

Civilization 260

Chapter 260 New Year Sacrificial Rite and Reform Advancement_3

However, long-standing beliefs could not change overnight. Faced with new doctrines, the common people began to harbor doubts once more, and at this time, an authoritative endorsement was needed, a tangible presence before their eyes.

As the community's praise rose, the spokesperson of the gods set out, and the fourth act was the procession.

Atop the Great Temple, the High Priesthood still presided over the sacred sacrifices. King Aweit rose from his throne and tapped Xiulote lightly with the Divine Staff, and the youth followed behind him. He then looked towards the elder whose figure was no longer in the palace.

The two descended the red-stained steps, mounted the high shoulder litter, and were carried by the loyal Samurai, majestically surveying the city.

The King represented the Chief Divine, the Sun God, and the War God. His shoulder litter was exceptionally wide, requiring dozens of men to bear. At the towering front and rear ends of the ornate litter were esteemed divine platforms. On the platform at the front were gold symbols of the sun and the hummingbird, reaching two meters high, with an outer circle and inner blade. The platform at the rear was filled with the tricolored feathers of the Feathered Serpent Divine, studded with emeralds symbolizing wisdom.

A few meters apart, Xiulote understood in his heart.

The King's procession proclaimed the expansion of the Chief Divine's priesthood; the feathers and turquoise symbolized the Chief Divine devouring the Feathered Serpent Divine. Henceforth, the Chief Divine became more powerful, acquired the wisdom of the Feathered Serpent, and also controlled peace and prosperity.

As Aweít's shoulder litter proceeded with dignity, the somber priests loudly declared, "The King brings the divine decree, the Feathered Serpent Divine has been devoured by the Chief Divine!"

The Feathered Serpent Divine was one of the traditional four gods and also an important deity to pray to during the New Year sacrificial rites. Hearing this proclamation, the commoners along the way showed unease, murmuring in perplexed and fearful whispers. The Samurais, however, were energized, loudly chanting prayers of the War God's faith. And the Nobility were enthusiastically thronging, laughing loudly and offering sincere greetings to the King.

Xiulote followed behind, faintly hearing various praises characteristic of this era's simplicity and ruggedness, "What a decisive and strong king to have killed his own brother!" "The King is a ruthless roaring Jaguar!" "The King is like a lone eagle soaring high!" "The King has the piety and courage to sacrifice himself!"...

Hearing this, the youth found it amusing and could not help laughing out loud, immediately drawing the attention of the other Nobility.

Thus, in a short while, Xiulote too was surrounded by earnest praise.

"Your Highness slayed the Marshal, shot dead the former king; truly extraordinary, brave and outstanding!"

"Your Highness has no interest in beauty, only in strong and muscular Samurai and Craftsmen, just like the great Toltec people!"

"Your Highness is as beautiful as a flower, inspiring admiration, and I wish to guard you for life!"

"Your Highness has received Divine Revelation and can stand for seven days and seven nights, listening to the voice passed down by the Heavenly Divine!"...

Xiulote's face stiffened, barely maintaining the expression on his face. Until suddenly, all the praises fell silent, leaving only the sincere cheers of the common people.

The youth was moved. He turned his head and saw the elder's shoulder litter slowly coming from another intersecting street.

The elder was seated high upon a divine platform, his expression calm, without a ripple. His hair was white, his back still straight, and his gaze swept over emotionlessly.

Where the divine gaze fell, the nobility immediately fell silent, hushed as if chilled to their very souls. The samurai, however, showed excitement, bearing genuine admiration for heroes. And the common folk outright cheered and praised, singing of the Sun God who illuminated their fifty years! ... Continuously, everyone bowed to the elder, who also nodded slightly, calmly facing the more excited cheers.

In front of the elder's palanquin, priests carried high the symbols of the Chief Divine, followed by the smaller standards of the Subordinate Gods. Among them, the Rain Divine was particularly conspicuous, having been demoted from an equal dual divine to a subordinate of the Chief Divine.

In the distance, Xiulote bowed deeply to the elder, sincerely expressing his regards.

The elder's pilgrimage despite illness was to declare the ascension of the Chief Divine's position, from then on the Supreme Chief Divine above all gods, absorbing all priestly roles, until becoming the only true God!

Finally, the King and the elder bowed to each other, and the two different processions like this passed by each other.

Atop the palanquin, as if a divine were on a procession, Xiulote was filled with countless emotions.

He looked down upon the prostrating masses along the way, savoring the eyes of reverence and obedience, feeling the supreme power, and also experiencing the soul-shaking impact that power brought: All could be decided with a single word, law following the word, this is the divine supremacy!

Majestic emotions danced in the young man's chest, making him want to bellow out a cry, a smile of enjoyment emerging on his lips. Moments later, remembering the calm elder, the youth suddenly became alert, reining in his presumptuous emotions.

Following that, Xiulote fell into deep thought.

He followed behind the King, silently observing all changes, and thereby saw the more essential matters. Nobles, samurai, and commoners, these different classes, faced religious reforms with varying psychological changes. These changes depended on their devotion to the deities and their capability to control power. The commoners were the most devout, the nobility held the most power, and the samurai were the most reliable.

For the priestly class, the reforms that were underway were in fact propelling a rapid expansion of their power and also promoting the growing size of the priesthood. Even though the priests of various gods were subordinated under the Chief Divine, the number of lower-level priests was still far from sufficient.

For the priests had penetrated deeply into people's lives. They were to preside over daily rituals, preside over grand ceremonies every ten days, regularly receive confessions from the public, and also undertake pilgrimages to the Holy Land. More importantly, the priests were to fully enforce the religious laws in society according to the Code of Law!

In the daily lives of the Mexica, the new religion had become increasingly significant, exerting a continuous and profound influence on all groups. This was also a characteristic of strong monotheism, penetrating into the lives of people. And the more it penetrated into life, the more inflated the priests' privileges became. In the foreseeable future, priests would eventually become the core of society, guiding people's words and actions, becoming the measure of all things.

"The height of priestly power developed to its utmost is like the gentry authority at the peak of the Ming Dynasty. It requires adequate checks and balances!"

Xiulote pondered silently, envisioning the unpredictable future, with his thoughts extending far away.

It was a long while before the youth came back to his senses amidst the cheering. He listened attentively; it was the unanimous praise for the Chief Divine, the sincere singing for the elder, many people's admiration for the King's choice... The variation in the quantity and emotion of these praises displayed the ranking in people's hearts. And among these praises, only a very few mentioned His Highness.

"The future, I have only just begun!"

Thinking this, Xiulote smiled faintly. He looked around, now at the junction between the main city and North City, where it was time to depart. Thus, before everyone, His Highness bowed respectfully to the King, then dressed down and left discreetly.

The youth left the supreme solitude of the Divine Kingdom for the beautiful gathering among men. He was to find the girl in white, untainted, to lean on each other in sharing a heartwarming New Year.