

Civilization 51

Chapter 51: The World

The drizzle was tireless as it fell, during the rainy season of June.

Raindrops landed on the wide surface of the Lerma River, creating layers of ripples. A gentle breeze brushed across the fields of sprouting new shoots, where corn saplings were joyfully growing tall. Beneath the corn were the newly sprouted beans and squashes.

Xiulote stood on the watchtower of the mountain stronghold, squeezed together with Aweit, looking towards the lake and camp on the opposite bank of the river. The Tarasco's patrol team was inspecting the riverbank in the rain, just like the Mexica army on this side.

"I finally see the advantage of this flag. At least it can block the rain." Xiulote reached out to adjust the commander's flag on Aweit's back, ensuring the flag's umbrellalike top sheltered them both. "You just said this camp is the most important?"

"Yes," Aweit, the commander, observed seriously the distant Tarasco main camp. "See that lake? That's Lake Cuitzeo; it connects at its northernmost end to Leman Lake, and then extends westward into the Tarasco's inland. From the southwestern end of Lake Cuitzeo, it takes only a week to reach the Tarasco's core hinterland, located in the Patzcuaro Valley, Patzcuaro Lake region."

"Patzcuaro." Xiulote repeated the word twice, digesting the information. "The Prepetcha people?"

"Smart." Aweit smiled slightly, "The Tarascos don't call themselves Tarasco, but Prepetcha. They name themselves after the most prosperous capital, the center of their group's rise, the Patzcuaro Valley. In

fact, hundreds of years ago, they were just a branch of the Chichimeca Canine Descendants that moved southward, conquering the flourishing Bajio and Michoacan Tribes, and inherited the name Prepetcha."

"I see! Just as we rose from the Mexica Valley and call ourselves Mexica, or Tenochca people. And foreign nations say we are the Aztec, from the distant Aztlán. So, our ancestors were also a branch of the Chichimeca Canine Descendants who moved south?" The clever young man deduced by analogy.

"That's not something a priest should say." Aweit laughed, "When the Guardian God promised us, our name changed from Aztec to Mexica, who are destined to conquer the world."

The world of the Mexica was indeed the extensive Mexican region of Central America.

Xiulote agreed with a smile, switching to a more crucial topic: "If the Tarascos are our greatest rivals, then how many people do they have? How many armies can they mobilize?"

Aweit contemplated, tracing figures in the air, and after a while, responded: "From the north at the Lerma River to south by both banks of the Balsas River, east next to the Mexica City-States, to the west around Lake Chapala are the lands controlled by the Tarasco City-State Alliance: the Michoacan region. The Tarasco alliance controls a population of over one million six hundred thousand."

"Michoacan? Land of fishermen?"

"Yes. The Tarasco controls the territories of Eight States. The three states around Lake Patzcuaro have approximately eight hundred thousand people, with its core being Qinchongcan, Ivachi, and Patzcuari. Among them, Qinchongcan City has the largest scale, with a city population of fifty thousand.

In the western part of the Tarasco lands, the Chapala Lake region's two states house about six hundred thousand people. However, these two states are quite far from Qinchongcan, so the Tarasco king can't effectively control this area.

The remaining two hundred thousand people are spread across three states between the lakes. Overall, populations tend to cluster near lakes because only lakes can support the highly productive Chinampa."

In this era, state was a vague regional division. It could be a city-state plus attached villages, a cluster of a group, or a small area separated by terrain. Xiulote regarded it as the "county" concept in Huaxia. The Tarasco alliance controls eight counties, with the capital located in the county of Qinchongcan.

"One million six hundred thousand people in the Tarasco Alliance, estimated to have fifty thousand samurai, twenty-five thousand from the Patzcuaro Lake region, directly controlled by the king. Another twenty thousand samurai belong to the highly autonomous Chapala Lake region, with the remaining five thousand from the three states between the lakes," Aweit continued to calculate.

"One million six hundred thousand people with fifty thousand samurai, so that means one samurai for every thirty-two people?" Xiulote thought for a moment, truly fitting of the Warring States, a period of warfare and militarization that couldn't be maintained without high-yield crops.

Aweit considered for a moment and nodded, "Overall, approximately that ratio. In the capitals of various tribes, the ratio of samurai being supported is higher, while in other areas, the samurai ratio is slightly lower."

Xiulote nodded in understanding. The capitals of each tribe always had more resources, wealth, and population, supporting stronger military power, maintaining suppression over other alliance city-states.

Simply put, the strongest is king, and the king is the strongest.

"Then how many militia do the Tarascos have?" the youth asked again.

"The number of militia is hard to determine, depending on whether it's the busy farming season or not, and the ruling power of the tribe. In an emergency mobilization, the numbers can be extreme." Aweit pondered, "Overall, a tribe's provisions can barely support up to double the samurai as militia. More than that would severely impact the food stores and production of the states, inevitably leading to famine."

Speaking thus, Aweit looked meaningfully towards the north at Otapan City.

Xiulote nodded understandingly, sighing softly.

At this time, the tribes of Central America and the daimyo of Japan's Warring States era were somewhat similar, composed only of relatively wealthy city-state warriors and very poor village militia, forming a two-tier military system of samurai and peasant soldiers.