In 1206 the great Mongol warrior Temujin was named the Genghis Khan—Universal Ruler. His armies had defeated their foes in Mongolia, North China, Central Asia, Persia, and Russia. Even the Great Wall of China did not keep out the Mongol cavalry. By the time Genghis Khan died in 1227, the Mongol Empire extended from east China to the Caspian Sea. His successors invaded Korea, Russia, Hungary, and Poland.

Genghis' grandson, Kublai Khan, conquered South China (the Sung Empire) in 1279. Kublai began the Yuan Dynasty, which ruled all of China until 1368. At first, Kublai did not trust the Chinese. But he later grew fond of Chinese culture and allowed Confucian ceremonies. In fact, non-Mongol religious groups were spared from paying taxes.
He then received the Chinese national flag, the highest honor given to all theup-to-date government officials and scientists. He thereby acknowledged the Chinese people to be the real country. Therefore, he expressed his country's appreciation of China.

Khalil understood that the Moguls needed help from the Chinese.
QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What was the extent of Genghis Khan's Mongol Empire?
2. How did Kublai Khan enlist the help of the Chinese people?
3. How did Kublai use the talents of foreigners?
4. How did the Polos explain their delayed return to China?
5. How did Marco Polo describe his trip from Venice to China?

UNDERSTANDING THE STORY

A. Write K for each statement that Kublai Khan made or might have made and P for each statement that the Polos made or might have made.

1. You have a great deal to learn about my country.
2. You sent us on a mission to Rome.
3. Pope Clement died soon after our arrival.
4. I am aware of what I asked you to do in Rome.
5. Tell me all that you saw and did on your journey to China.
6. We decided to bring my son with us.
7. I am very impressed with your son.
8. The days were long, but the nights were even longer.
9. Tell me why you are interested in people who live far away.
10. I am very curious about everything that exists in this world.

B. Suppose the president of the United States followed the example of Kublai Khan. The president decided to appoint his advisers and cabinet from among the world's greatest scholars and financial experts. These men and women were brought to the United States from all corners of the globe. How would this differ from the usual manner of choosing government appointees? Do you approve? Why or why not?

ACTIVITIES AND INQUIRIES

1. On the map of Kublai Khan's empire, on page 189, trace Marco Polo's route from Venice to China. Compare the trip during the 1200s with a trip you would take to China today.
2. Kublai Khan felt that he had to know about everything that existed in the world. Are you that sort of person? Why or why not? What is the most remarkable thing that you have learned about in your life?