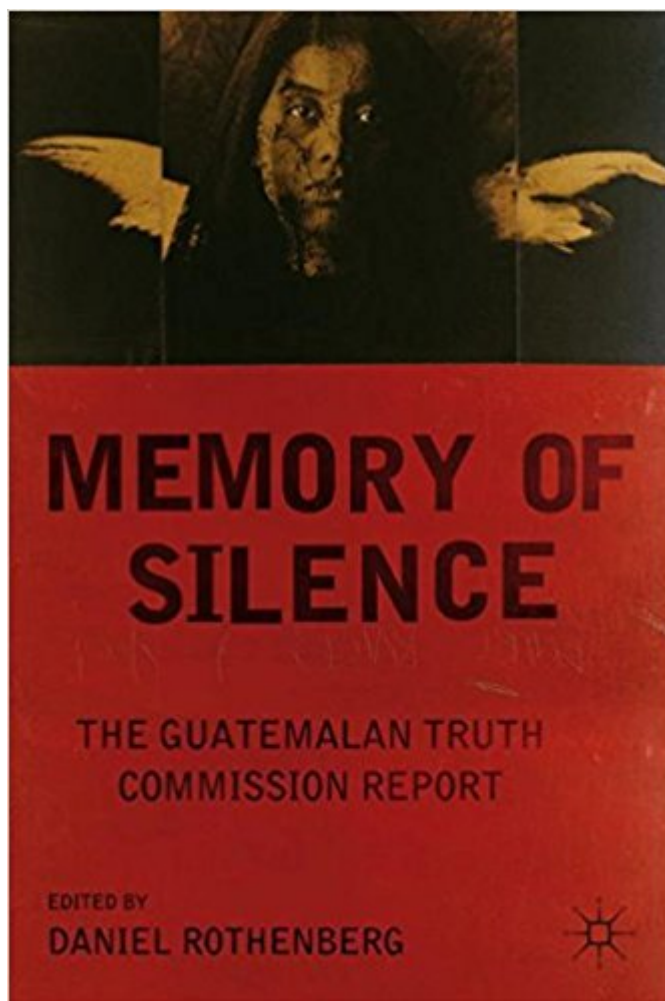


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# Memory Of Silence: The Guatemalan Truth Commission Report



## Synopsis

This edited, one-volume version presents the first ever English translation of the report of The Guatemalan Commission for Historical Clarification (CEH), a truth commission that exposed the details of 'la violencia,' during which hundreds of massacres were committed in a scorched-earth campaign that displaced approximately one million people.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This book is a must-read for anyone concerned with human rights in the Americas and the world. It presents the first accessible version of the important work of the Guatemalan truth commission and its courageous documentation of one of the most important cases of genocide, systematic torture, and institutionalized terror justified in the name of national security. Memory of Silence stands as a powerful reminder that we must engage honestly with past atrocities to make sense of the present, to prevent future violations and to better understand ourselves and our world." Juan E. Mendez, United Nations Special Rapporteur on Torture "This book represents an extraordinary accomplishment. For the first time, it makes accessible the impressive findings of Guatemala's Truth Commission to readers in both English and Spanish, providing a model of dissemination that should be followed by all future efforts of historical clarification. Permeating this entire endeavor is the commitment to fairly explain state terror, assess responsibility for genocide, and give voice to the victims of civil war. It is a vital resource for anyone trying to understand the dynamics of contemporary civil wars, the responsibility of the United States, and the courageous role of the human rights community in breaking the silence surrounding the atrocities of the past in order to

improve the governance of the future." Terry Lynn Karl, Gildred Professor of Latin American Studies and professor of Political Science, Stanford University, and former advisor to chief U.N. peace negotiators in El Salvador and Guatemala "Of all the Latin American 'dirty wars' of the late Cold War, none was more brutal than the scorched earth counter-insurgency in Guatemala. At least two hundred thousand people died, many in massacres that in their relentless savagery beggar the imagination. The story is both complex and terribly simple: For decades in this small poor country, 'agents of the state committed acts of genocide against the Mayan people.' Memory of Silence, from which those words are drawn, is the definitive, wrenching account of one of Latin America's bloodiest conflicts. Anyone concerned with human rights and war and the dark history of our time should read it." Mark Danner, author, *The Massacre at El Mozote and Stripping Bare the Body* "This is history at its most immediate. It will make readers think deeply especially those in the United States, which helped set off the Guatemalan cataclysm." Stephen Kinzer, author, *Bitter Fruit: The Story of the American Coup in Guatemala and Overthrow: America's Century of Regime Change from Hawaii to Iraq* "The extraordinary work of the Guatemalan truth commission resulted in one of the strongest reports of any truth commission to date. Open to any page: the accounts found here are excruciating to read, but impossible to turn away from, even if you wish to. The victim testimonies are searing; the commission's conclusions, of facts and responsibility, are brutally clear and often breathtaking. The full twelve-volume report is testament to the commission's close research, but in practical terms has been little accessible. Daniel Rothenberg deserves much thanks for offering this one-volume summary, published in both Spanish and English, including a useful essay that reviews the response to the report and relevant developments since its publication. It is powerful, and essential, reading." Priscilla Hayner, author, *Unspeakable Truths: Transitional Justice and the Challenge of Truth Commissions* "Memory of Silence is one of the most important documents about genocide during our time. In bringing to light the various facets of the Guatemalan government's eliminationist assault upon indigenous Maya, it highlights the political nature of genocide, the willfulness and cruelty of those implementing the destructive policies, and the individual human suffering that should never be lost sight of because of the vastness of the horror. Memory of Silence does a service for truth, historical understanding, and political and moral accountability. It is a searing and enlightening document that should be read by everyone." Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, author of *Worse Than War: Genocide, Eliminationism, and the Ongoing Assault on Humanity* and *Hitler's Willing Executioners: Ordinary Germans and the Holocaust*

DANIEL ROTHENBERG currently a Senior Fellow at the Orville H. Schell, Jr. Center for

International Human Rights at Yale Law School and a Fellow in the Agrarian Studies Program at Yale University, USA.

Very sad stories, but reality of the things that took place. As a missionary in Guatemala it helps to be able to understand what the people faced and the grief that the Mayan community is living with to this day. Love it and recommend for any type of cultural history class and missionaries working with the Mayan people.

This book describe how this was allowed to happen in Guatemala with the USA help, how the worst of the worst in humans.

This is a splendid although necessarily depressing entryway into Guatemala's violent history of the last 50 years or so. The author introduces the Guatemalan Truth Commission well and the additional material does the job. Strongly recommended for anyone interested in Guatemala or for classroom use.

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