In the previous seminar, ethnographic inquiry was presented as an excursion through a conceptual maze rather than as a walk in a vaulted gallery of images (you can think for instance of Kurosawa's film *Rashomon*, Calvino's *Città Invisibili*, or Lewis' *Alice in the Wonderland*). Ethnographic inquiry begins where conceptual unity ends, and a conceptual unification of practices is not its goal. The particularity of ethnographic inquiry in anthropology is contextualization in the terms of those whose practices one seeks to understand. Historically, however, the ancestor of ethnography is the "philosophical travel" and "planetary consciousness" that emerged in the second half of the 18th century, when cultural difference was thought of as temporal distance: "universal history" sought to unify the world as if it were a watermelon on a silver platter and the Other was by definition "exotic" in the sense of being outside the history of the traveller. The ways of seeing, describing, and thinking about "difference" predicated on this kind of travel related imagination has shaped ethnography in the first half of the 20th century as a science of "primitive" cultures or "savage" societies (e.g. Durkheim and Mauss *Primitive Classification,* 1903; Malinowski's *Argonauts of the* Western *Pacific,* 1922). In the aftermath of decolonization it was contested by a "critical anthropology" (Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other*, "Ethnography and Inter-subjectivity"; Marie Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*) that clustered around notions such as "coeval" and "inter-subjective", and more recently around notions of the "contemporary" and "correspondences". The two texts under study (Das, Navaro-Yashin)were examples of what ethnography can be in practice with reference to issues students from other disciplines would be familiar with (state, law, power, violence, affect). These texts showed us that ethnography is not about propositional statements about the world, or linear narrative, but an inquiry into the messiness of everyday life worlds, and a style of writing committed to remain as close as possible to the context and circumstances described and that explicitly takes on board the problem of focus and context as part and parcel of knowing through an engagement with the practices that make and unmake social worlds. In our discussion we have observed that what happens in the "margins of the state" is not in fact qualitatively different from what happens at the "centre": patriotic feelings for instance can be thought of as on a continuum with the terror of the immigrant who does not speak the language of the state, or with the sarcasm of the inhabitants of a ghost republic. The ethnographer's description of a riot is not qualitatively different from the historian's description of a battle, and both will draw on literary genres they are personally familiar with in order to organise their "scenes" or "images". Further, we have seen that one of the limitations of these texts was their lack of a historical contextualisation of their examples, which created "gaps" in their arguments (e.g. the agency of cultural objects, the rhetoric of panic as instrument of control).

This seminar is about two examples of ethnographic inquiries into memory as narration rather than as cognition, as social practice rather than as a faculty of the mind or of the brain. Ethnographic studies of memory consider memory practices in the present as the ways in which others relate to their past. As the two texts under study suggest, these practices however can be ephemeral, dispersed, or inarticulate. On the basis of these two examples, we will explore questions such as: What causes us to remember/forget? In what ways do we remember/forget? How are figurative and literal meanings, absence and presence, silence and voice woven (or disjoined) in how we remember/forget? Can silence or loss be represented, and therefore iterated? We will further ask ourselves about the usefulness of the categories that are usually used to describe and classify "kinds" of memory: semantic, imagistic, collective, personal, public, political, closed, open, good, bad, accurate, distorted, constructed, documented... Can memory be "good" vs. "bad", "private" vs. "public", "semantic" vs. "imagistic"? When are we understanding others, and when are we reducing others to the categories of our own familiar worlds? How much "consistency" should I force onto the ways in which you link past and present, if your remembering does not meet the needs for order in terms of my grammatical categories (e.g. the kind of verbs that connect or separate the categories of the living and of the dead)? What is the difference between "generalization" and "de-contextualization" (e.g. my generalizations could be your de-contextualization)?