

Civilization 175

Chapter 175 - Subsequent News: Commoners, Nobility, and Priests_3

The High Priest gave a slight smile, then gestured for Xiulote to speak.

Xiulote thought it over and decided to start with the "Thousand Character Text" he had memorized in the past. This was a primer for enlightenment and had profound implications. By the time he had finished the one thousand characters, a basic textual system had emerged.

So, the young man straightened his back, pointing to the topmost plank, he began to speak solemnly:

"Ilhuicatli, tlalli, tilitic, coztic; the universe, ixachipul, huahcatzin."

"Heaven and earth are dark and high, the vast universe is infinitely great and also infinitely distant. The azure sky is black, the great earth is yellow, the boundless universe is infinite in size, and also infinite in extent."

Here, 'heaven and earth' and 'vast' were read phonetically in Nahuatl. The young man carefully considered that the concept of the universe was not clear in this era, so he still used the phonetic reading of the Chinese characters.

The Elder Priests pondered the meaning of these words, and with their capabilities, learning these Chinese characters was not difficult.

An aged Elder Priest pondered and began to speak, his voice tinged with slight admiration.

"This phrase seems to have a deep meaning."

Xiolote's spirit was uplifted, and he looked at these wise men of the era expectantly.

"Ilhuicatl is the sky, and also the beautiful Divine Kingdom. Tlalli is the earth, the fields, and also the world beneath. Tliltic is black, the shadow of a person, and also signifies the dead. Coztic is yellow, the yellow of gold and bronze, and could also be the underground mineral deposits..."

Upon hearing this, another lucid Elder Priest clapped his hands and laughed heartily, speaking loudly.

"Excellent! The profound meaning of this sentence is: those who follow the gods, after death, will ascend to Heaven and enjoy infinite beauty. Those who defy the gods, after death, will sink into the earth, congealing into eternal Jin Shi, without ever escaping. The divine power of the gods is infinite, enveloping boundless lands, transcending generations, infinite and everlasting!"

Hearing this, all the Elders praised together. Xiulote the Priest truly had extraordinary talent and learning for his age.

Immediately after, a middle-aged Elder looked at the High Priest, and suggested respectfully and solemnly.

"Priest Xiulote speaks excellently! This line aligns with our fundamental scriptures, so we should inscribe it in the first chapter of the doctrine. 'Heaven and earth are dark and high, the vast universe is infinitely great.' Those who follow the divine will ascend to Heaven and forever enjoy tranquility. Those who defy the divine will sink into the Abyss, turn into gold and Jin Shi, and never escape. We must believe in our god Huitzilopochtli, His divine power is infinite, from the past to the future, controlling all existence, until doomsday arrives!"

The High Priest nodded in satisfaction, smiling with relief. Everyone then looked towards Xiulote, and seeing his composed expression, not arrogant or impetuous, the Elders praised him again.

Listening to the Elders' praises, the young man's heart surged like a stampede, yet his face was as expressionless as a wooden chicken.

As the teaching of writing and the compilation of doctrine unfolded simultaneously, the ensuing discussion entered a trajectory that the young man had never considered.

"Celestial bodies wax and wane, constellations spread across the sky."

"The sun, the moon, the stars, these celestial changes are all the divine power of the Chief Divine. He bestows sunlight upon us, using the lunar and stellar patterns to reveal the truth, then teaches these truths to the Priesthood."

"Indeed, the Chief Divine brings light, and the Priesthood listens to the decree!" the lucid Elder Priest exclaimed loudly.

"What Priest Xiulote says is true, it is worthy of being recorded in the doctrine." the middle-aged Elder proposed again.

Upon hearing this, the High Priest nodded in satisfaction once more.

"Cold gives way to heat, autumn harvests, winter stores."

"Autumn, winter? What's the difference between these two characters?" Uguel asked with some confusion.

"Elder Uguel, the Supreme High Priesthood's inherited Ritual Plate has mentioned it. Winter is the divine calamity from the far north, a fearful white cold that can destroy fields, freeze people and poultry to death." the aged Elder explained.

"Then the profound meaning of this verse is: the Chief Divine controls the change of cold and warmth of heaven and earth. He bestows bountiful harvests upon those who follow, and brings divine disaster upon the defiant, causing the earth to yield nothing, with both people and livestock perishing. And the Priests will provide guidance for the believers' agricultural production, to acquire the divine-given bountiful harvest."

"That's right, and we should add to the doctrine that those who die from the divine calamity will also sink into the Abyss." the middle-aged Elder thoughtfully added.

Once again bewildered, Xiulote's grandfather chuckled and patted his shoulder. "Continue."

"Inter-calation completes the year, laws and regulations harmonize with the sun."

"Intercalary days? That seems to be something from the Mayan Lunar Calendar. Our Sun Calendar doesn't have those,"

mused a learned Elder.

"Then let us substitute with the unlucky days at the end of the Sun Calendar. The divine reflects upon the sins of the past year during the last five unlucky days. Let the faithful come to the Temple for confession during these days, to absolve themselves of their wrongdoings," the aged Elder pondered aloud.

"Indeed, music is harmony, and harmony is music. The divine favors it, using music to soothe social strife and define social classes. We must establish different musical standards while also expanding the Temple's choir, recruiting distinguished commoners,"

"Excellent! The believers of the villages love music the most. We could compose poems that accompany the music to guide the hearts of the faithful..." the Elder with a bright gleam in his eye suggested loudly.

The Thousand Character Text covered all aspects of life, and the Elder Priests thus extended the doctrines to all aspects of society.

As Xiulote listened to the Elders' praises, he recited the Thousand Character Text with a vacant and weary expression. In the end, he received an extremely high evaluation: "Learned beyond others, unaffected by honor or disgrace. Devout in faith, graced with Wisdom Revelation."

The High Priest Xutel gently pinched the boy's cheek. Seeing the boy's exhausted expression, he kindly suggested that he go and rest.

Xiulote then walked to the outskirts and sat next to Acap, watching the central Elders continue to argue over doctrine. As the youngest Elder Priest, Acap had been mostly silent earlier. He simply watched the radiant boy in the center with a smiling gaze.

Xiulote leaned in to his childhood friend and nudged his arm, quietly asking in a low voice.

"Why are the Elder Priests so enthusiastic?"

Acap smiled warmly. He leaned closer to the boy's ear, likewise whispering softly.

"You were locked away by the Elders for a week, and you emerged unscathed, even compiling texts afterward. The Chief Priest was busy all week, and then he mysteriously died, with his family being taken over by me. Then the Priesthood merged, with the High Priest as the leader. What do you think the Elder Priests would think?"

It dawned on Xiulote then, and he chuckled at himself ruefully, realizing this was a textbook example of borrowed authority.

After thinking for a moment, he sighed softly, "The thoughts conveyed by text will always be interpreted by the people of the era, in accordance with the wishes of the times."

Throughout December, the Priestly Temple was the center of Xiulote's activities. He woke early and returned late each day, teaching characters, reciting various articles from memory, watching as the fundamental texts slowly grew thicker.

In the meantime, he did not forget to instruct the old carpenter Kuode to continue expanding longbow production. The production capacity had rapidly increased, making it possible to produce dozens of longbows each day. Kuode had now been promoted to the position of Director of Craftsmen in the Capital City, commanding thousands of craftspeople. He was also responsible for the acquisition of copper mines and copper vessels for the production of bronze tools, to improve productivity.

And when he found leisure time in his daily routine, Xiulote would return to Montezuma Palace, to be with his beloved spirit, the beautiful and pure Alisa.

"You are a flower out of time, blossoming in the solitude of my heart," the boy said as he held the girl's hand, moving to kiss her cheek.

The girl smiled slyly, using her finger to block the boy's advance. She lowered her head to whisper in the boy's ear.

"The flower has not yet bloomed. I have yet to see clearly into your heart! You naughty brother," she said.

Having spoken, the girl drifted away like a gust of wind.

The boy watched her retreating figure, standing for a long time, his heart filled with a sense of loss.

It wasn't until a light cough sounded that Xiulote realized Gillim had been standing beside him, and for how long, he didn't know.

Gillim, clad in a simple brown robe, smiled faintly.

"The princess is still young, Your Highness need not be so hasty,"

Xiulote's face flushed red. Having narrowly escaped death, his outlook on life had changed significantly. He felt an urgent sense of impatience for the people and things he loved, indeed perhaps a bit too eager.

Gillim then bowed solemnly.

"Your Highness has inquired several times about the land situation in the Capital City. Tomorrow happens to be free, and I could take Your Highness on a tour,"

Upon hearing this, Xiulote's face became serious. Land was a matter of great importance to the nation; only by personally assessing and understanding the allocation of the land could one deliberate on state affairs.

With this in mind, he bowed his head deeply in respectful return.