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Foreword to the Revisited Edition by Omn. Austen Oseumin

There is little to say about Diet of Worms that hasn't been said a hundred times before. This, in short, is why this edition exists. Diet of Worms might be one of the most commentated Academic Publications in history, and certainly the most controversial. But, open and easy access to the original text has long eluded both casual and academic readers, instead having to contrast and compare hundreds of editions to find the actual, unaltered text, coupled with the author's own interpretation, which, in turn, is likely to be based on *another* author's interpretation.

I first came into full contact with Diet of Worms, like many academics do, through Mst. Faoren Merenmin's 1643 version, supplied with ample commentary. Of course, my familiarity with the book began well before that. My father, mother, and second father all held literature Generals, my father holding a Distinction in voice and style, so topics of the Ousentan Canon were frequent conversation in my household. Notably, my father's word that Diet of Worms should, he insisted, be included in the Canon. My mother was vehement that it deserved no such spot. When I would talk about the book with my teachers and classmates, they too would have varying thoughts on it. Critically, everyone had at least heard of the text, and had their own opinion on it (or, at our age, were parroting the opinion of adults around them), even if they hadn't read any of the editions in full. It was simultaneously a revolutionary landmark that showed how the Ousentans saw themselves in relation to others, as well as absolute nonsense that deserved to be ripped apart again and again. The dual-nature of this electrified my young mind, and my formative obsession was one I held for several years.

I was only 12 when I borrowed a copy of Diet of Worms to read, thanks to my father's access to the University of Mafauki archives. The 1643 edition, and Faoren's reevaluation, is certainly more gentle than ones that had come previously, and helped us see Kerefanha's work in a more objective light, and its importance cannot be undersold. But, I always found my attention pulled away from Faoren's commentary, instead trying to piece together what the man himself was actually saying. Every other paragraph was interrupted by Faoren's own thoughts and opinion, and I wished to hear Kerefanha speak his word alone. I tried my hand at copying out and puzzling together only Kerefanha's words, painstakingly using my father's rickety typewriter for hours on end, only to find the final product fragmentary and disjointed, and I would soon learn did not include many parts of the original text. It sparked a life-long desire to bring full light onto the original work itself, and the man who wrote it, rather than picking apart what others thought of his ideas.

About the Author

The author and central figure of *Diet of Worms*, Kerefanha Oromin, is someone surrounded by as much controversy and myth as the book itself. Even while he was alive, he was either a misunderstood trailblazer, a serial con artist, or simply an eccentric madman who fell into his fame by chance. His legacy and reputation persisted far longer than the man's lifespan, well into the modern age, making it a task in itself to separate myth from reality.

An unbiased biography of the man is in order. Kerefanha was born in 1343 to a wealthy family living in the town of Souleki, and taking a traditional birth name, was born with four planets visible in the sky, three people present, and during the night, for those who enjoy divining this sort of thing. Despite intent to pursue an academic career from a young age, he attracted ire from his parents by intending to study literature rather than natural philosophy¹, of which his father had studied. A striking contrast to an attitude that was, and arguably still is, pervasive throughout Ousentan academic culture. Some, however, might argue the progressive nature of this, with the early signs of the Scientific Revolution already making small, but significant, waves throughout the academic sphere.

Having scored highly on his Qualifiers, he read literature as his General Degree at the University of Mafauki, migrating from his hometown with a significant sum of money from his parents, in spite of their previous disagreements. He was studious, and content with his study for at least one year. Then, an event changed the course of his life entirely. According to his diaries, he says he "met one of those fascinating fellows from the far north [...] named the Aufenlu², who's[sic] style and manner of speech have captivated [him]." From this, he decided to change his academic trajectory. Kerefanha made the shift part way through his General to read history instead of literature, on advice from one of his lecturers after discussing his new desire to study the Kinakha Sitenlen languages, fascinated by their differences from Hikensu. This advice was driven by a new field that was emerging at the university, and now had a formal Distinction, anthropology, which in its infancy was a field strictly limited to studying Kinakha Sitenlen society.

His contemporaries made different accounts. Many noted how Kerefanha was very opportunistic, and would pursue matters and relationships based on

(1) A historical term, which describes sciences that don't fall into the traditional fields of biology, medicine, chromology, and astronomy.

(2) The preferred term in the year of publication is Kinakha Sitenlen. However, in the interest of historical preservation, all original terms will be kept as-written.

how much it benefitted him personally, rather than for personal satisfaction or moral reason. He was also noted for being two-faced, making praises to someone in one instance, and insulting them when they weren't present. One claim, quoting an alleged conversation where he referred to natural philosophy as a "dead and impoverished" field, says how he saw anthropology as the complete antithesis, that would soon be beset with funding and historical relevance, and that this was his main motivation for his change in trajectory. Some even claim that meeting a Kinakha Sitenlen person itself never happened.

In either case, inspired by meeting the Kinakha Sitenlen personally, or looking to pursue a field he believed held fame and fortune, this marks a notable reputation that would follow Kerefanha for the rest of his life. One of him being someone who exaggerates and inflates his experiences, and in some cases entirely fabricates them, for personal gain. Knowing how much of this is slanderous or truthful on the behalf of his contemporaries is an art in itself, and even becoming intensely familiar with the man's work and style, it's often difficult to make a clear divide between fact and fiction. This makes it that much harder to paint him entirely as a misunderstood genius or a madman, and I often argue he takes many shades of both, and in no doubt only adds to the narratives surrounding the book.

Due to, at the time, the General in literature having a heavy focus on the Ousentan Canon and historical events surrounding it, the transition to history is not as extreme as you might expect, and according to his grades one he adapted to with ease. He passed his General in 1367 with a High Degree, and began his Distinction in anthropology immediately after. If anything, this only affirmed the decision to himself, and he found himself enthralled by the material he encountered. Kerefanha made regular comments of how much further he was taking his studies beyond the Distinction itself, which, as you might expect, was contested by some of his classmates.

Much like his General, Kerefanha passed his Distinction and started a Mastership as soon as he possibly could. His intent still unchanged, his Mastership was focused on Kinakha Sitenlen languages, at this point believed to be one single language, rather than the range of dialects we are aware of today. By the end of his Mastership, Kerefanha produced a dictionary that held over 2,000 words, and a grammar he claimed could train a Hikensu speaker to a level of fluency in what we now can identify as Southern Aluk'minese, that would later evolve into the standard dialect of Shise'inese. He garnered criticism from Candidates and Masters alike for varying reasons. Some claimed his conclusions on grammatical function were improbable compared to Hikensu grammar, some

claimed his methods were generally unscientific and free-styled, and some believed that the pursuit itself was a useless endeavour, believing there to be no point in documenting a language that was then thought to have no written script. Others simply took issue with his manners and demeanour, caring little about his actual research. Accurate or not, this was one of the first instances of formal linguistic study of a language that was not Hikensu itself.

Kerefanha successfully defended his Mastership in 1375, and took on small grants and assistant positions for the next few years, focusing on translation. Even after his Mastership was granted, Kerefanha still attracted controversy with his research. The uneasy reputation of his actual personality stuck, and this only seemed to amplify the overall negative opinion of his work. There were even extreme claims that his translations were entirely made up. Kerefanha's dictionary was used religiously by himself, with evidence that he expanded and revised it further, but was seldom referenced by other Masters. His grammar was even further ignored, as no other Masters saw it as a useful resource, and Kerefanha himself being fluent had little utility for it, or, at the least, he *believed* he had little utility for it.

In 1378, following the footsteps of anthropologists before him, Kerefanha submit a pitch to undergo an expedition into Kinakha Sitenlen territory. His original intent, based on the documents, was to live in a village for a set number of days (originally pitched at 85), and to gather data through first-hand experience. The ultimate outcome of the expedition was left on an open-ended note. Quoting him exactly, he says “[he was] willing to immerse [him]self fully into the society of the Aufenlu with no pre-defined intent or motivation [...] and see what possibilities might arise as they may come to [him]”. In simpler terms, he was using the expedition as a note gathering session, to then find new avenues of research to pursue and pitch further. What those avenues might have been never came to pass as, quite infamously, the expedition went on a much different track than Kerefanha, or really, anyone else, could have predicted.

The pitch was approved and the expedition began in autumn of the same year. Kerefanha travelled over twenty days north from Mafauki to the southern limits of Kinakha Sitenlen territory, and lived in a Kinakha Sitenlen village for a further forty days. Despite what you may hear, what village this is has never been confirmed. Advances have been made in narrowing down potential candidates, but these are all highly speculative.

When I mention that I'm a Scholar focused on Diet of Worms and the cultural phenomena surrounding it, I am frequently asked about this village. So, I will say this now on the matter of what village he may have lived or died in: I

do not know. I believe, for myself, that his ultimate resting place is one that's of no importance to my research and what I do. I have always focused on the cultural impact of his work, and how this impacted perception of the Kinakha Sitenlen, and less on the physical reality and potential inaccuracies of his research. That work is being done by others who have far more motivation in the question than I have, and it is something that's of no interest to me and my specialisation.

The expedition started as an apparent failure. Kerefanha found that much of his language knowledge was serviceable, but hit a wall when faced with the cultural differences of Kinakha Sitenlen society. Despite being able to communicate basic concepts, and even hold significant conversations, little anthropological data could be gathered from them. Anyone with prior knowledge of Kinakha Sitenlen society, or being Kinakha Sitenlen themselves, will be able to identify how the village was undergoing a social process known as "stonewalling", which is a uniquely Kinakha Sitenlen response in the face of an apparent threat or unknown other. Often quoted as rude, abrasive, and sometimes childish behaviour by Ousentan scholars, I've often argued how stonewalling is much the opposite in a Kinakha Sitenlen context, and was seen as an instrumental tool in the face of active prosecution. Despite relative peace granted in the north by the work of Monarch Yazaimin, among others, in the 14th century, I would say that the village had valid reasons to respond as such, even from an Ousentan perspective, and even more so from a Kinakha Sitenlen perspective, especially given the history that would progress in the following centuries.

Kerefanha's expedition takes a turn when, now the most infamous event in the book, he suffers an injury to his leg which is then infested with "worms". There has been much debate over what these worms 'actually' were, and as mentioned before, this is not a question that concerns me, and further speculation would take away from my intent with this publication. What does concern us, is that this wound eventually infests to the point he develops a severe fever, and after being helped by the village shaman, he realises he can *see* these worms. Previously, he believed them to be a concept or theory, much similar to the likes of germ theory, which he was a shockingly progressive adopter of at least two centuries before mainstream conversation. During his fever, he feels compelled to, and is then encouraged by the shaman, to eat these worms. The description of this is unusually visceral and disgust-provoking, which was barely an acceptable literary practice in fiction at the time, let alone Academic Publications.

After this point, the village stops stonewalling, and embraces Kerefanha as a full member of their social group, effectively 'vetted' by the shaman, and is soon fully initiated as a "worm-eater". He then details several instances of healing members of the village by identifying and eating worms, primarily those found in open wounds and sores.

It's important to note that what Kerefanha is describing here, known as 'worm-eating practice', is a term now beginning to fall out of favour in academic circles, for various reasons. I have opinions on this, as many do to positive and negative effect, but also believe that I am not qualified enough to determine what Kinakha Sitenlen spiritual practices should, or shouldn't, be named. One of my Candidates, Kinakha Sitenlen-born herself, has been making exceptional strides in this field, and coined the term "Kinakha Sitenlen Shamanism", which encompasses these practices and many others into a complete system, in similar effect to Traditional Ousentan Medicine. Whilst I cannot cite her material at present until the completion of her Mastership, which I see her defending with absolute ease, I would highly recommend interested parties to pay close attention to publications from the University of Mafauki in the coming years.

When returning to Mafauki, now thoroughly shaken by his experience, Kerefanha immediately set to work on collecting his notes into the manuscript that would become Diet of Worms. This publication was actually a stipulation of his expedition, that to be granted funding he would be required to produce an Academic Publication afterwards. Although, due to its open-ended nature, arguably anything could have been published as long as it pertained to the expedition in some capacity. He claims to have written the whole manuscript in under a week, but, this can be contested, as much of the manuscript was likely to have been lifted from his notes, possibly to the extent of a one-to-one transliteration, if they were written in a similar style to his diaries, a voice pervasive throughout Diet of Worms.

As was traditionally needed for Academic Publications, a foreword written by another Master was required in order for the manuscript to be eligible for publication by the Royal Academic Press. It was common for the first draft of a manuscript to be brought to review before a foreword was supplied, but sometimes one was sought immediately, usually when the author was certain the manuscript would be well-received, or, in Kerefanha's case, particularly controversial. Kerefanha had little success in finding another Master, no doubt on account of his poor reputation. Eventually, a foreword was supplied by Mst. Fahn. Aranka Yendera, most well known for his work in promoting Daikenyu for public use, who Kerefanha previously knew from his literature General.

There's some reports that he was bribed by Kerefanha to write the foreword. Equally, as both were working in controversial Masterships, Aranka may have felt some sympathy to Kerefanha, and then having actually read the manuscript wrote the foreword regardless, not wanting to cause issue. Or, he may have just genuinely felt like the publication needed to be put into the world, despite his personal disagreements with it. Either way, the foreword was oddly curt, but still qualified it for future publication.

The response to the manuscript was overwhelmingly negative, and in many ways, unusually cruel. When seen out of context, it's almost absurdly so. But, as far as the academic sphere was concerned, especially in Mafauki, this was someone that had been causing general issue and controversy for well over a decade. If Kerefanha, to them, was no longer taking himself seriously, and entirely disrespecting the academic process, that meant everyone else was free to no longer take him seriously as an academic. In effect, this publication was seen as the moment when full permission was given to no longer hold academic politeness, as, to them, this was no longer an academic matter. If any positive commentaries could have emerged during this period, this came to a shuddering halt when Omn. Lifenakha Eren, then the highest authority on the Kinakha Sitenlen, published his own commentary as a pamphlet, quashing any chances of such.

When commentaries were submit to and collected in the Grand Journal that winter, over a third of them were solely dedicated to taking down Diet of Worms, many by Masters well divorced from the small community of anthropology. Whilst certainly overkill, no doubt fuelled by a general distaste of Kerefanha as a person by many, what fascinated me was the *variety* in how these commentaries dissect and attack the manuscript. There's criticisms of his style, breaking Academic Publication standards, his support of dubious scientific theory (some that are widely accepted today, as mentioned previously), events being exaggerated or entirely false, doubt in how well he translates the Kinakha Sitenlen language, a breakdown on how his timeline of events is inconsistent, and accusations of insanity. It was the first example of how completely Diet of Worms could capture the Ousentan imagination, and how compelled people felt to engage with the book's material.

Undeterred, perhaps knowing this was the outcome (although, I would definitely argue, not predicting it to this extent), Kerefanha did not write a second draft of the manuscript and instead pushed the first to publication as-is. Practically unheard of at the time, and still to this day, this attracted even more negative attention. Although, according to his contemporaries, Kerefanha took

this in stride, and fully embraced his new reputation while in public on campus grounds, and, apparently, even performed worm-eating sessions on interested parties. 'Interested' may be inaccurate, as many of those who engaged seemed to do so as an act of mocking. Whether he was aware of this is debatable, but I would argue in favour of him being so.

With the vocal controversy, the Royal Academic Press initially ran the book on the smallest possible order volume of 16 copies, thinking it would not sell well among scholars. Of course, this caused much the opposite effect, and the book was out of stock almost immediately. This led to four more reruns of the book, each with increasing order volumes, until the book was then moved to regular print, keeping the book in stock at all times, rather than being put out on limited runs. In the modern age, this is an almost expected standard for many books, but back then, such a labour-intensive process was an extreme rarity for a book to be blessed with. At the time, only seven books were in regular print from the Royal Academic Press; six were mandatory textbooks for General degrees, and the seventh was the *Book of Beginnings*. Consider yourself as someone who has been a vocal opponent of *Diet of Worms* since its first manuscript, hearing that this book has now been elevated to regular print, in the same bracket of importance as *the Book of Beginnings*, and a picture of how controversy around this book began spiralling out of anyone's control becomes very clear.

This controversy only accelerating, the book was then sought after for co-publication by the Public Printing Press, believing it could leverage its reputation among the general public for sales. This is, as far as records show us, the only instance of such a thing happening before the Printing Boom and general democratisation of the printed word. If *Diet of Worms* being brought to regular print was a scandal in itself, this would have added even more fuel to the fire. It inspired both sides of the argument, that *Diet of Worms* was not an academic piece to begin with, or that it was an academic-born work that could appeal to all stratas of Ousentan society. As far as we can tell, Kerefanha had no say in this arrangement, as full rights of the text were handed over to the Royal Academic Press on its publication.

Whilst its academic reputation was completely ground to the dirt, the public's reception to *Diet of Worms* was the complete opposite. It became a universally beloved book almost overnight, and its popularity only climbed further with every urban centre the book was distributed through. This clashed against academic cultures in university cities, prompting even more independent pamphlets on the book with polarised opinions. In one half of society, Kerefanha was a self-absorbed lunatic, who had complete contempt for one of

Ousenta's oldest living institutions. In the other, Kerefanha was a revolutionary scholar scorned by the academic world, discovering untold secrets about a mysterious, esoteric people, sharing the very same soil as they did.

If Kerefanha thought he had been rectified by this surge of popularity, we have no idea if he did. This is the point where we know shockingly little about his motivations, and Kerefanha absconded in a form of self-imposed exile, with no evidence of where he could have gone. He ceased communication with anyone days before his disappearance, which many were happy to not return, did not make any further entries in his diaries, and a note left behind only had rigid instructions on what to do with his assets and research, leaving very little to read between the lines. It's even uncertain when he actually left, as the note may have been discovered well after he did so. The only thing of certainty was this: he did not want anyone to go looking for him.

It's often quoted that Kerefanha returned to the village he stayed in, which I receive many questions on, and, once again, the only thing I can comment is that we do not know. Returning to Kinakha Sitenlen territory is certainly a possibility, given comments he made in *Diet of Worms*, but there's no way of knowing if he actually did or didn't. This might have fully been his intention after he finished the manuscript, but there is over half a year between its completion and publication by the Public Printing Press, and his opinion on this could have shifted dramatically. He could have assumed an alternate identity, as was strikingly easier to do in the past, perhaps not wishing to live a life as a public celebrity. It's possible he commit suicide, either within Ousenta or elsewhere. No evidence has been found in support, or against, any of these conclusions, and we can only speculate where his final resting place is.

In any case, returning to live with the Kinakha Sitenlen is the most popular narrative, and the one adopted by Yazaimin's Court. An order was put out for the return of Kerefanha to the capital, at ten households of grain, about equivalent to SK60,000 today, taking some liberties with conversion. What prompted the order was, most likely, an attempt to appeal to the public following the mass popularity of the book. By showing that the Court was taking efforts to find a popular figure, it showed they kept a finger on the pulse of the public's wants and desires, which Yazaimn leveraged to her intense popularity multiple times during her reign. This order also was, quite famously, the last order she signed personally. Despite an increase to the reward in later years, no-one found Kerefanha or evidence on where he might have gone, and the order was formally withdrawn by the Grand Parade in 1505, over 150 years after he was born.

This ends Kerefanha's story on a muted note, and arguably his story has

...ome to end. There's no bombastic final words, or a publicised death with
...ration to Siya attended by masses. As a person, he fades into the
...ound, with his work left to be propagated and reinterpreted entirely
...out his word, and, perhaps, this is the ultimate outcome he desired.

Censorship and Republications

Kerefanha's disappearance only served to drive the craze over the book even further. Now, a book that was surrounded by mystery and secrets of an exotic culture, also had an author with an equally mysterious effect. In a famous incident, a rumour was spread through Sisiten that the book would never be republished now that Kerefanha was presumed dead. The book was cleared out of stock in the city in less than a day, only to be restocked a few days later, and a much similar story took place once again. Allegedly, this repeated at least four times before it was realised that the book was not going out of print anytime soon. Of course, the Public Printing Press would have little reason to repress these rumours.

Over the next few decades, along with ongoing collapse of the Court and advent of the Civil War, the book was foundational for the rise of the All-Saints movement. To detail the movement and its impacts would require an additional novel in itself, but we can summarise it briefly. Towards the end of Diet of Worms, Kerefanha comes to the conclusion, quoting his experience with Kinakha Sitenlen Shamanism, that there are aspects of Ousentan religion that do not fully encompass all spiritual experience. This was then argued in reverse, that aspects of Ousentan religion trumped the then-limited understanding of Kinakha Sitenlen spirituality. Eventually, these conclusions combined into one idea, that neither was all-encompassing, and instead both were the descendents of a greater, uncorrupted religious path. The All-Saints movement sought to find this original religion.

By the time the New United Government was in power, and their desire to affirm the strength of a fully united and culturally strong Ousenta, the All-Saints movement was designated a key enemy of the new state, and Diet of Worms was banned from publication in 1428. It was set to be republished after censorship of the original text, and this new revised edition was published in 1431, fully in Daikenyu.

Many people have made extensive commentaries on the inadequacies of the New United Government, which I will save you from here, but the attempts to

suppress Diet of Worms were objectively an almost complete failure. It begins with the glacial pace of censorship, meaning the original could be redistributed as unauthorised copies and pamphlets, prepared well before censorship took full hold. Once the new edition was complete, the Royal Academic Press still retained rights to the original 1379 version, and this new 1433 edition was entirely separate, under full government ownership, and thus, public property. The New United Government stressed this status, in fact, subsidising presses to print this version en-masse. The logic, that if there were so many more copies of this new version over the original, it would mean the original would be nearly impossible to obtain, and it would be increasingly difficult for the All-Saints movement to make use of it, instead turning to a government-approved message. Copies of the revised edition of Diet of Worms flooded the markets, and set into motion the start of the Printing Boom. Most importantly, and the true failure of this scheme, the parts of the work that were censored were of next to no importance to the All-Saints movement, and the revised edition was more than acceptable for them to use as a reference.

The result, is that Diet of Worms was now more accessible than ever, would be increasingly accessible in the future, in a script that was easier to learn and read, and in a format that the New United Government's apparent enemies were more than happy to capitalise on. Then, more upcoming printing presses and publishing houses found they could republish the book in entirely new editions with commentaries from other authors, either academic and casual, all from a text that was free to reprint and redistribute. Members of the All-Saints movement itself began to take advantage of the Printing Boom, publishing their own material, often as further editions of Diet of Worms itself.

These events are often pointed to as the catalyst for Diet of Worms having so many editions, each with substantial commentaries by amateur and professional authors alike, but I've argued that this is only part of the story. It is very true that these events escalated the amount of editions published, but, this ignores *the book itself*. From the minute of its manuscript review, Diet of Worms angered and enchanted everyone it touched. Even after hitting public distribution with a much more favourable reputation, people still felt need to suppress it, spread it, insult it, talk about it, analyse it; simply feeling a great need to engage with the book in any sense. Its conclusions and material were certainly more than scandalous in its year of publication, and definitely not something that would shock a modern reader on content alone, with many arguing that its reputation and hype carries the book into the 18th century. But, even beyond the reputation, many have found themselves compelled just by the

text, even if they have little to no previous opinion on the book, and then seek a need to discuss it with others. *Diet of Worms*, undeniably, has a magnetic effect on the Ousentan reader, and the book itself is the only thing to blame for its continued legacy.

As the New United Government dissolved, and the ban on *Diet of Worms*'s publication more being forgotten than officially repealed, further editions were produced that gradually began to incorporate more original material, culminating in the 1643 version discussed previously. But, the source itself was beginning to disappear. The Royal Academic Press lost the original manuscript during restructuring efforts between 1509 and 1512, and while organised destruction of the book was never *de facto* approved by the New United Government, book burnings and similar destructions were actively encouraged in unofficial terms, and with how easily accessible the content of the book was, there was little motivation to save these original editions. Given the estimate of the original number of copies at its peak, somewhere between 27 to 30,000, it's a harrowing look into how effective this combination was, doubled with poor construction and book quality that hounded early printed works well into the onset of the Printing Boom. It's only through the efforts of archivists, counter-culturalists, historians, and many others working in cultural preservation, that we have the two original editions that survive to this day, rather than having to rely on potentially inaccurate copies.

The 1749 Republication

I was one of the very lucky few who gained access to the copy of the original 1379 version in the University of Mafauki's archive as part of my Mastership. I remember this day vividly, as I do all the preparation that went into it, revising *Jazeo* for weeks on end to make sure I was reading *Kerefanha's* work with the highest accuracy as I could manage. Now, I finally had the original to read without anyone else's thoughts on it to shape my perception. What I was left with was questions, but not the questions others had. The questions were not of if this was a true story, or if the research was 'valid', but instead of the impact this had on the Ousentan mind. Why did he react in such a way to *Kinakha Sitenlen* society? Why did most Ousentans do so around this period? What, actually, was his true motivation for going on the expedition? Most importantly, why was the book itself such a magnet for controversy?

These questions did not leave me, even as I set out to pursue recommended

reading around the book. When I asked my Supervisor and my colleagues these questions, I was given shrugs or befuddled looks in response, as if wondering why this had never been asked before. My Mastership quickly shifted in scope. I was no longer simply looking for answers on what Diet of Worms 'means', but now on the actual circumstances of the book and the man behind it.

I won't bore you with my academic career, but I truly believe it has culminated in this publication. This book intends to be a complete, uncensored, definitive edition of Diet of Worms for the modern reader, both the casual and professional academic, fully realised in Daikenyu. It is intended to be quoted and sourced as if quoting the original text itself. Any misspellings, odd grammar, and possible errors will remain, without myself inserting my own interpretations of what they may or may not mean. This includes his personal transcriptions of Kinakha Sitenlen names, which are, bending my own rules a little, often incorrect to the point of embarrassment or flat-out offence.

Criticism is always made against efforts to transpose works written in Jazeo into Daikenyu, and these critiques have been around for as long as Daikenyu has been in active use. This is an argument that has many valid concerns, but, Diet of Worms is uniquely suited for such transposition. Having been proposed and invented while Kerefanha was alive, Daikenyu would have mapped almost exactly to the actual spoken word he would have intended. By taking from the original book, rather than its repeated iterations by others, we can be completely certain that this is as close to the original language as we can get, while still being written in a script that is accessible and readable to the majority.

Still understanding the importance of historical preservation, the text has also been supplied, in full, in the original Jazeo, reformatted for the sake of readability, at the back of this volume following the Daikenyu transposition. For those fluent in both, it will be possible to contrast the two and check for accuracy of the transposition yourself. If there are any criticisms against this, as I am certain there will be, I implore those compelled to publish commentaries of their own. This only adds to the extensive history that this book has spawned.

As is my intent, there will be no further comments from myself, or anyone else, beyond this point. Diet of Worms will be presented as-is from the time of publication in 1379. So, before the book proper begins, I ask you, the reader, to engage with the book on your own terms. It is a near-impossible task to detach yourself entirely from the books' reputation, but it's an exercise I highly recommend. Which parts do you believe Kerefanha has exaggerated, or is being entirely truthful? How would you, if you were an academic in 1379, have reacted

to this book's publication? How would you have reacted as a member of the common public? We now have the foresight of nearly 400 years of publications to help answer this, but you might take this further and entirely ignore them. What you take from Diet of Worms is as much as you put into it.

For many obvious reasons, the republication of this book has been beset with many delays. Originally set to be published by the end of 1747, this was then pushed further back to mid-1748, and by this point, both myself and my editors and publishers decided to suspend the project indefinitely while we attended to other matters. This has been a blessing in a cosmic way, as in the current year, we now see this publication being made on the book's 370th birthday.

Now, on the advent of a new Era, as many of us are trying to, I wish to deliver ourselves into it on the strongest possible foot, and I will do that in the best means that I can. Kerefanha's seminal work, for the first time in over two hundred years, is now printed as he intended, without commentary or omissions to the original text. Whether a worm-tongue, worm-eater, both, or neither, Kerefanha's influence cannot be denied, and his work deserves to be preserved for posterity and prosperity.