

STRUGGLE AGAINST TYRANICAL REGIME IN TOLSTOY'S *HADJI MURAD* (1904): MARXIST CRITICISM

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ABSTRACT

The major problem of this study is describing the struggle to fight against tyrannical regime in Chechnya reflected in Leo Tolstoy's *Hadji Murad*. The objective of this study is to analyze the novel based on Marxist approach. The writer employs qualitative method. The object of the study is Leo Tolstoy's novel *Hadji Murad* published in 1904. The writer uses two data sources: primary and secondary. The primary data source is the text of *Hadji Murad* by Leo Tolstoy, published by Pennsylvania State University and the secondary data source are references and materials related to the study which are taken from books or internet. The technique of data collection is documentation and the technique of data analysis is descriptive analysis. Based on the analysis, the writer gets two conclusions. First, through *Hadji Murad* novel, Tolstoy delivers a message that hero is a matter of perspective. Second, the *Hadji Murad* novel reflects the social realities of the Chechen Muslims in the struggling against the Russian tyrannical regime that reflect Tolstoy's support to the proletariat class.

Key words: Hadji Murad, Marxist, regime, struggle, tyranny, Tolstoy

INTRODUCTION

Hadji Murad is the last novel written by Tolstoy before he died in 1910 and it was published in 1904 in Russian language. Then it is translated into English by Louise and Aylmer Maude. This novel which contains 135 pages and 25 chapters is written based on Tolstoy's experience when he became a Russian army. The setting of place is at Chechnya, Russia and the setting of time is during the Caucasian War in 1851-1852.

The novel captures an episode of the Caucasian War in Chechnya where the Muslim-Avars of Chechen struggle against the Russian Empire's conquest under the command of Imam Shamil. As the

title suggests, Tolstoy takes Hadji Murad based on a real figure named Hadji Murad, an Imam Shamil's naib that was trapped between the Russian Empire's side and the Chechen Muslim-Avars' side. Tolstoy depicts many conflicts in the novel and he ends it up by the tragic death of Hadji Murad.

In this research, I only focus on describing the struggle to fight against tyrannical regime on the major character, Hadji Murad in the *Hadji Murad* novel based on classic Marxist approach by Karl Marx.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are three previous studies that deal with Hadji Murad. The first study is done by Paul Friedrich

entitled *Tolstoy, Homer, and Genotypical Influence* (Friedrich, 2004). It is a comparative literature study whose objective is to find and to describe Homer's influence on Tolstoy's novel. Paul Friedrich used four different perspectives in his study: biography, fundamental values and themes, phenotypical traits, and genotypical poetics. To do so, Paul Friedrich refers mainly at Tolstoy's *The Cossacks* and *Hadji Murad*. Paul Friedrich concludes that Tolstoy is influenced by Homer and the type of influence is genotypical influence which means Homer's work is the source of Tolstoy's work. The second study was done by Jeff Love entitled *Tolstoy: A Guide for the Perplexed* (Love, 2008). The object of his study is to find patterns in Tolstoy's art and thought. To do so, Love refers to aspects of Tolstoy's life, considering briefly the narrative efforts to give form and meaning to life, and Tolstoy's *The Cossacks*, *War and Peace*, *Anna Karenina*, and *Hadji Murad*. Love comes to a conclusion that Tolstoy's style in art and thought are striving and the plurality, movement, and change.

The third study was done by Michael Church entitled *A Thistle in Russia's side* (Church, 2005). It is a historical study about the past conflicts of the Caucasus that reflected in Tolstoy's novels *The Cossack* and *Hadji Murad*. Church found that in *Hadji Murad*, there is a parallel between two main figures pitted against each other, there are Shamil and Nicholas I. They represent two poles of absolutism - Asiatic and European. He also found that *Hadji Murad* is symbolized by a thistle that Tolstoy

had once self-laceratingly failed to uproot.

RESEARCH METHOD

The object of the study of this research paper is Leo Tolstoy's *Hadji Murad* published in 1904. Type of data in this study is text that consists of words, phrase and sentences. For the data source, there are two categories data in this research: primary data source and secondary data source. The primary data source is the text of *Hadji Murad* by Leo Tolstoy, published by Pennsylvania State University and the secondary data source are references and materials related to the study whether picking up from the books or internet. In analyzing the novel, the data is collected through the documentation and the technique of data analysis is using the descriptive analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In analyzing *Hadji Murad* novel, I use Marxist Criticism by Karl Marx. For that, I use four elements of Marxist criticism, namely historical materialism, alienation, class struggle, and revolution.

After analyzing *Hadji Murad* novel, the researcher finds out some findings as follow:

1. Historical Materialism

In "*the German Ideology*" Marx (1998) considers that history is determined by material production condition. So, social changes occurred when there is a change in people's way of production. There are two things that can change people's way of production that are

called as base and superstructure (Marx, 1859). Base or infrastructure consists of two points, there are productive forces and relations of production. Superstructure or ideology consists of two points, there are institutional arrangements and collective consciousness arrangements. Those two points is used by the ruling class to legitimate the power of social class which owns the means of economic production (Eagleton, 2006: 3).

a. Base

Hadji Murad novel reflects the productive forces and relations of production. Here, the productive forces are power, region, source, family, and properties. Based on those productive forces, the characterizations of the novel are divided into two large groups, the Russian Empire and the Chechen Muslims. The Russian Empire consists of five narrow groups; they are the Russian Empire's Tsar, the Russian Empire's officials, the Russian Empire's soldiers, Russian farmers and Russian serfs. The Chechen Muslims consists of four narrow groups; they are Chechen Muslims that becomes Russian Empire's allies, the *ghazavat Imams*, the *ghazavat* officer, and non *ghazavat* Chechen Muslims.

Those characterizations are represented by characters in the novel. Character that represents the Russian Empire's Tsar is Nicholas and characters that represent the Russian Empire's officials are the Viceroy, Vorontsov, Loris Melikov, Poltoratsky, General Meller, Chernyshov, General Rosen, Major Petrov, Bibikov, Butler, and General Kozlovsky. Character that represents

Russian Empire Soldier is Avdeev, character that represents Russian peasantry is Avdeev's family and character that represents Russian serfs is Vovilo.

Characters that represent Chechen Muslims that become Russian Empire's allies are Akhmet Khan, Arslan Khan, and Hadji Aga. Characters that represent the *ghazavat Imams* are Hamzad and Imam Shamil. Character that represents the *ghazavat* officer is Eddin, and characters that represent non *ghazavat* Chechen Muslims are Hadji Murad, Sado, Eldar, Bata, Khan Mahoma, Avar Khanefi, Gamzalo, the Khansa, Patimat, Yusuf, and Sado's father.

The relations of production between characters in the novel consist of conflicts. The productive forces makes complicated conflicts happened. The first conflict happened between the Russian Empire and the Chechen Muslims. The Russian Empire wanted to conquer Chechnya and oppressed its citizen to dominate its region and resource by raids, cutting down forests and destroying the supplies of food.

The conquest made the Chechens split into three groups. The first group is the Chechens that surrender to Russian Empire and becomes it's allies. The second group is Chechen Muslim that resisted from the Russian Empire's conquest and fought back by forming a military power named the *ghazavat* that was first led by Hamzad and then was succeeded by Imam Shamil. The third group is non *ghazavat* Chechen Muslims that refused to join the

ghazavat and refused to become the Russian Empire's ally.

The second conflicts happened among the Chechen Muslims. The *ghazavat Imam*, Hamzad, considered that they need a huge power to defend and fight against the Russian Empire's conquest. So he forced all Chechen Muslims, including Chechen Muslims that had already become Russian Empire's ally, to join the *ghazavat* and fight back at Russian Empire's conquest. But some Chechen Muslims like Hadji Murad, his family, and the Khansa refused to join the *ghazavat*.

b. Superstructure

Hadji Murad novel also reflects institutional arrangements and collective consciousness arrangements. The institutional arrangement is reflected from the Russian Empire's Tsar. The Russian Empire's government form was autocracy, that made the Tsar had an absolute power to control the Empire. Based on that, Nicholas the Tsar believed that his command and decision were not allowed to be discussed that made him an arrogant, injustice, and cruel ruler. One of his cruel decisions was to force the peasants to hold the Orthodox faith and punish them who refuse to. And one of his injustice decisions was the transfer of State peasants to the Crown.

Besides that, Nicholas was ignorant. He knew that almost all of his officials were corrupt but he did nothing.

The collective conscious arrangement is reflected in blood feud that happened among Chechen Muslims. A blood feud happened between Hadji Murad and Hamzad

as the result of Hamzad's treachery and killing of all the Khans. That made up Hadji Murad and his brother's mind to kill Hamzad.

A blood feud also happened between Arslan Khan and Hadji Murad that made Arslan Khan tried to kill Hadji Murad at his departure to leave Major Petrov's house.

Another blood feud happened between Hadji Murad and Imam Shamil because Imam Shamil killed Hadji Murad's brother, Osman, and Abu Nutsal Khan. As the result, Hadji Murad refused to join Imam Shamil in the *ghazavat*. And when Hadji Murad was forcibly joined in the *ghazavat*, there was never any friendship between them.

2. Alienation

Alienation is a process where someone is estranged from his milieu, work, products of work, or self (www.merriam-webster.com).

There are two kinds of alienation: first, workers are alienated from themselves and second, workers are alienated from other human. Besides that, the alienation can happen inside both classes. Worker competes with worker to find a place to work, and owner competes with owner to get market.

In *Hadji Murad* (1904), the main character, Hadji Murad, is alienated from his family, positions, his Imam, supporters, followers, and properties. When he was a teenager, he was alienated from the Khans that have been treated him like a family. Hadji Murad had to lose the whole of the Khans family that were killed by Hamzad because of the Khans' recusant to join the *ghazavat*.

Then he was alienated from his position. After Avaria fell into

Russian's hand, Hadji Murad was ordered to govern Avaria. But there was hostility between him and Akhmet Khan that made Akhmet Khan do his trial to kill him and told lie about him so Hadji Murad lost his position.

Then he was alienated from his *imam*, Shamil. After his hostility with Akhmet Khan, Shamil came with an offer to protect him, so he received his offer and joined the *ghazavat*. But then hostility happens between him and Shamil that makes him go to Russia to get protection.

Hadji Murad was also alienated from his family. Because he went to Russia to get protection, Shamil took his family as prisoner and wielded his family to make him went back to Shamil so Shamil could kill him.

Besides that, Hadji Murad was also alienated from his property and his follower. Because of his going to Russia, Shamil had an order to the Chechens to seize him alive or dead. That makes Hadji Murad became a fugitive and had to move from one place to another.

Hadji Murad was also isolated by the Russian Empire after his surrender to the Viceroy. He was placed in Grozny to keep him away from his supporters and was not allowed to go anywhere without Russian soldier's guard.

Besides Hadji Murad, his supporters and *murids* that were still loyal to him were alienated too. One of his supporters was Sado. After Hadji Murad's arrival at his house, he became alienated from his neighbour.

One of Hadji Murad's loyal *murid* was Gamzalo. After Hadji Murad's hostility with Shamil, he became

alienated from his idol, Imam Shamil.

Another Hadji Murad's *murid* was Eldar. After Hadji Murad's status changed to fugitive and moved from one place to another, he followed Hadji Murad whenever he go. That makes him became alienated from his properties and environment.

Besides that, alienation occurs upon the Chechens. Because of the Russian Empire's effort to conquer their region, they become alienated from their source and properties.

Another alienation occurred upon the Russian peasants that are alienated from themselves. First, they were alienated from their faith. Nicholas forced them to hold the Orthodox faith and a punishment will be prevailed upon them who disobeyed.

Second, they were alienated from their free will. The Tsar also transferred State peasants, which their status were free peasants, to Russian Empire that meant to make them serfs of the Imperial family.

Alienation also happened to Russian serfs that were alienated from their selves. One of the serfs was Vivolo who is the serf of Poltoratsky. He became a serf since he was a boy and until he was forty he didn't get his freedom yet.

There was also Poland that was alienated from justice. Poland was labeled as rascals and when a young Poland student named Bzhezovski got an unfair treatment at an examination, hurt his professor with a pen-knife, Nicholas punished him with gauntlet of a thousand men twelve times.

Besides that, alienation also occurred upon Russian soldiers. They were alienated from themselves, their

family, and their money. One of Russian soldiers was Avdeev. He lost his identity after becoming a soldier and he felt dull and suffer because of it.

Avdeev was also alienated from his family. Became a soldier meant to live at the fort and leave the family. That made Avdeev missed his family and lost his wife.

Besides that, Avdeev was also alienated from his money. That happened because a corrupt commander in his commissariat took the treachery that was collected by soldiers.

Alienation also happened upon Russian officials that were honest. They were alienated from themselves. Bibikov was one of honest Russian official that stand for justice. The Tsar's injustice and cruelty made him afraid to express his disagreement of the Tsar's unfair decision.

3. Class Struggle

Class is social group in a society that is determined by certain position in production process. The most importance thing to be understood is not just what class that is found but also how the power structure among them is. So, there will be obvious that there are always be oppressing class and oppressed class. The oppressed class is the class that is struggling.

a. The power structure

In *Hadji Murad* novel, there can be found a complicated power structure among the characters because there are five bodies of power structure. Those power structures are:

a) The Russian Empire oppressing the Chechens

In the first power structure, the oppressing group is the Russian Empire and the oppressed group is the Chechens. The Russian Empire wants to conquer Chechnya and oppresses its citizen to dominate its region and resource by raids, cutting down forests and destroying the supplies of food.

This conquest made most of the Chechens that have no power simply surrender to Russian Empire and become its allies but some mountaineers and Muslims are fighting back.

b) The Russian Empire officials oppressing the Russian soldiers

In the second power structure, the oppressing group is the Russian Empire officials and the oppressed group is Russian soldiers and serfs. In Russian military, it is very common that a commander takes the commissariat money that is collected from the soldiers.

Besides that, unlike the Russian soldiers whose life is suffer, the life of Russian Empire officials is a luxury life with special rights given by the Tsar.

c) The Russian Empire officials oppressing the serfs

At the third power structure, the oppressing group is the Russian officials and the oppressed group is the serfs. Vivolo, Butler's serf, feels that his life is like a dog's life.

d) The Russian Tsar oppressing the Russian farmers

In the fourth power structure, the oppressing group is the Russian Tsar and the oppressed group is the Russian farmers or peasants.

The Russian Tsar oppressed them by force them to hold the Orthodox faith and to punish them if they disobey. He also made the State peasants become the Crown peasant that meant to change them from free peasants to serfs.

e) The ghazavat Chechen Muslims oppressing the non ghazavat Chechen Muslim

In the sixth power structure, the oppressing group is the Chechen Muslims that join in the *ghazavat* and the oppressed group is the Chechen Muslims that don't join in the *ghazavat*. The Imam of *ghazavat* forces and oppresses all of the Chechen Muslims, including the Chechen Muslims that have already surrendered to Russian Empire, to join the *ghazavat* and fight back against the Russian Empire's conquest. Some of the Chechen Muslims are scared of the Imam and join the *ghazavat* but some of them are struggling not to join the *ghazavat*.

From the power structures above, we can see that there are two power structures that collapse each others. The first power structure, Russian Empire oppressing Chechens, results the forming of the sixth power structure, the *ghazavat* Chechen Muslims oppressing the non *ghazavat* Chechen Muslims. Some of Chechen Muslims didn't want to surrender to the Russian Empire conquest. They resist by forming a military power named the *ghazavat*. But to defeat such a huge Russian Empire military power, they need a lot of support. That is why they force all of Chechen Muslims to join the

ghazavat and fight back the Russian Empire. So the non *ghazavat* Chechen Muslims is oppressing by two groups: the Russian Empire and the *ghazavat* Chechen Muslims.

b. Classes

Based on the power structures above, we can conclude that there are three classes in *Hadji Murad* novel, they are:

a) Russian Empire bourgeoisie

The Russian Empire bourgeoisie class consists of the Russian Tsar and the Russian Empire's officials.

b) Chechens nobility

The Chechens nobility class consists of Khans, the *ghazavat* Imam, the *ghazavat* naibs, and the *ghazavat* official.

c) Proletariat

The proletariat class consists of the Russian soldiers, the Russian peasantry, the Russian serf, the Chechens peasantry, and the non *ghazavat* Chechen Muslims.

Among those three classes, two classes are the struggling class; proletariat that struggle against Chechens nobility and Chechens nobility that struggle against Russian Empire bourgeoisie.

4. Revolution

In "*Preface to Contribution to the Critique of Political Economics*" (Marx, 1971: 8) Marx explains that the oppressed will always struggle for the better by changing the economic system. The superstructure can be changed by changing the system of ownership, and the whole system can be changed when the base is strong enough in a collective movement to force the superstructure that is called as revolution. Marx has a notion that all of social changes can

be achieved by revolution. History is formed by revolutions that occur from unstable society and result a new superstructure.

In *Hadji Murad* novel, the collective movement of the oppressed class does not occur. Hadji Murad and his *murids* and supporters should unite with Imam Shamil and his *murids* to be free from the Russian Empire's conquest. However, that never occurred because Nicholas disunited them by using Hadji Murad's conflict with Imam Shamil. He isolated Hadji Murad that already surrendered to him and promised to serve him, to make Imam Shamil lose a lot of power and supported to fight back against the Russian Empire. And that would be easier for Nicholas to defeat the *ghazavat* with the help of Hadji Murad. Nevertheless, because Nicholas broke his promise to help Hadji Murad saved his family, Hadji Murad did a reckless thing by running away from the isolation place and heading to Venedo to save his family. That act made Nicholas announced to all Chechens that Hadji Murad was a fugitive and he would reward a thousand rubles to anyone that can capture Hadji Murad alive or dead. Soon hundreds of men were chasing Hadji Murad. In the morning, Karganov, Hadji Aga, and Akhmet Khan succeeded in capturing and killing Hadji Murad. Hadji Murad's death was announced by a Russian officer to all the forts and souls. That made Imam Shamil's struggle to defeat the Russian Empire conquest comes in vain.

After analyzing the *Hadji Murad* novel using the Marxist criticism, it is clear that the novel reflects the

struggle of the Chechen Muslims against the Russian tyrannical regime. Here Tolstoy manifests the social realities of Chechnya during the Russian Empire's conquest. He tries to reflect historical materialism, alienation, class struggle, and revolution that happened in Chechnya during the conquest of the Russian Empire.

In the novel, the materials which are power, region, source, family, and properties are the productive forces. Those productive forces form relations of production between characters which consist of complicated conflicts. Those conflicts emerge alienation occurs upon some characters that make them become the oppressed classes. The oppression makes the oppressed class struggling to get the materials that are alienated from them.

In the first conflict, Nicholas the Tsar's ambition to have a powerful Empire made his decision to conquer Chechnya. Because of that conquest, the Chechens became alienated from their source and properties. As the response, some Chechen mountaineers and Chechen Muslims resisted and struggled to get their source and properties back.

In the second conflict, some Chechen Muslims were struggling by forming a military power named *ghazavat* led by an Imam. The *ghazavat Imam's* consideration of support and huge army needs made the *ghazavat Imam* legitimates his force to all Chechen Muslims to join the *ghazavat* and struggle against the Russian Empire conquest. Some of the Chechen Muslims refuse to join the *ghazavat*. That made them became the *ghazavat's* enemy and became

alienated from themselves, their family, their properties, and their environment and they were struggling to get those materials back.

Above those struggles, there are superstructures that hold those struggles. They are the barrier between those struggles and revolution. The revolution can be reached when the base is strong enough in a collective movement to force the superstructure. In *Hadji Murad* novel, the superstructures are strong to destruct the base and make revolution didn't occur.

The first superstructure was a culture among the Chechen Muslims that said a blood feud should be paid off. That emerges conflicts among Chechen Muslims. A blood feud happened between Hadji Murad and Imam Shamil because Imam Shamil kills Hadji Murad's brother, Osman, and Abu Nutsal Khan. As the result, there was never any friendship between them. In the end, it emerged a conflict that makes Shamil want to kill Hadji Murad. That makes Hadji Murad join the Russian Empire's side.

The second superstructure was the tyrannical regime. The situation above was used by Nicholas, as the Viceroy's recommended it, to break Imam Shamil's power and defeat the *ghazavat*. He isolated Hadji Murad to make Imam Shamil lost a lot of power and support to fight back against the Russian Empire. That would be easier for Nicholas to defeat the *ghazavat* with the help of Hadji Murad. But because Nicholas broke his promise to help Hadji Murad save his family, Hadji Murad did a reckless thing by running away

from the isolation place and heading to Vedeno to save his family. That act made Hadji Murad died and made Imam Shamil struggle to defeat the Russian Empire, the conquest came in vain. Therefore, the struggle of the Chechen Muslims against the Russian Empire tyrannical regime didn't result a revolution.

Besides that, it is clear that the novel reflects the author's ideology that stands up for the proletariat, especially Hadji Murad. Tolstoy was a Russian Soldier that witnessed the Caucasian War but in *Hadji Murad* novel he states his admiration to Hadji Murad's toughness connotatively through a narration of a Tartar plant that keep standing and not surrendering to man who had destroyed it.

Most of his narrations in *Hadji Murad* novel are about Hadji Murad and his goodness. In the novel, Hadji Murad is one side that is oppressed by both sides: the *ghazavat* and the Russian Empire. When he was struggling against the Russian Empire with the *ghazavat*, he had to accept the hatred of his leader Imam Shamil that took everything of him including his family.

After Shamil took Hadji Murad's family, he forcibly rebelled the *ghazavat* and came to Russia that he hated most to get a protection and support to save his family. Through narration, Tolstoy narrates Hadji Murad's sacrifice to save his family and his hatred to the oppressing class in the novel connotatively.

From the explanation above, *Hadji Murad* novel reflects how the struggle of the Chechen Muslims against the Russian tyrannical regime. The structural elements of

Hadji Murad novel are matched with the main idea of Tolstoy viewed from Marxist perspective.

CONCLUSION

After analyzing *Hadji Murad* novel that is written by Leo Tolstoy, I come to the following conclusions: First, through *Hadji Murad* novel, Tolstoy delivers a message that hero is a matter of perspective. For that, he writes conflicts happened in Chechnya during the Caucasian war that did not only happen between the Russian Empire with the Chechen Muslims, they also happened inside the Chechen Muslims side and inside the Russian Empire's side. So he emerges three major characters and thirty three minor characters. Those conflicts and characters are united in retrospective plot arrangements that end up tragically.

Second, the *Hadji Murad* novel reflects the struggle of the Chechen Muslims against the Russian tyrannical regime. Here Tolstoy tries to manifests the social realities of Chechnya during the Russian Empire's conquest. Tolstoy tries to reflect alienation, class struggle, historical materialism, and revolution that happened in Chechnya during the conquest of the Russian Empire. That manifestation reflects Tolstoy's ideology. It can be found in *Hadji Murad* novel that Tolstoy states his party to the proletariat class.

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