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On the Authenticity of the Kurbskii-Groznyi Correspondence: A Summary of the Discussion

Six years ago Professor E. Keenan wrote a major study, refuting the authenticity of the correspondence between Ivan the Terrible and Kurbskii.¹ Keenan's book attracted great attention. In 1973 the Institute of Russian Literature (Pushkinskii Dom) published my book *Correspondence between Ivan the Terrible and Kurbskii: Paradoxes of Edward Keenan*.² In the course of the discussion generated by the publication of Keenan's book, scholars of the most varied schools and tendencies have expressed their reaction to the subject of the controversy.³ Between 1972 and 1975 a series of articles summarizing the controversy were published, and the matter was thoroughly discussed. Edward Keenan's paradoxes have not received support among the scholarly community. Keenan's idea that, in view of the spuriousness of nearly all the writings of Ivan IV and several other significant compositions of that time, the history of Russia in the sixteenth century needed to be written anew might have served as a stimulus to an all-embracing discussion of a broad range of problems. In the absence of any serious proof of the fabrication, however, such a discussion did not take place. A number of works of Ivan IV and Kurbskii have been preserved to the present in copies indisputably compiled in the sixteenth century, and the controversy as to whether the persons in question were the writers goes by default.

The scholarly significance of Keenan's study lies in the fact that he drew attention to the similarities between the texts of Kurbskii's first letter to Ivan IV and the works of the monk Isaiah. The latest publications devoted to Keenan's discovery, namely, the articles by N. Andreev (Cambridge), J. Fennell (Ox-

1. Edward L. Keenan, *The Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha: The seventeenth-century genesis of the "Correspondence" attributed to Prince A. M. Kurbskii and Tsar Ivan IV* (Cambridge, Mass., 1971).

2. R. G. Skrynnikov, *Perepiska Groznogo i Kurbskogo: Paradoksy Edvarda Kinana* (Leningrad, 1973).

3. D. S. Likhachev, "Kurbskii i Groznyi—byli li oni pisateliami?," *Russkaia literatura*, 1972, no. 4, pp. 202-9; N. Andreev, "Mnimaia tema," *Novyi zhurnal*, no. 109 (1972); Charles J. Halperin, "A heretical view of sixteenth century Muscovy: Edward L. Keenan: the Kurbskii-Groznyi Apocrypha," *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas*, 22, no. 2 (1974); A. Kappeler, "Die Sowjetische Reaktion auf Keenans Häresie," *ibid.*; Marc Szeftel, review of Keenan's book, *Slavic Review*, 31, no. 1 (1972); Serge A. Zenkovsky, "The Prince Kurbsky-Tsar Ivan IV Correspondence," *Russian Review*, 32, no. 3 (1973).

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ford), A. A. Zimin (Moscow), and Ia. S. Lur'e (Leningrad),⁴ have confirmed that the debate concerning the spuriousness of the Kurbskii-Groznyi correspondence has been exhausted, and that now the discussion is focused upon the narrower question of the relationship between the texts of Kurbskii and Isaiah.

In 1975 Professor J. Fennell published a review of my book, in which, for the first time in print, he expressed his position in the debate regarding the authenticity of the Kurbskii-Groznyi controversy.⁵ His contribution had been awaited with great interest. In the preface to his *Apocrypha*, Keenan thanked Fennell "for many helpful suggestions and patient counsel" (Keenan, pp. viii-ix).

In the review, formally devoted to my book, Fennell refuted the thesis concerning the spuriousness of the Kurbskii-Groznyi correspondence, and summed up the controversy of many years in his own unique way. "What remains to be done? Is there need for scholars to produce still further arguments to refute Keenan's thesis? It seems improbable that anyone having studied Skrynnikov's book carefully will willingly accept Keenan's hypothesis or question the authenticity of the works, traditionally attributed to Kurbskij and Ivan. There are, however, still a number of unresolved questions" (Fennell, p. 197).

Analyzing the unresolved questions, Fennell criticizes simultaneously both the views of Keenan and those of Skrynnikov. Since these two inquirers defend opposing positions, the task of "summarily" refuting them is a sufficiently complicated one. How well has Fennell achieved this aim?

An important place in Keenan's conception is occupied by his proposed grouping of the manuscripts of the Kurbskii-Groznyi correspondence, taking into account exclusively the external characteristics of these later copies, namely their dates, established principally on the basis of their watermarks. In my own book I pointed out that dating on the basis of watermarks can only amount to an approximation, and that Keenan's grouping does not accord even with his own factual premises. Keenan's construct starts out from the preconceived assumption that the correspondence is spurious, and originated in the seventeenth century. In my own book I pointed out that analysis of the external properties of later copies of a work should be preceded by study of the substance of its text, and that when grouping the text, it is first necessary to take into account above all the content of its "convoy." Kurbskii's first letter to the tsar, as I have succeeded in establishing, is accompanied by a consistent complex of documents composed at Wolmar. Among the manuscripts with the full "Wolmar convoy," only Kurbskii's letter to the tsar is to be found. Tsar Ivan's answer was included in the content of manuscript collections later, after the "Wolmar convoy" had been dispersed.

Fennell sums up the discussion concerning the grouping of the manuscripts in a rather unexpected way: "But neither can Skrynnikov give a satisfactory explanation of the peculiar grouping of MSS, which so puzzled Keenan" (Fennell, p. 190). If the originator of this grouping is himself so puzzled by

4. A. A. Zimin, "Pervoe poslanie Kurbskogo Ivanu Groznomu," *Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoi literatury*, vol. 31 (1976); Ia. S. Lur'e, "Pervoe poslanie Ivana Groznogo Kurbskomu," *ibid.*

5. J. Fennell, review of R. G. Skrynnikov's book *Perepiska Groznogo i Kurbskogo*, in *Russia Mediaevalis* (Munich), 2 (1975): 188-98.

his own creation, can any satisfactory explanation be expected from anyone else? As a preliminary working hypothesis, Keenan's scheme had a right to exist, providing that serious evidence of the spuriousness of the correspondence was available. But insofar as the discussion revealed that the evidence concerning the spuriousness of the correspondence will not stand up to examination, the working hypothesis forfeits its right to exist. Who can now rationally explain the irrational scheme "of the origin and development of the Kurbinskii-Groznyi correspondence in the second quarter of the seventeenth century," and the grouping of manuscripts, also proposed by Keenan, bound up with that scheme? Unfortunately, Fennell passes over in complete silence all of my argument relating to the "convoy" of the Groznyi-Kurbinskii correspondence, and even my new grouping of various manuscripts. Fennell, in short, on the one hand brings the controversy back to its starting point, and on the other hand gives the reader an incomplete and distorted exposition of the book he is reviewing.

One of the main points under discussion is the problem of the relationship between the Isaiah and the Kurbinskii texts. Keenan succeeded in establishing the similarity between a large fragment of Kurbinskii's first letter to the tsar, and a portion of the *Complaint* of a certain Lithuanian monk called Isaiah. The borrowing, from Keenan's perspective, was by Kurbinskii from Isaiah, from which Keenan draws an important conclusion, namely, that since Isaiah's *Complaint* appeared in 1566, that is, two years after Kurbinskii's letter, Kurbinskii could not therefore have borrowed from a text which had not yet been written, and therefore it was not he who wrote the "letter to the tsar."

By way of a supplementary argument, Keenan cited the similarity between two lines in Kurbinskii's letter and the *Lament*, written by Isaiah. Both Keenan and Skrynnikov focused their attention upon the first textual link, which objectively appears to be the most extensive and intensive. Both researchers have attached rather less significance to the second instance, which is where Fennell sharply disagrees with them. "A closer investigation of the two texts, however," writes Fennell, "will show that both Keenan and Skrynnikov are wrong" (Fennell, p. 191). Fennell attempted to bring into the foreground the textual link between the letter and the *Lament*:

Kurbinskii's letter (1564)

Не хотех рещи вся по ряду
ратные мои дела, их же
сотворих на похвалу твою,
но сего ради не изрекох,
зане лучши един бог вестъ:
он бо, бог есть всим сим
мъздовоздатель и не токмо
сим, но и за чашу студены
воды.⁶

Isaiah's *Lament* (1566)

Чаю смерть, безсмертие
помышляю. О узрю ли
спекуляторский меч, небо
вменяю и всим сим
мздовоздатель Христос
истинный бог наш, и не
токмо сим, но и за чашу
студеной воды: вспомни
убо всех от века
благоугодивших богу, коим
образом улучиша спасение.⁷

6. *Poslania Ivana Groznogo* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1951), p. 535.

7. D. I. Abramovich, *K literaturnoi deiatel'nosti mnikha kamianchanina Isaii* (St. Petersburg, 1913), pp. 5-6.

The works of Kurbskii and Isaiah are fairly voluminous. Their coincidence is limited to one incomplete phrase. Nevertheless, the English scholar Fennell is inclined to regard it as a matter of prime significance: "The almost identical repetition of the peculiar combination of *vsim sim mzdovozdatel'* and *i ne tokmo sim . . . vody* cannot be considered as coincidental; clearly the one influenced the other" (Fennell, p. 191). Such a categorical statement can hardly be considered convincing. The similar places in the text do not represent a combination, but a conjunctive citation (*sim i ne tokmo sim*). The citation does not contain any specific or biographical information. It merely conveys the conventional gospel image of a just God, who rendered a reward to all for a cup of cold water. Both Isaiah's and Kurbskii's citations may be traced back to the text of St. Matthew's Gospel (*ashche napoit . . . sikh chasheiu studeny vody, . . . ne pogubit mzdy svoeia*), which was altered in later theological literature, from which it was probably borrowed by the sixteenth-century authors.

The texts cited above, in Fennell's opinion, were used by Kurbskii and Isaiah in dissimilar fashion: "The reading in Kurbskij's letter is intelligible," while "Isajja's text has little or no meaning as it stands; there is no connection between *nebo vmenjaju* and *vsim sim mzdovozdatel'*. The syntax is clearly at fault (what case is *mzdovozdatel'*?) and the whole passage is untranslatable" (Fennell, pp. 191–92). The actual difficulties in translating Isaiah are not so great as they appear to Fennell. The word *mzdovozdatel'* is definitely in the nominative case and, incidentally, has in Isaiah a more ancient form, as compared with the later and more artificial form (*m''zdovozdaiatel'*). In Isaiah's *Lament* the linking verb is omitted, but in other respects his text is only slightly inferior to that of Kurbskii. Isaiah's lament can be translated thus: I see the sword of the executioner, I cast my thoughts to heaven, and for all this Christ will repay not only him, but also *everyone* for each cup of cold water."⁸ The foregoing renders somewhat unconvincing the following assertion by Fennell: "If intelligibility is an indication of primacy, as it certainly should be in most textological comparisons of similar texts, then clearly Kurbskij's version is primary, and Isajja's secondary" (Fennell, p. 192). The argument as to whether the text is primary or secondary arises from the premise that literary borrowing took place. But this very premise is unsupported by any serious evidence. The similarity of one solitary theological imprint, of a conventional character, slightly altered by one of the authors, cannot amount to serious proof of direct literary borrowing.

Knowledge of theological literature was an essential ingredient of sixteenth-century education. Writers affected the art of citing sacred texts. Secular publicists could rival the clergy in this art. They cited verses and whole chapters, on any pretext, whether relevant or not. The question arises, why should not the monastic deacon Isaiah and Kurbskii, who was fairly well grounded in theology (as witness, his letter to Vassian), have cited three lines about Christ the recompenser independently of each other, without the one necessarily having copied it from the other?

We have yet to find the source for the citations in Isaiah and Kurbskii. But this point can only have a bearing on the main argument under one con-

8. The vagueness of the citations from Isaiah and Kurbskii (one example is the slip *vsim sim*) can fully be explained by the difficulties in translation caused by differences in the grammatical structure of the Greek and Slavic languages.

dition—if we could be sure that the huge corpus of sixteenth-century theological literature had survived intact through to our own time, and if it were known in detail to the modern researcher. But in any case we cannot be certain of this, since a considerable quantity of theological literature has been lost. The major part of extant ecclesiastical books have no great bearing on literary history, and so they are not studied very attentively by literary experts.

In order to appreciate the origins of these small citations, they should not be studied in isolation, but in the context of both the literary work and the historical period. As it is set out in the heading to the *Lament*, Isaiah wrote the text while immured in a Rostov dungeon.⁹ Plain common sense suggests that Isaiah, who had been languishing for four years in strict confinement, simply did not have the opportunity to consult ecclesiastical books in order to borrow citations, so he simply recited from memory.

Contrary to Fennell's opinion, the similarities between the gospel imagery of God the recompenser in Isaiah and in Kurbinskii's letter are evidently of a coincidental nature, and cannot serve as proof of direct literary borrowing. The use of similar short citations can be explained by the fact that both writers were Orthodox biblical scholars, having similar tastes and a similar cultural background, versed in the very same set of sacred books and citations.

The second textual similarity—that between Isaiah's *Complaint* and Kurbinskii's letter—has characteristics of a different order. The coincidence of a combination of five phrases and fragments, and the presence of concrete biographical information therein, rules out the possibility of pure coincidence.

In this case, in which direction was this literary borrowing? Fennell decisively rejects the textological observations of Keenan, namely, that Kurbinskii borrowed the text from Isaiah's *Complaint*, and wrote that "Keenan's arguments . . . are anything but convincing" (Fennell, p. 192). In support of his argument, Fennell advances the following textual comparison:

<i>Complaint</i>	Kurbinskii's letter
. . . и кровь моя, яко вода пролитая туне, вопиет к богу моему.	И кровь моя, яко вода пролитая за тя, вопиет на тя к богу моему.

Keenan heard in Isaiah's phrase an authentic echo of the Old Testament, as distinct from the banal use of the same phrase by Kurbinskii. Fennell took issue with his interpretation, proposing that "*tune* qualifies *vopiet*, not *prolitaja*." This reinterpretation, however, simply will not fit. Following Fennell's interpretation, Isaiah addresses his complaint to God (his blood, spilt for no purpose, in vain cries out to God). At the same time Isaiah seeks recompense for his blood, which he likens to water spilt in vain. (Compare the Psalms of David: "our enemies have spilt the blood of the people of Jerusalem like water"). Kurbinskii used the biblical image indisputably with less success than Isaiah. The commanders, in his words, themselves "spilt their blood for the tsar . . . like water."

Fennell's chief argument concludes with the following criticism. "When, one might ask, had Isajja ever shed his own blood?" This phrase, "trite though

9. Abramovich, *K literaturnoi deiatel'nosti*, p. 5.

it may be, is apposite in the context of Kurbskij's letter. Isajja's phrase is not" (Fennell, pp. 192–93).

Isaiah spent thirteen years as a prisoner and a captive in Russia. Prison confinement placed Isaiah in such a situation, that he was compelled to write the most absurd things. One example is his accusation against the Greek metropolitan, Joseph. Isaiah had crossed the Russian frontier in the suite of the metropolitan, and immediately denounced Joseph to the Russian authorities, on the grounds that he had, while in Lithuania, sworn allegiance to the king. The denunciation caused Joseph much harm. Nevertheless Isaiah, in his *Complaint*, accused the metropolitan with such expressions as "for good, you have rendered evil unto me," and so forth. In comparison with such accusations, the words about the spilling of blood possibly contained an element of truth. Isaiah was being held in prison as a criminal, in the stocks; this punishment was preceded by a trial, which in those days rarely proceeded without some kind of torture, especially when the charge involved treason.

Fennell has not refuted the main textological argument in favor of the textual borrowing from Isaiah by Kurbskii, which is of a serious nature. Keenan noticed a unique rhythmic organization in the text of Kurbskii's letter. Kurbskii's accusations against the tsar constitute a unique recitative: "pro chto, tsariu, sil'nykh . . . pobil esi! I voevod . . . rastorgl' esi! . . . krov' ikh . . . proliial esi!," and so forth. Within Kurbskii's recitative, however, there are texts which drop the rhythm (for example, "izmenami . . . oblygaia pravoslavnykh," instead of "izmenami oblygal esi!"; and, later "Ali bessmerten," "I za blagaia moia"). Insofar as the nonrecitative fragments of Kurbskii coincide with the analogous text of Isaiah, Keenan has adequate grounds to propose that these constituted an alien element in the original recitative text of Kurbskii (Keenan, pp. 17–21). This concrete observation seems to be successful, even though Keenan drew an erroneous interpretation from it. Contrary to Keenan's opinion, rhymed prose was used not only in the seventeenth century, but also much earlier.¹⁰ Thus Keenan's observation does not support his conclusion regarding the seventeenth-century origins of the "Correspondence between Groznyi and Kurbskii." In Ivan the Terrible's time the recitative style was sometimes used even by *prikaz* officials. According to the instructions of the Ambassadorial Chancellery, the Russian ambassadors in Poland were to accuse Kurbskii in these terms: "i zemliu pravoslavnuu voeval esi! Da i na gosudaria sabliu podymal esi! i izmenivshi gramoty gosudariu nevezhlivo pisal esi!"¹¹

The foregoing recitative contains in itself two important arguments against Keenan's general thesis. First, it shows that the recitative style of Kurbskii's letter corresponded with the very literary style that was used by contemporaries of Ivan the Terrible and Kurbskii. Second, this original instruction from the Ambassadorial Chancellery refutes Keenan's assertion that there was never any reference to the correspondence in original documents dating from the sixteenth century. Kurbskii's "insolent letter" to the tsar, mentioned in the instructions to the Russian ambassadors, is none other than his first letter, written immediately after his "treason" and flight.

10. Likhachev, "Kurbskii i Groznyi," p. 206; Andreev, "Mnimaia tema," p. 267.

11. TsGADA, fond 79, dela pol'skogo dvora, book 12, fols. 289–289v. B. N. Floria was the first to discover this direct reference to Kurbskii's letter made in Ivan the Terrible's lifetime, in the original books of the Ambassadorial Chancellery.

Without in fact advancing any fresh arguments in favor of the thesis that Isaiah borrowed the text from Kurbskii, Fennell proposes a new dating for Isaiah's *Complaint*.¹² This prompts us to return to the question concerning the date of the *Complaint*. Keenan's chief error was that he did not subject Isaiah's correspondence to the necessary analysis and source criticism before he used that work in his own textual comparisons. The generally accepted observation with regard to the source criticism of Isaiah's correspondence is as follows. In the collection GPB O.XVII.70 there was deposited a complex of Isaiah's letters, having the same origin with regard to time and place. The letters, however, were copied, not in chronological, but in reverse order. The first place was occupied by the most extensive and significant theological letter, with a notation relating to the year 1567, then the letter called the *Lament* was copied, with 1566 as the date, then the *Complaint*, the *Explanation*, and the *Prophecy*, and, finally, a letter (*List*) addressed to Isaiah by someone unknown, and written in 1562. Evidently the copyist or the compiler of the collection placed them "back to front." This gives us the first indication that the *Complaint* should be dated some time later than 1562. Why did the compiler of the manuscript collection include along with Isaiah's correspondence the *List* from an unknown person, which was devoid of theological content? The reason is that the *List* is organically connected with the *Complaint*.

List

(GPB O. XVII.70, fol. 180v.)

Иже словеси ради
истинного во юзах
страждующему мниху Исае.

Complaint

(GPB O. XVII.70, fol. 179)

Днесъ аз в темницы, и слова
ради истиннаго Христова во
юзах яко злодеи зле стражу.

The corresponding places are not scriptural citations; rather they contain exclusively biographical information, and have an important ideological content. Consequently we are faced with a sufficiently clear-cut and obvious textological link. This observation, and also the realization of the reversed order of the documents in the Isaiah collection lead us to the conclusion that the 1562 *List* was the starting point of Isaiah's correspondence, and the *Complaint* was the direct reply to it.

Fennell draws the attention of the reader to two *stemmata*. He reconstructs the first on the basis of Skrynnikov's argument and refutes it without difficulty in the following terms: "It would be bizarre, to say the least of it, to imagine, firstly, Kurbskij borrowing from Isajja for his letter, and then Isajja himself borrowing from Kurbskij's letter" (Fennell, p. 195). Such a scheme is in itself unconvincing. But it has nothing in common with my line of argument. I attempted to prove, first, that Kurbskii borrowed the text from the *Complaint*, and, second, that the use of similar citations in the *Complaint* and in Kurbskii's letter did not necessarily imply direct literary borrowing. It is much more probable, I wrote, that Isaiah and Kurbskii made use of one and the same literary

12. The arguments concerning the appositeness of the expression "spilling of blood" in Kurbskii, and the inappositeness of the phrase in Isaiah, were expressed by Andreev at the very outset of the debate (Andreev, "Mnimaia tema," p. 270).

fund.¹³ "The only possible stemma which does not strain probability to the maximum," continues Fennell, is that Isaiah borrowed the text from Kurbskii's first letter when he was composing his *Zhaloba* (1566?) and *Plach'* (1566).

Thus Fennell considers it most probable that in 1566 Isaiah had at hand at least four manuscripts: his own *Complaint* and *Lament*, and also the *List* and Kurbskii's letter. Isaiah simultaneously borrows one phrase from the *List* and from the Kurbskii letter for his *Complaint*, and uses yet one more phrase from Kurbskii for the composition of the *Lament*. An Old Russian scholar, comfortably situated in his study among his books might indeed have operated in this manner. But Isaiah was compelled to write, not under normal circumstances, but in a prison cell. In 1562 Isaiah was being held along with criminals and jailbirds in the Vologda prison, when some agents managed to get the *List* to him from Lithuania, which was at war with Russia. We will assume that Isaiah managed to take the *List* with him when they transferred him from the Vologda to the Rostov prison. But who would have dared to furnish the convict at Rostov with the letter of the traitor Kurbskii, who had roundly abused the tsar? Ivan the Terrible did not forgive such actions, either among small fry or even among his closest entourage. Throughout the country the *oprichniki* raged, and Tsar Ivan personally imprisoned and starved to death one of his closest advisers, whom he had suspected of secret correspondence with Kurbskii.

Fennell considers that Isaiah wrote the *Complaint* and the *Lament* simultaneously. If so, the content of these two works should reflect this fact. But they are completely different, both in mood and in intention. Having received news from home in his prison at Vologda, Isaiah's spirits rose. Replying to the *List*, he fiercely justified himself, attacked his enemy, the Greek metropolitan, and tried to represent himself as a struggler for Christ's cause and a true subject of the Polish king. Such is the content of the *Complaint*. In the *Lament* he made no more mention of his enemy the Greek, nor of his native Lithuania, nor of his Lithuanian patrons. Four years of imprisonment had their effect on him. The monk's spirits had drooped, and in his new composition, as he signifies in his heading, "he wept and comforted himself," he humbly called out to God and longed for death to deliver him from earthly sufferings.

The dating I have proposed for the *Complaint* (1562) can be clarified by the sources in a very simple manner. In 1562 some unknown person came secretly to Vologda, slipped the *List* to him, and carried back the *Complaint*. In Lithuania the *Complaint* fell into the hands of that circle of Orthodox magnates who were in correspondence with the secret opposition in Moscow and were giving extensive support to Russian émigrés in Lithuania, who took a vital interest in all news coming from the country they had forsaken. After his flight from Iur'ev to Wolmar, Kurbskii immediately joined the circle of Orthodox Lithuanian magnates and Russian émigrés, who were awaiting his arrival. Within this circle Kurbskii, probably, also had the opportunity to acquaint himself with Isaiah's missive from the Vologda prison. Such a hypothesis fits in well with the whole chain of established facts.

In his monograph, Keenan gave 1566 as the date of the *Complaint*. In the course of the debate he has modified his view with regard to this date in fairly definite terms, though with the reservation that "apart from certain insignificant

13. Skrynnikov, *Perepiska*, pp. 12-13.

corrections . . . I see no objection to the line of reasoning which leads Skrynnikov to the conclusion that the *Complaint* was written in 1562, but this dating seems to me far from proven or obvious." Keenan's principal "correction" is to point out that I mistakenly rendered the words "from the birth of Our Savior" as "from the birth of Christ." He did not present any arguments pertinent to the dubiousness of my dating of the *Complaint*, and thus he declined to comment upon the substance of the problem.¹⁴

Thus Keenan has declined to defend the dating of the *Complaint* he originally proposed (1566), once proof had been set forth of the inaccuracy of this date. Fennell, after many years of debate, has returned to the discredited date, qualifying it only with a question mark. Paradoxically, in a special review of my book, Fennell did not find room to examine my argumentation in substance, and did not bring to the debate any new contribution which might explain the connection between the texts of Isaiah and Kurbskii. As a result the reader in this instance receives a distorted view of the book under review.

Defending his opinion with regard to the textual borrowing from Kurbskii by Isaiah in his *Complaint* (1566?), Fennell writes, "even if we consider it likely that Isajja's *Complaint* was part of a *poslanie* answering an anonymous letter (*list*) dated 1562 and addressed to Isajja in jail, there is no evidence to show that this answer of Isajja was not embellished—and crudely—at a later date by a scribe who had access to K-1" (Fennell, p. 193). Such a probability must surely perplex the reader. In the absence of any evidence whatsoever, and quite unnecessarily, Fennell brings onto the scene an imaginary later scribe, who falsifies Isaiah's correspondence by means of an interpolation from Kurbskii's letter. Why should Isaiah's *Complaint* be singled out as a forgery and not the other parts of Isaiah's correspondence? Who was this scribe, and what were the motives for his literary mystification? All this remains a puzzle. For the sake of refuting one myth, namely the falsification of Kurbskii's correspondence, it is unnecessary to fabricate another myth, namely the falsification of Isaiah's correspondence. From the perspective of source criticism, the importance of these parallel hypotheses is minimal, since they are completely groundless.

14. Edward Keenan, review of Skrynnikov's *Perepiska Groznogo i Kurbskogo*, in *Kritika*, 10, no. 1 (1973): 162.