Loss, Memory, and Asian childhood in Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and lê thi diem thúy's *The Gangster We Are All Looking For*

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Joy Kogawa's *Obasan* and lê thi diem thúy's *The Gangster We Are All Looking For* portray silence as a solution to facing family tragedy and experiencing trauma. These Asian American/ Canadian texts present a prevalent dilemma in Asian immigration history between choosing to know (knowledge) or to be kept in ignorance: knowing the ancestral origin, knowing the secrets of one's parental past, the unspeakable, or the traumatic death.

The debate lies in whether children should be informed of the historical truth or traumatic family history with the price of bearing national, racial burdens or be kept unaware of what happened. How does knowing or unknowing affect one's development of self-identity?

Should memories be buried, repressed, and contained as silence, or should it be unveiled and articulated? And in what forms of articulations? How might historical, familial wounds and losses be healed?

The paper examines how silence plays within each family when tackling trauma and death and the process of healing and forms of articulation and expressions.

The paper argues that silence might be a strategy and defensive tactic for people to survive traumatic losses; however, the unexpressed sorrow and loss eventually need a ritual to heal and a form of expression for people to resolve the characters' internal conflicts forthe incomprehensibility of trauma and thus reconcile with the fragmented past.