

AGAINST SLAVERY IN MICHAEL APTED'S *AMAZING GRACE*

: A MARXIST APPROACH



RESEARCH PAPER

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by:

**Joanna Gunawan
A 320 050 189**

**SCHOOL OF TEACHER TRAINING AND EDUCATION
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study.

The *Amazing Grace* describes slavery in England by the seventeenth century until eighteenth century. The *Amazing Grace* takes William Wilberforce as the main Character. He is a member of parliament. This film has duration around 103 minutes 59 seconds. This film also recounts John Newton's writing of the hymn.

The *Amazing Grace* movies begin with William Wilberforce's holiday with his cousin, Henry Thornton. He meets with the future wife, Barbara Spooner. The stories flash back to 15 years ago in 1782. William Wilberforce recounts the events that led him to where he is now. Beginning as member of parliaments, he is ambitious to persuade the dangerous issues of the British slave with his friends, William Pitt, Thomas Clarkson, Hannah Moore and others. The William Wilberforce's opinion led him to become highly unpopular in the House of Commons among the Members of Parliament representing vested interests of the trade in the cities of London, Bristol, and Liverpool. One Member of Parliament that becomes the rivals of William Wilberforce is duke of Clarence. he always fights effort of William Wilberforce to erase the slavery.

William Wilberforce feels frustrated due to many fights from the other member of parliaments that disagree with his opinion and he becomes physically ill. This brings the story back to the present day. Having virtually given up hope,

William considers leaving politics forever. Barbara convinces him to keep fighting because if he does not, no one else is capable of doing so. A few days afterward, William and Barbara marry. William with a renewed hope for success picks up the fight where he had previously left off, aided by Thornton, Clarkson and James Stephen. In time, after many attempts to bring legislation forward over twenty years, he is eventually responsible for a bill being passed through Parliament in 1807, which abolishes the slave trade in the British Empire forever.

Many people believe that this film is great film that already change view for slave. They believes that this film as a campaign of anti – slavery movement. After release in 23 February 2007 many critics from public. Ones website already accepts 108 reviews for the film, 70% of which were positive. Ones reviews that positive by Jason;

I really enjoyed *Amazing Grace*, as well .it is a very good telling of the story of this great man in history, One that until this movie, I knew very little about. The jumping backhand forth in this story threw me off a bit, but is a minor complaint for a movie that overall is well worth your time and money to go see (Cinemablend. 2009)

Then there are that negative like as by Roberta bowman that says;

I saw the movie yesterday and caught the difference between abolition of the slave trade and abolition of slavery. I know enough about history that slavery was not abolished for many decades later. However, I was interested to learn the facts surrounding the producers of the film and their point of view so that I could examine the movie for other possible examples of bias that might exist. I would have liked to know more about Wilberforce's other accomplishments as well, particularly in the area of animal welfare. I don't care that his motivation for doing good works might center on the salvation of his own soul. I feel the purpose of our lives might very well be our own salvation through our good works. By salvation I don't mean an afterlife, I mean a feeling that one has lived a good life while he is alive. Being able to life with oneself on a day to day basis.Thankyou (Wordpress, 2007)

These statements show to reader or viewer that *Amazing Grace* has gained response forwards society.

The film brought in a little over \$4 million at the box office over the weekend of February 23 up to 25, placing it as the tenth highest grossing film for the weekend, behind such new releases as *The Astronaut Farmer* and *the Number 23*. The film has grossed \$21,250,683 in the United States as of June 14, 2007. Worldwide box office as of August 26, 2007 stands at \$32,050,774.

The *Amazing Grace* presented by Bristol by Production that in association with Ingenious Film Partner. This film made at 2006 and released in February, 23 2007. Steven Knight as writer this film, and directed by Michael Apted. He is already made many film such as; *Coronations Street* (1963-1964), *New York news* (1994), *Married in America* (2002), *Rome* (2006) etc. Beside already get much money, this film also success to get Award with named “*Best Spiritual Film of 2008*” in third annual *Beliefnet Film Awards*.

There are four points of interest for *Amazing Grace* that become the writer reason to analyze this movie, the points are: first, the elements is plot which is the film used different with the other because this story use plot that began with end ,back to beginning ,middle, climax and the next is end or conclusion again. If the other use plot began from beginning, middle, climax, and the net is end. So, the writer thinks this is unique and makes the writer interest with The *Amazing Grace* movie as object in his research.

Second is setting. The *Amazing Grace* is a history that describing about anti – slavery movement in England at 17th up to 18th century. Michael Apted is excellent to make setting in the *Amazing Grace* movie like reality. He built the movie with the unique architectures like the western style at 17th up to 18th

century. Beside that, he also success make clothes that use by each characters seeks in the 17th -18th century, which men use men's suit and blouse with shirt that it collar any lace, shoes with long socks. The women use long dress, glove, hat, coat, etc. The all clothes that used by characters is unique style at 17th -18th century and shows characteristic each characters.

Third, are the characters which the writer interest with the main character. The main character is William Wilberforce, he is a politician that fights without surrender of prohibition although he is in condition sick as soon as a justice. This is become the reason why that the writer interested in William Wilberforce because his attitude can use in the writer's life.

The last is the theme which is used by the film about slavery. Slavery is condition which a person is compelled to work for another without must pay them. Slavery itself comes from word "slave" it means that person is compelled with the other person who have strong power.

Beside the reasons take from elements of movie any other reasons. The reasons are effects from *Amazing Grace* movie. The writer believe that there are two effects from this movie, such as know about slavery so in the future if any sigh about it we will understand, know about politics, because this movie also show how the way to engage in politics. Moreover, the reader can learn to engage of politics and use it in the writer's life.

Stimulated by all of facts and reasons clarified above, this research described the anti-slave in Michael Apted by employing Marxism. The writer

chooses the title **Against Slavery in Michael Apted's *Amazing Grace*: A Marxist Approach.**

B. Literature Review.

There are no researchers who conducted studies on the movie of *The Amazing Grace*, at least among the students of Surakarta and Yogyakarta, but there several researchers that use Marxist as approach as their subject. The first researcher is Siti Romlah with entitled "Struggle for the Truth in Henrik Iben's *an Enemy of the People*: Marxist Perspective" (Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, 2005, Research Paper). She tries to describe an opposition for injustice an *Enemy of the people* movie. Basically this is same with my paper because it's talk about injustice, but different object. If in her research uses in *Henrik Iben's* movie as object, I will use the *Michael Apted's* movie. The other researcher by Nita Ariyani with entitle "Social relation and stratification in James Cameron's in *Titanic Film Script*: Marxist Perspective" (Muhammadiyah University of Surakarta, 2005, Research Paper). She tries to describe the relation society between up with low class. Based on the two papers there are different and similar. The different is the first uses object Henrik Iben's an *Enemy of the People* and the second use James Cameron's in *Titanic Film Script*. The similarity is both use approach that same.

In this research, the writer uses similar approach, but using different object and problem statement focusing on how George Orwell reflects Against Slavery in *Michael Apted's Amazing Grace* by using Marxist Approach.

C. Problem Statement

Based on the research background above, the problem of the study is “How Against slavery of Michael Apted is reflected in *Amazing Grace* film”.

D. Limitation of the study

To focus on the study, the researcher needs to limit the study. The researcher is going to analyze William Wilberforce character in *Amazing Grace* by using A Marxist Approach.

E. Objective of the study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To analyze the film in term of its structural elements
2. To analyze the film based on Marxist Approach

F. Benefit of the Study

The benefits of this study are as follows:

1. Theoretical Benefit

- a. To give some information which can be used by those who are interested in analyzing this literary work.
- b. To give a contribution to other literary research especially in the study of Michael Apted’s literary work.

2. Practical Benefit

- a. For getting deeper understanding about Marxist issues in *Michael Apted’s Amazing Grace*
- b. For getting Bachelor Degree of Education in English Department.

G. Research Method

The research method employed in this study will be a descriptive qualitative method, which merely focuses on the analysis of textual data, includes:

1. Object of the Research

The writer will use the movie of *Amazing Grace*, it was first released 23 February 2007 (USA). This movie has 2 discs, the duration is 1 hours, 52 minute, 59 second.

2. Type of the Data and the Data Source

The writer will define the source of data into primary data and secondary data. The primary data will be the movie of *Amazing Grace* itself, while the secondary data will be taken from the internet and other materials that relevant to support the analysis.

3. Technique of the Data Collection

The data collection is done through documentary or library research that is the writer seeks the data from printed media, the movie in this case, as the primary data and the other sources as the secondary data. The following steps are the procedure to conduct the study: first, watching the movie repeatedly, second: taking, the important notes in both the primary and the secondary data, which is relevant to the study.

4. Technique of the Data Analysis

The technique of data analysis in this research will be descriptive. This is an interpretation of the movie analysis to get the characteristic of the data to Marxist analysis of *Amazing Grace* movie.

H. Research Paper Organization

The paper consists of six chapters which are presented as follows: Chapter I is introduction of the research that includes the background of the study, literary review, problem statement, limitation of the study, objective of the study, benefit of the study, research methodology and paper organization. Chapter II presents the underlying theory consist of Marxist theory, especially the nature of Marxist and the principle of Marxist. Chapter III deals with the social background with all of the aspect of the social reality of the England society in the seventy century. Chapter IV is the structural analysis of the movie by describing character and characterization, setting, a point of view, plot and theme of the movie and a brief discussion. Chapter V is Marxist Analysis deals with the problems in the movie. Chapter VI contains conclusion and suggestion.