

## Civilization 57

### Chapter 57 Crossing the River

Aweit stood aloft, calmly directing the battle. Behind him was the mountain camp they had set up, with the flags of various commanders fluttering above the camp. At his disposal were one thousand Jaguar Warrior Brigade, ten thousand direct Samurai, one thousand City-State Warriors, four thousand Militia, and eight thousand boat troops.

Xiulote huddled nearby, watching the exciting battlefield while learning from the commanding experiences and occasionally offering some sneaky ideas. Behind him were over a hundred Longbow Guards.

The sound of the attack drums continued to rise among the hills. As the two large flags waved to either side, four Mexica warrior camps split into two wings and suddenly charged down from the hills.

The young man saw the warriors divide into agile squads, each enveloping the small formations of Spear Formation on either side of them.

He saw a formation of two hundred Tarasco Spearmen who had just disembarked and gathered together. The sharp spears clumped together, shimmering with the cold light of bronze under the sun. Dozens of Mexica Warriors provoked them in front, shouting loudly, brandishing their weapons, and cautiously approaching with their shields raised, luring the spear formation's forward point.

At this moment, two hundred warriors had already swiftly crossed past the flanks of the spear formation. As soon as the spear formation stepped forward, a hundred-man squad led by experienced warriors immediately charged from the flank. The warriors used their shields as the vanguard, rapidly and fiercely colliding into the Spear Formation, infiltrating the enemy and disrupting the formation of the Spearmen. Then the War Clubs slashed diagonally from above, mercilessly smashing onto the

unprotected sides and backs of the Spearmen. Utilizing the close-range advantage, they killed the enemies wielding long spears.

At the initial point of the charge, the front rows of Spearmen were in chaos, falling one after another. Only the back rows of Longbowmen barely managed to react, beginning to stab from behind. These stabs were hard to defend against and armor-piercing, soon causing several warriors to fall to the ground.

At this time, the second hundred-man squad finally circled to the rear side of the Spear Formation, and the warriors launched a second charge. The charge from behind was devastating, the Spear Formation was not thick enough to engage in combat on multiple fronts. The rear Spearmen, currently attacking the front, were utterly unprepared to face the attack and fell down one after another. They died instantaneously as if ice melted in boiling soup.

Seeing the chaotic spear formation in front, the dozens of warriors who first lured the enemy no longer hesitated and charged forward with their shields, using sharp Stone Blades to tear apart the soft bodies. Under the triple-sided attack, the Tarasco Spear Formation quickly disorganized, morale rapidly declined, and then collapsed. Without coordinated Long Spears, they posed no threat, ineffectively grazing the approaching warriors in Leather Armor, and then failing under close combat as the Spearmen dropped like brittle straws beneath the clubs, silently withering in the wind.

The young man took keen interest in the agile pincer attack of the warrior squads, mimicking the tactics of hunting packs of Coyotes. In eliminating a two hundred-man Spear Formation, the Mexica warriors suffered casualties of no more than ten people.

The hundred-man squads were led by seasoned warriors. These battle-hardened, low-level officers formed the backbone of the army, controlling the smallest tactical units. They were experienced, akin to the Mongolian Centurions, capable of launching very sophisticated small-scale tactics based on their own assessments of the situation.

This tactic of outnumbering and multi-directional hunting carried on ceaselessly, and in just a quarter of an hour, out of five thousand Spearmen, over a thousand were consumed, while the warriors' casualties were less than one-twentieth. The remaining Spearmen did not blindly scatter and charge, nor did they ultimately collapse and disperse. Instead, they kept gathering toward the center, eventually forming a large formation of three thousand five hundred Spearmen. Under command, the formation gradually turned spherical, tens of layers thick like a giant hedgehog.

Dozens of young warriors, flushed with victory, chased after the remnants of the enemy. Confidently, they charged at the large Spear Formation, only to be met by three layers of hundreds of long spears. After just over a dozen charges, the shield of one warrior was skewed aside, revealing a gap on the right.

Immediately after, several Long Spears thrust from the right side, piercing through Leather Armor with a few puncturing sounds, half a scream as the shield hit the ground, blood splattering as the body fell. The young warriors quickly paid with their lives, staining the golden spear tips with their fresh blood.

The drumming paused, and the long, echoing sound of a horn filled the air. The Mexica warriors then stopped advancing and gathered, slowly retreating. They formed four warrior camps, partially encircling the large Spear Formation from three directions, while the North Coast raged behind them. By this time, the Tarasco boatmen had returned to the southern shore, and the second batch of foreign Mercenary troops began embarking.

"This miner-composed Spear Formation isn't bad. Even after crossing the river, they managed to form up again; suffering over a thousand casualties without collapsing. If not for their poor equipment, they would have also been considered strong forces. No wonder they were the first to cross the river," remarked Xiulote.

"Yes, the discipline of this Spear Formation is indeed good, probably even better than that of the warriors opposite them. But their morale is very low now. If it weren't for their backs against the Long

River with no way to retreat, they would have scattered long ago. If all of them had Leather Armor, the warriors' casualties would have been much higher," agreed Aweit, nodding.

"But even the most elite militia are just expendable. The first ones sent over are meant to lay down their lives just to provide footing for the Samurai," the Commander said with a smile, stating the cruel reality.

"What do we do now?" the young man asked, pointing to the porcupine-like spear formation. "Do we attack forcefully? The second river-crossing legion is almost ready to set off."

"A forceful attack would cause too many casualties," Aweit shook his head. "Use long-range attacks. First, send out a thousand stone throwers to harass them. The Jaguar Warrior Brigade's javelins are limited; they need to be kept in reserve. For now, let's use the new Longbow Guards to shoot from a distance and test the new troops' capabilities."

"This unique formation of spearmen relies entirely on alignment. As soon as their formation wavers, and the spearmen disperse or sally forth, the Samurai can surprise them from the flank and rear," the Commander said, showing his teeth in a grin.

A thousand stone-throwing troops quickly left the camp, advancing to a distance of eighty steps from the spear formation. Stones the size of goose eggs fell like raindrops, causing chaos within the spear ranks. However, despite the impressive sound of stones, each volley only killed about twenty men; the spear formation struggled to hold on.

Next, Bertade led more than a hundred Longbow Guards to a position ninety steps from the spear formation. Under the protection of a Samurai company, the Longbow Warriors began stable, level shooting. Facing such a dense spear formation from close range, the longbows unleashed impressive power.

Xiulote saw a dashing Samurai draw his bow to the full, squinting slightly as he aimed, before releasing the arrow. A 75-cm bone arrow whistled through the air, easily tearing through the thin cloth of the front-line spearmen's uniform, piercing his warm chest, exiting from a narrow back, and then embedding in the arm of another spearman behind him.

Two spears fell to the ground simultaneously, as the front-line spearmen collapsed powerlessly, bringing down their comrades behind them. Warm liquid flowed from their chests, seeping into the ground, making their bodies cold.

Over a hundred longbowmen, shooting levelly from ninety steps. Facing an unprotected, dense spear formation, each round of shooting took more than ten lives and injured many more, with six rounds a minute. After five minutes of longbow firing, the front rows of the great spear formation were immediately disarrayed. The heavily injured front-line spearmen could no longer endure the one-sided attack and, howling, charged toward the Longbow Warriors.

The Longbow Warriors immediately fell back, retreating thirty to forty steps, then continued shooting from another direction. The Samurai company behind them immediately advanced with shields, their coordinated, agile attacks turning the small groups of charging spearmen into corpses.

Spurred by the charge, a part of the spearmen also attacked while others hesitated in place, causing the formation to scatter. At that moment, a middle-aged, burly man in leather armor, wearing a helmet and appearing to be a leader, roared within the formation. He swung his arms as if trying to maintain the order of the formation.

Bertade's eyes narrowed slightly, his eagle-like gaze locking onto the leader in the center. With a composed expression, he took a bronze arrow from his quiver. Then, the Head Warrior nocked the arrow, drawing the bow fully, closed one eye to aim, and slightly pursed his lips, holding his breath gently. A moment of stillness followed by a sharp whistling sound.

A long arrow, fast as a shooting star, traced a hardly visible trajectory, bypassing surrounding spearmen and diagonally plunging into the eye of the middle-aged man. The arrowhead exited from the back of his head, and the burly man immediately fell silent, tilting his head and dropping to the ground. The surrounding spearmen instantly buzzed in shock.

Bertade then breathed a sigh of relief: after years of using a short bow and practicing the longbow for so long, he finally managed to hit the head!

With the death of the spearmen commander, the formation of spearmen could no longer be maintained. The longbowmen continued their fire for another five minutes, then had to stop.

The opposing circular formation had become a broken wave. Four Samurai companies launched charges from three sides, mixing chaotically with the Militia and Samurai, who could now freely engage in close combat. Spears broke, blood flowed, and the remaining spearmen gradually retreated towards the great river behind them, Tarasco people falling in despairing screams.

Meanwhile, under the harassment of the Mexica navy, the second batch of Tarasco people finally reached the North Coast. Five thousand foreign mercenaries, their morale high, roared as they jumped from their ships, charging without hesitation toward the hill where the commander's banner flew.