

# Bronze and Faith

The official Concept Paper

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## Introduction

Bronze and Faith came to my mind after I finished reading Bernard Cornwell's „Stonehenge“. I was fascinated by the story but also by how technology must have developed back then, and how people strived to accomplish something like putting stones atop each other for no good reason (except religion, of course). This idea was cursing my mind for weeks, until I decided to plan a „Primitive Style Survival Game“. A Game in which you will never put down your effort to survive, just because technology levels don't allow it. My first goal was to create an elaborate crafting system, which was based on true learning. To lighten it up and give the game a social-cultural part, I found religion and politics extremely appealing so that went in too. Except for Unreal World, no similiar game comes to my mind.

## Bronze and Faith

Bronze and Faith is a procedural game, in style of a roguelike. It is randomly generated each time a player starts a new game. No two gameplays will be the same. In the background, a lot of simulations will happen to let the world live and develop with or without the player's intervention. The player is set in an already existing and living world and he is no hero, only one of a few thousand humans. Death is permanent and survival is hard which makes bronze and faith especially difficult for beginners. Whoever gets beyond the difficulties of simple survival will be confronted with rich culture and lots of possible interaction around the world and with other humans. Bronze and Faith promotes immersion and will deal with it by allowing the player to do some very human-like and natural things.

The Bronze part stands for hard labour, crafting and survival. By using the items the world provides, by combining and using skills, the player will further progress into new levels of technology. An example for this is an adept Metalworker who will learn the secret of ironcasting and creates superior iron tools.

The Faith part, on the other side contains the metagame, the roleplaying and cultural immersion. Respect and faith have to be earned to achieve bigger goals that can't be achieved alone. An example is a priest who creates a fictional god and spreads its religion out to the last part of the world, influencing every cultural product that emerges from villages.

## History and Culture

Bronze and Faith is set in the late Bronze Age, roughly around 1000 BC. The world which the player enters is on the verge of entering the Iron Age, as iron is known in other places at that time, but it is not widely used in the lands where the player lives. Tools exist, but they are weak and good bronze tools are very expensive.

BaF collects from historical data all around the world and processes the most effectful information into a fictional low Culture, which is in development and can be developed by the player's deeds.

The people live in small to medium villages. This ranges from small family settlements of 4-5 people up to larger villages with 50 or more. Some of these villages are isolated, others might have some form of trade agreement. Especially the large villages will have a hierarchy with a local chieftain on top.

## World

The world is purely imaginary and not inspired by any real country. It is an isolated island with a temperate climate, featuring one or more hills or mountain ranges, as well as rivers and other natural occurrences. The map will cover around 200\*200 km in its final state. One might argue that its conditions resemble those of Ireland or Britannia. Flora and Fauna will be mostly middle European. Large portions are covered only with dry or lush grass, and around 70% covered with forest. Other common terrains are rocky terrain and swamp. The terrain distribution can be modified. Villages and inhabitants are pregenerated and presimulated.

## Main Features

Bronze and Faith aspires to provide deeply immersive and complex experience. Lots of features are planned, but they are often condensed during the design process. This enables easy implementation during early development and expansion in later stages. A few features are absolutely central and considered being main features of BaF, such as the skill system and the religion system. But also other ideas or implementations of them are vital to give BaF its unique characteristics.

## Profession and Skill

Professions are an essential part of the game when living with a clan. A profession allows for high specialization of a skill, leading to new recipes and secret techniques and bonuses. Your profession scales with your skill and with the respect you get from people. Many NPCs will react differently to you based on what profession you have. Trade is heavily influenced, and it is possible to engage in a daily crafting routine that brings benefits for a village's development. In a well working village with integrated professionals, each inhabitant provides for each other. For example, a skilled carpenter player doesn't need to go hunting or farming, because he can trade his expensive goods in for food.

Skills will be very slow to develop. Trivial tasks won't help to reach a master skill, so hard work must be done. For a boost, a player can learn from other NPCs. It is even possible to take an apprenticeship and do trivial work and learn a secret technique in return. Secret techniques are static and will decide if you can or cannot use a certain skill. A master Carpenter who has never learnt to craft an instrument still cannot create master-grade instruments. Profession techniques will extremely rarely appear in visions or dreams. Finding an NPC who teaches skills is much safer and faster.

The scope of skill development will be designed in such a way that it is impossible to master more than a few skills during the lifetime of a character. Spirituality and other modifiers will allow for an optimal learning effect that help getting the most out of the skills.

## Religion and Rituals

Any player can create a religion almost out of nowhere. By dialogue, a deity is created. Knowing the aspects of the deity, a player can craft pictures, figures displaying the deity. Attempts can be made to spread a religion by words. Getting the first followers is the hardest and needs much effort or finding naive people with no religion. Religion is tied to social interaction. As a religion advances, more elements can be defined with rituals. The more faith a religion earns, the more powerful it becomes and the more respect the player earns for it. Some rituals will have a real effect on the participants (modifiers) or the surroundings (slightly increased chance for rain) while others are performed only for gathering faith. Skills will allow for more variation during rituals and spreading of religion.

You can either make a spontaneous ritual or a set up ritual and invite people. Different elements attribute value points to the ritual, especially elements or offerings. Special weather can give a multiplier to certain elements. Stances and actions will contribute static points, your appearance will act as multiplier.

Some stances are necessary just to keep people interested. The more people are attending, the more base faith will be granted to the ritual.

At the end, every attendant of the ritual will earn the base faith, plus the faith from every element multiplied with the modifiers.

At the beginning, your ritual techniques are meagre and you need to keep it short in order to be taken seriously. You will need to refine your appearance and social skills, help people with visions or medicine in order to gain some base faith and to keep it up with cheap techniques.

Faith will decrease fast if not regularly kept up. Holding big rituals gives big boons, but might be too expensive materials wise. It is wise to plan different types of ritual and make use of them at special occasions.

## Reputation

AI reaction can be steered by several variables that spread differently. Knowing your Name will have a huge effect. The reputation is built by individual people, but can be spread among them up to a certain degree. Personalities will offer some variation.

Example:

After telling your Name, you attack Person A and cause 50 Fear and 50 Respect

Person A survives and tells Person B and Person C about you.

Because Person B is cynical, it gets 20 Fear but only 5 Respect.

Person C is naive and gets 40 Fear and 30 Respect.

Village A (made out of those 3 people only) will now have the average of  $110 / 3$  Fear and  $85 / 3$  towards you. By local interaction among the villagers, the cynical person will very slowly build up until it reaches the average of the village, while the average itself should decrease, because the values always decrease after a certain time if the player doesn't show up.

Person C is a traveller and visits village B. As he is very chatty and goes through a number of events he will tell about and because he still has 40 Fear from you, he will tell someone the story about you. He also tells them your name. If, in theory, every person in village B is directly told about you, the village will also have an average of  $40 / x$  Fear and  $30 / x$  Respect where  $x$  is a generation modifier.

(Generation Modifier means that the value is divided each time a person tells it to another. Hearing an event from a person that was included in the event will be very powerful. At some time, the event is so weak that no one will bother telling it onwards.)

If you visit Village B, no one will know you. But as soon as you tell someone your true name (! it might be possible to use a false name, but it will severely hit your reputation if you get caught), they will use the reputation they got from Person C because they know your name.

# Appearance

Without knowing your name, people will react to your appearance depending on their culture or personality.

One of the most important factors is "dehumanization". This defines how much people are willing to see you as a true prophet or shaman, but will also have negative effects, such as striking fear or disgust. Dehumanization can be earned by being maimed, having a disability or comes as a combined effect of the other stats.

The second most important factor is "respectability". By combining the other factors, you will earn respectability. Trophies and weapons will cause respectability, but also scars, tattoos and other elements that show strength.

Fearsomeness is the next, caused by blood, human body parts, trophies, etc. This will cause fear with enemies but can also gain some respect, depending on the target's personality (macabre for example) or culture.

Disgust will be gathered by an unwashed character or, just like fear, by gathering body parts. Running around naked will also cause disgust.

Nobility can be earned by carrying expensive goods such as bronze armlets, fine clothes or valuable weapons. High nobility will, however cause some people to try and rob you. Walking through a poor village that hates you will possibly end with you walking into an ambush. Respect and nobility are closely tied, but low nobility and high respect will prove to be much safer, except for diplomatic missions.

There will also be a hidden factor called "pitifulness". This one comes in effect when being naked or half-naked, stripped of all goods and/or being wounded. This can be used to play beggar, but can also cause an honorable enemy to leave you alive, which can save your game in important moments. Pitifulness and Nobility are exclusive.

This will end up with different ways to display your character and provoke different "first impressions":

- The Strange Man will be highly dehumanized, but all other stats will be low, except for disgust maybe. Everyone tries to avoid you, most people won't necessarily hate you, but some might attack you out of fear.

- The Sage might be highly dehumanized, but has also earned Respect. People come to understand his ways and if he is dedicated to spreading a religion, he will have quite some success. Disgust will only give a flavour and will either attract or repel followers.

- The Fearsome Man has huge problems to make contact with new people. Many will run from him and call guards. Armed men will be very, very suspicious until they get to know you. This might be perfect to avoid ambushes or diminish enemy battle morale, especially when combined with respect. Someone who relies only on fear to earn his respect will be hated by many people.

-The Respectful Man has earned much Respect, which is the hardest to come by in its pure form without involving other factors. This man will be looked upon and welcomed very openly. Many people will trust him with their lives, which makes him a good leader. Warriors will generally have high respect values. Competitive people will not like you and often challenge you.

-The purely disgusting Man runs around naked with squirrel entrails on his head and blood smeared on his ass, while stinking like shit. People will treat you like shit (unless they are disgusting themselves) and sometimes beat you (with sticks, stones, etc...). Almost nobody will want to have a conversation with you. This is until you look so pitiful (sick, not vigorous) that people start worrying and try to help you out with spare clothes / rags and a piece of meat. Being disgusting is a good way to get banished from a village until you wash yourself. Note: Being naked for a reason(Ritual, Sex, Bathing) in an appropriate context and place will reduce the "disgusting" effect, a good looking body will even help you there.



## Health System

The Health System is very deep and includes many layers of tissue because different wounds will have great effect on the rest of your character's life.

The body contains the following segments:

Head, Torso, Left Arm, Right Arm, Left Leg, Right Leg.

The Head has following subsegments:

Skull(with Organ Brain), Face (which in turn contains as Organ: Eyes, Ears, Tongue, Cheeks, Front), Neck(Artery, nerves)

The torso is made up of shoulders, chest(l. + r. lungs, heart), belly(intestines), groin(left nut, right nut, penis), and back (l.+r.lungs, heart, intestines, nerves)

Left Arm contains Upper Arm (Artery), Lower Arm(Artery), Hand  
Right Arm is the same

Left Leg contains Upper Leg(Artery), Lower Leg(Artery), Foot  
Right Leg is the same

Each Subsegmet has a layer of skin, a layer of muscles and a bone. Destroying the skin results in scars, destroying muscles will result in very hard to heal limb weakness and impairment, destroying bones will result in a broken limb which makes it unusable but is possible to heal after a long time depending on the body part.

Different weapon profiles will penetrate these layers differently:

TISSUE	EDGE	POINT	BLUNT
Skin	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	XXX	X
Muscle	XXXXXXX	XXX	X
Bone	XX	XXX	XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
Organ	XXXXXXX	XXX	XXXXXXX

Example:

Edge is good against belly, because it doesn't need to penetrate any bones. Edge will also most likely cause scars.

Point has a light chance to hit an organ everytime, but does limited damage overall.

Blunt is primarily designed to hit an opponent's head or back. Breaking the skull will severely damage the brain, while breaking the spine will paralyze your foe.

And immediate death will incur if: enough blood is lost or a vital organ is lost.

Other Organs can still lead to death.

Vital Organs is: Brain. Every other Organ will cause a blood loss per turn (Heart, Artery), make it impossible to eat (Intestine) or cause suffocation (Lungs). Loosing your eyeballs will result in loss of blood but you might still survive.

Theoretical example:

The Player's body contains 6000 units of blood. At 3000, the player will lose consciousness. At 1000, there is a chance of gaining madness or imbecile traits (Braindead). At 0, the player is dead.

Every Layer can cause loss of blood when hurt with skin being the lowest.

With a theoretical skin value of 100, removing all skin could result in loss of 10 units of blood per round and per body part that has been stripped of skin.

When the muscle (40 for the Lower Arm, for example) is down to 0, the Artery will also have been cut (this can happen right after breaking the skin by chance or as a decisive action when muscle hits 0). The Artery will lose 100 per turn. The severed muscle will lose  $40 * 2$ . (Bleeding from only the artery will leave you 30 turns to treat yourself, other wounds not included). At this point you are losing  $100 + 100 + 80$  units of blood per turn, which is very fast but in real life it is also fast. Now lets suppose the bone (50) will break and the arm is severed, which will make you lose another  $50/2$  units. In total, with only a severed arm, you will lose 330 units of blood per turn. You have around 9 turns to break combat and slow the bleeding. After that, you have around 10 more turns to get external help because you will be consciousnessless. Top layers don't necessarily need to be destroyed for one to bleed. It is supposed that internal bleedings can also occur.

Slowing the blood can be done in different ways, such as putting rags on the wound, praying, grabbing the wound, applying medical herbs, crawling. Several modifiers can be combined(herbs, crawl, pray, rags).

Stopping the bleeding can be done by stitching, binding the wound off (limbs only and with rope, cord, etc) or burning.

Increased bleeding or lifting of slowing modifiers(prayer) will occur when running, climbing, fighting or other physical exercises. Until the wound is well healed, it can reopen and restart bleeding having good medical skills decreases the chance of reopening. Much rest is well advised after a battle gone wrong.

Every wound can get infected if not treated well with herbs, the closing method will have a great impact. (closing with clean needle is much safer and leaves a nicer scar than burning)

All in all, this system is very punishing. High skills and good equipment are necessary to avoid instant death. Dodging is very valuable, as are diplomatic skills or surrendering in desperate moments. First aid is extremely handy and knowing how to correctly bind off an arm or not can decide between life or death.

Body composition can change depending on athlecity or genetics (thick-skinned, thin-skinned, muscle buildup).

Severing or breaking a limb will make the whole subsegments unusable. Severing an upper arm will stop bleeding from the lower arm.

## World Generation

The player plays on an isolated landmass, surrounded by ocean. The ocean can be sailed, but as the player reaches the edges, a storm will emerge, ultimately killing the player.

The landmass is generated by a fractal set of SimplexNoise and CellNoise. A distance calculation from the center will lower the edges in order to form an island.

Height is not important during gameplay, only during generation. Tile types are assigned, based on height values.

A Forest generator creates leaf forest, needle forest and mixed forest Tiles which will be populated by fitting trees.

Rivers are pathed from high tiles towards shallow water with the A\*Algorithm.

Swamps are generated depending on water abundancy and height.

Clay is distributed along coasts and riverbeds.

Metals are distributed on hills and some on flatland too.

Herb spawners are created and distributed on fitting terrain type.

Animal spawners (including fish) are created and distributed.

Natural items (rock, sticks) are created.

Calculating natural resource values around them, village centers are placed.

A simulator calculates village development based on resource usage and neighbor village proximity. Villages can get destroyed during this process, which leaves remnants. Diplomacy can happen, which results in roads connecting villages. Depending on village score, size and resource, professions are created and houses built. At the end of the calculation, NPCs are created to fill the professions.

Items are created for each village and profession.

Individual NPCs are created and distributed.

Religions are created and distributed.

Herbs are pregrown by the spawner.

Animals are created and distributed by the spawner. Animal presence (poop, tracks) are placed.

The world is presimulated for a few turns.

The player is created and placed according to his starting scenario.