Order of the Templar

The Order of the Templar is a military order of the Separa'Shan religion. The Order was conceived as a central military force, recruited from all states and charged with enforcing religious law and safety of things and places holy to the Separa'Shan religion. In practice, this meant protecting temples, holy sites, and places of learning during the pre-contact wars that occasionally sprang up. Over time, however, this gradually evolved into preventing the wars that might threaten the temples, holy sites and places of learning. By YE 29 they were the largest and most powerful military force on Essia System and provided police work and other public duties. Following the planet's integration into the Yamatai Star Empire local military units were folded into the Templar, making it the only military and police force on the planet. However, in YE 35, the Order was again changed: local police work and other civic tasks were delegated to the city-states and military defense was removed from the Templar mandate and given to a system-wide military, leaving the Templar with a sort of federal level police work, protection of Temples, Holy Sites, places of learning, and following the commands of the Priesthood.

History

The Templar were founded in the wake of intense religious wars as a way for Naga'Shun to protect her sacred sites and places of learning, many of which had been destroyed during the wars. They were also charged with protecting holy relics. Because of this, many trade caravans that were afraid of being attacked during the frequent trade wars would transport a holy relic with them to obtain the protection of the Templar.

In time, the Templar grew from protectors of the holy sites to also protectors of the people and peacekeepers. The story of a lone Templar pursuing some evildoer and bringing them to justice or rushing into a fire to save children is a powerful one. They became the last resort of the downtrodden when the local police were unable to help them and by YE 29 they were the largest and most powerful military force on Essia System.

In YE 30 they were involved in a small war that arose between the Conclave of Seven and several other city-states about who would represent Essia. However, the victory was not decisive, leading to a second war two years later that lead to the establishment of the Conclave of Essia.

In YE 32 local military units were folded into the Templar, making it the only military and police force on the planet. This brought significant friction within the Templar, as many were resentful of the new members and the integration was difficult. In YE 35 they were again changed, splitting them into the local police forces, the system's military, and the Templar. This freed the Templar to focus once again on their roots.

After the Kuvexian invasion in YE 40, the Templar were folded into the Kuvexian military by the Kuvexian puppet government. However, the government in exile continued to recognize the original Templar Order. Many Templar swore their allegiance to the government in exile and participated in guerrilla resistance movements all across the planet.

Standing in Society

As a holy order, the Templars are by definition tied to the Essian priesthood. They are required to undergo physical, mental, and spiritual tests to ensure that they are devoted and capable warriors. The separation of religion and politics meant nothing to the Separa'Shan as they lived in theocratic states prior to the arrival of Yamataian envoys. Their success and the high profile nature of their early work gained them wide praise and respect from all quarters of the planet. Since then, they have become the focus of many Separa'Shan stories of all genres.

Due to their religious role, the Separa'Shan were rather concerned about the way the more secular Yamataians would view them. Already lacking more modern weaponry and technology, the Separa'Shan forbade any Templars from enlisting in the Star Army to prevent a clash of interests. When they encountered the Yamataians in YE 29, the Order was a zealous fighting force instilled with the belief that they were the defenders of their religion and planet.

The Templar still cultivate the image of a warrior-priest, able to preach one moment and invoke the wrath of the gods in battle the next. The image of duality, peaceful preacher sitting by the roadside full of morality and wisdom juxtaposed against the image of a fierce, fanatical warrior in the heat of battle, combined with their illustrious history and surrounding mythos, stirs the romantic inspirations of many Separa'Shan.

Templars hold themselves apart from the ordinary citizen on Essia. That is not to say that they are detached from or isolated from the general populace. Instead, they are simply more ascetic in their lifestyle and frown upon useless frivolities. Some have been known to marry outside of the Order and the Priesthood, though it is not especially common since the Templar rarely engages in purely social events. This distance allows them a worldview that is, it is believed, more objective. It is why many Templar are chosen as representatives of the Separa'Shan.

Equipment

Due to the overall backward nature of Essia and the planet's heat and humidity, modern technology is often rendered useless after a short exposure. This has led the Templars to adopt the more traditional weapons of their people. While the abundance of swords, spears and other archaic hand weapons may seem primitive to a modern society, it is more than sufficient if the most probable opponents are similarly armed. Before the arrival of the Yamataians, the Templars had a respectable arsenal of gunpowder rifle-muskets and cannon; to maintain an edge, however, the Templar have contracted Separa'Shan merchants to supply them with more modern Nepleslian weapons, as from their experience energy weapons tend to start fires and fall apart faster then simpler mechanical gunpowder weapons due to the deteriorating electronics present in the former.

Firearms, excepting the locally produced muskets, are only issued during an emergency and as a force multiplier. Almost all of these weapons found their way into the hands of the Essian Resistance during the occupation. In addition, weapons and armor provided by Yamatai and Section Six were purchased and smuggled into Essia. Power armor was not used by the Templar until the occupation, when Revenant Power Armor Mk II was purchased and smuggled into Essia to use in their resistance against the Kuvexian Occupation.

OOC Notes

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