Kublai Khan Encyclopedia Article

Kublai Khan

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Kublai Khan

1215-1249

Mongolian general who conquered China and went on to rule its Yüan, or Mongol, dynasty. Kublai Khan was the grandson of Genghis Khan, leader of the nomadic Mongols. Compared to his grandfather, who conquered with an iron fist, Kublai became known for his great humanity. Kublai succeeded his brother Mangu as leader of their grandfather's empire in 1260, and in 1279 conquered the Sung dynasty, thus gaining control of both North and South China. While continuing his rule of Mongol dominions in southern Russia, Persia and Mongolia, Kublai became the first emperor of China's Yüan dynasty. He established a magnificent capital city at Cambuluc, which is now Beijing.