

HYBRID SUBJECT NEGOTIATION OVER CONFLICTING EASTERN AND WESTERN CULTURAL VALUES IN *THE FAREWELL* (2019)

Silvia Valentina Putri¹, Hujuala Rika Ayu²

¹²English Literature Study Program, Faculty Languages and Arts, Universitas Negeri
Surabaya

silvia.22085@mhs.unesa.ac.id¹; hujualarika@unesa.ac.id²

Abstract

Colonialism has created a binary identity division between "West" and "East," which has given rise to a dynamic conflict between Western and Eastern cultural values. *The Farewell* (2019) reveals the conflict between the West with its individualism and the East with its collectivism. This study uses a textual analysis method to examine the identity negotiations of the main characters in the conflict of cultural values. As a tool for analytical reading, this study employs Homi K. Bhabha's hybridity based on postcolonial theory. In the film, hybridity is reflected in Billi, a Chinese-American woman who lives between two cultural values. Billi's identity is not only formed by one culture; Billi can be more American in one context and more Chinese in another. As a hybrid subject, Billi will continuously reshape her identity. In dealing with the situation, Billi makes compromises. In Billi's case, the negotiation process isn't simply about finding a final, one-sided answer. Rather, it's about the ongoing process of identity formation.

Keywords: Collectivism; Homi K. Bhabha; Hybridity; Individualism;

Introduction

Colonialism has an impact on large-scale population migration networks in various parts of the world, creating diaspora groups as associations outside their homeland. Migration has influenced the spreading process of diaspora groups from various races and cultures across the world. That makes diaspora's identities no longer the same and formed from the clash of conflicting cultures. The interaction between the values of the new culture and the culture of origin creates a complex and unstable identity. As explained by (Bhandari, 2024), the identities of immigrants and diaspora can no longer be understood in black-and-white terms, for example, simply as "people from the country of origin" or "people from the country of destination." Immigrants and diaspora live in a "third space," a space of interaction between two cultures, so their identities do not belong entirely to a single culture. The identities of diaspora groups

merge with each other due to the influence of history, social dynamics, and cultural diversity. This proves Hall's (1997) argument that identity is not fixed, but rather fluid and dynamic, evolving as an individual's process of becoming.

In the context of Indonesian diaspora there is *#KaburAjaDulu* phenomenon, a real-life event, that demonstrates the existence of two conflicting values over individual decisions of moving from one's homeland to another country. This phenomenon, which became popular in early 2025 among Gen Z and millennials, has created a sharp clash between individuals' desire to leave their country to determine their own future and the demands of loyalty to the country. The tension *#KaburAjaDulu* phenomenon lies in nationalism and the opposite attitude, which is often labeled as a traitor. This nationalism is often interpreted as a form of loyalty to stay and fight for the country regardless of the country's condition. While the subject of

the diaspora is often labeled as a form of deviation from nationalism. In the #KaburAjaDulu trend, the decision to finally leave or stay is often faced with conflicting moral judgments in an ambiguous position between being unnationalistic or an individual's realistic choice. As stated by Dama et al. (2025) "The labels 'Traitor' or 'Patriot' in this context are irrelevant and lack strong justification." This black-and-white binary identity assessment of traitors or patriots is unfair and baseless as if identity is something fixed. Whereas the moral decisions of diaspora subjects are not fixed but negotiable and will continue to change.

Far before the #KaburAjaDulu phenomenon, colonialism has created a binary identity division between "West" and "East," which has given rise to a dynamic conflict between Western and Eastern cultural values. Film often serves as a medium for conveying issues within the dynamics of social life. Lulu Wang's *The Farewell* (2019) is one of the films that explores the clash of cultural values within a diaspora family as a postcolonial subject. Lulu Wang is a Chinese-born, American-raised director and writer, best known for the film *The Farewell* (2019) and the miniseries *Expats* (2024). *The Farewell* (2019) itself won Best Film at the *Independent Spirit Award*. Moreover, this film was also named as one of the ten best films by the *American Film Institute* in 2019. Furthermore, *The Farewell* (2019) is actually an adaptation from the story of Wang's own grandmother who is also sick and her dynamic with her family.

The Farewell (2019) tells the story of Billi, a first-generation Chinese immigrant woman who settled in New York, America. The main story tells how Billi's family decides to hide the doctor's diagnosis of terminal lung cancer suffered by Nai Nai, Billi's grandmother. Billi's family then plans her cousin's wedding as an excuse to visit Nai Nai because the doctor estimates that she only has three months left to live. Billi's family's decision not to tell Nai Nai about her illness has given rise to a conflict between Billi and her family related to the

contradictory values of the West and the East. Billi, with her Western influences, wants to tell Nai Nai about her grandmother's illness because it is her right to know about it. Although Billi's parents had moved to America long ago and the rest of her family remained collectively bound to keep Billi's grandmother's condition a secret to maintain Chinese tradition. Billi, who is separated by generations and place gap, felt her logic was at odds with her family's values.

The clash presented in this film reveals the conflict between the West with its individualism and the East with its collectivism. Eastern values are heavily influenced by collectivism, which emphasizes social obligations and communal harmony for the benefit of the group. Western values, on the other hand, have historically been more closely tied to individualism, which means that interests are separated from the group, emphasizing individual independence and autonomy (Her & Joo, 2018). *The Farewell* (2019) was chosen as the object of study because it presents an unresolved conflict between Eastern and Western values, leaving the main character without a moral resolution, as either moral choice is not completely right or wrong. The failure to achieve a resolution to the moral decision is the attraction of choosing this film as the object of this study to analyze how the negotiation process occurs in the main character.

The clash between Western and Eastern values which occur in the film is closely relevant with Bhabha's postcolonial elements of hybridity. In the colonial context, Homi K. Bhabha (1994) defines hybridity as a new meaning and identity formed from the encounter between the colonizer and the colonized culture. Bhabha's Hybridity rejects the idea of stable identity and binary opposition, showing that the new identity of hybridity is fluid and productive, which makes the postcolonial subject always renegotiate his identity because of the position "in-between" and exposure to various cultures encountered. In Bhabha's framework, Hybridity "is not a third term that resolves

the tension between two cultures..." which defines that the concept does not only mean cultural mixing, but also a continuous "productive" process of new cultural meanings formation. Bhabha's opinion is supported by Huddart (2006) who states that cultures are never separate or stand alone. but "they are always in contact with one another, and this contact leads to cultural mixed-ness" which is complex and dynamic.

Bhabha further proposed what is called the "Third Space," a space where the negotiation process occurs, because hybridity is not a middle ground that can unite two cultures harmoniously. In the "Third Space," two different cultures meet and influence each other, where meaning and identity will never remain the same. In this space, binary perspectives such as East-West or colonizer-colonized will be challenged by the shift, reinterpretation, and formation of new meanings and identities from hybridity. No culture is completely dominant or inferior in this space. The collective experience of various cultural values and identities will be continuously reconstructed and negotiated and not simply accepted passively.

The experience of hybridity in the film *The Farewell* (2019) is represented by its main character, Billi. Billi is a second-generation diaspora subject who is exposed to two different cultures. During her return to China, Billi felt an emotional distance between herself and her family. Although she grew up in America, Billi is still Chinese due to her family's ancestral ties. However, even though Billi is a subject formed from two perspectives, her family still views her differently. As a hybrid subject, Billi cannot position herself solely in one position, Billi cannot be positioned as a completely Chinese subject because her perspective has been mixed with values from her life experience in America, conversely, Billi cannot be positioned as a completely American subject because of the lingering attachment to Chinese family

values. Therefore, to adapt to both cultural

values, Billi must engage in ongoing negotiation. Billi is in the "Third Space", her identity is formed through a productive process where negotiations between the values of the two cultural systems will continue.

Buddha of

Discussions regarding the theory of hybridity have been widely discussed in previous studies in various literary works. As in the study conducted by Nurcahyani & Kamil (2021) entitled "Identity Negotiation of Chinese American's Twoness in Lisa Ko's *The Leavers: Postcolonial Approach*," the researchers discuss how the main character's "in-between" identity, which is between Chinese and American, is negotiated. This study applies Homi K. Bhabha's postcolonial theories of mimicry, hybridity, and ambivalence, orientalism from Edward Said, and the concept of twoness from Du Bois to analyze the data. Through a descriptive analysis method, this study shows that the main character in the book faces the pressure of assimilation from American culture that overlaps with Chinese culture, and is trapped in a position between the two. Based on the result of the study, due to social, cultural, and racial pressures from two different cultures, the main character begins to mimic the dominant culture with the purpose of getting acceptance from the community. But due to the main character's hybrid identity and the clash of different values between both cultures the main character then faces ambivalence which then creates an identity crisis, inner conflict, and alienation within him. The conclusion of this study shows identities that exist between two cultures in the book are not formed stably; that identity is dynamic and complex, and will continue to be negotiated as the main character passes through the process of migration, experiences of discrimination, and power relations dynamics in white domination communities.

Meanwhile, another study by Azeem, Sangi, & Ansari (2020) in an article entitled "Critical Analysis of Identity Crisis in Hanif Kuriyesi's Novel *"The*

Suburbia"" discusses the dilemma of identity crisis experienced by immigrant characters as the impact of colonial power during colonization. By using textual analysis research methods, close reading, and the postcolonial theory approach of hybridity, ambivalence, mimicry, and assimilation from Homi K. Bhabha, this study shows that the experience of racism, discrimination, and social pressure experienced by the main character Karim Amir as a child of immigrants has made him experience identity conflict between two cultures, India and England. Karim and other immigrants aspire to emulate the cultural values, ethics, and language of the English depicted in the novel as part of their assimilation efforts. However, these characters simultaneously feel ambivalence toward the culture they are adapting to. In the end, Karim and other immigrant characters can only be described as subjects struggling to find their identity in a British society that does not fully accept them. It can be concluded that the immigrant characters in the novel experience the impact of colonialism which has caused social inequality and created a complex cultural and social space.

In another article Babaei & Pourjafari (2022) entitled "Hybridity, Mimicry, and Ambivalence: Re-Evaluation of Colonial Identity in Nadine Gordimer's Selected Short Stories," analyze the interaction between the colonizer and the colonized that results in the different identities formation. The results of the study show that the mimicry carried out by the characters in the short stories never makes them completely the same as the colonizer. The imperfect imitation of the colonizers has created tension and identity confusion experienced by the colonized. The colonized subjects want to imitate and be the same as the colonizers in power, but on the other hand, they also want to have their own identity. Those conflicting desire creates ambivalence from the hybrid situation they experience. The conclusion of this study shows that characters who are able to form a new and stable identity are characters who are able to accept and successfully overcome these conditions.

while characters who feel they do not have a clear identity and experience an identity crisis are characters who fail to overcome these conditions.

Another article entitled "Bhabha's Ambivalence and Hybridity in Andrea Levy's *The Long Song*" by Kaur (2018) discusses the identity formation of the main character, July, in the Jamaica postcolonial within history of slavery context that places her in the complex dynamic of colonial power relations. Homi K. Bhabha's postcolonial approach and descriptive qualitative methods were used as the research methods are used in this study to show that July represents a postcolonial subject who is in a place of ambiguous power relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. As a survival strategy, July performs a form of obedience to colonial authority, but simultaneously she also secretly carries out forms of symbolic resistance, indicating an ambivalence in July's attitude. Meanwhile, July's position between two African and American cultures as a Mulatto shows that she is a hybrid subject who does not have a single identity and whose identity is fluid. This study concludes that the colonial legacy that occurred in the past has a strong relationship with the subject who is still bound by that experience even in a more modern postcolonial context.

Another article entitled "The Notions of Mimicry and Ambivalence in Rubai el-Madhoun's *Fractured Destinies*" by Ferhood & Janoory (2020) discusses the cultural issues that occur in a Palestinian girl named Ivana Ardakian who lives under Western cultural domination. Using qualitative methods, this study analyzes how Ivana behaves and responds to the dominance of Western culture when viewed within the theoretical framework of mimicry and ambivalence by Homi K. Bhabha. The results of the study show that Ivana attempts to imitate the lifestyle and cultural values of the colonizers. The process of mimicry experienced by Ivana has caused a sense of loss toward her original identity and caused a conflict that fragmented her identity. Oppressed by her "in-between"

identity status, within ambivalence Ivana feels she can never fully become part of Western culture, and at the same time she also can never completely accept the culture of the colonizers. Ivana is a hybrid subject she is not fully part of her native culture and not fully part of her Western identity. This study concludes that hybrid identity can create tension due to imperfect imitation and ambivalence because the boundaries between colonizer and colonized group can become blurred.

Several previous studies have applied Bhabha's theories on hybridity, ambivalence, and even mimicry to analyze various postcolonial literary works. Most previous research tends to focus on the representation of identity in classical colonial contexts and diasporic experiences which emphasize the conflict between the home culture and the dominant culture. Although Bhabha's theory has been widely applied, previous studies generally highlight how characters adapt their identities, how identity crises appear, and how hybrid identities are formed through this process. However, there is little research exploring how hybrid identity is negotiated personally and emotionally in the context of modern diaspora families. To fill this gap, this study will use Homi K. Bhabha's postcolonial concept to understand how Billi as a hybrid subject negotiates her identity. This study argues that Billi's position as a hybrid subject places her in a process of negotiation between Eastern and Western values that simultaneously challenges the binary categorization of cultural identity.

The Farewell (2019) reflects that building harmony in conflict can be navigated through ambiguity even if it does not lead to absolute resolution. Not all dilemmas need to produce a one-sided resolution, staying in between can be a strategy to maintain the validity of each side's values without forcing significant change on the other. Billi's hybrid position has placed her between two cultures, Billi is not forced to completely side with one

culture only, in Bhabha's discourse Billi can

live amidst the tension that exists between the two opposing cultures. Bhabha's concept of hybridity shows that Billi's character as a hybrid subject who does not have a fixed identity will continue to experience ongoing negotiations, and the clash of Western and Eastern cultural values that she experiences will not reach a final resolution. The concept of hybridity that appears in Billi's experience challenges the existence of Western and Eastern binary oppositions, which shows that cultural identity is something complex and cannot be placed in one certain position.

METHODS

This study applies textual analysis to examine the conflict of cultural values and the negotiation of the main character's identity. The purpose of this method is to describe in detail and in depth the meaning and interpretation behind phenomena such as themes, characters, or social representations present in the film. The primary data in this study comes from the film's script of *The Farewell* (2019) that is written by Lulu Wang. Furthermore, this study will also include narration and stage direction in the script of the film, for example in character expressions, storylines, and actions of the characters, only if the elements can support the analysis. As a tool for analytical reading, this study uses the concepts of hybridity based on Homi K. Bhabha's postcolonial theory. The representation of the clash between Eastern and Western cultural values, dialogue among characters, and word choices involving the character Billi which influenced her behavior in the film's script of *The Farewell* (2019) are analyzed to identify how Billi negotiates herself as a hybrid subject. The results of the analysis are then arranged thematically to draw conclusions based on the research arguments.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Billi's experience as a diasporic subject living between American and Chinese cultural values in *The Farewell* (2019) will be analyzed in this study. Billi's identity, which was influenced by Chinese and American cultural values, became an important concept in compiling an analysis to understand how Billi's identity was constructed and negotiated throughout the film. Dialogue, narration or stage directions, and relevant word choices in the script of *The Farewell* (2019) were analyzed using Homi K. Bhabha's theory, especially hybridity to answer the research question of how Billi as a hybrid subject negotiates her identity. In addition, the analysis is also compiled to draw conclusions based on the research argument. For further analysis regarding Billi negotiation as a hybrid subject is as follows:

Billi Negotiation as Hybrid Subject

The experience of hybridity in the film *The Farewell* (2019) is represented by its main character, Billi. Billi is a second-generation diasporic subject exposed to two different cultures. Billi is a subject who lives at the intersection of two cultures, the one value of respecting individual rights in the American culture she grows up with and the attachment to family collectivism in Chinese cultural values. Billi cannot be positioned as a fully Chinese subject because her perspective has blended with values of her life experience in America. Conversely, Billi cannot be positioned as a fully American subject because she remains bound by Chinese family values. The values of two cultural systems that Billi encounters undergo a productive process in the ongoing negotiations that occur in the "third space." For further detail, this data regarding Billi's negotiations as a hybrid subject in the film are explained below.

Billi's family's collective decision to conceal Nai Nai's diagnosis has forced Billi to renegotiate her beliefs about individual rights.

BILLI: I need to go see her.

HAIYAN: You can't.

JIAN: Everyone thinks it's better if you don't go. Look at you. You can't hide your emotions! Nai Nai will know right away!

BILLI: I need to say goodbye. What if she dies and I don't get a chance to say goodbye? (Wang, 2019, pp. 15).

Billi has a very close relationship with her grandmother. When she heard the news of what had happened to her grandmother, Billi impulsively wanted to meet her immediately so she could support her morally and say goodbye in person. Billi's father directly said that she cannot see her grandmother, while her mother blocks Billi's action by saying "You can't hide your emotions!" It shows that Billi does not meet the emotional standards of Eastern culture, her emotional expression is considered "dangerous" because it could disrupt the harmony and plans being carried out by her Chinese family. Billi's personal decision to meet her grandmother demonstrates her individualistic perspective, which clashes with her family's collective decision. Billi's family views her as a threat who can potentially thwart their decision, as her way of thinking deviates from the traditional Chinese values that are deeply rooted in her family. Billi is considered not completely Chinese, so her family forbids her from meeting Nai Nai, fearing she could undermine the decisions made in accordance with tradition. Although the negotiation process has not yet fully developed here, the scene shows indications of the early stages of a clash of cultural values that triggers the process for negotiation.

Emotionally, Billi doesn't fully agree with her family's decision, but her hybrid status forces her to renegotiate her family's cultural values.

UNCLE HAIBIN: [Nai Nai is very sick, you know?]

BILLI: [I know.]

UNCLE HAIBIN: [Nai Nai herself doesn't know. We're not going to tell her.]

BILLI: [I know.]

UNCLE HAIBIN: [We're not planning on telling her.]

BILLI: [I know.]

UNCLE HAIBIN: [No matter how sad you feel, you cannot say anything.] (Wang, 2019, pp. 23 - 25).

The dialogue shows Uncle Haibin, with his strong belief in his collective culture, playing a role in maintaining these norms within their family. He represents Eastern collectivity by exerting normative pressure on Billi, such as family moral authority, putting aside individual honesty as protection, and suppressing emotions for the sake of family harmony. In the dialogue, Billi seems not given the space to voice her opinion. Every repeated answer that Billi uttered when his uncle dictated to her showed how Billi tried to control herself within the pressure that did not give Billi space to voice her voice. Billi's irritated and half-hearted tone of response indicates an external acceptance of the rules imposed on her. Billi is forced to fit in Eastern norms by suppressing her own personal emotions. Billi does not reject but also does not fully agree emotionally and at the same time she also does not fully determine her decisions. Billi's hybrid position is seen when she cognitively understands the family rules, but emotionally doesn't fully accept them. Negotiation emerges when Billi no longer argues with her family's collective decisions. The repetitive answers demonstrate a symbolic adjustment to Billi's limited choices toward her family's collective values. Billi's hybrid position of outward acceptance but inner uncertainty demonstrates that her identity is not entirely stable and indicates an ongoing negotiation that is still in its productive process.

Billi's hybrid position has created a negotiation process over the clash of Eastern and Western conflicting values.

BILLI: [Gu Gu... Don't you think we should tell Nai Nai?]

GU GU: [Tell her? What for?]

BILLI: [What if she has things she wants to take care of?]

GU GU: [She doesn't have anything like that... Ow!]

BILLI: [But... what if she wants to say goodbye?]

BILLI: [But... what if she wants to say goodbye?]

GU GU: [Say goodbye? That's so painful! What's the point of that?]

GU GU: [You see her for yourself. She seems fine, right? Just like a normal person...If you tell her, you'll ruin her good mood.] (Wang, 2019, pp. 39 - 40).

In the scene, Billi tries to present a possibility by convincing Gu Gu about the family's decision that contradicts with her logic. In negotiating her moral beliefs Billi tends to ask questions rather than make firm statements to reduce the tension between the two opposing cultures. Billi tries to express her concerns about the possibility of Nai Nai wanting a chance to say goodbye or the possibility of things that need to be resolved by her. Billi's opinion and assessment emphasize the individual's right to know the truth and make decisions about their own lives within the Western value of individualism. However, like her parents, who are still tied to Chinese culture, Gu Gu emphasizes that the family's lie is a form of protection. She denies that telling Nai Nai could only "ruin her good mood" and is painful for Nai Nai. In line with the value of collectivism in the Chinese perspective, Gu Gu believes that the entire family is responsible for maintaining happiness, harmony, and stability, rather than revealing potentially painful truths. For Billi, who is a hybrid subject, her family's decision is something that is logically unacceptable, but on the other hand, Billi cannot reject and directly undermine the family's decision. The arguments she puts

forward in the form of questions and
how

Billi does not interrupt Gu Gu's explanation are forms of negotiation that occur in Billi.

Billi is a hybrid subject caught between the Western values of honesty she has grown up with and the Eastern values of collective deception practiced by her family.

BILLI: Don't you think you should tell her?

DOCTOR SONG: It's complicated. In her situation, most families in China wouldn't tell her. When my grandmother had cancer, my family also didn't tell her.

Billi registers this with surprise.

BILLI: Don't you think it's wrong to lie?

DOCTOR SONG: It's not really a lie if it's meant for good. (Wang, 2019, pp. 55).

Identity negotiations occur as Billi tries to seek confirmation of transparency, honesty, and individual rights regarding her family's decision to conceal her grandmother's diagnosis from Dr. Song, who is responsible for her grandmother's care. In this situation, Billi, as a hybrid subject, cannot fully accept Chinese culture, when she questions Dr. Song's action on hiding his patient condition. Billi deliberately used English to communicate with Dr. Song so that her family, who did not understand, would not hinder her actions in seeking justification that was in line with her logic. Billi thought that Dr. Song should tell her grandmother about her diagnosis as well as her conditions, because usually it is part of the Doctor's responsibility or procedure toward their patients. However, Dr. Song, who currently practices in China, explained that the procedure is still heavily influenced by Chinese cultural ties, especially in the family context. Dr. Song furthermore explains that he has experienced a similar situation and also considers medical information to be a collective family responsibility. Billi traps between two conflicting value systems and her

positions force her to negotiate the meaning of "right" and "wrong" over both values. And in this process, Billi cannot choose one option absolutely, she does not take any direct action to reject the practice nor directly agree with the practice, indicating that there is an ongoing negotiation process.

Negotiations occur when Billi, who tries to push Western values of transparency, faces off against her family, who persist to Eastern values of collectivism.

HAIYAN: [It's just... in America, we would not make this kind of decision. We couldn't, really.]

BILLI: [It'd be...] (switches to English) Illegal. How do you say illegal?

HAIYAN: [Illegal. In America, this is illegal.]

UNCLE HAIBIN: [This isn't America.] (Wang, 2019, pp. 57).

Billi asserts that her family's actions in concealing Nai Nai's diagnosis are "illegal" under American law. Eastern values regarding family-centered decision-making clearly conflict with Western values regarding legal ethics and individual rights, which are present in the dialogue. Uncle Haibin's response, saying "this isn't America," demonstrates that there is a dual boundary between Eastern and Western values, emphasizing that the standards Billi calls illegal, do not automatically apply to Eastern values. In the negotiation process, Billi must consider that her family's decisions cannot be completely rejected, but they also do not always make logical sense. Billi, as a hybrid subject, cannot decide on one decision and is caught between the two. Billi finds herself in a "third space" that requires her to renegotiate the values she believes in and the values that are bound to her.

The two conflicting value systems of Eastern collectivism and Western individualism position Billi as a hybrid subject who must constantly renegotiate her cultural position.

UNCLE HAIBIN: [You know Billi. You need to understand something. You guys moved to a Western country a long time ago, so you're no longer connected to the Eastern way of looking at things. In America, you think one's life belongs to oneself. But that's the difference between the East and the West. In the East, your life is part of a whole. Family. Society.]

He lectures to her like she's a child. Still, his words register.

UNCLE HAIBIN: [You want to tell Nai Nai the truth because you feel too much responsibility carrying it. If you tell her, then you don't have to feel guilty anymore. We're not telling her because it is our responsibility to carry this emotional burden for her.] (Wang, 2019, pp. 69).

she uses a Western perspective to

Billi is a hybrid subject who doesn't fully fit into one cultural identity. Her hybridity is evident when Uncle Haibin implicitly categorizes her as American, even though she is still ethnically Chinese, as both her parents are also Chinese. Negotiations occur when Bili can't fully fit into one cultural identity; she must constantly reconsider her decisions and position herself within both. Billi is seen as placing greater emphasis on Western values regarding the individual's right to the truth of one's medical condition, rather than the values of collective responsibility and protection her family believes in. The clash between these two values prevents Billi from immediately accepting her family's decision. However, her rejection creates a resistance that is perceived as a threat to her family's decision. Uncle Haibin's statement forces Billi to negotiate her identity through a process of reconsidering the Western values she holds in contrast to the demands of Eastern collectivism she faces.

Billi negotiates her hybrid identity as

question Chinese family norms that normalize lying to protect parents.

and

BILLI: Mom... if one of you guys got sick... in America... what should I do? Would you want me to lie to you?

JIAN: Definitely not! Are you crazy? (Wang, 2019, pp. 87).

In the end, Billi's negotiations occur discursively through dialogue and moral questions she poses to her mother. Before that, throughout the series of events she experiences in China, Billi, as a hybrid subject, actively compares two intersecting value systems within herself. Billi does not completely reject her family's culture of lying as a form of protection. But on the other hand, she also continues to question her family's decisions because what they do goes against the logic she adheres to. In the third space, the meaning she holds regarding the Western value of honesty as a form of respect for individual rights undergoes a process of negotiation. The negotiation process occurs when Billi tries to confirm the two conflicting cultural moral value frameworks she encounters with her mother. Her mother's response, which was a rejection if Billi carried out the same lying action, shows that Billi's identity will never be influenced by just one cultural value, but will continue to undergo an ongoing process through negotiation.

Billi's identity is not only formed by one culture; Billi can be more American in one context and more Chinese in another. As a hybrid subject, Billi will continuously reshape her identity. This is in line with what Kaur (2018) stated in her study that "We are constantly creating new identities to help us cope with the different experiences that we have, and once we are exposed to it, our way of thinking can never go back to the original." This shows that hybridity creates a fluid identity. This study elaborates Kaur's study discussing hybridity in postcolonial subjects to the concept of hybridity in Billi as a diasporic character formed from mixed identities

cultural tension. In addition, in line with Lin's (2024) which discusses cross-cultural concepts such as individualism vs. collectivism, power distance, and face through Billi's behavior, this study develops it into Bhabha's concept of hybridity to examine the negotiation process between two cultural values. (Lin, 2024) states that Billi "Initially firm in her American individualism, her deepening understanding of Chinese culture led her to increasingly identify with and adapt to collectivist values..." This study aims to see how Billi responds to her family's decisions and how she positions herself in cultural conflict. Billi's identity negotiation, formed from her life experiences in two cultures, shows that cultural identity is not static, but changes depending on the situation.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded through the analysis of the conflict that Billi experienced, the cultural identity of hybrid subjects is never certain and final, but will always change according to individual experiences. The conflict created by the difference in values pushes Billi to challenge the rigid idea of binary boundaries in the context of cultural identity. Throughout the film, Billi does not immediately place herself on one value. When Billi learned her family had lied and concealed her grandmother's cancer diagnosis, she immediately questioned her family's illogical decision. Having grown up with a Western perspective, Billi couldn't immediately accept a lie rooted in Chinese Confucian values, even though her family collectively agreed it was a wise act of protection. Billi feels that what her family did is illegal, she feels Nai Nai has the right to know about her condition. Although Billi felt her family's decision was not entirely acceptable or justified, she did not aggressively intend to betray her family. While she morally rejected the lie, she indirectly participated in the collective lie. Negotiation occurs as Billi attempts to understand the value of the good lie held by her family. Through continuous adaptation, Billi neither completely rejects her family's

values nor imposes her beliefs on them. In dealing with the situation, Billi makes compromises. In Billi's case, the negotiation process is not simply about finding a final, one-sided answer. Rather, it's about the ongoing process of identity formation. As a hybrid subject, Billi is constantly influenced by two values; her identity isn't solely Chinese or solely American, and she continually negotiates between the two.

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