Synopsis of Leo Tolstoy’s Hadji Murad

A story about a Chechen named Hadji Murad who stands between Russian and his own tribe. He stands between two big poles that clash. The Russians want to expand their territory including territory where Caucasian people lived and earned their living. On the other hand, the Chechens who are led by Imam Shamil reject to join the Russians with declaring a Ghazavat, a war against the infidel.

The war between the Russians and the Chechens itself has given both sides a great disadvantage. Many soldiers from both sides have sacred their lives. In one occasion, a Russian soldier dies on the battle field and brings sadness to the whole family including his wife, even though the Russians themselves did not pay too much attention to this matter. On another occasion, Aoul, where the Chechens live, is destroyed by the Russians. Their houses are burnt down and their harvests have vanished into dust. Not only the soldier but innocent people even a kid also become the victims of this war between the Chechens and the Russians.

Beyond all the conflicts between the Russians and the Chechens, the protagonist Hadji Murad also has his own conflict involving the Russians and the Chechens under Shamil command. He has to face the truth that after he has run away from Shamil’s side his family becomes a hostage and kept by Shamil. His
clash with Shamil has started before Shamil becomes Imam to lead the Ghazavat. Hamzad, the previous leader before Shamil, together with Shamil has murdered Hadji Murad’s sworn-brothers. It makes Hadji Murad has to take revenge over his sworn-brothers’ death. Hadji Murad and his brother kill Hamzad in order to pay what Hamzad has done. Although Hamzad has been killed by his hand, Hadji Murad still has a personal revenge over Shamil as he is still alive and become the leader after succeeding Hamzad.

During his quarrel with Shamil, the Russians order Hadji Murad to govern Avaria. At first this situation would have been well, but later on he is blackmailed by Akmet Khan. Beside of blackmailing Hadji Murad, Akhmet Khan also orders his henchmen to kill Hadji Murad. Knowing the situation of Hadji Murad, Shamil is offering a hand to help Hadji Murad and would make Hadji Murad rules over Avaria again with the condition Hadji Murad would help Shamil fight against the Russians. Hadji Murad accepts it. Yet, as time goes by, Shamil seems threatened by Hadji Murad. Finally, Shamil wants to get rid of Hadji Murad. Hadji Murad flees to the Russians asking for help. In escaping from Shamil, Hadji Murad does not bring his family and now his family is on Shamil’s hand.

Hadji Murad asks for help to the Russians through Vornstov. He asks for help to set his family free from Shamil’s hand and he will join with the Russians; On top of that, he adds that his life is the guarantee if he breaks the agreement. Some of the Russians are inclined to do so, but others are afraid that Hadji Murad may be just spying on them. The action drags on, with no resolution, until Hadji Murad receives a message from Shamil to ask for Shamil’s pardon. Confused as he is whether to go to Shamil or keep staying with the Russians, Hadji Murad
makes his final decision. Hadji Murad escapes from the Russians to release his family from Shamil. This final decision leads Hadji Murad to death as he is involved in a war with the Russians who try to stop him from running away from them.
**Biography of Leo Tolstoy**

Leo Tolstoy was born with the name Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy on 9 September 1828. He was born at Yasnaya Polyana, Tula Province, Russia, the fourth and last son of the Russian couple Princess Marie Volkonsky and Count Nicholas Tolstoy. As Tolstoy’s age reached 18 months, he had to face the fact that his mother died and followed by his father’s death when Tolstoy was 9 years old. After becoming an orphan Tolstoy and his siblings were raised by his aunts and when Tolstoy was 16 years old, he went to language and law school where he got bored and left it without a degree. At 1851 he went with his brother to serve the army in Caucasus. He spent three years becoming a soldier in Caucasus, and there he wrote his first novel, *Childhood*.

On September 1862 he married a girl named Sophia Andreyevna Bers. At that time Tolstoy was 34 years old whereas Sophia was 18 years old. This marriage gave Tolstoy 13 children. During this marriage he wrote his masterpiece *War and Peace* and continued with *Anna Karenina*.

Between 1884 until 1904 he produced several literary works such as *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*, *The Power of Darkness*, *The Kreutzer Sonata*, *Hadji Murad*, *Resurrection* although in 1901 Tolstoy’s health was going bad. Although his health was growing worse, he did not stop writing until he faced his own death on November 20th 1910 and was buried in the place where he was born, Yasnaya Polyana.