it's happening in his country.*

**You grew up here, right?**
*Yes, I've been here for 9 years, and I'm 11. I'm in grade 6.*

**Have you seen any arguments about this at school?**
*No, not even a single time. I've never seen that before, since we don't have any other students who are Russian [in grade 6] and there's no other people that [have the other perspective]*

**What would you say to those people who are arguing in other grades or places at school?**
*I would say, why are you arguing? It's like, why are you arguing? It's OK. It's just like, it's not even you fighting, It's those people back there. It's not our fight, we're just here. We're learning in school and they're fighting.*

**Could you tell me a story that impacted you about someone from Russia in this conflict?**
*I want to tell you a story that I've been told about by my dad, how this all started. I'm not sure if that's true or not. Well, so Putin found out that they wanted to attack us or something. And then Putin attacked them before they attacked us because that would be worse for us if they attacked us first. We would lose much more soldiers. And that's one of the stories.*
*The other story is that I heard from another person that's neutral, that's what he heard and he told me, he said that the Russians started attacking for no reason because they wanted the land or something. I just have no idea why they would want the land because they have the biggest country in the world. Why would they do that?*

**How do you decide what to believe?**
*I'm just gonna listen here, listen to the stories. And as I said, it doesn't matter to me. I'm here, I'm safe and sound. I'm very good here. So I just remember it sometimes.*

***And so I'm just going to sit here and listen to the stories.***
Jenya (Grade 6)

# Optimism on the way to Peace

**Is there a specific moment during your career as a teacher across conflict that had a huge impact on you?**

*Actually, I would say my most powerful experiences observing conflict and humanity's attempts to pursue peace and end conflict have come throughout my career, not only in teaching but also in my other jobs and experiences.*

*I saw acts of xenophobic violence more recently in South Africa in 2015. I've seen how feelings of victimhood persist in societies that have experienced trauma. In Lebanon, I met these girls at a rooftop bar, and the next day they showed me around Beirut pointing out, almost as a badge of honor all the places that the Israelis have bombed. In my own country, Canada, francophone children are still taught to remember that they were defeated by the English at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759. More personally, my great-grandfather and grandfather experienced racism and some discrimination in Canada as Chinese immigrants.*

*Finally, and more recently, I've seen the power of communities and groups of people coming together to try to transcend their differences. This happens daily in South Africa, where the sons and daughters of the colonisers and victims work together to build the country. There was a palpable optimism among the young African students I taught in South Africa as there was this sense that the newborn free, non-colonized people could finally create their own destiny.*

**What types of challenges have you often encountered in your work? What methods did you use to overcome them?**

*Here at UWC, I find my GP students have usually already bought into the mission and idea of diversity as a force for peace. I have had some challenges with individuals in conflict not wanting to work together. We run a session on how to have challenging conversations at the beginning of the class in order to collectively build some consensus and expectations over how to deal with conflict and differing perspectives. We create a class agreement out of this discussion. It's helpful that it's built into the assessment. You have to be able to acknowledge different perspectives in order to do well on the course. We try to mix up the learning groups intentionally and give flexibility and freedom of choice around content students can explore so that there is a sharing of perspectives.*

**Do you believe working in this type of environment made you consider conflict in a different way? If so how?**

*I think working here has just added another layer of perspective to my prior life experience. I enjoy the optimism of young people. Although we may have our differences at this stage we are still learning and growing and flexible. And I enjoy being a part of that. There is a real opportunity there as Kurt Hahn identified. In my development, military, and the UN work, it can be quite demoralizing to see the UN work, it can be quite demoralizing to see the entrenchment of conflicts. But as I tell my students, just because things don't always work well, doesn't mean we shouldn't keep trying.*



***The only way forward is through engagement, attempts at cooperation and learning from each other. If we stop doing this, then progressing beyond conflict is hopeless.***

Kru Chris

# Saharan Songs

## نشيد المسيرة الخضراء
## (صوت الحسن ينادي بلسانك يا صحراء)

O seekers of the desert, its gates are open
Our Green March is a rewarding outcome
It holds security and peace, the glorious history of the homeland
Without war, without weapons, it's a miracle of the time
Rejoice, O land of my country, your land has become free

"Every 6th November, my family and I remember this March, and celebrate 350,000 Morrocans that showed up for the cause. It gives me a sense of unity and makes me feel proud to be Morrocan."
Student from Morocco

SCAN TO LISTEN

*The editorial team of TCT would like to highlight the tension present between these two songs and two perspectives. This tension and conflict exist for many reasons, but we would like to draw your attention to the knowledge passed down through families at school and how that shapes our views on historical events, pieces of art and even other human beings.*

SCAN TO LEARN MORE

A former Spanish colony, Western Sahara, was annexed by Morocco in 1975. Since then it has been the subject of a territorial dispute between Morocco and its indigenous Sahrawi people. A 16-year-long insurgency ended with a UN-brokered truce in 1991 and the promise of an independence referendum which has yet to take place. A buffer strip with landmines and fortifications stretches the length of the disputed territory and separates the Moroccan-administered western portion from the eastern area controlled by the Polisario Front - From the BBC

## How come the World allows

## فرقة الولي : هل يسمح العالم

SCAN TO LISTEN

هل يسمح العالم بتقتيل الاطفال
How come the World allows the killing of children?
هل يسمح العالم بتشريد الاحرار
How come the World allows the displacement of native peoples?
حرگونا بالنيران # قصفونا بالطيار
We were torched by their incendiary weapons and they strafed us
يخدمنا الانسان# بالات الدمار
This is how Man serves us; He serves us with weapons of destruction
و اعوان الرجعيين # و اعوان الاستعمار
The assistant of reactionaries and the assistant of imperialists.

"History is a bit of an intense topic, but I know about this march from my father's perspective since he practically lived through it. What is written and told about the March only represents the perspective of one side. My country found itself or rather was put in a complicated position since three countries were trying to claim us... Attached is a Sahrawi song that speaks to the struggles and aspirations of the Sahrawi people, particularly concerning the conflict before the Green March. It's a call for attention to their plight and a plea for international recognition and support."
Student from Western Sahara

# Peace and Conflict Transformation Day Reflection

**Could you please share your experience of Peace and Conflict Transformation Day at our school?**

*I think it was really eye-opening. The workshops gave me an opportunity to learn so much more about the civil war in Myanmar. It was similar to our global politics class but on a different level. We got to know about the personal experiences of people and the effect of war on their day-to-day lives. Especially, talking about something that is so close to where we live, but we still don't know much about it. It was quite powerful to see what some of the people happen to go through every day. I feel like personal experiences of people discover quite a lot of details about peace and conflict around us. And it was touching to hear all of the stories from our classmates during the assembly.*

Rhys (Grade 11)







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# The Common Thread

Uniting our individual worlds

"There is magic in collaborative community storytelling and that magic leads to more people feeling accepted and valued"

**If you want to contribute art, writing or ideas, please reach out to our team.**


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