With the career of Nikolai Utin, we arrive at the end of the beginning. Utin’s activities in the revolutionary underground represent the culmination of many of the themes we have discussed. He grew up, as he admitted freely, on Herzen, then found it necessary to turn against Herzen in the context of a “young émigré” follower of Chernyshevskii, and finally became a leader of the Russian section of the First International, standing solidly with Marx against Bakunin in that arena of combat. In many respects, as we shall see, Utin carried the notion of collective action to new dimensions. On the one hand, his activities marked the close of the period of the emigration’s origins, and on the other, they established a model of revolutionary involvement that would characterize the next generation of Russian émigrés. That next stage in the evolution of the emigration was the era of political party formulation, which first reflected varieties of populism, and later, varieties of social democracy. Utin, then, was the precursor of the generation of émigré party functionaries for whom ideology rather than ideas became so attractive. Although Sokolov, Mechnikov, Zhukovskii, and Zaitsev reflected aspects of this growing trend toward involvement in political party formation, submission to charismatic political leaders, and the development of revolutionary ideology, none was as deeply submerged in these currents as Utin.

Utin, like most of the figures discussed in this study, lies buried under historical neglect and distortion. Whenever he is mentioned in the West, the imagery seems to emanate from a prejudiced account of Utin written by Bakunin in the heat of the battle over control of the International. Venturi, for instance, quotes Bakunin directly in evaluating Utin: “One cannot say that he doesn’t work seriously or that he takes a frivolous view of things. On the contrary,
I have met few Russians who work as hard. He is a martyr to the study of political and social problems... but he is gifted with a remarkable lack of ability to understand, to seize the essence, the real nature of the problem. . . . He runs along behind the thought and the thought scampers on ahead without ever letting itself be caught."

A more recent and less balanced opinion of Utin can be traced to the same Bakunin tract: "Short, small and intense, Utin had a quick tongue and manner. Basically petty by nature, his judgment was often faulty, his sentiments frequently ungenerous. He had few fixed principles. Nevertheless, he was a talented man who was to play a crucial role in the émigré revolutionary movement." Paradoxically, this same historian admits that "after Bakunin, [Utin was] the most prominent of the active Russian revolutionaries in Switzerland," though the claim is not substantiated in his account of the émigré movement. The facts of the situation are, in reality, quite clear in establishing Utin's significance. As a prelude to the material presented below, suffice it to mention here that there was adequate justification for the Third Section's view of Utin:

This man Utin is extremely dangerous to Russia, and before him in this respect the Bakuninist party (which broke with him) pales. . . . We repeat that Utin is a very influential person in the International revolutionary organization; he is one of the main pillars of the International; he knows all the ins and outs, and he, as one of the main members of the Comité du groupe de propagande, knows everything pertaining to the Russian revolutionary intelligentsia in the International.4

Another indication of Utin's prominence at this time can be found in a letter written by Dostoevsky in 1867 in which he compares Utin with Turgenev, Herzen, and Chernyshevskii in the same breath. While Dostoevsky was hardly approving of these individuals' efforts to create what he considered to be a materialist purgatory on earth, there is no doubt that he regarded Utin as a serious political figure of his era.5

Nikolai Isaakovich Utin was born in either 1840 or 1841; the date is uncertain.6 He was born into substantial bourgeois wealth as a result of his father's career as a highly successful wine merchant. It is not clear exactly where Utin was born, since his father frequently moved from town to town in the northwestern sector of the empire...
while building his business. Sometime during the mid-1850s, the family settled in St. Petersburg, where they bought an elaborate town house and an equally luxurious dacha on the outskirts of the capital. The Utins were quite prominent socially and were often mentioned in newspapers in this capacity. Nikolai grew up in a house whose guests included members of the government, established businessmen, young writers, and scientists as well.\(^7\)

Utin's path to St. Petersburg University was paved by his four older brothers. Significantly, his eldest brother, Boris, was arrested in 1849 in connection with the Petrashevtsy, but later became a professor at the university. The other three brothers all attended the university en route to their chosen careers in publishing, law, and government.\(^8\) To encourage this array of brilliant careers, Utin's father hired cultured private tutors for his children and took the family abroad on summer vacations.

It was far from obvious during Nikolai Utin's school years that he would be the first and only member of his family to depart from the socially prominent roles of his siblings and parents. In 1858 he entered the historical-philological faculty of St. Petersburg University and in the following three years demonstrated that he was an outstanding student. Apart from the testimony of his teachers celebrating his abilities as a student, Utin won the gold medal in the spring of 1861 for his superior senior thesis. It is interesting to note that the second-place silver medal that year was awarded to Dmitrii Pisarev, the future nihilist.\(^9\)

That, however, was the last honor tsarist Russia was to grant Utin. Utin's final year at the university coincided with the student upheavals that followed the Emancipation Proclamation. That spring in St. Petersburg, students established autonomous cooperative institutions, mutual-aid funds, libraries of forbidden literature, and mock courts designed to issue decisions to correct government abuses. Utin threw himself into these activities with abandon and commitment, finding, as he admitted, a new purpose for his life in this upsurge of student activism.\(^10\) He quickly became a popular leader among the students as he tirelessly involved himself in many of the emerging organizations. Because of his skill as an effective orator, he was frequently asked to deliver speeches at meetings. He was selected as one of the editors of a collection of student papers and served on the student court. He was also chosen to serve as a student representative on the Kavelin commission, which was set up by a number of professors to publicize the students' grievances.\(^11\)
Utin's political views shifted dramatically toward Chernyshevskian radicalism in the spring, summer, and fall of 1861. He spoke openly in favor of Polish freedom and independence, and criticized the Russian government as an enemy against which he urged students to fight on behalf of Poland. He continued to play a leading role in the student movement in the fall of 1861 up until his arrest on 26 September. He was released on 4 December as a result of his father's intercession with the authorities, but he returned to the student opposition movement immediately. In the spring of 1862, Utin's energies were devoted to two main endeavors. The first was organizing support to have P. V. Pavlov, a popular professor of history, reinstated at the university; Pavlov had been dismissed from his post by the administration because of his support for the student organizations. The second was working with the leadership of Zemlia i Volia. Utin was of course closely watched by the agents of the police, who reported on his "criminal purposes" and who considered him to be Chernyshevskii's "right arm." Utin did see Chernyshevskii on a number of occasions in 1862 prior to the Sovremennik editor's arrest, and discussed with him several anti-autocratic proclamations he had written. Finally, in the spring of 1863, the police decided to seize Utin. They searched his apartment on the night of 18 May, but discovered that Utin had already fled. Actually, he had gone underground on 2 May, hiding out in the home of a friend outside the city before making his way abroad clandestinely. In a letter to his father dated 5 (17) July 1863, Utin explained that his departure from Russia had been decided upon quickly once he had learned from an informer that he was under constant surveillance and that the government "intended to arrest me" in the very near future.

Utin's flight from St. Petersburg actually had been arranged by the Central Committee of Zemlia i Volia, of which Utin had recently been selected a member. Utin claimed that he had to be persuaded to leave the country by the Zemlia i Volia leadership because he "did not consider the danger to be so serious." Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the police were preparing to seize him. The Zemlia i Volia leaders were aware of this, and decided that emigration was preferable to arrest in Utin's case. Utin was tried in absentia on 27 November 1865 for his involvement with the student rebellion, the Polish cause, Chernyshevskii, and Zemlia i Volia, and was sentenced to death by firing squad, with deprivation of all rights of property and citizenship until that time.
Utin went immediately to London, where he was warmly welcomed by Herzen in August 1863. Herzen hoped to continue his contacts with the surviving members of Zemlia i Volia who had escaped arrest, and he enlisted Utin’s aid to this end. He published a letter by Utin to the Central Committee of Zemlia i Volia in Kolokol in which Utin thanked the organization for his successful escape. Utin’s relationship with Herzen remained friendly through the fall of 1863 but soon began to sour. As Utin became more familiar with the émigré milieu, he began to make his own proposals for revolutionary action. As early as November 1863, he was beginning to conceptualize the notion of a unified emigration with its own united émigré organ to promote the cause of political and social transformation in Russia. He traveled to Switzerland to view the situation firsthand and was disturbed by the isolation he found in the émigré communities. While Herzen had devoted a good deal of effort to establishing links between his London center and the Zemlia i Volia leadership in St. Petersburg, he had, Utin felt, ignored the growing divisions within the emigration itself. No émigré had emerged on the Continent who could either rival Herzen’s prestige by creating a new émigré center, or find ways to fuse the geographically and politically separate émigré communities in London, Paris, and Geneva. Utin assumed the latter task. The unification of émigré forces in Europe was necessary to combat tsarism in Russia, Utin believed. The problem that soon surfaced as Utin pressed his concerns upon Herzen and Ogarev was what role Kolokol would play in the context of a unified emigration. In another letter, Utin argued that in order for the émigrés to accomplish their mission—which he defined at this point as the “discrediting” and “paralyzing” of the Russian government—it would be necessary to talk seriously “about reforming the publication and content of Kolokol.” The suggestion to reorganize Kolokol worried its editors, for both Herzen and Ogarev saw this as a threat to their independence and control over the journal.

Utin’s idea was for Herzen and Ogarev to head a center around which all émigrés could unite for the purpose of fighting tsarism. In the wake of the Russian government’s successful crushing of Zemlia i Volia, it was hoped that a new revolutionary center would emerge in Russia. To galvanize this opposition force abroad and to solidify it on a permanent, ongoing basis, Kolokol would act as the theoretical and practical organ of the movement. Thus, it was crucial for Kolokol to adopt a programmatic format.
cept more concretely in another proposal directed to the editors of *Kolokol*. As the theoretical organ of a united revolutionary emigration, he argued, the journal should contain an economic section with articles criticizing bourgeois theory, advancing European socialist economic concepts, and raising related crucial political and social questions. Utin also called for a section dedicated to “the elaboration of problems in historical context” in order to provide readers with a sense of continuity between past, present, and future. Finally, he urged that the new *Kolokol* include a section devoted exclusively to Russian internal affairs, a section in which the emphasis would be placed on the conflict between state and society.\(^{23}\)

Herzen remained unconvinced and criticized Utin and his colleagues for their continuing efforts to involve him and his press in their affairs. Herzen, moreover, was somewhat puzzled that Utin expressed such militant opposition to him at the 1864 émigré congress, on the one hand, while, on the other, he went on corresponding with Herzen and Ogarev in a most respectful manner after the congress. Herzen may have overlooked a factor that could explain this apparently contradictory behavior—his own powerful influence over this generation of “sons” who, in spite of their rebellion against him, could not easily let go of him. Even Serno-Solov’evich, whose public criticism of Herzen was more devastating than Utin’s, spoke on more than one occasion of his deep respect for his political antagonist.\(^{24}\) In any case, Utin waited for more than two years from the time of his last letter to either of the editors of *Kolokol* before writing to them again. It was a period of transition for him as he began to search for new alliances among the émigré communities.\(^{25}\)

In February 1867, in response to a letter from Ogarev, Utin wrote once again about a new effort at collaboration to found a journal that could unify the émigrés on a common political platform. This time he was speaking not only for himself but also on behalf of Mechnikov and Zhukovskii, both of whom were willing to devote themselves to such a project. Utin reviewed the areas of disagreement between himself and the *Kolokol* editors, citing Herzen’s calling Karakozov “a fanatic,” his earlier “liberalist” position on the 1861 reforms and on the Polish Question, and his lack of a concrete revolutionary program. Nevertheless, Utin extended the olive branch to Ogarev.\(^{26}\) The offer was rejected, however, as Ogarev stated that he saw no need for an explicit program.

There was one final exchange in 1869, when Utin, Zhukovskii, and Mechnikov were already publishing a new Bakuninist paper,
Narodnoe delo, in which they explored the possibility of linking their paper with the Herzen press. Because problems had developed with Bakunin, Utin's attitude toward Herzen was once more quite respectful. Again, however, nothing developed between them, and the attempt to create a joint force collapsed.27

It is not entirely clear how Utin came to work directly with Bakunin, who was in a short time to become his archenemy on the left. Most likely it was through his friends Zhukovskii and Mechnikov, who were genuinely sympathetic to Bakunin's ideas, that Utin was asked to help establish Narodnoe delo.28 There is reason to believe that Bakunin hoped to organize the "young émigrés" in Switzerland, with whom Herzen had had difficulties, into his own party. Regardless, the collaboration was short-lived. After the initial issue in the fall of 1868, which consisted almost entirely of Bakunin's work, disagreements emerged. Bakunin and Zhukovskii resigned, leaving Utin in editorial control. Departing sharply from the anarchist orientation of the first issue, the next issues of the paper were dominated by a combination of Chernyshevskian socialism and strong attacks on Bakunin's buntarstvo. Within another year, Utin had moved in an entirely new direction, as the main organizer of the Russian section of the International.

The shift made by Utin from a vague radicalism influenced mainly by Herzen and Chernyshevskii to the more concrete socialism of Marx was not as rapid and dramatic as it may appear. In 1868 Utin may have already been in touch with Marx.29 A year later he attended the Basel congress of the International, during which time he befriended Anton Trusov. Prior to joining the International, Trusov had emigrated from Russia after participating in the 1863 Polish uprising. In 1870 Utin and Trusov became coeditors of Narodnoe delo, which they converted into an organ of Marx's wing of the International. Utin, unable earlier to achieve an all-émigré journal under Herzen's leadership, now published an internationalist paper under Marx's guidance.30

Utin's articles in Narodnoe delo between 1868 and 1870 are not original, but they are faithful adaptations of the vocabulary and content of Marx's ideas. There is no doubt that he steeped himself in the literature of the International during these years. His essays from this period reflect an almost obsessional concern for "the Russian proletariat," which would soon emerge to join the ranks of the European and American proletariat in the global struggle against capitalism. Instead of the political struggle against tsarism and au-
tocracy, which informed his earlier writings, Utin now wrote about "the socioeconomic conflicts" that lay beneath the political crises. The "class character" of the conflicts stood at the core of all existing problems, according to Utin. He also wrote about the liberating mission of the working class in its war against archaic "bourgeois forms," and the eventual transcendence of these "structures" by "a new mode of existence" dominated by the triumphant proletariat. He celebrated the International as the institutional center for the dissemination and organization of these new proletarian "modes of existence." He envisioned the growth of International sections in Russia in the near future, which would begin "to dismantle . . . the [bourgeois] institutions of the state, the church, trade, and industry." On the Russian peasantry, Utin combined Chernyshevskii's ideas on the socialist nature of the rural commune with Marx's conceptions of the struggle against capitalism. He foresaw a process of peasant nationalization of the countryside jointly proceeding alongside the proletariat's nationalization of state and private properties in the cities. It was a bold vision, simultaneously derivative and prophetic.31

Utin's ideological commitment was matched by his organizational work in setting up in Geneva the Russian section of the International in what was in fact a Marxist political party of Russian émigrés. He was joined by a number of newly arrived émigrés from Russia, Viktor and Ekaternia Bartenev, and Elizaveta Tomanovskaia (Dmitrieva) in addition to Trusov.32 On 12 March 1870 Utin, Trusov, and Bartenev composed a formal document establishing the political program and constituency of the newly formed Russian section and sent it to the office of the General Council of the International for approval. The group also wrote a collective letter to Marx regarding permission to be the "official representatives" of the International for the Russian working class.33 Two other letters from Utin, Trusov, and Bartenev were sent to Marx that year. One was a statement condemning Bakunin in general, and his relationship with Nechaev in particular; the other was a letter of recommendation for Tomanovskaia to join the Russian section.34

Utin's first personal letter to Marx was sent a year later, and it underscores the fact that no Russian émigré since Nikolai Sazonov in the 1840s had become so involved with Marx. After speaking about Tomanovskaia's virtues as a revolutionary and about the events in Paris concerning the establishing of the Commune, Utin tells Marx how much and how deeply he admires and respects
Marx's "mind and political acumen," and how determined he is to serve under Marx's banner.\textsuperscript{35}

In the summer of 1871, Marx notified Utin that instead of a general congress that year, there would instead be a closed conference in London which would consider a resolution to expel Bakunin's Alliance for Social Democracy from the International.\textsuperscript{36} It was at this point, judging from this letter and those which followed it, that Marx decided to call upon Utin to wage a systematic campaign on Marx's behalf against the Bakuninist wing of the International. At the London conference, Utin presented information about Nechaev's activities with the obvious intention of embarrassing Bakunin. Utin published a short report on this matter, which forms part of the stenographic account of the conference.\textsuperscript{37} Utin continued this work after the conference, reporting to Marx on the attacks directed against the Marxist wing by the Bakuninists. At one point, Utin complained that "this filthy atmosphere of intrigue and disgusting slander" is a waste of valuable time which only weakens the real work of the International. He blamed this on his former comrades "the drunkard Zhukovskii" and "the idiot-schemer Elpidin," now identified with the Bakuninists.\textsuperscript{38}

Utin's battle against the anarchist influence in the International continued into the next year as he helped prepare the brief that Marx used to expel Bakunin's delegations from the International at the 1872 Hague congress.\textsuperscript{39} After the Hague congress, Utin drifted away from the movement, burned out by the exhaustive campaign against Bakunin. Although Marx referred to Utin as "one of my dearest friends,"\textsuperscript{40} there was no further task for Utin to perform in the International, which was already beginning to disintegrate after Marx's pyrrhic victory at the Hague congress. At the same time, returning to Geneva after that congress, Utin found himself alienated from the many émigrés there who were sympathetic to Bakunin.\textsuperscript{41} The Russian section remained a small group and declined rapidly after the Hague congress. Nevertheless, Utin clearly had awakened Marx to the possibilities of a Russian revolutionary movement years before the latter's contacts with Vera Zasulich and the Executive Committee of the People's Will. At the 1871 London conference, Marx paid tribute to Utin's efforts in this regard when he said: "[Utin] had great hopes for the Russian student movement. There the students, most of whom are quite poor, are very close to the people and will give a strong impetus to the working class. In Russia, secret societies are not necessary; one could perfectly well
create there an organization of the International. Among the workers, the spirit of cooperation and solidarity is very strong.⁴²

Regardless of the exaggeration in Marx's interpretation of the Russian situation, his interest in Russia as a result of his association with Utin was real. Utin, however, did not remain part of the socialist movement that had been so important to him. Having moved away from the milieu of the Russian émigré community concerned with Russia, he also did not maintain contact with the West European Internationalist movement. Thus, in the mid-1870s, Utin ended up in complete isolation. At the very moment when the Russian émigré community was becoming a truly revolutionary movement, with the elements of organization and ideology that he himself helped spawn, Utin abandoned the entire political struggle. Instead, he returned to school in London and earned an engineering license, then went to Rumania to work on a railway project. There he wrote a rather obsequious letter to the Third Section requesting a pardon and permission to return to his homeland. The request was granted in 1880 and he immediately went back to Russia. Lavrov called this "one of the earliest cases of renegadism in the ranks of Russian socialists, but alas, not the last."⁴³ Once in Russia, Utin worked for a short time as an engineer, with no further involvement in politics. He did not, as Kel'siev had tried to do (and as Tikhomirov was to do a few years later), turn against his former comrades and become an apologist for the autocracy. He did return to Europe in 1878 and remained abroad with his wife (mainly in Brussels) until the end of 1881, when they went back to Russia. Utin worked in the Ural mines as an engineer until his death in December 1883, which passed without notice among the representatives of both official Russia at home and revolutionary Russia abroad.