

## Civilization 162

### Chapter 162 - The Reform of Mexica Religion – Part 2

The candlelight flickered, casting unpredictable shapes, and the shadows beneath it did the same, only longer and darker. A slight alteration at the upstream of religion and law could cause the future of the nation and society to surge tumultuously.

At this moment, Xiulote thought of many things. For instance, the Pope could command, and the hundred thousand Holy Legions would respond, marching eastward mightily. Or capturing the Cross Missionaries to prohibit the spread of foreign gods. Priests could also monitor the Alliance with spies infiltrating everywhere. There were also devout believers coming from all over America to pray every day, accompanied by the glow of thousands of lamps and the common tolling of bells...

Going a step further, if one day someone became both King and Pope, they would possess the supreme authority of combined political and religious power. Even, he recalled the millennium-long opposition between green and red, the civil wars and killings between the crescent Nobility and the Priesthood...

But this was all a future far off. Religious reform couldn't be accomplished overnight; it always required generations, decades of time for gradual evolution.

Xiulote pondered for a long time but merely described it simply: "Dozens of years from now, the Mexica will have a cohesive religious faith, forming a multi-ethnic state unified by beliefs, just like a clay figure shaped and formed through high-temperature firing and time's solidification.

The world will share common scripts and laws, society operating under the guidance of religious regulations. After long periods of settling, repeated setbacks, and changes in clans, a unified conceptual nation will form, achieving a true grand unification."

Xiulote reflected on the past of the Celestial Empire. Huaxia's unification had gone through the bloody changes of the Qin Dynasty and the establishment of civil laws in the Han Dynasty, taking hundreds of years to fully form. Among them, the First Emperor played an indispensable role. He laid all the foundations, truly deserving the title of Huaxia's ancestral dragon.

"The future state must maintain a careful balance of power among the different social classes. The influence of the Priesthood will expand rapidly, but a limit must be set to maintain a check on power. This check comes mainly from the emerging Samurai groups, primarily the military Nobility and commoner Samurai. The Priesthood should also divide into two factions, one focused on faith and the other on administration."

The Royal Family must become the leader of both Priests and Samurai while carefully maintaining the balance between them, suppressing the influence of one side. At the same time, both the Priesthood and Samurai groups must open up channels for commoners to ascend, promoting from within the common people to maintain fresh blood within the ruling class. Especially, the hereditary transmission of priests should be reduced.

In simple terms, it's about class balance, power checks. Commoner promotion, weakening of bloodline. One hand wields the sword, the other holds Scripture."

In Xiulote's design, the development of the Priesthood should be similar to that of the Huaxia scholar-officials, dividing into the scholarly faction and the administrative faction. They must control the hearts of people while limiting power. The Samurai groups represent the emerging non-noble landlords, providing a solid guarantee of military force. And when the economy is sufficiently developed, there will also emerge a merchant and citizen class to provide a balance. No single class should become too large and rigid, impeding the ongoing needs for reform.

Of course, to suppress the priestly class, the King must have enough prestige and tact.

The elder, silent for a while, finally turned around. He looked at the youth once more.

"My child, you seem to have forgotten some people."

Xiulote shook his head, gnashing his teeth slightly, and declared solemnly.

"Princes are a hidden danger to the Alliance. They have no loyalty to the Royal Family and must be eradicated! The Great Nobility class holds too much wealth and manpower and must be weakened and suppressed as much as possible! At least within a ten-day journey from the Capital City, we should be able to govern the City-States directly, not autonomously."

Xiulote remembered the rebellion of the Tlacopan and Texcoco princes at the arrival of the Spanish. They directly tied up most of the Alliance's military strength. External princes should never be spared! Similarly, weakening hereditary Great Nobility, cultivating non-noble landowners, and commoner Priests was also the core of reform and change.

The elder was silent for a moment, then shook his head slightly. A skilled ruler would set many preparations in advance, and then take advantage of the situation, inserting a sharp knife into the crevices of the bone to flexibly butcher the target.

The elder taught as he walked slowly ahead.

"My child, do not rush. You should eat your food one bite at a time, walk your road one step at a time. And naturally, you also eliminate the rats in the fields one nest at a time. Tell me about your new Priesthood system."

Xiulote nodded and followed slowly. He only knew the general direction of the reforms and didn't have a starting point yet.

"The Priesthood needs to establish a strict hierarchy. The lowest level are the community priests in cities and villages. They should have the right to interpret Scriptures and regulations, adjudicate daily disputes, mobilize Samurai and Militia, and collect religious taxes. They are responsible for educating commoners and farmers, organizing ten-day Rituals, and are the roots of the Heavenly Divine Tree."

In Mexica's villages and communities, it's generally managed by a council of four. One of them is a priest, one is a local Nobility representative, one is a Samurai, and one is the leader of local self-governance. Currently, for non-directly governed City-States, the central Alliance lacks a sensible jurisdiction, only able to control through the power of the religious Priests.

The system of Civil Officials is far off, with cultural monopoly held by High Priests and Great Nobility; one has to choose between a divine or noble system. It requires a long period of administrative reform and cultural accumulation before there's a foundation to train administrative Officials to replace the local Nobility.

The elder pondered for a moment. Revenue, manpower, regulation, indoctrination. These local priests needed to compete with the Great Nobility, who owned villages, for grassroots control.