

Johnny Grandjean Gøgsig Jakobsen

Friars Preachers in Frontier Provinces of Medieval Europe

In 1220-22, i.e. only few years after the official foundation of the Dominican Order in 1216, Friars Preachers were sent from the centres of the Order in southern France and northern Italy to establish convents in all regions of Europe, including the more peripheral ones in the north and the east. Already in the 1220s, Dominican convents in these frontier regions of Christianity were, just as in the rest of Europe, grouped in provinces with a significant degree of semi-autonomy. The first line of such 'frontier provinces' were Hungaria, Polonia and Dacia, from 1303 also with the province of Bohemia, collectively covering the entire central-eastern and northern Europe. Whereas the Friars Preachers had to adapt into an already well-established ecclesiastical structure in western and southern Europe, the settings were quite different in the east and the north, which opened up for an even greater Dominican impact on Church and society as a whole. This paper will compare observations on the wide role in society played by Friars Preachers in northern and central-eastern Europe, both these frontier provinces in between as well as to the friars in the rest of Europe.