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Spring 2015

Presentation on Maaza Mengiste's Beneath the Lion's Gaze Day 4

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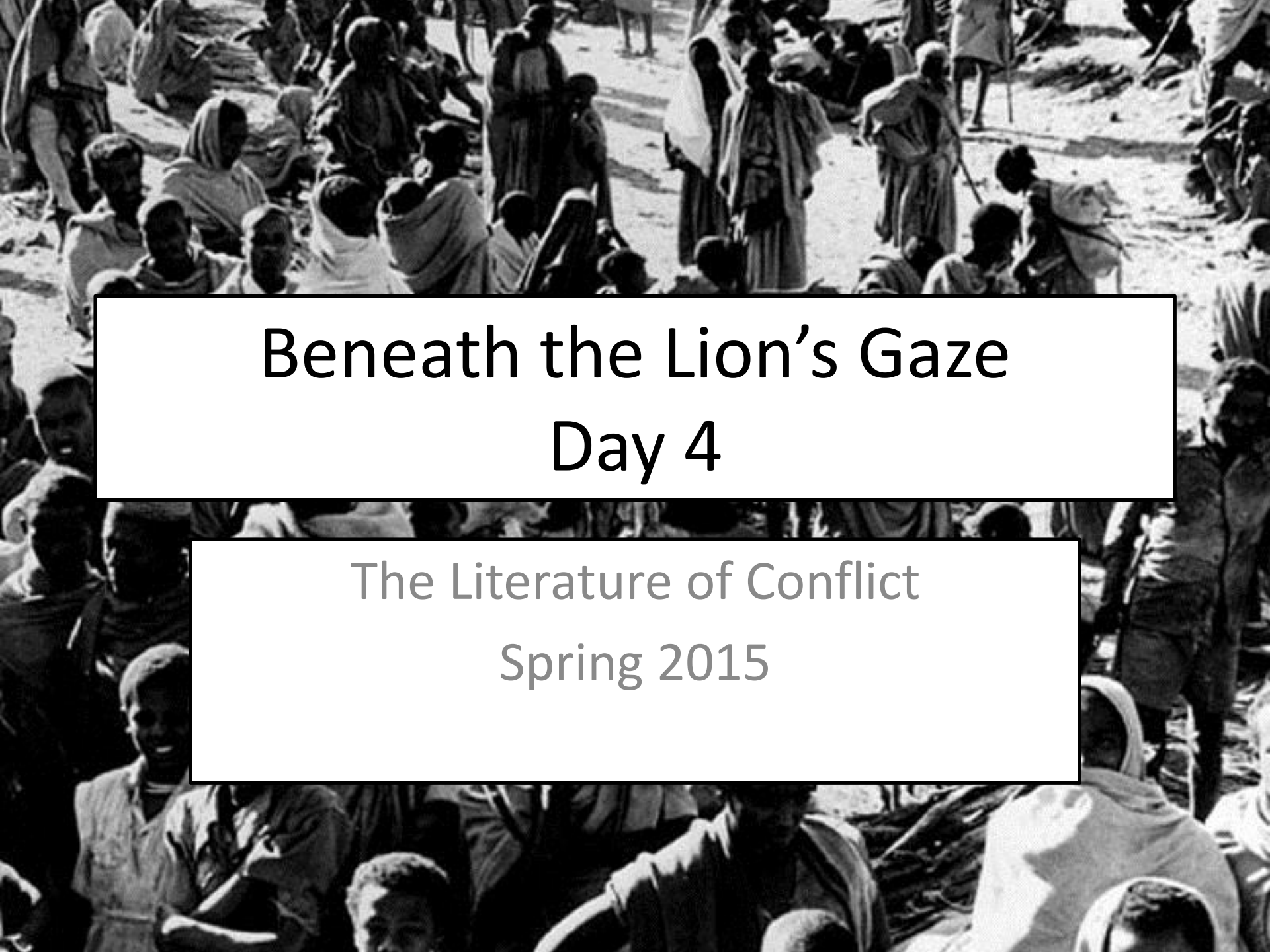


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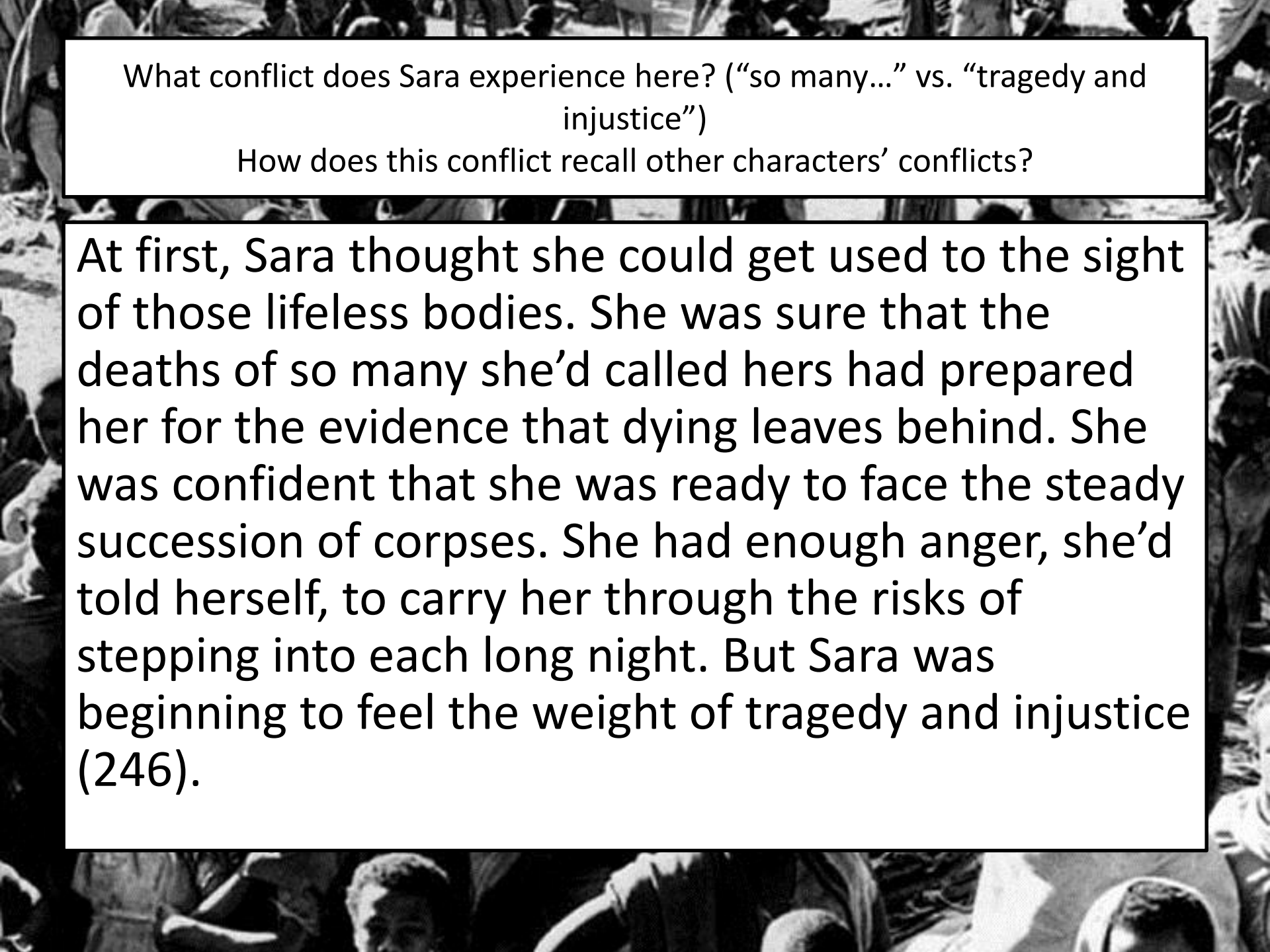
Beneath the Lion's Gaze Day 4

The Literature of Conflict
Spring 2015



Today

- Passage on Sara re: conflict family and larger problems nation
- Hailu and Dawit character arcs
- Overall themes of novel
- Overall, how does novel respond to core question of “how literature fosters understanding of conflict”



What conflict does Sara experience here? (“so many...” vs. “tragedy and injustice”)

How does this conflict recall other characters’ conflicts?

At first, Sara thought she could get used to the sight of those lifeless bodies. She was sure that the deaths of so many she’d called hers had prepared her for the evidence that dying leaves behind. She was confident that she was ready to face the steady succession of corpses. She had enough anger, she’d told herself, to carry her through the risks of stepping into each long night. But Sara was beginning to feel the weight of tragedy and injustice (246).

Red Terror (290)

3 February 1977

Fifty-eight top Derg officers were killed in an hour-long shootout.

Mengistu (Gudda) achieves full control Derg, implements Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party fought Derg

Death count from Derg intensifies during next two years



“And everywhere, everyone searched the heavens for signs that angels reigned, that they would listen and heed their calls for help” (290)

By this point in the novel, then

1. Overthrow of Selassie 12 September 1974
2. Imposition Derg rule and resistance by Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Party and others 1974-1977
3. Renewed crackdown by Derg (Red Terror)

This is the history that the novel covers: we want to ask how the novel does its work to help readers imagine both the conflict and living through it.



Throughout novel

Right side of class: list what happens to Hailu in order

Right side of class: list what happens to Dawit in order

How does novel use family as a frame or lens through which to view conflict?

Larger Conflict Ethiopia—Derg vs. rebels, circumstances of Red Terror, deprivation

Family in Compound
Hailu, children
+ Mickey
+ Sofia and family

