

Title: Nekhliudov the Advocate: Seeking the Lost Hero of Tolstoi's *Resurrection*  
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Abstract:

Tolstoi's final novel, *Resurrection* (1899), is undoubtedly his most didactic, sweeping aside the relative ambiguities of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* for a clearer moral vision. However, while the novel's overall message could hardly be confused, the fate of its hero, Prince Dmitrii Nekhliudov, is more complicated. In this paper, I will examine the incongruity of the author's search for universal truth and the individual development of Nekhliudov, which are not as aligned as they are purported to be, and account for the novel's somewhat awkward ending.

Nevertheless, *Resurrection* represents Tolstoi's greatest attempt to situate an idealistic moral treatise within the confines of the realist novel. In the process of reevaluating the successes and failures of this experiment, I will focus particularly on the Nekhliudov of the middle of the novel – the prisoners' advocate - who appears to develop organically from both the character's nature and Tolstoi's ideas, but was seemingly rejected by the author and overlooked by critics. Through analysis of the novel's structure and hero, and in consideration of Tolstoi's own public life, I hope to show how Nekhliudov's preachy finale does not signify the peak of his moral perfection project but rather a regression from it. What is lost by the end of the novel is Nekhliudov the advocate, who offers a different, but no less Tolstoian, alternative to Nekhliudov the preacher.