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NIFLANT, IFLANT

Dô sprach von Niflande Mórunc der junge man

The name *Niflant* in the above line from *Kudrun* (211, 1) is generally recognized as a variant form of *Livland*, and Martin, in his note on the passage, cites a number of other literary monuments in which this spelling occurs. It seems not to have been noticed, however, that *Nifflant* is the only form found in the Statutes of the Teutonic Order, under whose dominion Livland remained for several centuries. This document, promulgated by the Grand Master Werner von Orseln, is dated September 17, 1329. Its dialect is Middle German:

Auch so mach derselbe meister zu Duitschen landen den meister zu Nifflant auch in mitwissen lassen haben (p. 233). . . . dez meisters zu Duitschen landen und Nifflanden (p. 235). . . . verhengnisse eins meisters van Duitschen landen und auch eins meisters zu Nifflanden (*ibid.*) ein meister van Nifflant mit allen sinen und anderen gebietgern des landes zu Prusen (*ibid.*). . . . der gebietiger und brueder van Pruesen, auch van Nifflant (p. 240). Wie ein meister zu Nifflant auch ein mitwissen mag und sal haben (p. 241). . . . die wile ein meister zu Nifflant auch der oberste gebietiger einer ist (*ibid.*). . . . mach er den meister zu Nifflant, der do zu den zeiten isz, beruffen (*ibid.*). Ob aber derselbe meister zu Niffland nicht komen en moichte (p. 242). Were auch sache das derselbe meister zu Nifflant nicht queme als were der meister zu Nifflant selbe gheenwartich gewiest als were der meister zu Nifflant gegenwirtich (*ibid.*) prueder Eberhart van Minheim, meister zu Nifflant (p. 243).¹

The form *Liflant*, while frequent in other documents of this period, does not occur at all in these Statutes, which long continued to be the fundamental law of the Teutonic Order. *Nifflant*, therefore, instead of being a mere sporadic variant, is to be regarded as a regular, current form. An off-shoot from the spelling *Niflant*, namely *Iflant*, *Ifflant*, seems hitherto to have escaped notice, despite the fact that it occurs very frequently in documents of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The earliest instances are in a legal summons

¹ Published in F. G. v. Bunge's *Liv-, Est- und Curländisches Urkundenbuch, Zweiter Band*, Reval, 1855, pp. 233 ff.

addressed to the Teutonic Order by Magnus, Bishop of Westerås, under date of September 15, 1354:

. . . . und allen brudern und iren icklichem in Ifflande wesenden (*ac fratribus universis et cuilibet ipsorum, per Livoniam constitutis*), (Bunge, II, 596). czerungen und becostungen czu den teilen kegen Ifflant (p. 598). ufgehalden, gewangen, ader welcherwis bekumert in der jegent Ifflande (p. 601).

In the year 1370, King Waldemar of Denmark addresses a letter to the "ratman der gemeinen stede van der Wend siden, von Prusen, von Yfflande und von der Sudirse" (Bunge, VI, 658).

In 1387 the Master of the Order in Livonia sends instructions to his representative at the Papal Court, in which the form *Iffland* is used exclusively:

mitzamt unsem vulbort und unser mitgebitiger zu Iffland (Bunge, III, 545). unser brudere in Ifflande (*ibid.*). eine zuvorsicht unsers ordens in Ifflande (*ibid.*). unser mitgebitiger in Iffland (p. 546). uf die materie der zachen unseres bannes in Iffland (*ibid.*). zu uns in Ifflande (p. 547). uns und unsern orden in Ifflande (*ibid.*).

Similarly, in the official correspondence of the Emperor Sigismund the spelling *Iffland*, together with its variants (*Yfflant*, *Yffland*, *Yffland*), is almost exclusively used, a single instance of *Leyffland* constituting the exception:

den ganczen Deutschen orden in Preussen und ouch in Yffland (Bunge, VII, 94: dated 1424). prelaten, in Preussen und in Yffland gesenzen (p. 95). den erwirdigen hoemeistern in Preussen und in Yffland und irem orden (*ibid.*). der erwirdig meister von Yfflant Deutsches ordens (VIII, 55: 1429). der lande czu Prussen und czu Yffland (VIII, 454: 1434). meister von Leyffland hertzog Swidrigal und den Yfflennern dem meister von Yffland (pp. 542 f.: 1435). die niderlag des erwirdigen meisters von Iffland (p. 618: 1435). von der Yfflender wegen (p. 619). ouch der ritterschaft und steten in Iffland (*Monumenta*,¹ XIV, 533: 1435). dem groszfursten und dem meister von Yffland (p. 544).

In a letter of September 6, 1434, addressed to the Grand Master by Hans Balg (Bunge, VIII, 499–501), we note the forms *czû Yfflande*, *von Yfflande*, *dy Yfflender*, *dy Ifflander*, *dy Ifflender*, *czû Yfflande*, *von Ifflant*, *dy Ifflander*, *dy Ifflander*, *mit den Ifflender*. The form *von Yfflanden* is found in Bunge, IX, 133 (1437), while *ken Yfflandt*, *in Yfflandt* occur four times in a document of the year 1449 (Bunge, X, 455). This list may be concluded by noting the additional forms

¹ *Monumenta medii aevi historica res gestas Poloniae illustrantia*, Tomus XIV, Cracoviae, 1894.

marschalk van Iffelant and *marschalk von Iffilant* (*Monumenta*, XIV, 512 f.: 1431).

As to dialect, it may be noted that the form *Ifland*, like its predecessor *Niffland*, occurs almost exclusively in Middle and Upper German documents, whereas Low German texts always have *Lifland*, or a similar spelling with initial *L*. The two forms *Ifland* and *Lifland* hardly ever appear in the same document—the most striking exception to this statement is to be noted in a letter of the year 1410, in which there are also other indications of a mixture of dialects (Middle and Low German):

dat ir mir behulplich sin an den mester von Yfflande, das her mich zo wissen do (Bunge, IV, 746). Dar uf ret ik en euwir genate ind noch euwirn willen to Lifflande (*ibid.*). di mich obir gengen obir al Yfland (p. 747). das ich ene erfolget hette in Yfland (*ibid.*). So bin ich uis Yffland geriten ind en ger nicht mer (*ibid.*).

The spellings *Niffland*, *Iffland*, *Iffelant*, *Iffilant*, and the like would seem to indicate a short stem-vowel: on the other hand, only a long stem-vowel could have produced the diphthongized form *Eifland*. Rud. Hildebrand,¹ who cites this form from a text of the sixteenth century, explains it by positing a form *Neifland*, which lost its *N* through combinations like *von Neifland*, *in Neifland*. As far as I know, not a single instance of *Neifland* can be cited; nor is it necessary now to posit this form, as *Ifland* with which Hildebrand was unacquainted, sufficiently accounts for *Eifland*. The loss of the initial *N* is paralleled in the name of Heinrich von Notleben, which is found in Bunge in more than a dozen different spellings, including *Otleben* (IX, 222), *Otleyben* (p. 334), and *Otlofften* (p. 177). Similarly, the name of the county of Ortenau in Baden had, as late as the fifteenth century, an initial *M*: *Mordenau*, *Mortenau*.²

The following early instances of *Eifland*, *Eifländer*, *Eifländisch* may be noted:

daz die Eyflender die selbin weile in dem lande gehert haben . . . do sie in das lant komen, do worin die Eyflender weg (*Monumenta*, VI, 185: 1409). der komphthur czum Elbinge ken Eyfland (Bunge, X, 220: 1447). das dye cleynen freyen . . . ken Eyfland mit nichte czyen wellen (p. 224). was mich dy Eyfflendesche reysze gekost hat (p. 454: 1449). uff die Eyfflendesche hervart (*ibid.*).

¹ "Zur Gudrun," *Zeitschr. f. deutsche Phil.*, II, 477.

² *Publikationen aus den Preuss. Staatsarchiven*, LIX, 565.

The last variant to be noted is *Eyfenland*, in a text of the year 1432: "sageten, her were dovon komen und kein Eyfenland geflogen."¹

As giving a possible clue to the origin of the form *Nifland*, Martin, in the note referred to above, states that the Russian name of the province is *Infland*. I am unable to confirm this, as the Russian dictionaries at my command give only *Liwonja* or *Lifjandja*; in Polish, however, the form *Inflanty* is regularly used, occurring frequently, for example, in Vol. VI of the *Monumenta*:

aby zbrojnie kroczyli do Inflant (p. 42). gdy i mistrz Inflancki jego poddanym dozwoili tegoż w Inflanciech (p. 49). Mistrz Inflancki Dietrich Tork przyrzeka w. ks. Witoldowi (p. 304).

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¹ *Scriptores rerum Silesiacarum*, VI, 116.