

## Civilization 196

Chapter 196 Mexica "Jiang Zuo Shao Fu": Longbow and Paper Making\_2

Kuode respectfully reported back.

Xiulote nodded. He and Aweit had reached a consensus long ago, prioritizing Longbow production as the Alliance's primary task. To this end, he even consulted the elders to slow down the expansion of the Great Temple in order to focus more craftsmen.

The elders gazed at him calmly for a long time before slightly nodding. He once again admonished the youth to prepare well for war. The coronation war after the autumn harvest was the first battle after the religious reforms, and it must be an all-out war. It could only be won, not lost.

"What is the daily production of Longbows now?" Xiulote asked seriously.

Kuode calculated for a moment and answered cautiously and conservatively.

"I currently have two to three thousand militiamen and three to four hundred craftsmen, capable of making forty to fifty quality Longbows and thousands of arrows each day. We are also responsible for making paper from bark and scrap wood. The main production limitation is the shortage of skilled Bowyers and the lack of metal tools. However, there is no shortage of quality wood supply."

Xiulote slightly furrowed his brows. This efficiency was much lower than he had imagined. For this Alliance campaign, he planned to form at least one group of eight thousand Longbow Warriors. Accounting for attrition, he would need over ten thousand Longbows. In the future, he also planned to make the Longbow standard equipment for the Warriors, training them from a young age.

After thinking for a moment, the youth scoffed at himself. Mastering the Longbow required decades of practice. The Mexica Warriors had always looked down on archery. Most of the Warriors in his newly formed Longbow Guards came from poor civilian backgrounds, which is why they had a foundation in archery from hunting at a young age to support their families. Whether he could gather eight thousand Warriors familiar with the bow remained an unknown.

Xiulote's thoughts raced. He remembered seeing the old Hunter and that girl during his first prisoner capture. The tribal people and village Hunters of the mountains, using simple Hunting Bows to hunt birds, could indeed be a good source of Longbowmen. They also did not need to wear Armor or Formations and could serve as a raiding force similar to the Welsh Longbow Militia.

"I just confiscated a batch of copper ore from Tarasco traders yesterday, all assigned to you for making Bronze tools! I'm giving you another two hundred craftsmen, the daily production of quality Longbows must increase to at least sixty, and rise to a hundred in a month!"

He made a firm decision, the more Longbows the better. Archers could be conscripted from everywhere; if all else failed, let the Warriors engage at close range, fifty meters of covering fire should suffice to hit the target.

"I will send a hundred Warriors to oversee. Each bow must bear the Bowyer's name for evaluation and merit-based rewards or penalties. For diligent and excellent craftsmen, rewards of cotton, Gold and Silver, possibly even positions and land, and their children taken as Warriors! For lazy and inefficient craftsmen, flogging, family detention. If a bow breaks three times, behead the Bowyer and demote his children to slaves!"

Xiulote's expression was commanding, his tone already chilling with the intent to kill. The impending war placed him under immense pressure, and he must do everything possible to enhance the military strength. This war's target was the powerfully equipped Tarasco people, possessing Bronze Weapons.

The gradually intensified religious reforms had already begun to displease the Nobility. Only a powerful central army, only a spectacular victory in war, could secure absolute power and prestige, pushing the reforms further!

Looking at the young man's stern face, feeling the chilling gaze, Kuode felt a chill in his heart, rising in deep awe. The once innocent youth had grown into a commanding Divine Revelator. Thinking this, he put away his smile, respectfully bowed his head, solemnly saluting.

The surroundings quieted for a moment as the craftsmen, too, knelt in awe. Xiulote waved his hand, signaling the craftsmen to continue. He watched for a while as the craftsmen marked with a ruler, sawed wood with Bronze tools, shaped the bow, sequentially trained the bow. Then, they used coarse hemp fibers for the new bow strings, among which sword hemp was the most durable. Lastly, bone glue was used as an adhesive.

The completed longbows were sent to a specialized testing ground where the Longbow Warriors could test them. Those that passed the test were stored in a specialized warehouse, waiting to be picked up by the guards. The remaining bark and miscellaneous materials were transported to the paper mill, where they were soaked in lime water ponds for preliminary degumming.

The elderly Craftsman had arranged the workshop area in a clear and orderly fashion. Inside the vast center of craftsmanship, there were Samurai supervising, Craftsmen bustling about, and militia transporting raw materials. Further inside lay the production centers for cotton armor, wooden shields, and Obsidian weapons. The Mexica had decades of mature experience in manufacturing these traditional military equipments and needed no guidance from outsiders.

Xiulote nodded slightly. He immediately turned around, not wanting to interfere with military production, and headed to the nearby paper mill.

The scale of the paper mill had expanded tenfold, with hundreds of busy Craftsmen. Hundreds of militia continuously transported bark, coarse hemp, bamboo, and Luwei. At his suggestion, special troughs and lanes were also built; the former for rinsing materials into curtains, and the latter for drying paper sheets.

Piles of paper were produced and supplied primarily to the Capital City's Priesthood. The paper was copied into initial books by the Assistant Priests and then distributed to the Calmecac Noble Schools. At this point, the teaching of writing had only spread from the Priesthood to the Noble Schools, and it was still early days before it would spread to the community-level military schools.

Xiulote smiled. Script and books were the foundation of a thriving civilization. For the budding Mexica civilization, investing in education was a top priority. At the same time, he had already mobilized several skilled Pyramid mural engravers to start preliminary experiments on block printing. Once the compilation of religious scriptures was completed, they would be printed and distributed to every Priest as quickly as possible.

Later, the young man picked up a freshly made sheet of paper and examined it carefully. Under Mexica's stringent laws, the toughness of the paper was ensured, but it was generally too thick. The color of the paper was still a mixed yellow, gray, or even brown.

Xiulote scratched his head. The color of the paper came from the lignin in the pulp; papermaking technology was supposed to include a bleaching process. How should bleaching be done? The young man pondered long and hard. It seemed that sunbathing, microbiological decomposition, and grass ash treatment were all possible methods for bleaching.

He then continued to issue orders, the elderly Craftsman bowed deeply with hands clasped.

"Offer a reward to the Craftsmen! Whoever discovers a paper bleaching process will be promoted to senior Craftsman, recruit a member of the Royal Warriors from their family, be rewarded with a hundred bolts of cotton, ten quarters of Milpa, and a box of Gold and Silver! Give priority to methods involving sunlight, soaking, and grass ash treatment."

Hearing such a reward, the Craftsmen present immediately had fiery eyes. They respectfully knelt down in silence, bowing, yet in their glances at one another, there was a different kind of sparkle.

Xiulote shook his head slightly. The status of Craftsmen was limited; Chinampa could only be awarded to Warriors, Priests, and Nobility because the Craftsmen simply could not keep it safe.

"Go back and discuss with Aweit. The Alliance must create special titles of Craftsman Warriors and set up a promotion system for Craftsmen to accommodate the increasingly important Craftsman community in the future."

"After all, science and technology are the primary productive forces."

Thinking this, the young man smiled, turned, and walked away briskly. Next, he planned to inspect civilian industrial and mining production and to look for potential soldiers to form a new unit.