

Civilization 275

Chapter 275: Planning the Western Expedition, Part 3

"How have the people of Tlaxcala been lately?" came the chilling voice, carrying the age-old murderous intent of the Mexica.

"Your Majesty, since your ascension to the throne, the great army of the Tlaxcala has withdrawn from the border and has been disbanding gradually. At least until the autumn harvest, they will not gather in force. However, when the main force of the Alliance marches west, it will be difficult for the Tlaxcala to remain calm for long."

The King nodded slightly, then commanded in a deep voice.

"The Tarasco Kingdom in the north is adjacent to the State of Atotoztli of the Alliance, and to the south, it connects with the Xochipeople State. During the western campaign, neither of these City-States can divert their military force, and there's a need to further strengthen...

The main force of the Alliance will take the southern route, and the supply lines are also in the south. The State of Xochipeople is particularly crucial, needing an addition of at least five thousand Samurai. We must also guard against the Naval Forces of Tlaxcala, preventing them from traveling southward along the Tarsas River, bypassing Xochipeople State to land."

Gillim nodded seriously, recognizing the necessity of these actions.

Then, Aweit looked around Tlaxcala, contemplating all the forces that could be utilized.

"Are the Totonac people to the east of Tlaxcala willing to join the Alliance and send troops against Tlaxcala?"

"The Totonac are weak and cunning sparrows, only capable of chirping shrilly, never truly acting."

"How about the vassal Mistec people in the south?"

"The Mistec are cautious like deer, merely guarding their own homeland. They are prosperous and harmless, whether to the Alliance or to the people of Tlaxcala."

"What about the religious Holy City of Cholula? People from Tarasco are thorough believers in foreign gods. In this western campaign, we the Mexica will engage in a holy war. Witnessed by the gods, those of the same faith should not interfere with the divine battle."

Upon hearing this, Gillim's eyes lit up. He pondered for a moment, then nodded seriously.

"Your Majesty, it's worth a try. The religious reform of the Alliance is still limited to the Lake Region, and the priests of the Cholula Holy City have not been affected. The Priesthood has maintained contact with them, and honorable priesthoods are open to them. We can send an Envoy with generous gifts to have the priests of the Holy City temporarily prevent the Tlaxcala Alliance from sending troops, at least delaying them for several months."

Aweit nodded slightly, making a decisive decision.

"Then let the Elder Priest of Acap go. He is remarkably handsome, gentle, and gracious. Now he is the successor of the former Chief Priest, with a prestigious status, suitable for diplomatic duties! Also send envoys to the Totonac and the Mistec to make the Tlaxcala more wary."

Gillim respectfully nodded and silently took note.

The King's fingers continued to move, following the Tarsas River as it wound southward, flowing through the prosperous state of the Mistec people, and then turning west. Afterwards, the river followed the southern boundary of the Mexica City-States, passing through the sparse Qiongtal community in the mountains, and over a region with large bronze mines in the state of Weytamo.

Aweit watched the bronze mine markers in Weytamo for a long time, his gaze moving westward again, following the river. The Tarsas River traversed the Lake Region of Apachigan, leaving many lakes behind. Finally, the river again wound southwestward, merging into the infinite Western Sea through the state of Coarcoman.

The King's fingers lingered on the westernmost estuary, recalling carefully.

"Is this the tribal Alliance of the Tekos in the south?"

"Yes, Your Majesty. From here to the state of Colima in the west, there are at least three hundred thousand subjugated Tekos tribes. These southern Tekos have been subordinated to the Tarasco Kingdom for over a decade, even longer than the Alliance. Compared to the Alliance, the Tarasco Kingdom treats its vassals with leniency, even conducting blood-oaths with local leaders, forming a brotherly pact.

Thus, in an emergency, the Tarasco Kingdom could likely mobilize at least ten thousand Tekos Samurai here, along with many more tribal Militia. Until the Divine Descendants of the Tlaxcala are severed, these Tekos Samurai are unlikely to waver."

Gillim used his language cautiously.

Aweit pondered deeply, then shook his head slightly.

"Regardless of the effect, send a team of Envoys there. Even if they cannot persuade the local leaders, at least they can probe the local culture and geography. Xiulote has always mentioned Colima!"

Aweit smiled slightly, his gaze softening with the memory. Then, he stretched out his hand, moving it back and forth between the Tarsas River and the Lake Capital City, searching for the distances from memory. This was the only major river not connected to the Capital City.

After a long moment, the King reflected inwardly.

"The closest point between the Tarsas River and Lake Texcoco should be just over three hundred miles. If we were to dig a canal connecting these two places... the Alliance could rapidly mobilize forces, and the main strength of the Naval Forces could also move southward from Lake Texcoco... and even move upstream from the south to strike at the southern part of Tlaxcala..."

The King's eyes flared with a blood-red hue. In this era, to dig through a canal over three hundred miles long meant the consumption of hundreds of thousands of lives, taking over a decade. Yet, with bronze

tools, perhaps only a hundred thousand lives would be needed. However, the effects of this canal would allow the Alliance to firmly control the entire south!

After a while, Aweit recovered from his vast and brutal vision. He stood up, looking at the standing Gillim.

"Gillim, you may go now. Tomorrow, visit the Craftsman district to check and count the production numbers of Longbows. Then, go find Xiulote and tell him all the critical intelligence and plans."

Upon hearing this, the Intelligence Officer made a deep bow. Then, he solemnly got up, carefully taking the wooden board filled with intelligence, and bowed as he backed out.

Aweit stood alone by the window, watching the high-hanging moon. It was a time when the stars were brilliant, wondering who else was gazing at the sky. Perhaps, that person also longed to ride the wind, soar out of the crowded Jungle, and look down on the masses from the mountains in the west.

Standing in silence for a long time, the King finally murmured softly.

"Very well. The days gone by never return. A King should alone sip the supreme wine of sovereignty... bitter yet prolonged!"