

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

3.1 The Woman Struggle of Being A Governess in Anne Bronte's Agnes Grey

In this chapter the writer wants to analyze the depiction of woman struggle as seen through Agnes character. By firstly examining on her character, the writer hopes to gain profound knowledge about the character of Agnes clearly. After having fundamental background of Agnes character, then through studying her characterization more intensely is intended to reveal her way of struggle. Inside this analysis process, the writer uses Feminism theory specifically Marxist feminism to support the analysis in order to expose the motive that leads Agnes Grey to be a governess and her struggle to face the oppression from her employers within her being of governess.

3.1.1 The Motive that Leads Agnes Grey to be A Governess

The story of Agnes Grey is delivered using first-person point of view which Agnes itself appears as the narrator who narrates all the events, experiences she has. She is the one who tells to the readers about what she does, speaks and thinks. The things that she can also tell about are just limited to them that correlate with her. For instance, other characters only appear when they have to deal with Agnes and information about them is on Agnes charge. So, Agnes automatically becomes the main character because she appears on the whole story as what Nurgiyantoro said that main character is character that always appears and dominates the whole story (176).

Furthermore Altenbernd and Lewis declared that in this type of point of view in fiction, main character automatically becomes the protagonist. The usage of first-person to

narrate makes readers to feel really involved in. Readers give empathy totally to main actor (63). Therefore, Agnes also belongs to protagonist character that readers can really feel her hard struggle and finally admire her as a heroine character.

Agnes Grey is a character of eighteen years old girl and daughter of clergyman as it is evident from the following mention of her parents, she comes from a decent family:

My father was a clergyman of the north of England, who was deservedly respected by all who knew him; and, in his younger days, lived pretty comfortably on the joint income of a small incumbency and a snug little property of his own (Bronte 3).

This means that Agnes is not rich. She just comes from adequate family that her father only has a small amount of money. Agnes's father does not have much money as a parson, and he "troubled his head with revolving endless schemes for the augmentation of his little fortune, for [his wife's] sake, and ours [the daughters']" (Bronte 5). Additionally, becoming a daughter of clergyman puts her social status into middle-class. It is based on the division of class in Victorian era in which placed clergyman as one of the members of religious order to be belonged into this social class—middle class (Mitchell 20).

Actually, although Agnes family has no large sum amount of money but it is at first never troubling their life, especially Agnes. Although they are not rich, the father "liked to see his house comfortable, and his wife and daughters well clothed, and well attended; and besides, he was charitably disposed, and liked to give to the poor, according to his means, or some might think, beyond them" (Bronte 6). As it is obvious from the excerpt above, Agnes has a very comfortable background, and lives in a happy family.

Moreover, Agnes as the youngest child, is always indulged so well by all the other members—father, mother, and sister. So she never finds anything to be problems in her life.

Of six children, my sister Mary and myself were the only two that survived the perils of infancy and early childhood. I, being the younger by five or six years, was always regarded as THE child, and the pet of the family: father, mother, and sister, all combined to spoil me—not by foolish indulgence, to render me fractious and ungovernable, but by ceaseless kindness, to make me too helpless and dependent—too unfit for buffeting with the cares and turmoils of life (Bronte 4-5).

Unfortunately, that entire comfort situation does not last long. It starts when one day; Agnes's father is suggested by a kind friend, a merchant, to double his private property by entrusting him with the money he spared, promising him a fair share of the profits. But unfortunately, “the vessel, which contained [the] fortune, had been wrecked, and gone to the bottom with all its stores, together with several of the crew, and the unfortunate merchant himself” (Bronte 7). Thus, the family is suddenly impoverished and this is the point when Agnes life begins to change.

However, Agnes is not type of person who is easily hopeless when facing ruinous situation. This is the most interesting part which Agnes looks as a hero. Her father is the most miserable one upon this matter since he thinks that this all is his fault and her mother tries to console him. Mary, her sister, although she “did not lament, but she brooded continually over the misfortune” (Bronte 8). Instead of blaming and lamenting such bad condition otherwise Agnes has this kind of thought in her mind:

Though riches had charms, poverty had no terrors for an inexperienced girl like me. Indeed, to say the truth, there was something exhilarating in the idea of being driven to straits, and thrown upon our own resources. I only wished papa, mamma, and Mary were all of the same mind as myself; and then, instead of lamenting past calamities we might all cheerfully set to work to remedy them; and the greater the difficulties, the harder our present privations, the greater should be our cheerfulness to endure the latter, and our vigour to contend against the former (Bronte 8).

It seems that Agnes is a character of woman who is not defeated so easily by the condition. Besides, she prefers to find out the solution rather than doing lament. She believes that if they do hard under the difficulties, they will get happiness in the future.

Next, they start to stop lamenting on that bad luck. Mother suggests Mary whom she considers her drawing is good to start professionally make pictures, frame them beautifully to sell them in order to earn money while mother herself endeavors to find purchasers. In this point, knowing that her sister can do something, she does not want to be the useless one so she said “I wish I could do something” (Bronte 12) to her mamma. From this statement, the writer argues that Agnes character shows a value of Marxist feminism which rejects the construction women as a class of passive consumers (Madsen 65). Agnes’s awareness that she hopes to do something to earn money means that she, as woman, thinks that she is not only consuming but also able to produce something.

Then her mother advises her to do the same thing as what Marry does, drawing pictures and then selling them. It seems like that is the best thing to do because of the existence of Victorian custom which said that the proper sphere of woman was within her home therefore forbade and limited women to involve in workplace (Kalafutova 2). It causes Agnes has no enormous choice to choose job for getting money. However, Agnes has prepared in mind what she wants to do and she tells it to her mom:

‘But I have another scheme in my head, mamma, and have had long, only I did not like to mention it.’

‘Indeed! pray tell us what it is.’

‘I should like to be a governess.’ (Bronte 12)

From the quotation above, the writer sees that Agnes character performs the spirit of Feminism in which women become autonomous decision makers that they have right and

freedom to decide their own careers and life patterns (Tong 15). Agnes does not simply accept her mother's suggestion but she decides herself what she wants to be that she chooses to be a governess as her career in producing money. In agreement with Tong stated above, in Islam, femininity is appreciated too. Although the maintenance of wife and children including food, clothing, and lodging is the primary obligation of the husband and of the father respectively, but women may still work outside the home or volunteer their services to benefit the community as long as their primary responsibilities are taken care of. Any money that a woman earns is her own, to spend as she likes; men remain solely responsible for maintaining the family. Furthermore, in the Qur'an (the supreme and ultimate authority and a guide for all Muslims in all matters) is also implied clearly that women are expected to come out of their houses if and when the necessity arises. The Hadith (statements of the Prophet Muhammad on various religious, moral, social, cultural and legal issues) makes the position more clear. The Prophet said, "It is permitted to you (the women) to go out for your needs". Therefore, Islam also views women are in the same position as men who also come out of their houses only for their needs (Syed 113).

Moreover, the choice to be a governess is seen as the most suitable job for Agnes since in Victorian England, where the ideology of female domesticity was adopted and women were excluded from the employment market, the governess, a wage-earning woman, held an extraordinary position. Middle-class women could choose only from a narrow professional area which would not endanger the family's middle-class status. The most common occupation was a teaching profession or governess (Lecaros 15-17). Remembering that Agnes is a woman with a middle class status so that becoming a governess is the best decision made by Agnes. So she is still able to enter employment without endanger her family's middle class status and produces money to maintain her family's financial state.

Unluckily, Agnes decision to be a governess is not accepted by other members of her family. They who always spoil her too much and treat her just like she is still a child in her age of eighteen years old think that Agnes is incapable of doing such thing. This can be seen through her mother and sister given responses when she is declaring her intension.

My mother uttered an exclamation of surprise, and laughed. My sister dropped her work in astonishment, exclaiming, ‘YOU a governess, Agnes! What can you be dreaming of?’ (Bronte 12)

It looks they do not believe in Agnes capability since they always regard Agnes as a child. Her mother who considers Agnes has not been able to look after even herself yet adds an answer “But, my love, you have not learned to take care of YOURSELF yet” (Bronte 12). Agnes keeps convincing them to let her doing upon a decision she made by claiming “You do not know half the wisdom and prudence I possess, because I have never been tried” (Bronte 13). Another assurance she declares when her sister Marry also doubt on her incompetence, Agnes says “You think, because I do as you bid me, I have no judgment of my own: but only try me—that is all I ask—and you shall see what I can do” (Bronte 13).

The denial towards Agnes choice to be a governess is further performed by her father too. Her decision is completely refused by all the member of her family. When Agnes, mother, and sister are discussing as stated above, suddenly her father enters into the room and the subject of their discussion is explained to him. Listening to the topic of Agnes determination to be a governess, he seems so shocked.

‘What, my little Agnes a governess!’ cried he, and, in spite of his dejection, he laughed at the idea.

‘Yes, papa, don’t YOU say anything against it: I should like it so much; and I am sure I could manage delightfully.’

‘But, my darling, we could not spare you.’ And a tear glistened in his eye as he added—‘No, no! afflicted as we are, surely we are not brought to that pass yet.’ (Bronte 13)

From the conversation the writer sees that her father also shows hesitation upon Agnes. The evidence is her father who is laughing at her idea. Like what mother and sister are thinking about Agnes, her father also has same opinion like them two that Agnes cannot be a governess because she is too young and immature to handle that high responsibility of teaching and caring children. So he forbids Agnes to be a governess. He feels that it is unnecessary for Agnes to do such thing because he claims the responsibility of finance notion is still on his charge as head of family. Nevertheless, Agnes keeps convincing her father to let her executing her own decision.

The debate on the matter is over when mother becomes annoyed for Agnes keeps arguing with father. Mother perceives Agnes who does not want to accept her father decision to be sort of disobedience and calls Agnes 'naughty girl'. "Oh, no! said my mother. There is no necessity whatever for such a step; it is merely a whim of her own. So you must hold your tongue, you naughty girl..." (Bronte 13). This utterance shows that mother suffers irritated on the debating between Agnes and her father. She thinks that Agnes starts to be impolite by denying father's decision so she asks Agnes to 'hold her tongue' hence then Agnes stops debating on the topic, even for a few days later.

In this section, the writer considers that Agnes freedom is limited by the patriarchal system in family which describes a particular form of household organization in which the father dominates other members of an extended kinship network and controls the economic production of the household. The term patriarchy is related to the absolute power through a socially defined institution of fatherhood, for instance, of a father-daughter relationship. Fathers insist on their daughter's dependence, financial, and emotional. In patriarchy, women should be obedient under the rule of the father (Barret 10-16).

Even though Agnes chooses to prevent herself from resuming the subject and does not talking about it for several days but it does not mean that she stops struggling. “I was silenced for that day, and for many succeeding ones; but still I did not wholly relinquish my darling scheme” (Bronte 14). From this quotation, the writer reveals that Agnes is not kind of woman who gives up so easy on the decision she has made. Rejecting by all her family members does not interfere herself with the plan she decides. She still argues that becoming a governess is the best way.

How delightful it would be to be a governess! [...] to earn my own maintenance, and something to comfort and help my father, mother, and sister, besides exonerating them from the provision of my food and clothing; to show papa what his little Agnes could do; to convince mamma and Mary that I was not quite the helpless, thoughtless being they supposed. (Bronte 14)

It seems that she chooses to be a governess for two reasons. The main purpose is she hopes to earn money in order to help her family’s financial condition which is going worse at the time. She does not wish to trouble them of her life needs. The additional reason is that she wants to prove to father, mother, and sister about her capability. Agnes who is always treated like a child tries to show them that she has been mature. In her age of eighteen, she is “only a little, because, though a woman in my own estimation, I was still a child in theirs [father, mother, and sister]” (Bronte 10). She is never given a chance to contribute some helps. “so that whenever I offered to assist her, I received such answer as—‘No, love, you cannot indeed—there’s nothing you can do” (Bronte 10), here is such answer that mother gives to Agnes whenever she wants to help her. Besides, her sister Mary also does the same “Help me you cannot, Agnes! [...] You cannot, indeed, dear child” (Bronte 10). Therefore Agnes intends to break that family judgment towards herself through her decision of being a governess.

After resting her plan for days, then she continues struggling to make it true. She begins to talk it again with her mother and finally she permits her to do so, “At length, again, I mentioned it to my mother in private; and, with some difficulty, got her to promise to assist

me with her endeavors” (Bronte 15). Nonetheless, her father does not still assign permission yet but it is just because Agnes never stops struggling to convince him over and over again until her father at last changes his decision and lets her go. “My father’s reluctant consent was next obtained” (Bronte 15). Here the writer argues that Agnes can break down the patriarchy system which positions man (father) as the ruler in family. This spirit of Marxist feminist which is owned by the character of Agnes Grey that she does not merely accept to be under his father’s rule to decide her life is also in line with Islamic values. Islam appreciates feminist in which women are wanted to have as much equality with men as was possible in the male dominated. In family, the man is a ruler over the people of his house, but the woman is a ruler over the house too. So everyone is a ruler and everyone shall be questioned about his/her subjects (Syed 49).

From the analysis above, the writer reveals that the motive which leads Agnes Grey to be a governess is fundamentally rooted from the fact of misfortune experienced by her family. Therefore, she basically chooses to be a governess in order to help the finance of her family. Another reason is she also wants to make her family realize that she has been adult and able to be responsible for herself. Governess is seen as the most possible work because of the custom about women at that era so that Agnes chooses governess which does not degrade her middle class status. The writer sees the spirit of Feminism in which Agnes decides herself what she wants to do. She does not put her career or life pattern upon the judgment from other people. Further, Agnes awareness that she can produce money is the representation of Marxist feminist which disapproves women as a class of passive consumer. Women are not viewed as class that can produce nothing. Moreover, she is successful in breaking the patriarchal system that makes a man to be the ruler. Going through firm debating and arguing, at last she can win her decision. She does not need to follow her father’s option.

Father's rule cannot conquer her daughter's want. This act of dismantling the patriarchy is also the element of Marxist feminism depicted through the character of Agnes Grey.

3.1.2 The Struggle of Agnes Grey in Facing the Oppression from Her Employers within Her Being of Governess

The struggle of Agnes Grey does not end yet. After having difficult effort to convince her family to let her to be a governess then she has to struggle a lot again within her being of governess. Because of the presence of custom in Victorian era which stated that the proper sphere for women was within their home then made women were restricted from various work outside (Kalafutova 2). Governess was an extraordinary profession. This kind of job which was responsible for teaching children was regarded to be acceptable for women because they were still inside the house and concerned with women feminine traditional job; teaching children. Moreover, governess was also assessed as the most perfect profession for women of middle class because it would not endanger their social status (Goreau 41).

Depending on that thing, governess becomes Agnes' choice for her career. Unfortunately this limitation of choosing job makes Agnes has to deal with new problem. People who can hire a governess always belong to upper class or the bourgeois. Coming from lower class, a governess is disrespected and within her being of governess, Agnes Grey is often oppressed by her employers. This division of class, between the bourgeois and the workers, bears the system of capitalism (Tong 99). This is also in accordance with what Michele Barret stated that the oppression of women does not merely upon men's power, but both within the working class and the bourgeois (Barret 249).

As what her mother has promised she assists Agnes to find out employer who can hire her. She writes to father's relation and also consults the newspaper advertisement. At last, it is decreed that Agnes should take charge of the young family of a certain Mrs. Bloomfield. She is a wife of "Her husband was a retired tradesman, who had realized a very comfortable fortune" (Bronte 15). It indicates that Bloomfield family is higher in rank than her. The family of aristocracy, gentry, landowners, industrialist and tradesman, capitalist are belonged to upper class (Mitchell 18). Under the system of capitalism which is born by the existence of upper class employer creates oppression. Agnes is often getting oppressive treatment in many ways.

In Bloomfield family, Agnes has to handle with four children. The eldest one is Tom Bloomfield, a well-grown boy of seven. The second is Mary Ann. She is almost six years old. The third is called Fanny, a very pretty little girl of four years old and the youngest is Harriet, the two-year-old little boy. Since the first arrival Agnes has realized that her pupils are not kind of children who easily conduct and the things are going to be worse afterward.

My task of instruction and surveillance, instead of becoming easier as my charges and I got better accustomed to each other, became more arduous as their characters unfolded. The name of governess, I soon found, was a mere mockery as applied to me: my pupils had no more notion of obedience than a wild, unbroken colt. (Bronte 33)

Agnes seems annoyed of the children's behavior. She begins to feel that to be a governess is not easy. Agnes thinks that these children are too difficult to control. "Other children might be guided by the fear of anger and the desire of approbation; but neither the one nor the other had any effect upon these" (Bronte 34). It is obvious that Agnes has no agreeable tips to manage them.

Master Tom, as the eldest one, has troubled Agnes the most. It is very hard to make him obey the order. He does not want to be ruled. On the other hand, he loves ruling others, his sisters and also Agnes, his governess. The worst of all is he likes to use violence in making others obedient towards his command. “Master Tom, not content with refusing to be ruled, must needs set up as a ruler, and manifested a determination to keep, not only his sisters, but his governess in order, by violent manual and pedal applications” (Bronte 34), this performs that Agnes is oppressed through Tom’s violence. Violence is thought as one of oppressions in capitalism. Violence is systemic because it is directed at members of a group simply because they are members of that group (Young 62). Tom judges that it can be done to his governess because she is definitely the one whom has to obey her master’s control. However, Agnes does not simply let Tom to do all the things he wants, especially to violate her.

[...] I determined to refrain from striking him, even in self-defence; and, in his most violent moods, my only resource was to throw him on his back and hold his hands and feet till the frenzy was somewhat abated. (Bronte 34)

From the excerpt, the writer assumes that Agnes does not merely accept Tom’s attitude. She makes an effort to protect herself from his violence but still using way which does not injure him.

The naughtiness of children is not one thing that Agnes should handle with. She has to cope with the parents too. Mr. and Mrs. Bloomfield frequently leave the fault of their children on Agnes side. One example is when Tom, Mary and Fanny escape from the schoolroom and run out of the house into the garden, where they plunge about in snow, shouting and screaming in exultant glee. Agnes has attempted to catch them and get them in but she fails. Suddenly Agnes hears a voice behind her, in harshly piercing tones, exclaiming. This is Mr. Bloomfield shouting. He is showing his anger towards Agnes. He is angry of his children’s

wickedness of playing around outside in the snow. Agnes explains that she has made an effort to get them in but they do not listen to her.

‘But I INSIST upon their being got in!’ cried he, approaching nearer, and looking perfectly ferocious.

‘Then, sir, you must call them yourself, if you please, for they won’t listen to me,’ I replied, stepping back.

‘Come in with you, you filthy brats; or I’ll horsewhip you every one!’ roared he; and the children instantly obeyed. ‘There, you see!—they come at the first word!’

‘Yes, when YOU speak.’ (Bronte 47)

In this quotation, the writer supposes that Agnes is also oppressed by the parents. Mr. Bloomfield is angry to Agnes whom he considers irresponsible of his children. Agnes does not let her employer to wrong her that way because she has tried to control them. Mr. Bloomfield still forces her to get his children in. Agnes refused to do it. She thinks what she has done is enough. She is even asking bravely to Mr. Bloomfield to do it himself. It is her struggle for showing her power. Powerless is the other mode of oppression in capitalism (Young 40). By refusing to be always wronged and boldly command her employer is her struggle to show that she is not powerless. She has power either to deny or to order even though she is just a governess in Bloomfield family. Furthermore, Agnes ever speaks to Tom “‘I shall do what I think right in a case of this sort without consulting any one. If your papa and mamma don’t happen to approve of it, I shall be sorry to offend them” (Bronte 59). Here, Agnes shows that she does not need to consult her employer first whenever she has to do something that she thinks it is right. She has power to decide what to do.

The other mode of oppression in capitalism is exploitation. Capitalism thrives on exploiting its laborers. Labor power is the one commodity which in the process of being consumed produces new value (Young 49). The oppressive treatment in exploiting Agnes service can be seen through Agnes utterance, “‘About Christmas I was allowed to visit home;

but my holiday was only of a fortnight's duration" (Bronte 43). In this utterance, the writer sees a disappointment in Agnes character of her only short holiday. She adds "how intensely I had longed for my holidays, how greatly I was disappointed at their curtailment" (Bronte 43). It means that her employer does not give her enough time to break or in other words, Agnes is exploited.

The struggle of Agnes Grey does not easily come to an end. Even though she experiences a lot of tough condition but she does not give up. She continues struggling to be a governess in Bloomfield family. Some oppressive treatment she has encountered does not make her regret her decision. It can be seen by this quotation:

I flattered myself I was benefiting my parents and sister by my continuance here; for small as the salary was, I still was earning something, and with strict economy I could easily manage to have something to spare for them, if they would favour me by taking it. Then it was by my own will that I had got the place: I had brought all this tribulation on myself, and I was determined to bear it; nay, more than that, I did not even regret the step I had taken. (Bronte 42)

It is proven that Agnes deserves to be called as representation of woman who is full of spirit. Bad situation never conquers her easily. She determines to keep struggling for teaching children as governess in Bloomfield family although it is very hard because of her intention that she has to earn money. It does not matter that the salary is not much enough but at least she can produce something.

Unfortunately, her struggle again faces unexpected circumstances. Her service of being a governess for Bloomfield family has to be ended since "Mrs. Bloomfield sent for me, and calmly told me that after Midsummer my services would be no longer required" (Bronte 63). Mr. and Mrs. Bloomfield feel unsatisfied with Agnes so that they fire her. Instead of becoming exhausted in this matter, Agnes is still optimistic for the better future. She keeps positively thinking that there must be finer employer with more pleasant children than

Bloomfield family. “I was not yet weary of adventure, nor willing to relax my efforts. I knew that all parents were not like Mr. and Mrs. Bloomfield, and I was certain all children were not like theirs” (Bronte 64). From her utterance, it means that Agnes is not going to give up. Besides, she says “The next family must be different, and any change must be for the better” (Bronte 64). It shows Agnes illustrates an optimistic woman character.

Next, Agnes searches another chance to be a governess through the advertising columns of the newspaper. She also tries to put an advertisement by stating her qualifications such as: singing, drawing, French, Latin and German. It is to describe better assessment on her so it can make her to be more respected. This wishes is achieved when there is “one would consent to give me fifty pounds, the sum my mother bade me name as the salary I should require” (Bronte 69). This sum of money is higher than Bloomfield offered which “could not be prevailed upon to give a greater salary than twenty-five pounds to the instructress of his children” (Bronte 15). It means that Agnes struggle will be doubly paid. The second employer who hires Agnes is Murray family. According to Agnes, Mr. Murray’s status is higher than Mr. Bloomfield, “his rank from what I could gather appeared to be higher than that of Mr. Bloomfield” (Bronte 71).

In Murray family, Agnes has to deal with children who are more adult than in Bloomfield. So, Agnes’ duty seems easier because the children are not as naughty and uncontrolled as Bloomfield’s children. However, it does not mean Agnes is not oppressed. Again, Agnes service is wanted to be exploited by her employer. Rosalie, the oldest daughter, forbids Agnes to go home for holiday because she wants Agnes to present at the ball and see her best appearance there.

‘Well, I only said it to tease you. But now I want to talk about the ball; and to tell you that you positively must put off your holidays till it is over.’

‘Why so?—I shall not be present at the ball.’

‘No, but you will see the rooms decked out before it begins, and hear the music, and, above all, see me in my splendid new dress. I shall be so charming, you’ll be ready to worship me—you really must stay.’

‘I should like to see you very much; but I shall have many opportunities of seeing you equally charming, on the occasion of some of the numberless balls and parties that are to be, and I cannot disappoint my friends by postponing my return so long.’ (Bronte 94)

In this part, the service of Agnes Grey is going to be exploited. Rosalie wants Agnes to postpone her holiday just depending on her own excitement. She hopes Agnes to present at the ball so she can adore her beauty but the harder Rosalie forces her to stay, the firmer Agnes decides to still go home. The writer sees here that Agnes struggles for her right.

The oppression in this second family is also in form of marginalization.

Marginalization is perhaps the most dangerous form of oppression. A whole category of people is expelled from useful participation in social life and thus potentially subjected to severe material deprivation and even extermination. The material deprivation marginalization often causes is certainly unjust, especially in a society where others have plenty (Young 53). This kind of oppression makes the oppressed group to lose their right in interacting with the society freely. The social class as the aspect of people lives has become unseparated from the private or personal of one’s self. Those who lives are now restricted to the laborers or workers class are disrespected and considered marginal to the public life of the society.

The marginalization towards Agnes can be seen through the part when Agnes admits that she is lonely because she is restricted inside the household of her employer without a chance to communicate liberally with the people around.

“[...] the lonely drudgery, of my present life: for I WAS lonely. Never, from month to month, from year to year, except during my brief intervals of rest at home, did I see one creature to whom I could open my heart, or freely speak my thoughts with any hope of sympathy, or even comprehension: never one...” (Bronte 125)

From the statement above it can be seen clearly that Agnes has lonely life within her being of governess. She has no other friends to share with, a friend to talk things freely because it is impossible to do such things with her employers. She is marginalized from the society. However, Agnes attempts to make the situation better. She does not let herself to be vulnerably marginalized all the time. “and thus I made a few acquaintances among the cottagers; and occasionally, I went to see them on my own account” (Bronte 111). This excerpt shows that Agnes tries to interact with the surrounding society. Until she succeeds to make a friend with “poor Nancy Brown, with whom I could enjoy a single moment of real social intercourse, or whose conversation was calculated to render me better, wiser, or happier than before” (Bronte 125).

Nevertheless, as belonging to the marginalized group, indeed Agnes is limited to have interaction with other people. It can be proven through the way her employer tries to prevent her to meet Nancy Brown and other people by giving extra duties as the quotation given below.

All chance meetings on week-days were likewise carefully prevented; for, lest I should go to see poor Nancy Brown or any other person, Miss Murray took good care to provide sufficient employment for all my leisure hours. There was always some drawing to finish, some music to copy, or some work to do, sufficient to incapacitate me from indulging in anything beyond a short walk about the grounds, however she or her sister might be occupied. (Bronte 184).

Another evidence of marginalization against Agnes as governess can be noticed through one part when she has to accompany her employer to the church every Sunday. Every people look at her differently. People think that the governess should not walk beside her employers. Nevertheless Agnes does not let them entirely offends her. There is one occasion for example that she survives for her right to be measured the same.

“I liked walking better [...] for, in truth, I considered myself pretty nearly as good as the best of them, and wished them to know that I did so, and not to imagine that I looked upon myself as a mere domestic, who knew her own place too well to walk beside such fine ladies and gentlemen as they were” (Bronte 136).

From the words, it can be concluded that Agnes is not a kind of woman who just helplessly accepts other people prejudice against her. She knows that she has to do something for her own right. She “lingered behind, it was some bird or insect, some tree or flower, that attracted my attention” (Bronte 137). She does not position herself to be different and inferior from them. This thought of Agnes which refuses to be regarded as lower and often disrespected performs a type of feminism. According to Rosemarie that the concept of multicultural feminism is a movement that embraces a variety of marginalized cultures so that women can, at various moments in their development, coalesce to undermine and ultimately overthrow the power of those individuals who have proclaimed themselves to be the primary group (Tong 214). This matter of marginalizing people in Islam is also got an attention. One verse in the Quran says:

يَأَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا لَا يَسْخَرُ قَوْمٌ مِّن قَوْمٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُونُوا خَيْرًا مِّنْهُمْ
وَلَا نِسَاءٌ مِّن نِّسَاءٍ عَسَىٰ أَن يَكُنَّ خَيْرًا مِّنْهُنَّ وَلَا تَلْمِزُوا أَنفُسَكُمْ وَلَا
تَنَابَزُوا بِالْأَلْقَابِ بِئْسَ الْأَسْمُ الْفُسُوقُ بَعْدَ الْإِيمَانِ وَمَن لَّمْ يَتُبْ
فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الظَّالِمُونَ ﴿١١﴾

“O you who believe! Let not a group scoff at another group, it may be that the latter are better than the former; nor let (some) women scoff at other women, it may be that the latter are better than the former, nor defame one another, nor insult one another by nicknames. How bad is it, to insult one's brother after having Faith. And whosoever does not repent, then such are indeed wrong doers” (Quran 49:11).

That verse tells that human cannot differentiate one person and another. It is not allowed that one group has pride too high for their own self until they prejudice against the others whom they think they belong to the secondary group.

From all the analysis towards the character of Agnes Grey the writer concludes that Agnes represents a character of woman who does not easily give up. Although she has to face many obstacles in her life, she always continues struggling no matter what. Agnes says that “Patience, Firmness, and Perseverance were my only weapons; and these I resolved to use to the utmost” (Bronte 35). Those are had by the character of Agnes to deal with all her problems. This ideal characterization of Agnes is in accordance with one verse in the Quran which states that someone should seek help with patient perseverance and prayer, for God is with those who patiently persevere (Quran 2:153). Having this good moral value within her character, the writer marks that Agnes is a heroine protagonist character in this story.

Unfortunately, finally the experience of becoming a governess thoroughly comes to an end. The ending of Agnes experience in being a governess in Murray family is not caused by the dissatisfaction of her employer like in the Bloomfield. Different from her experience in Bloomfield family which ended by her firing, in Murray family her service of being a governess is ended by her own decision when she hears that her father is dead. After that, she does not choose to be a governess anymore.

I set myself with befitting energy to discharge the duties of this new mode of life. I call it NEW, for there was, indeed, a considerable difference between working with my mother in a school of our own, and working as a hireling among strangers, despised and trampled upon by old and young; and for the first few weeks I was by no means unhappy. (Bronte 214)

This quotation informs that Agnes makes her own school with her mother. From this section, the writer argues that this is the best part of Agnes struggle to liberate herself from the system of capitalism and its oppression. It is because by holding a school and becoming the teacher

there means that she does not need to work under other people's power especially when she had to be governess and was hired by upper class employer who treated her badly in oppressive ways. Deliberating from that oppression under capitalism system, the writer claims that this is the evidence of Marxist feminism value depicted through the character of Agnes Grey who finally succeeds to be free from capitalism which is seen as one of the sources of women's oppression.