

Reviewing amazing grace



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BUSTER**

The film, *Amazing Grace* was an attempt on part of the film makers to present a historical biopic of William Wilberforce in the scenario of his legendary battle for the emancipation of slave trade in eighteenth century Britain.

The film was an endeavor to interpret the historical events from the point of view of William Wilberforce himself, and not from a wider perspective of the black slave population. The film thus portrays the abolition campaign as a battle of will and intellect rather than as a straightforward encounter against slavery.

The film follows the career of William Wilberforce (played by Ioan Gruffudd) from his entry to the parliament as a youngman when he joined with his companions William Pitt, Thomas Clarkson, and Hannah More to the passing of the bill which abolished the slavery in British Empire.

It also becomes a story of man's spiritual journey to fulfill a great historical campaign. The character of Barbara Spooner (Romola Garai) as his future wife who inspires him to action renders depth to the story. It illustrates how the personal events and relationship leads to great causes.

The film stands primarily as a biopic, in presenting the life of Wilberforce thereby breathing life to the historical figure. The director Michael Apted succeeds in rendering justice to history as well in the presentation of the period and its events, and in the portrayal of Wilberforce's contemporaries and the driving forces in his life. (especially, John Newton, a former slave ship captain and the author of the hymn "Amazing Grace"— who induces Wilberforce to take up the cause).

At the same time depicting Wilberforce's two decades of abolitionist struggle through flashback makes it a personal vision of history. The film communicates more as man's emotional quest to end a social evil than as a historical movie of action.

Work Cited

Amazing Grace. Dir. Michael Apted. Perf. Ioan Gruffudd, Romo Garai. Samuel Goldwyn Films, 2006.