

RuneQuest

Bronze Age Rules Sourcebook

1.0 Version (2005 AD)

Compendium of rules from my RuneQuest campaign set in the Ancient Middle East.



By Eduardo Chamón

1. Introduction

This file is just a compilation of house rules of my own to set my RQ games in the times of bronze weapons and chariot warfare. It is my intention to cover all Bronze Age period, but here I only provide rules from 3000 to 1300 BC. This age includes the Sumerian and Akkadian Empires, Old and Medium Egyptian Kingdoms and the Hammurabic Babylonian Empire.

As this work is just some new rules I haven't written a full description of every culture and important day-life information to run a roleplaying campaign. This is not a full sourcebook like "Vikings" or "Land of ninja" (although I would like to have the knowledge and time to write it), just some useful rules that I hope will help you.

The Cults in the religion chapter are not really in depth developed, but for quick character creation will give a reasonable guide.

This rules assume the use of RuneQuest III system, the phalanx combat rules appeared in "Sun County" and the chariot rules of "Monster Coliseum", that even include sumerian, egyptian and hitite chariots!

Much of the information and inspiration come from the Warhammer Ancient Battles book "Chariot Wars" and of course "RuneQuest".

This work is dedicated to that rulebooks and to their designers.

Enjoy!

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Victory stele of Naram-Sim c. 2300 BC

2. Peoples and cultures.

3000 BC – 1300 BC

PRIMITIVE

- 1- Kush
- 2- Nubia

NOMAD

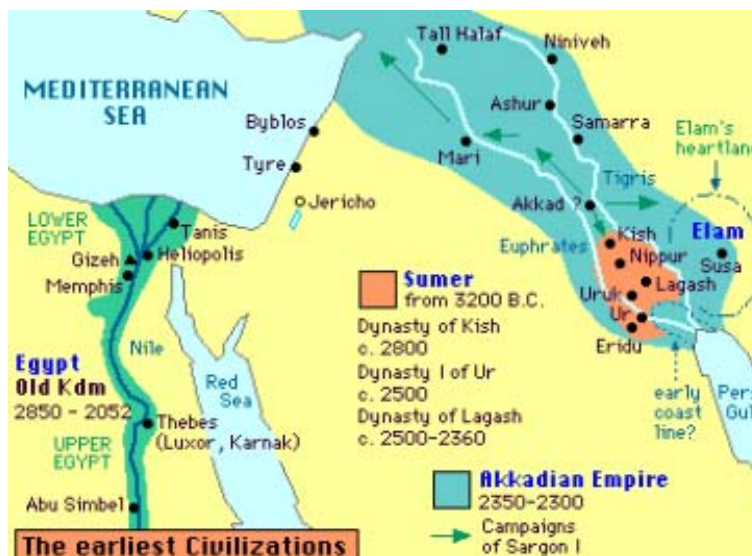
- 1- Amorites
- 2- Kassites
- 3- Lybia

BARBARIAN

- 1- Gutium
- 2- Hattic States
- 3- Makkan
- 4- Minoans
- 5- Syria
- 6- Subartu

CIVILISED

- 1- Akkad
- 2- Elam
- 3- Egypt
- 4- Hammurabic Babylonia
- 5- Sumer
- 6- Empire of Ur



4. Cultural weapons

These are the weapons and starting percentages most used by each culture, and that will be worn by a typical soldier with his appropriate armor. In civilised armies there will be warriors with less armor (slingers, skirmishers), and in any army nobles and officials will often wear better armor.

Note that some cultures lose points compared to RQIII rules, you can balance PC creation letting Amorites characters to have points in shield for example, but it won't be listed as initial equipment.

KUSH / NUBIA

Spear 1H 25
Mace 1H 25
Short bow 25
Small shield 20

Armor: None

Notes: Chieftains wear animal skins capes of 1 armor point in chest, abdomen and arms.

AMORITES

Spear 1H 20
Javelin or Short bow 20

Armor: None

KASSITES

Mace 1H 20
Composite bow 20

Armor: None

LYBIA

Short sword 20
Javelin or Short bow 20

Armor: animal hide cloack (1 AP in chest, abdomen and one leg.)

GUTIUM

Spear 1M 25
Javelin 25
Axe 2H 15
Bow or throwing stick 25

Armor: 1AP animal hide on chest, abdomen and one leg.

HATTIC STATES

Spear 1H 25
Axe 1H 25
Axe 2H 15
Comet shield 25

Armor: None

Notes: They used large shields, use the norman/comet shield stats.

MAKKAN

Spear 1H 25
Short sword 25
Javelin 25
Dagger 25

Armor: None

MINOANS

Spear 1H or 2H 25
Short sword 25
Short bow or Javelin 25
Comet shield 25

Armor: Helmet made of boars' tusks (3 AP)

Notes: They used huge bull-hide 'tower' shields or 'figure of eight' shields, use the norman/comet shield stats.

SYRIA

Spear 1H 25
Bow or Javelin 25
Dagger 25

Armor: None

SUBARTU

Spear 1H	25
Mace 1H	25
Short bow	25

Armor: None

AKKAD / SUMER / EMPIRE OF UR

Short sword, axe or mace 1H	25
Spear 1H or 2H	20
Composite bow (Akkadians)	25
Javelin or stick (Sumer, Ur)	25
Great rectangle shield	25

Armor:

Akkad: Copper helmet (4 AP), leather or felt cross straps in chest and abdomen (1AP)

Lagash: Copper helmet (4 AP), leather or felt cross straps in chest and abdomen (1AP)

Ur: Copper helmet (4AP), thick felt or leather cape reinforced with copper discs (2AP in every Hit location except head)

Other cities: Copper helmet (4 AP), thick felt or leather cape (1AP in every Hit location except head)

ELAM

Short sword	25
Spear 1H	20
Composite bow	25

Armor: Copper helmet (4 AP)

EGYPT

Axe, mace or khepesh	25
Spear 1H	20
Composite bow	25
Comet shield	25

Armor: None

HAMMURABIC BABYLONIA

Short sword, sickle sword or axe 1H	25
Spear 1H	20
Javelin or throwing stick	25
Herald shield	25

Armor: Copper helmet (4AP), felt cross straps supporting a bronze or leather breastplate (3 AP on chest and abdomen)

Notes: Babylonians used medium size hide shields with a vague shape of diamond, use the herald shield stats. Use the Khepesh stats for the sickle sword. Axes were more common.



HAND TO HAND WEAPONS

NAME	DAMAGE	BRONZE	IRON	STONE
Axe, combat	1D8+1	7	7	-
Axe, hand	1D6	5	5	-
Dagger	1D4	4	-	-
Dagger	1D4+1	-	5	-
Knife	1D3	-	-	3
Mace, heavy	1D10	8	9	-
Mace, light	1D8	5	5	-
Sword	1D6	8	9	-
Khepesh	1D6+1	8	9	-
Javelin	1D8	7	7	-
Spear, short	1D8	9	9	8
Spear, long	1D10	9	9	-
Pike	2D6+1	11	11	-

Notes:

The table above gives damage and armor points stats.

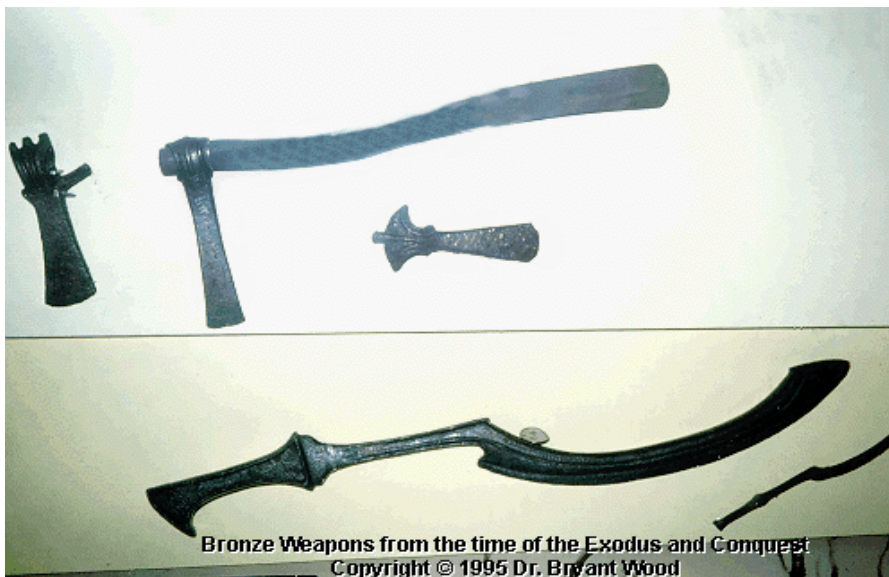
As metal weapons were expensive stone tools were still used for long time before metals were common. I have assumed that knives, spear and arrows points were made also of stone.

Weapons made mainly of wood have more similar armor points to steel weapons.

Swords were small, broadswords and “long” swords didn’t exist. So all swords are RQ short swords. In fact you can assume the use of daggers and call it also “swords” in the game. The metalsmith from that ages were not sophisticated to make broadswords, so it was very common to use daggers or short blades as main weapon.

A Khepesh is a sickle-sword used by mainly by egyptians.

Pikes were used in primitive phalanxs by Sumerians, Akkadian and Mycenians.



MISSILE WEAPONS

NAME	DAMAGE
Bow, short	1D6
Bow, composite	1D8
Javelin	1D8
Sling	1D8
Stone, hand thrown	1D3
Throw stick	1D6
Whip	1D4

Notes:

Arrow points were made of stone, bronze or iron.

Sling and hand thrown stones do not impale.

Throw sticks were a traditional amorite weapon similar to a boomerang. They were used as a throwing club before engaging in hand to hand combat. Use the War boomerang stats, obviously it doesn't returns to the thrower's hand.



Hammurbi stands before Shamash



Granet cylinder seal showing Ishtar 720-700 BC

6. Cults in ancient Middle East

In the beginning of the cities, each city had its own protector deity of the city. With the birth of the first empires several cities were under one ruler but the local gods were added to the rulers cult. Soon there was overpopulation of gods, so they started some kind of specialization making one god ruler of the air, other god of the water, etc. That was the birth of the pantheons in the religions. When an empire fell down, the new rulers carried their new gods, inserting them in the conquered pantheon usually as the new main god. Priests had then to ‘rewrite’ old legends and beliefs to include the new gods, usually through familiar bonds like son, daughter, wife, etc

This a rough guide to the Meseopotamian pantheons; just use the description, magic and religion skills of its equivalent RQIII rulebook or Gods of Glorantha cult.

The column ‘city’ refers to the city in wich that god was originally worshipped so it is the place with more influence for his religion. In that city is usually the Main Temple of the cult.

SUMERIAN PANTHEON

NAME	DESCRIPTION	CITY	RQ III CULT
Anu	God of the sky, main god	Uruk	Main god
Enlil	God of the earth	Nippur	God of the agriculture
Ea	God of the water, giver of life	Eridu	Goddess of the earth
Tiamat	Goddess of chaos and dark seas		Krarsht

AKKADIAN PANTHEON

NAME	DESCRIPTION	CITY	RQ III CULT
Sin	God of the moon	Ur	Goddess of the moon
Shamash	God of the sun	Sippar	God of the sun
Ishtar	Goddess of love and beauty. Daughter of Anu	Uruk	Uleria
Ada	God of the storms		God of the storms

