

Kublai Khan

Scientific developments and relations with minorities

The "Muslim trebuchet" (Hui-Hui Pao) used to breach the walls of Fancheng and Xiangyang.

Thirty Muslims served as high officials in the court of Kublai Khan. Eight of the dynasty's twelve administrative districts had Muslim governors appointed by Kublai Khan.[79] Among the Muslim governors was Sayyid Ajjal Shams al-Din Omar, who became administrator of Yunnan. He was a well learned man in the Confucian and Daoist traditions and is believed to have propagated Islam in China. Other administrators were Nasr al-Din (Yunnan) and Mahmud Yalavach (mayor of the Yuan capitol).

Kublai Khan patronized Muslim scholars and scientists, and Muslim astronomers contributed to the construction of the observatory in Shaanxi.[80] Astronomers such as Jamal ad-Din introduced 7 new instruments and concepts that allowed the correction of the Chinese calendar.

Muslim cartographers made accurate maps of all the nations along the Silk Road and greatly influenced the knowledge of Yuan dynasty rulers and merchants.

Muslim physicians organized hospitals and had their own institutes of Medicine in Beijing and Shangdu. In Beijing was the renown Guang Hui Si "Department of extensive mercy", where Hui medicine and surgery were taught. Avicenna's works were also published in China during that period.[81]

Muslim mathematicians introduced Euclidean Geometry, Spherical trigonometry and Arabic numerals in China.[82]

Kublai brought siege engineers Ismail and Al al-Din to China, and together they invented the "Muslim trebuchet" (Hui-Hui Pao), which was utilized by Kublai Khan during the Battle of Xiangyang.[83]

Khubilai's revision of the Chinese law code reduced the number of offenses that carried the death penalty to half what it had been under the previous dynasties.