

# Crosscultural Background of Anglo-Saxon Society

—Ælfric's Rendition—

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## 0. Introduction

It is a well-known fact that after the Meiji Restoration, with the nation's policy of "*bunmei kaika*" (civilization and enlightenment) there were adopted an abundance of Indo-European words, written in *kata-kana*, conveying the Western civilization. However, how many of the ordinary Japanese would know that the Japanese word *danna* is not of Japanese origin when they say "*uchino dannawa itsumo kaeriga osoi*" (my husband is late coming home every day)? The number will certainly decrease when asked how many would know that the word *danna* came into the Japanese vocabulary as a Buddhist term, that it assumed the Chinese characters 檀那 (旦那) to represent its sound *dāna* in Sanscrit, and that it is cognate with European words such as French *donner*, Latin *dare* (infinitive of Latin *do* "I give"), English *donate*, *donation*, and *donor*. This is an example of an Indo-European word borrowed into Japanese long ago with the introduction of Buddhism into Japanese society.

The English language also has adopted in its long and complex history a large number of words from various languages, recently even words, such as *futon*, *ikebana*, *karaoke*, *koi* (carp), *origami*, and *sumo*, directly from Japanese.<sup>1)</sup> In other words the English language has been affected by various social events and foreign cultures, and has adopted a great number of words in various fields from foreign languages which reflect different cultures. Thus the crosscultural contact and interest in different cultures have resulted in borrowing of words both in Japanese and in English.

1) The earliest citation of the words *futon*, *ikebana*, *sumo*, and *origami* is dated in the *OED* (2nd ed.) as 1876, 1901, 1880, and 1922 respectively. The *OED* (2nd ed.) does not include the word *karaoke*, but *Collins English Dictionary* (3rd ed.) does.

The chief aim of the present article is to discuss the crosscultural contact mainly between the Latin world and the English world at the Anglo-Saxon period, about one thousand years ago, focussing on matters concerning homiletic and exegetic rendition of Ælfric (died c. 1010),<sup>2)</sup> whose writings have abundantly survived.

### 1. Social, cultural and lingual background and Ælfric's reference to his authority.

Ælfric's *Lives of Saints* (*LS* hereafter) includes an account about St. Oswald, a seventh-century Northumbrian king. Oswald's kingdom is described in the account as a multi-cultural/-lingual society, which comprised four peoples, *peohtas* (the Picts), *bryttas* (the Britons), *Scottas* (the Scots of Ireland) and *angle* (the Angles).

Oswoldes cynerice wearð gerymed þa swyðe .  
 swa þæt feower þeoda hine underfengon to hlaforde .  
 peohtas . and bryttas . Scottas and angle .  
 swa swa se ælmihtiga god hi geanlæhte to ðam .  
 for oswoldes geearnungum þe hine æfre wurðode .<sup>3)</sup>

[ÆLS (Oswald) 104–108]

There must have arisen a problem of lingual communication in such a multicultural/-lingual society. How did the king manage to settle the problem? Another passage from the same account relates how St. Aidan (d. 651), who was invited from Iona to the kingdom of Northumbria to revive the missionary work of St. Paulinus (d. 644) and became the first bishop of Lindisfarne, could not learn the language of Northumbria quickly enough, and how the king himself, who knew *scyttisc* (Irish) well, was acting as *wealhstod* (interpreter).

Hit gelamp þa swa þæt se geleaffulla cyning  
 gerehte his witan on heora agenum gereorde  
 þæs bisceopes bodunge mid bliþum mode .  
 and was his wealhstod for-þon þe he wel cuþe scyttisc .  
 and se bisceop aidan ne mihte gebigan his spræce  
 to norðhymbriscum gereorde swa hraþe þa git .<sup>4)</sup>

[ÆLS (Oswald) 64–69]

2) The date of Ælfric's death follows Peter Clemoes, 'The Chronology of Ælfric's Works', *The Anglo-Saxons* (London: Bowes & Bowes 1959), p. 245, and Patrick Wormald, 'Anglo-Saxon society and its literature', *The Cambridge Companion to Old English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1991), p. 17.

3) 'Then Oswald's kingdom became greatly enlarged, so that four peoples received him as lord, Picts, Britons, Scots, and Angles, even as the Almighty God united them for the purpose, because of Oswald's merits, who ever honoured Him.' The text and the translation are quoted from *Ælfric's Lives of Saints*, ed. Walter W. Skeat, EETS OS 94 & 114 (London: Oxford University Press 1890, 1900).

4) 'It befell then that this believing king explained to his counsellors in their own language the bishop's preaching with glad mind, and was his interpreter, because he knew Irish well, and

The source of the account about St. Oswald is Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, which Ælfric himself mentions in the clause "swa swa us rehte beda" (as Beda hath related to us) at the beginning of his account, ÆLS (Oswald) 33. The above-mentioned two passages are relevant to those in Book III, Chapters VI and III of the original Latin work by Bede.<sup>5)</sup> It may be noted parenthetically that the four peoples (feower þeoda) under Oswald's sway in Ælfric's version are described as the speakers of four languages (in quattuor linguas) in Bede's version, and that Bede's version gives a description about how he knew Irish—the king had gained a perfect knowledge of Irish during the long period of his exile (nimirum tam longo exilii sui tempore linguam Scottorum iam plene didicerat). An account about St. Æthelthryth (d. 679) in Ælfric's *LS* also includes a passage referring to Ælfric's use of Bede as its source. Æthelthryth, the daughter of Anna, the king of East Anglia, was married to Tondberht, an ealdorman, but after Tondberht's death she was given to King Ecgfrith. Although she lived with King Ecgfrith for twelve years, she remained a pure virgin. The relevant passage reads as follows:

Heo lufode þone hælend þe hi heold unwemme .  
 and godes ðeowas wurðode . an þæra wæs wilfrid bisceop  
 þe heo swyðost lufode . and he sæde bedan  
 þæt se cyning ecfrid him oft behete mycel  
 on lande and on feo . gif he læran mihte  
 ældryðe his gebeddan . þæt heo bruce his synscipes .  
 Nu cwæð se halga beda þe þas boc gesette .  
 þæt se ælmihtiga god mihte eaðe gedon  
 nu on urum dagum þæt ældryð þurh-wunode  
 unge-wemmed mæden . þeah ðe heo wer hæfde .  
 swa swa on ealdum dagum hwilon ær getimode  
 þurh þone ylcan god þe æfter þurh-wunað  
 mid his gecorenum halgum . swa swa he sylf behet .<sup>6)</sup> [ÆLS (Æthelthryth) 18–30]

bishop Aidan could not as yet turn his speech into the Northumbrian dialect quickly enough.'

5) Book III, Chapter VI: "... denique omnes nationes et prouincias Britanniae, quae in quattuor linguas, id est Brettonum Pictorum Scottorum et Anglorum, diuisae sunt, in dicione accepit (In fact he held under his sway all the peoples and kingdoms of Britain, divided among the speakers of four different languages, British, Pictish, Irish, and English)". Book III, Chapter III: "Vbi pulcherrimo saepe spectaculo contigit, ut euangelizante antistite, qui Anglorum linguam perfecte non nouerat, ipse rex suis ducibus ac ministris interpretis uerbi existeret caelestis, quia nimirum tam longo exilii sui tempore linguam Scottorum iam plene didicerat (It was indeed a beautiful sight when the bishop was preaching the gospel, to see the king acting as interpreter of the heavenly word for his ealdormen and thegns, for the bishop was not completely at home in the English tongue, while the king had gained a perfect knowledge of Irish during the long period of his exile)". The Latin text and the English translation are quoted from *Bede: Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. Bertram Calgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1969, repr. 1992), p. 231 and p. 221.

6) 'She loved the Saviour who kept her unspotted, and honoured God's servants; one of these was bishop Wilfrid, whom she especially loved, and he told Beda that king Ecgfrid often promised him

Here Ælfric states that Bede wrote the story (se halga beda þe þas boc gesette), and that Bede heard the story from Bishop Wilfrid. The corresponding Latin passage is the beginning of Book IV, Chapter XIX, of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* (Calgrave & Mynors, pp. 390–392).<sup>7)</sup>

Ælfric's *LS* includes a story of a later Anglo-Saxon saint, Bishop Swithhun (d. 861). In the story appear an afflicted thane (þegn) of the Isle of Wight who lay bedridden about nine years. The man was healed by the merits of St. Swithhun; he immediately went to Winchester to tell Bishop Æthelwold (d. 984) how he had been healed.

He ferde eac siððan to winceastre for-raðe .  
and cydde aðelwolde þam arwurþan bisceope .  
hu he wearð gehæled þurh þone halgan swiþun .  
and land-ferð se ofer-sæwisca hit gesette on læden .<sup>8)</sup> [ÆLS (Swithhun) 399–402]

Ælfric mentions here that it was in Latin that a foreigner (*ofer-sæwisca*, an adjective literally meaning 'from beyond the sea' or 'transmarine') named Landferth recorded the story.<sup>9)</sup>

Concerning the use of Latin, Ælfric's *LS* includes a homily with an insertion of a letter to and from Christ in which Christ answers in Latin. Abgarus, a Syrian king, writes a letter to Christ praying Him to heal his infirmity. Christ's answer to him, however, is written in Latin as follows:

þa awrat se hælend him sylf þis gewrit .  
and asende ðam cynincge ðus cwæðende him to .  
*Beatus es qui credidisti in me . cum ipse me non uideris .*

much in lands and money if he would persuade Æthelthryth his wife to brook the marriage-connection. Now the holy Bede who wrote this book saith that Almighty God might easily cause, even now in our days, that Æthelthryth should remain a pure maiden, though she had a husband, as whilom in the old days it formerly befell, through the (grace of the) same God, who continueth ever with His chosen saints, even as He Himself hath promised.'

7) "... cum hoc an ita esset quibusdam uenisset in dubium, beatae memoriae Uilfrid episcopus referebat, dicens se testem integritatis eius esse certissimum, adeo ut Ecgfridus promiserit se ei terras ac pecunias multas esse donaturum, si reginae posset persuadere eius uti conubio, quia sciebat illam nullum uirorum plus illo diligere. (When I asked Bishop Wilfrid of blessed memory whether this was true, because certain people doubted it, he told me that he had the most perfect proof of her virginity; in fact Ecgfrith had promised to give him estates and money if he could persuade the queen to consummate their marriage, because he knew that there was none whom she loved more than Wilfrid himself)." Underlines mine.

8) 'Then afterwards he went very quickly to Winchester, and told the venerable bishop Æthelwold how he had been healed through the holy Swithhun; and Landferth, the foreigner, set it down in Latin.'

9) John Earle, *Gloucester Fragments: Saint Swiðhun and St. Maria Ægyptiaca* (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts 1861) renders *Landferð se ofer sæwisca* as 'Landferð the transmarine' at page 11. The book, at page 60, also records the letter of Lantfrid about the miracles of St. Swithhun from MS. Reg. 15. C. vii, which contains one of the two Latin biographies of St. Swithhun.

*Scriptum est enim de me . quia hii qui me uident non credent  
 In me . et qui non uident me . ipsi credent et uiuent .  
 De eo autem quod scripsisti mihi ut ueniam ad te .  
 oportet me omnia propter quæ missus sum hic explere .  
 Et postea quam compleuero recipi me ad eum a quo missus sum .  
 Cum ergo fuero assumptus . mittam tibi aliquem  
 ex discipulis meis ut curet ægritudinem tuam .  
 et uitam tibi atque his qui tecum sunt prestet .*  
 þæt is on engliscum gereorde . Eadig eart ðu abgar .  
 þu þe gelyfdest on me . þonne ðu me ne gesawe .  
 Hit is awriten be me on witegung-bocum .  
 þæt ða þe me geseoð . hi ne gelyfað on me .  
 and þa þe me ne geseoð . hi gelyfað and libbað .  
 Be þam þe ðu awrite to me . þæt ic come to þe .  
 ic sceal ærest afyllan þa þincg þe ic fore asend eom .  
 and ic sceal beon eft genumen to þam ylcan ðe me asende .  
 And ic asende to ðe . syððan ic genumen beo .  
 ænne minra leorning-cnihta . þe gelacniað þine untrumnyse .  
 and þe lif ge-gearcað . and þam þe gelyfað mid ðe .<sup>10)</sup>[ÆLS (Abdon & Sennes) 102–123]

The account entitled “the letter of Christ to Abgarus”, which includes the above passage, is inserted after the homily about Abdon and Sennes. With regard to the insertion of this letter, Skeat (vol. II, p. 448) comments that “it is not clear why this Letter is introduced at this place, as it belongs rather to the Life of St. Thomas”. The letter is inserted in order to lengthen the homily as Ælfric himself states at the beginning of the letter as follows:

Nu we spræcon be cynegum we willað þysne cwyde gelencgan .  
 and be sumum cynincge eow cyðan git . Abgarus wæs geciged .  
 sum gesælig cynincg on syrian lande .<sup>11)</sup> [ÆLS (Abdon & Sennes) 81–83]

10) ‘Then the Saviour Himself wrote this letter, and sent it to the king, thus saying to him; *‘Beatus es qui credidisti in me, cum ipse me non uideris. Scriptum est enim de me, quia hii qui me uident non credent in me, et qui non uident me, ipsi credent et uiuent. De eo autem quod scripsisti mihi, ut ueniam ad te, oportet me omnia propter quæ missus sum hic explere; et postea quam compleuero, recipi me ad eum a quo missus sum. Cum ergo fuero assumptus, mittam tibi aliquem ex discipulis meis, ut curet ægritudinem tuam, et uitam tibi atque his qui tecum sunt prestet.’* That is, in the English language, ‘Blessed art thou, Abgar, thou who believedst on Me when thou hadst not seen Me. It is written concerning Me in the books of prophecy, that they who see Me will not believe in Me, and they who see Me not will believe and live. Concerning that which thou has written to Me that I should come to thee, I must first fulfil the things for which I am sent, and I must afterward be taken to the same who sent Me; and I will send to thee after I am taken up one of my disciples who shall heal thy infirmity, and prepare [eternal] life for thee and those that believe with thee.’

11) ‘Now we are speaking about kings, we will lengthen this discourse, and tell you yet about a certain king, who was named Abgarus, a certain blessed king in the Syrian land.’

## 2. Ælfric's explanatory insertion about elephants.

The preface to Ælfric's *LS* starts with a remark that he translated the *LS* from Latin into usual English speech (*ad usitatam Anglicam sermonicationem*) so that other people may study the work whether by reading or hearing (*siue legendo, seu audiendo*).<sup>12)</sup> He further states that he rendered sense for sense, not word for word, and abridged the longer narratives, because "brevity does not always deprave speech but oftentimes makes it more charming".<sup>13)</sup> On the other hand, he effectively makes an explanatory insertion, which seems to avoid tediousness caused by fastidiousness and attract readers or audience.

The homily on the Maccabees in Ælfric's *LS* includes the following explanatory insertion about an elephant:

Sumum menn wile þincan syllic þis to gehyrenne .  
 forþan þe ylþas ne comon næfre on engla lande .  
 Ylþ is ormæte nyten mare þonne sum hus .  
 eall mid banum befangen binnan þam felle  
 butan æt ðam nauelan . and he næfre ne lið .  
 Feower and twentig monða gæð seo modor mid folan .  
 and þreo hund geara hi libbað gif hi alefede ne beoð .  
 and hi man mæg wenian wundorlice to ge-feohte .  
 Hwæt is ealra fixa mæst . and ylþ is ealra nytena mæst .  
 ac swa-þeah mannes gescead hi mæg gewyldan .  
 þa hæðenan ða ferdon to ðam gefeohte swyðe .  
 and mid mor-berium gebyldon þa ylþas .  
 forðan þe mor-berian him is metta leofost .<sup>14)</sup>

[ÆLS (Maccabees) 564–576]

12) 'Hunc quoque codicem transtulimus de Latinitate ad usitatam Anglicam sermocinationem, studentes aliis prodesse edificando ad fidem lectione huius narrationis quibus-cumque placuerit huic operi operam dare, siue legendo, seu Audiendo; quia estimo non esse ingratum fidelibus. (This book also have I translated from the Latin into the usual English speech, desiring to profit others by edifying them in the faith whenever they read this relation, as many, namely, as are pleased to study this work, either by reading or hearing it read; for I think it is not displeasing to the faithful.)' [ÆLS (Pref) 1–5]

13) 'et non semper breuitas sermonem deturpat sed multotiens honestiorem reddit.' [ÆLS (Pref) 28–29]

14) 'To some men it will seem strange to hear this, because that elephants have never come to England. An elephant is an immense beast, greater than a house, all surrounded with bones, within the skin, except at the navel, and he never lies down. Four and twenty months goeth the mother with foal; and three hundred years they live, if they be not crippled; and man may tame them wonderfully for battle. The whale is of all fishes greatest, and the elephant is of all beasts greatest, but nevertheless man's skill may tame them. The heathen then went to the battle swiftly, and with mulberries emboldened the elephants, because mulberries are to them the pleasantest of food.'

The OE word used here for “elephant” is *ylp*, which was later spelled either *elp* or *alp* in ME,<sup>15</sup> is a shortened form of the OE *elpend*, an adaptation of Latin *elephantum*, an adaptation and an adoption of Greek *ἐλέφας* (genitive *ἐλέφαντος*). The word is now obsolete, the last quotation in the *OED* being dated c1325. The first citation in the *OED* of the modern word *elephant* is dated c1300, with the form *olifauns* (a plural form of *olifaunt*). A *Microfiche Concordance to Old English* records four variants of this word; *elpend*, *elpent*, *ylp*, and *ylpend*.<sup>16</sup> The word is also used in combination with the word *ban* ‘bone’ to form a compound *elpenban* (with variants such as *elpanban*, *elpenban*, *ylpenban*) meaning ‘ivory’. The form *elpend* occurs for the most part in the works by King Alfred or those associated with him, whereas Ælfric uses the form *ylp*. Ælfric prefers the shorter form.

The above-mentioned explanatory passage about an elephant is inserted in the homily about the Maccabees, the brothers who succeeded Maccabeus (Greek *Μακκαβαῖος*, originally meaning “hammer” in Hebrew), a nickname of Judas the leader of the Jews. Ælfric, describing the battle of Bethzechariah which was fought between Judas Maccabeus and Lysias, an officer of Antiochus V, the king of Syria (164–162 BC), inserts the explanatory passage just before his description of Eleazar’s attack on an elephant of Antiochus’ army. Ælfric did so, because, “*ylpas ne comon næfre on engla lande*” (elephants have never come to England), as he states, and so he wanted to give some introductory knowledge about an elephant to his audience. He describes an elephant as “*mare þonne sum hus*” (bigger than a house), as “*eall mid banum befangen binnan þam felle butan æt ðam nauelan*” (all surrounded with bones, within the skin, but at the navel), as “*feower and twentig monða gæð seo modor mid folan*” (the mother goes with foal for twenty-four months), and as “*þreo hund geara hi libbað*” (they live three hundred years).<sup>17</sup> Incidentally he further states that

15) The *OED* s.v. ‘elp’.

16) The variants occur at Or (for Orosius) 4 1.158.3 (*elpend*), Bo (for Boethius) 32.72.4 (*elpend*), Bo 32.72.6 (*elpend*), Alex (for Alexander’s Letter to Aristotle) 118 (*elpend*), CIGI (for Cleopatra glossary) 1 (Stryker) 1996 (*elpend*), CIGI 1 (Stryker) 2242 (*elpend*), Or 4 1.154.30 (*elpenda*), Or 4 6.176.32 (*elpenda*), Or 4 10.202.13 (*elpenda*), Or 5 7.230.22 (*elpenda*), Alex 95 (*elpenda*), Alex 241 (*elpenda*), Alex 623 (*elpenda*), Or 4 1.156.5 (*elpendas*), Or 4 1.156.11 (*elpendas*), Or 4 1.158.3 (*elpendas*), Or 4 1.258.21 (*elpendas*), Or 4 6.174.20 (*elpendas*), Or 4 6.178.2 (*elpendas*), Or 4 8.186.33 (*elpendas*), Or 4 10.198.26 (*elpendas*), Alex 95 (*elpendas*), Alex 299 (*elpendas*), Alex 351 (*elpendas*), Alex 632 (*elpendas*), Or 5 7.230.22 (*elpendes*), ErfGI (for Erfurt glossary) 1 (Pheifer) 351 (*elpendes*), Or 4 1.156.15 (*elpendon*), Alex 250 (*elpendum*), Alex 626 (*elpendum*), Or 4 1.156.10 (*elpent*), ÆLS (Maccabees) 566 (*ylp*), ÆLS (Maccabees) 572 (*ylp*), ÆHom M (for Ælfric, Homilies [Supplementary Collection]) 11 (Ass 4) 285 (*ylp*), ÆGI (for the Glossary in Ælfric’s Grammar) 5.3 (*ylp*), ÆGI 5.12 (*ylp*), ProgGI (for Prognostics glosses) 1 (Foerst) 95 (*ylp*), AntGI (for Antwerp glossary) 2 (Kindschi) 511 (*ylp*), ÆLS (Maccabees) 554 (*ylpas*), ÆLS (Maccabees) 564 (*ylpas*), ÆLS (Maccabees) 574 (*ylpas*), ÆHex (for Ælfric, Hexameron) 269 (*ylpas*), ÆHex 289 (*ylpas*), ÆHex 295 (*ylpas*), BoGI (for Boethius, glosses) (Hale) P.8.23 (*ylpas*), ÆLS (Maccabees) 560 (*ylpe*), ÆLS (Maccabees) 580 (*ylpe*), ÆLS (Maccabees) 583 (*ylpe*), HIGI (for Harley glossary) (Oliphant) 3906 (*ylpend*), AntGI 2 (Kindschi) 512 (*ylpes*).

17) The *New Encyclopædia Britannica* (15th ed, s.v. “elephant”) states that gestation averages 610 days for the Indian elephant and about two months longer for the African elephant. The *Encyclopedia Americana* says that the age of captive specimens is known to reach 70 years, and in the wild state elephants may live longer.

“mid mor-berium gebyldon þa ylþas forðan þe mor-berian him is metta leofost” ([the heathen] emboldened the elephants with mulberries, because mulberries are the pleasantest food for them). The source for the statement about mulberries inciting elephants to fight seems to be Chapter 6, Verse 34 of the 1st Book of Maccabees, which reads, “et elefantis ostenderunt sanguinem uvae et mori ad acuendos eos in proelium”.<sup>18)</sup>

Ælfric’s remark about the navel of an elephant seems to require a further consideration. He states that an elephant is all surrounded with bones, within the skin, except at the navel. His emphasis here seems to be placed on a vital part of an elephant, the navel not surrounded with bones. Several lines later Ælfric describes how Eleazar stabbed an elephant in the navel:

he arn mid atogenum swurde betwux þam eorode middan .  
and sloh æfre on twa healfa þæt hi sweltende feollon  
oð þæt he to þam ylþe com . and eode him on under .  
stang ða hine æt ðam nauelan þæt hi lagon ðær begen .  
heora egðer oðres slaga .<sup>19)</sup> [ÆLS (Maccabees) 583–587b]

The above scene is relevant to the following passage of the Latin version:

et iuit sub pedes elefanti et subposuit ei et occidit eum  
et cecidit in terram super ipsum et mortuus est illic<sup>20)</sup> [1 Mcc 6, 46]

In the Latin version Eleazar went under the feet of the elephant, put himself under it, and slew it. The Latin version does not say that Eleazar stabbed it in the navel. Where did Ælfric get the information of stabbing an elephant in the navel?

Bately, in her edition of *Orosius* (EETS SS 6, 1980, p. 271), comments that with regard to stabbing an elephant in the navel J. E. Cross, ‘The Elephant to Alfred, Ælfric, Aldhelm and Others’, *Studia Neophilologica*, xxxvii (1965), 367–73, points out the verbal correspondence between a passage about attacking an elephant in the Old English *Orosius* and that in Ælfric’s homily about Maccabees. The relevant passage in the Old English *Orosius* reads as follows, IV, i, 15–19 (Bately p. 84):

Siþþan Romane þæt gesawan þæt him mon swelcne wrenc to dyde swelcne hie ær ne

18) Quoted from *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1985; erste Auflage 1969), p. 1449, ll. 7–8. The Latin Vulgate quotations will be made hereafter also from this edition.

19) ‘He ran with drawn sword through the midst of the band, and slew ever on both sides, so that they fell dying, until he came to the elephant, and went under him, pricked (him) then at the navel, so that they both lay there, each one the other’s slayer.’

20) ‘He went under the feet of the elephant, and put himself under him, and slew him, and it fell to the ground upon him, and he died there.’ Translation, with spellings adapted, is quoted from *The Holie Bible, Doway 1609*, facsimile reproduction (Kyoto: Rinsen Book Co., Ltd. 1990).

gesawon ne secgan ne hirdon, þa flugon hie ealle buton anum men, se wæs Minutius haten. He genedde under ænne elpent þæt he hiene on þone nafelan ofstang.<sup>21)</sup>

In the corresponding Latin passage, however, what Minutius cut with his sword is not the navel but the trunk of an elephant:

Introductos autem inter concurrentia agmina elephantos, forma truces, odore graves, mole terribiles, ut videre Romani, novo pugnandi genere circumventi et terri, equis maxime pavitantibus, diffugerunt. Sed postquam Minucius, quartæ legionis primus hastatus, protentam in se manum belluæ gladio desecuit, . . .<sup>22)</sup>

It must also be noted that the Latin version of Orosius includes a passage in which the Romans attack the elephants' hinder and soft parts, *posteriora ac mollia*, with firebrands.<sup>23)</sup> Ambrose in *Hexameron* (VI, 5, 32), explains that weapons cannot easily penetrate an elephant's back and the other harder parts of its body, and that its belly is the softer part.<sup>24)</sup>

### 3. Conclusion

Ælfric's writings include accounts about multicultural/-lingual society of the Anglo-Saxon period. In these accounts Ælfric mentions how the people managed to communicate with each other: in the case of St. Oswald, the king himself, who had an experience of contacting people speaking foreign languages, acted as interpreter for St. Aidan. Interpretation or translation was, and still is, an important means to convey conceptions or ideas expressed in a foreign language. Ælfric, who tried sense-for-sense translation, as he himself states, not only sometimes abridged the longer narratives, but also sometimes made explanatory insertions.

21) 'When the Romans saw that people did to them such a stratagem as they had never before seen nor heard people say about, they all fled except one man, who was called Minutius. He went boldly under an elephant, and he stabbed it in the navel.' Translation mine.

22) Quoted from *Pairologiæ Latinæ*, Vol. 31, pp. 858-59. 'But when the Romans saw the elephants, fierce in appearance, offensive in odor, and terrifying in size, led in between the clashing battle lines, surrounded and terrified by this new kind of fighting, with their horses especially trembling with fear, they fled in different directions. But after Minucius, a first *hastatus* of the fourth legion, cut off the trunk of an elephant ...' Translation is quoted from *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 50, Paulus Orosius (Washington, D.C.: the Catholic University of America Press 1964), p. 123.

23) *Pauli Orosii Historiarum Libri Septem*, PL 31, p. 860: "Elephanti prima pugna vulnerari, atque in fugam cogi posse deprehensi: deinde subjectis inter posteriora ac mollia ignibus exagitati, ardentibus in super machinas furore trepido circumferentes, exitio suis fuerunt". (In the first battle, it was discovered that the elephants could be wounded and forced to flee; then, roused by the fire brands imbedded in their hind quarters and sensitive parts, carrying scaffolding on their backs with fierce fury, they became a source of destruction to their own.)

24) *The Fathers of the Church, a New Translation*, Vol. 42, Saint Ambrose: *Hexameron*, Paradise, and Cain and Abel, translated by John J. Savage (Washington, D.C.: the Catholic University of America Press 1961, repr. 1977), p. 247.

In the present article a passage in Ælfric's homily about Maccabees has been discussed as an example of his explanatory insertion. The passage is about an elephant. The word for "elephant" is *ylp*, a shortened form of *elpend*, which occurs mostly in Alfredian works. It may be assumed that Ælfric preferred or used the shorter form because it may have been regarded as a form easily accepted by ordinary Anglo-Saxon people. The shortening of a longer foreign term, as from *elpend* to *ylp*, is a process common to Japanese; "apartment (house)" and "department store", for example, are shortened in everyday Japanese to アパート (*apāto*) and デパート (*depāto*) respectively. Neither *elpend* nor *ylp*, the latter abridged form being preferred by Ælfric, has survived. They became obsolete in the course of the Middle English period, during which the word elephant, in the form *olifauns*, was introduced into English.

Ælfric describes an elephant as a long-lived and the greatest animal, which was tamed by the heathens to be used in battles. Its belly had been referred to as its only soft part, and therefore as its vital part. The translator of the Old English *Orosius*, as is suggested by J. E. Cross, may have been recalling Eleazar's attacking an elephant from under it at I Maccabees, 6, 46, when he translated a passage about Minutius' attacking an elephant. Interestingly the Old English *Orosius* and Ælfric coincide in explicitly referring to its vital part as "navel".

#### 論文要旨

10世紀末から11世紀初めにかけて英国で活躍した Ælfric [アルフリッチ] の説教並びに聖書解的記事はラテン語から英語への翻訳であり、それはラテン語で表された異文化の世界への英語の接触でもある。

Ælfric の『聖者伝』に、7世紀 Northumbria 王国の国王、St. Oswald についての記事が収められている。その中で、Oswald の王国は、ビクト人、ブリトン人、アイルランド人、アングル人の4つの民族からなる多文化・多言語社会として描かれている。そのような状態にあって、国王 Oswald は、Iona 島から招き入れた St. Aidan が英語をうまく話せなかったので、自らアイルランド語を使って通訳をした、とある。この話の出所は、Beda の『英国人の教会史』である。Ælfric は、Beda がラテン語で書いたものをもとにして、当時の英語に直したのである。通訳とか、翻訳といったものが、外国語で表された概念や思考を伝えるのに重要な手段であったことは、今日においても同じである。

Ælfric が試みたのは、sense-for-sense translation であり、長めの話を短縮することはよくやったし、その逆に解説を挿入するというのもやった。旧約聖書外典の「マカバイ記」をもとにした説教のなかで、物語の途中で、象という動物について、解説を挿入している。*ylp* という単語が象に相当する語であるが、それは *elpend* を短縮した形である。アルフレッド大王派の翻訳では、*elpend* の形であるが、Ælfric は短縮した *ylp* を使ったのである。それは普通のサングロ・サクソン人にとって容易に受け入れられる形であると思われたからかもしれない。日本語の“アパート”や“デパート”のように、長めの外国語の単語を短縮するというプロセスである。その象についての記事の中で、“へそ”を急所として紹介している。「マカバイ記」のウルガタ版では明確に“へそ”を攻撃したということまでは言及していない。アルフレッド大王が関係したと言われている *Orosius* の古英語訳でも、象の“へそ”を攻撃したという記述があるのは興味深いことである。