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### **THE RELATIONSHIP OF MAN AND SOCIETY IN LEV TOLSTOY'S NOVEL "RESURRECTION"**

Tagirova Madina Askarovna

Student of Shakhrisabz State Pedagogical Institute

E-mail: [tagirovam555@gmail.com](mailto:tagirovam555@gmail.com)

Tel: 77 297-82-84

Kalandarova Dilafruz Abdujamilovna

Scientific advisor, Associate Professor of Shakhrisabz State Pedagogical  
Institute, Doctor of Philosophy in Philology [PhD]

#### **Abstract**

This article analyzes the relationship between the inner world of a person and society, their mutual influence, and the issue of moral criteria on the example of Lev Tolstoy's novel "Resurrection". "Resurrection" is one of the most important socio-philosophical works of the great Russian writer Lev Tolstoy, in which the complex relationship between man and society is deeply artistically interpreted. The life of Russia at the end of the 19th century, the judicial system in the country, problems such as social inequality and moral crisis are placed in the center of the novel. Through the work, the author revealed not only the process of spiritual awakening of a person, but also the influence of the social system on human destiny.

**Keywords:** Resurrection, Tolstoy, society, Nekhlyudov, Maslova, fate, court, social inequality.



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### **Introduction**

The relationship between man and society is one of the leading themes in Russian literature of the 19th century. This problem is reflected in a particularly deep and philosophical interpretation in the novel “Resurrection” by the great writer Lev Tolstoy. “Resurrection” is Tolstoy’s last work, and the writer partly described himself in it, or rather, the gradual development of his worldview. A person cannot live outside of society, but society is not always indifferent to the fate of a person. It is this complex relationship that has found a profound artistic expression in the novel.

### **Analysis and Results**

People who are familiar with Russian literature consider Tolstoy as a writer for the nobility, and Dostoyevsky as an artist of real life. Indeed, many of Tolstoy’s works depict the luxurious life of the upper class, parties, balls, officials who are very satisfied with themselves, people who spend their time on trips and balls because they have a large inheritance, people who are not worried about living and making ends meet, and people who consider themselves to be the owners of real intelligence, talk about politics, society, and philosophy, which they do not understand, but think they know. And in “Resurrection” is a picture of completely ordinary people. Just as Nekhlyudov, who experienced a spiritual transformation, passed away from his land, Tolstoy began to take care of his wealth at the end of his life. He says that some of the works that we are reading as classics are worth a penny. This novel is not just a work to be read to pass the time.

“Resurrection” is an openly written work. In it, all the details of life are written without wrapping them on paper, and because of this, some images can dull the reader's taste. Analyzing Tolstoy’s work, the literary critic Dmitry Merezhkovsky notes that “the question of moral self-awareness and conscience occupy a central



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place” in his works. This idea is important in understanding the ideological basis of the novel “Resurrection”. The formal and spiritual structure of society is revealed especially through court proceedings.

The trial of Maslova is one of the central culminations of the novel. As a result of the carelessness of the court members, their superficial approach to the issue, and their distance from humanity, the innocent woman is sentenced to a severe punishment. This situation clearly shows the difference between law and justice. In this way, the author shows that the law does not always ensure justice, and that the social system often deviates from the principles of humanity.

By criticizing the judicial system, Tolstoy reveals the general moral crisis of society. Representatives of society act based on external rules and interests rather than conscience in fulfilling their duties. As a result, human fate becomes a victim of the mechanical system. In this respect, the novel is a vivid example of social realism, in which reality is truthfully reflected through artistic means.

In the work, it is described that state agencies, government, and religious institutions are built on complete nonsense. The employees of the office established to serve the people are engaged in oppressing people and robbing them. In the courts, the judges, who committed prostitution only yesterday, will read sentences to prostitutes the next day. One is tired, the other is not in the mood, one looks at work superficially so as not to be late for a meeting with his body, one sentences innocent people to prison to prove who he is. That is, sinners will remain and others will be punished.

How important do you think the fate of a person is? How much will you affect someone’s life? Can you afford to ruin someone’s life? You may not be able to find answers to these questions, or you may give an affirmation like I cannot, I do not go that far. But while reading this novel, you can see that people are



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involved in each other's lives, someone's fate is played by someone, someone is hurt, and someone lives comfortably at the expense of other people's lives. Speaking about Tolstoy's social views, the literary critic Georgy Florovsky notes that the main goal of the writer is "to prioritize the moral responsibility of a person over the institutional system." Indeed, the novel shows that a legal sentence is not equal to a fair sentence.

Although Maslova is innocent, she will be punished due to negligence and formality in the court process. This situation represents the decline of mechanization and humanity in the social system.

The character of Nekhlyudov is in the center of the novel. At first, he appears as a person who belongs to the upper strata of society, has aristocratic views, and pursues his own interests. His careless decisions in his youth cause Maslova's life to derail. However, the meeting with Maslova during the trial makes a radical change in Nekhlyudov's mind. He realizes his guilt and experiences pangs of conscience. This process is not accidental, but the result of inner spiritual search, self-analysis and awareness of moral responsibility.

Nekhlyudov's spiritual "resurrection" is a process of self-realization. He begins to see injustice in society, opposes injustice in the judicial system and tries to help Maslova. In this way, Tolstoy shows the possibility of moral growth of a person. According to the author, real change begins not with external reforms, but with the inner purification of a person.

Analyzing Tolstoy's heroes, literary critic Viktor Shklovsky notes that the writer's main method is "giving the idea by revealing the inner monologue and mental anguish of the hero." Nekhlyudov's internal struggle is described in this way.

The image of Maslova is an important symbol that reveals the social nature of the novel. She was actually an innocent and pure girl, but because of the cruelty and



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vulnerability of society, she fell into a difficult life. The place of a woman in society, social vulnerability and moral hypocrisy is revealed through the fate of Maslova. Society first deceives him and then judges him. In this way, the formation of human destiny under the influence of the social environment is shown. In the novel, the relationship between man and society is not one-sided. If the image of Maslova represents the negative influence of society on the life of an individual, the image of Nekhlyudov represents the possibility of an individual to have a moral influence on society. The characters of Maslova and Nekhlyudov develop in opposite directions: one becomes a victim of society, while the other understands society and chooses a way to change himself. This represents the interdependence between man and society.

The author's religious and moral views also play an important role in the novel. Tolstoy shows a person not as a passive product of society, but as a conscious being with a moral choice. According to the author, in order to change the society, the person must first change. Conscience, compassion and spiritual purification are the main ideological principles of the novel. In this respect, the novel "Resurrection" can be interpreted not only as a social criticism, but also as a moral manifesto.

### **Conclusion**

The novel "Resurrection" is a work that reveals the complex relationship between man and society in a deep philosophical and artistic interpretation. It criticizes injustice in the social system, formalism in the judicial system and social inequality. However, the author does not portray a person as an absolute victim. On the contrary, it shows that an individual has the ability to renew society through moral choice and internal change. That is why the novel remains relevant for today. Issues of responsibility, conscience and justice between man and



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society are important in any era. Tolstoy's work encourages the reader to think deeply about these problems.

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