



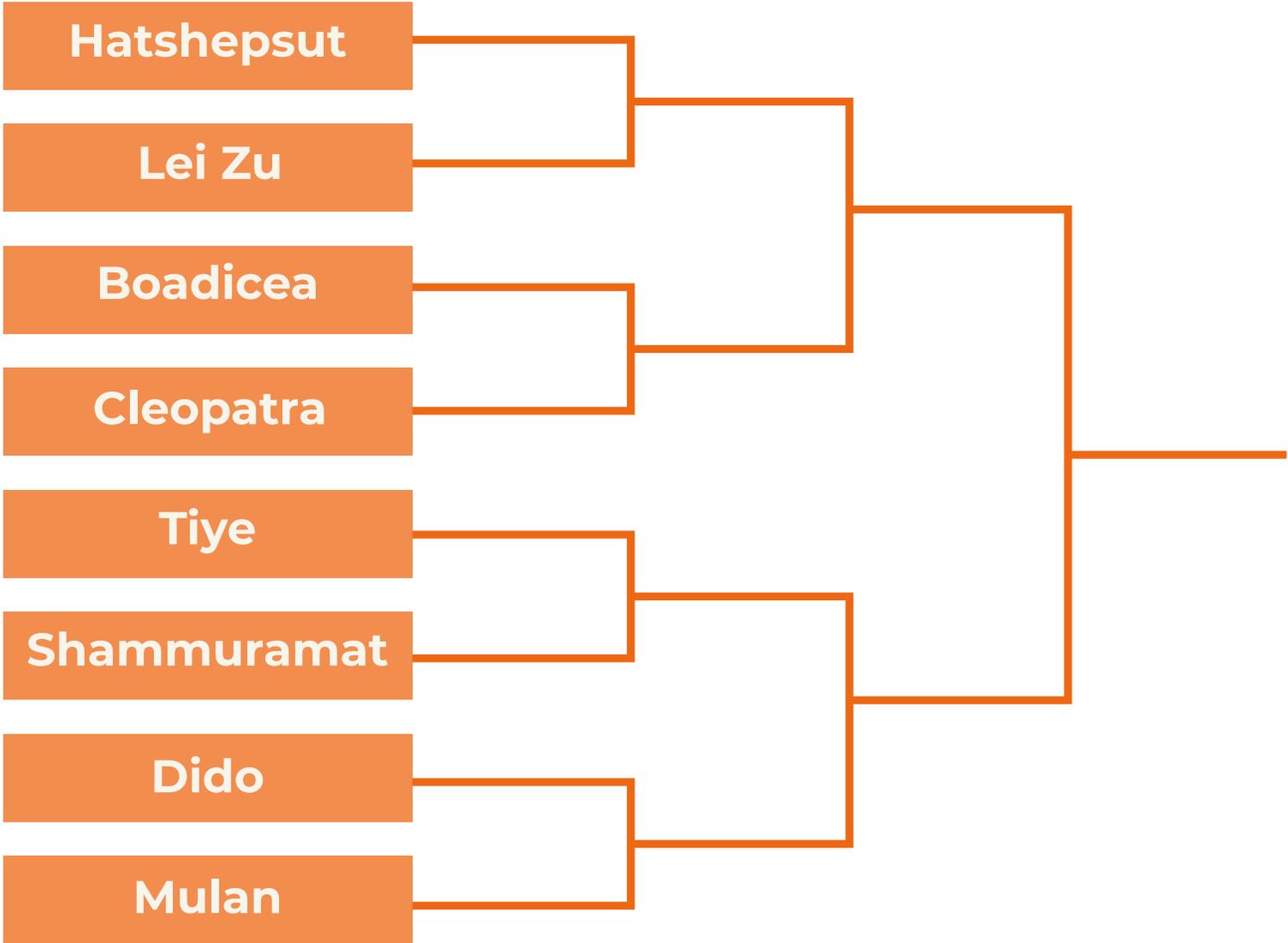
MAD WOMEN

Bracket Mini Bios

2026

Use these short game-style bios of the women from our bracket to learn about the women, and make your choices about who you think will win each head-to-head matchup!

REGION 1: ANCIENT TIMES



Hatshepsut

Egypt / 18th Dynasty / Reigned c. 1498-1483 BCE



“Storming the throne room and rewriting the job description, first into the arena is... HATSHEPSUT!”

Hatshepsut began as regent for her young stepson. Then she made a bold executive decision: upgrade to full Pharaoh. She ruled for over 20 years during one of Ancient Egypt’s most prosperous eras.

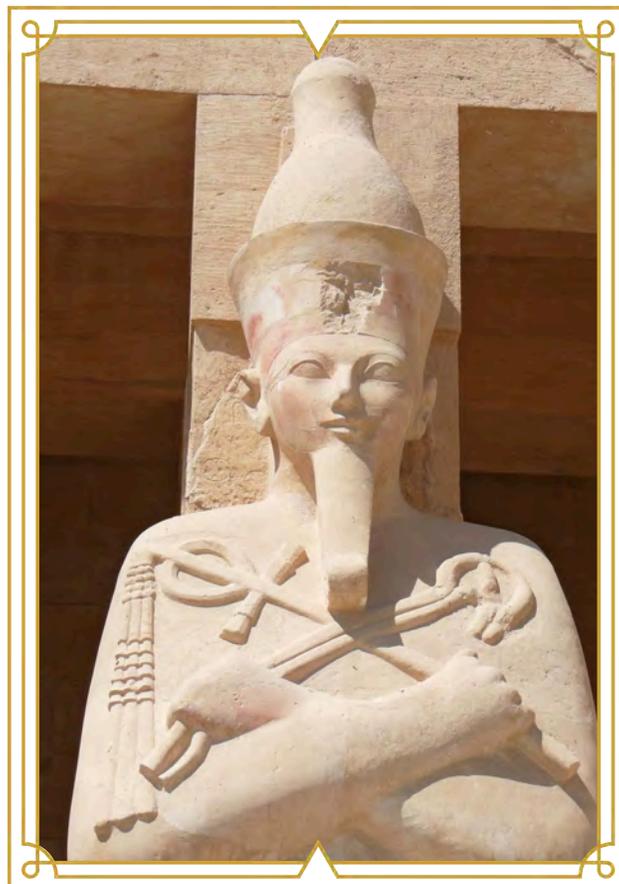
Stats:

- Commissioned massive building projects, including her mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahari
 - Expanded trade expeditions
 - Depicted herself in traditional male pharaoh iconography, including the ceremonial beard.
- Branding: flawless.

Play Style: Strategic. Economic. Monument-heavy.

Special Ability: “Temple Spam” overwhelms opponents with architectural legacy

Final Note: After her death, some successors tried to erase her. Spoiler: it didn’t work.



Lei Zu

China / Traditionally dated c. 27th century BCE (Legendary)



“Legendary unlock detected... silk tier activated... next into the arena is LEI ZU!”

According to Chinese tradition, Lei Zu discovered silk when a silkworm cocoon fell into her tea and unraveled. Instead of panicking, she reverse-engineered luxury.

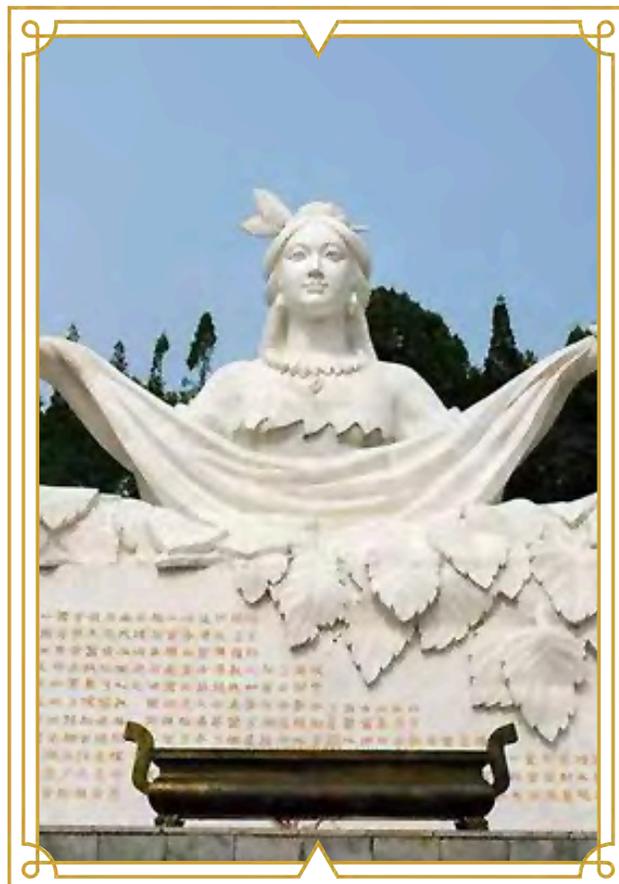
Stats:

- Credited with inventing sericulture (silk production)
- Launched an industry that shaped Chinese trade for millennia
- Silk became so valuable it literally named a trade route: the Silk Road

Play Style: Innovation economy builder

Special Ability: “Luxury Trade Buff” increases global commerce by 500%

Note: Semi-legendary, but historically influential in cultural memory



Boadicea

Britain / Died c. 60-61 CE



*“Charging into the arena on a war chariot...
it’s B-B-B-B-BOADICEA!”*

Move aside, Xena Warrior Princess. When Roman officials flogged her and abused her daughters after annexing her kingdom, Boadicea did what any respectable warrior **queen** would do: she assembled an army and burned Roman cities to the ground.

Stats:

- Led a coalition of tribes in a major revolt
- Destroyed Roman settlements including Londinium (modern London)
- Forced Rome to reconsider how it governed Britain

Play Style: High aggression. Massive early-game damage.

Special Ability: “Tribal Rally” summons large-scale uprising.

Outcome: Rome may have won in the end, but history remembered her anyway.



Cleopatra VII

Egypt / Reigned 51-30 BCE



“Sliding into Roman politics like it’s her own home court... She’s the last queen of Ptolemaic Egypt... She’s fluent, she’s fearless, she’s... CLEOPATRA!”

Cleopatra wasn’t just “involved” with Roman politics. She was a Roman political problem. She ruled during the final collapse of the Roman Republic and negotiated directly with Julius Caesar and Mark Antony.

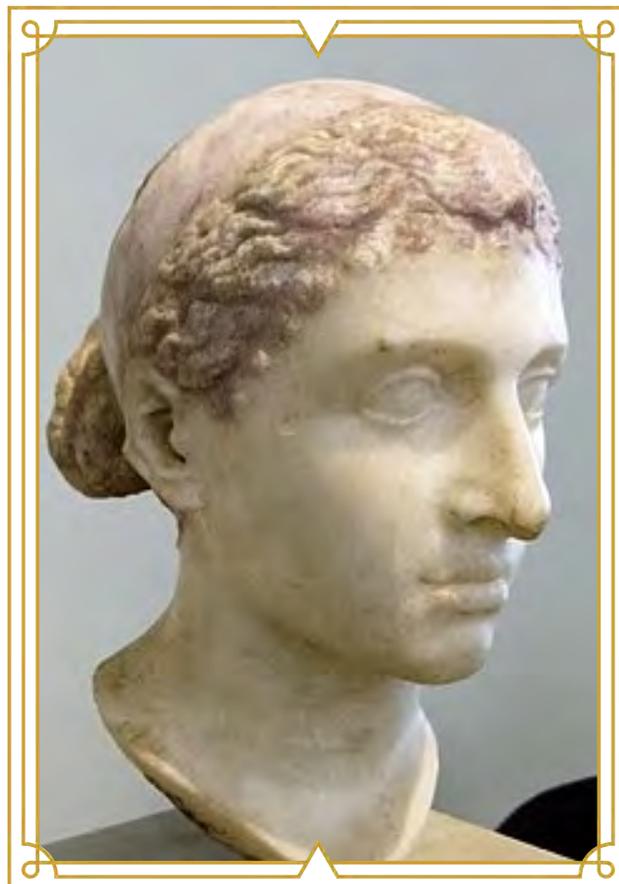
Stats:

- Spoke multiple languages
- Maintained Egypt’s independence for decades under enormous pressure
- Ruled for 21 years during a period of extreme geopolitical chaos

Play Style: Diplomatic control with high-risk alliances

Special Ability: “Alliance Combo” forms partnerships that shift the balance of power.

Weaknesses: Rome. Always Rome.



Queen Tiye Egypt / 18th Dynasty / c. 1398-1338 BCE



“Pulling the strings from the royal box... the power behind the throne... it’s QUEEN TIYE!”

Queen Tiye was the Great Royal Wife of Pharaoh Amenhotep III, but she was far more than a ceremonial spouse. Foreign leaders wrote directly to her in diplomatic correspondence.

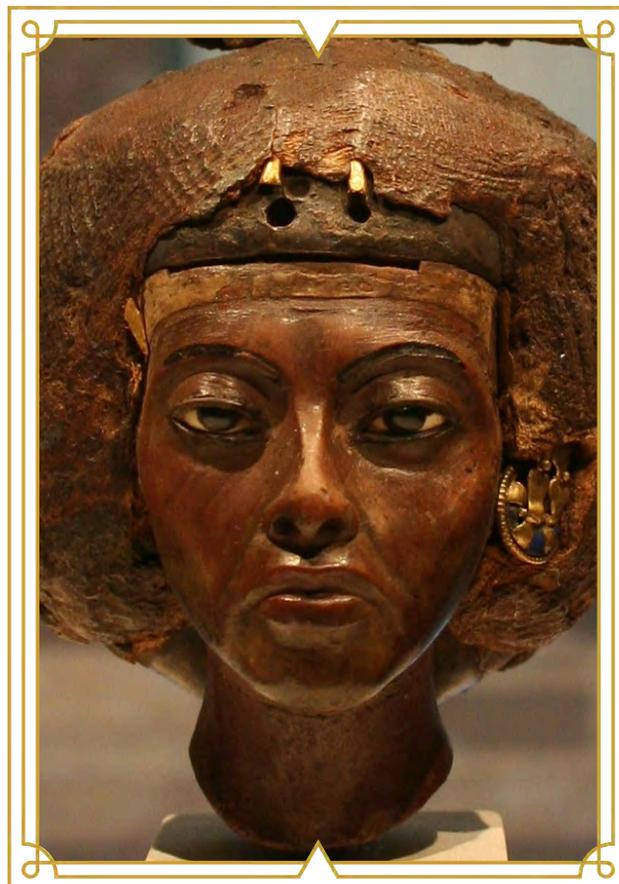
Stats:

- Played a visible political role in court.
- Mother of Akhenaten (yes, that Akhenaten)
- Depicted prominently in royal art, which was unusual for queens of her era.

Play Style: Court Influence Control.

Special Ability: “Diplomatic Network” strengthens international alliances.

Legacy: Quiet power. Lasting impact.



Shammuramat Assyria / 9th century BCE



“Warning: Historical figure has triggered Mythic Amplification. History says regent... legend says conqueror. Make some noise for SHAM-MU-RA-MAT!”

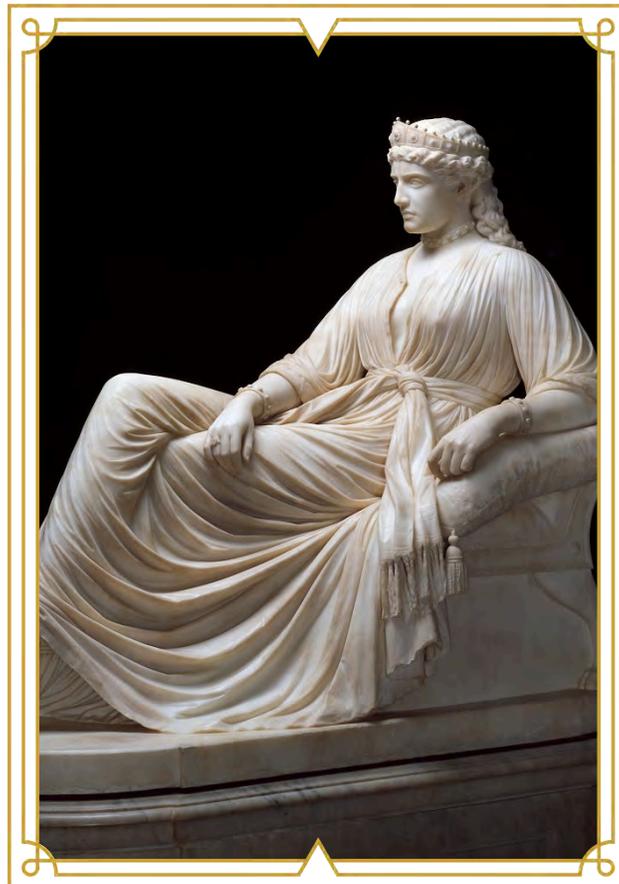
Shammuramat ruled as regent for her young son in the Neo-Assyrian Empire. Later legends exaggerated her into the mythical conqueror Semiramis, builder of cities and commander of armies, and, according to one persistent rumor, inventor of pants. Yes, pants.

Stats:

- Historically-documented Assyrian queen regent who held unprecedented authority for an Assyrian woman
- Her legend spread across the ancient Near East
- Inspired centuries of myth and storytelling

Play Style: Political stabilization with mythic afterburn.

Special Ability: “Legendary Reputation” posthumous power boost that unlocks legendary Pants Upgrade for all allies.



Dido

Carthage / Traditionally dated 9th century BCE



"From Tyre to total domination... She won't go down with this ship... it's the founder of Carthage herself... DIDO!"

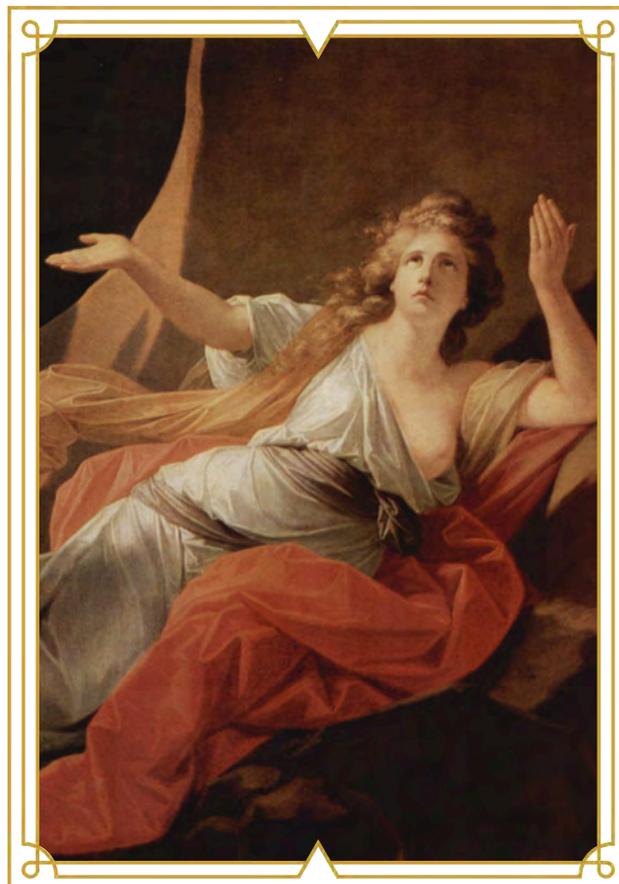
Dido, also known as Elissa, is credited with founding Carthage after fleeing Tyre. According to legend, she cleverly secured land by cutting an oxhide into strips to maximize territory.

Stats:

- Legendary founder of one of Rome's greatest rivals
- Strategic colonization mastermind
- Central figure in Virgil's Aeneid

Play Style: Expansionist start-up queen.

Special Ability: "Maximize Land Exploit" triggers long-term geopolitical consequences.



Mulan

China / Traditionally dated to the Northern Wei Period, c. 386-534 CE



“Switching classes mid-game... armor equipped and ready for action... it’s MULAN!”

From the Ballad of Mulan: a daughter who took her father’s place in the army, served with distinction, and returned home without demanding rank or reward.

Stats:

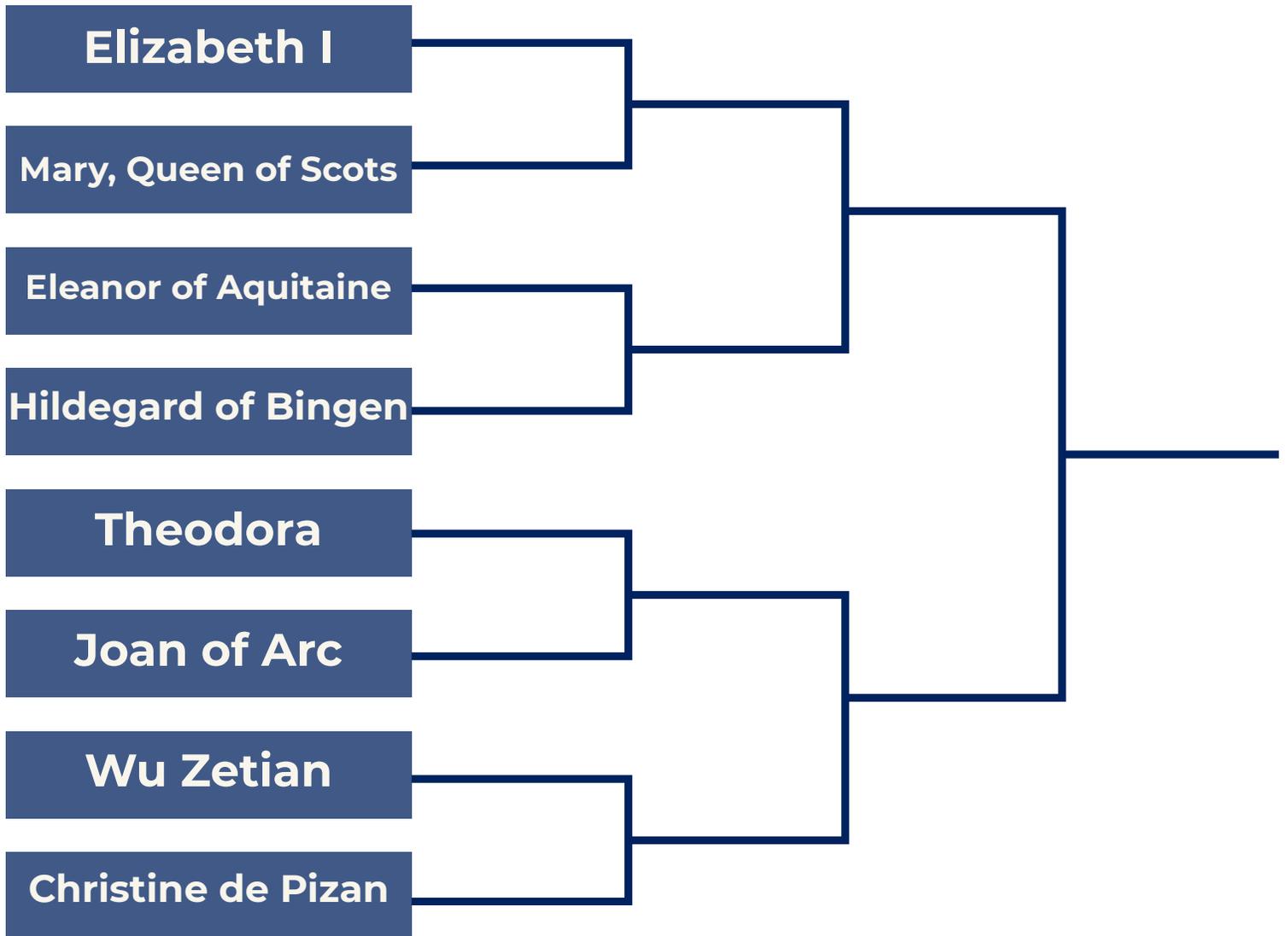
- Fought for over a decade
- Maintained her identity throughout service
- Became a symbol of filial loyalty and courage

Play Style: Tactical adaptability.

Special Ability: “Identity Shift” blends into any army



REGION 2: MIDDLE AGES



Elizabeth I England / Reigned 1558-1603 CE\



“Forty-four years on the throne with zero patience for nonsense and no intention of marrying for strategy points... ELIZABETH THE FIRST has entered the arena!”

Daughter of Henry VII, Elizabeth survived religious chaos, assassination plots, and family executions, so you know she’s ready for whatever her opponents throw her way. Then she ruled during a cultural golden age and defeated the Spanish Armada in 1588.

Stats:

- Reigned for 44 years
- Oversaw England’s naval victory over Spain
- Mastered political messaging before PR teams were invented

Play Style: Strategic Monarch.

Special Ability: “Armada Shutdown” neutralizes invading forces and boosts national morale.



Mary, Queen of Scots Scotland (and briefly France) / 1542-1587 CE



“Drama, intrigue, international scandal, our next player has it all... it’s MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS!”

She was crowned Queen of Scotland at six days old. She was Queen consort of France as a teenager. She was a rival claimant to Elizabeth I’s throne. This queen was here for the drama. Well, until she was eventually executed after being linked to political plots. You can’t win ‘em all!

Stats:

- Queen before she could walk
- Fluent in multiple languages
- Central figure in international power struggles

Play Style: High-risk royal gambit

Special Ability: “Dynastic Claim” creates instability in rival kingdoms and raises succession tension.



Eleanor of Aquitaine France & England / 1122-1204 CE



“Next into the arena, she was Queen of France... then Queen of England, because one crown was clearly insufficient for this diva... it’s ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE”

One of the wealthiest and most influential women in medieval Europe. Went on a Crusade. Managed vast territories. Mothered kings.

Stats:

- Participated in the Second Crusade
- Mother of Richard the Lionheart
- Political force across two kingdoms

Play Style: Dynasty builder

Special Ability: “Double Crown Control” expands influence across multiple territories simultaneously.



Hildegard of Bingen

Holy Roman Empire (Germany) / 1098-1179 CE



"Composer. Mystic. Scientist. Abbess... You've unlocked a Medieval multi-class: HILDEGARD OF BINGEN!"

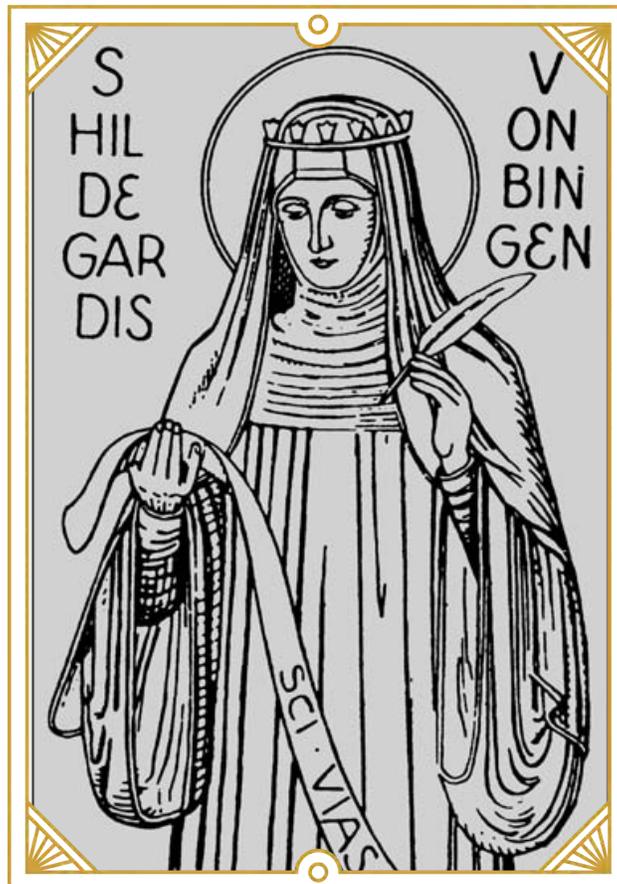
Hildegard wrote theology, music, medical texts, and letters to emperors and popes. She recorded visions and founded her own monastery. Medieval Boss Babe energy.

Stats:

- Produced original liturgical compositions
- Wrote medical and scientific observations
- Corresponded with major political leaders

Play Style: Polymath Build

Special Ability: "Illuminated Insight" reveals hidden knowledge and increases intellectual influence.



Empress Theodora Byzantine Empire / c. 500-548 CE



“When the empire panicked, she did not. Forget Hollywood royalty, this actress-turned-empress was a one-woman crisis response team. Coming into the arena next it’s... THEODORA!”

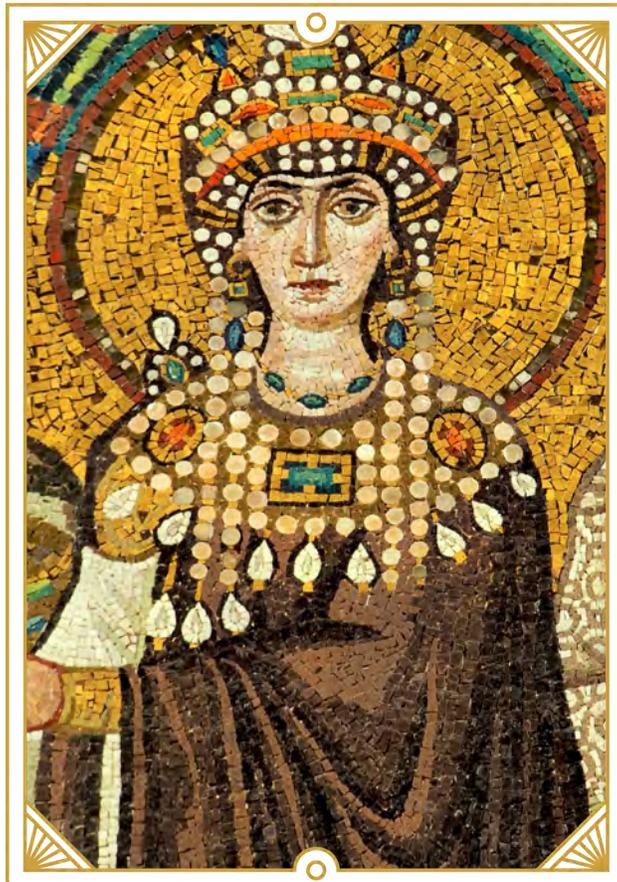
Rising from humble beginnings, Theodora became co-ruler alongside Justinian. During the Nika Riots, she reportedly refused to flee and helped stabilize the empire.

Stats:

- Empress from 527-548 CE
- Influenced legal reforms improving women’s rights
- Key advisor during political crisis.

Play Style: Crisis Commander

Special Ability: “Stand Firm” prevents collapse during rebellion and restores imperial control.



Joan of Arc France / 1412-1431



*“Seventeen years old. Armor equipped.
Army inspired. It’s... JOAN OF ARC!”*

Joan claimed divine guidance and led French forces to key victories during the Hundred Years’ War, dramatically shifting morale.

Stats:

- Broke the Siege of Orleans
- Helped crown Charles VII
- Executed at 19; later declared a saint

Play Style: Fearless Frontline

Special Ability: “Morale Surge” dramatically increases troop confidence and battlefield momentum.



Wu Zetian China / Ruled 690-705 CE



“Court intrigue level: extreme. With the throne secured and her title upgraded to Emperor, next into the arena it’s... W-W-W-W-WU ZETIAN!”

Wu Zetian rose from concubine to empress, then declared herself emperor. She’s the only woman in Chinese history to rule in her own name.

Stats:

- Expanded civil service exams
- Consolidated imperial authority
- Ruled independently for 15 years

Play Style: Political Mastery

Special Ability: “Throne Takeover” seizes full authority and restructures the power hierarchy



Christine de Pisan
France / c. 1364-1430 CE



“When the literary arena turned hostile, she built her own city. Here comes... CHRISTINE DE PISAN!”

One of Europe’s first professional female writers. In *The Book of the City of Ladies*, she defended women’s intellectual capacity and achievements.

Stats:

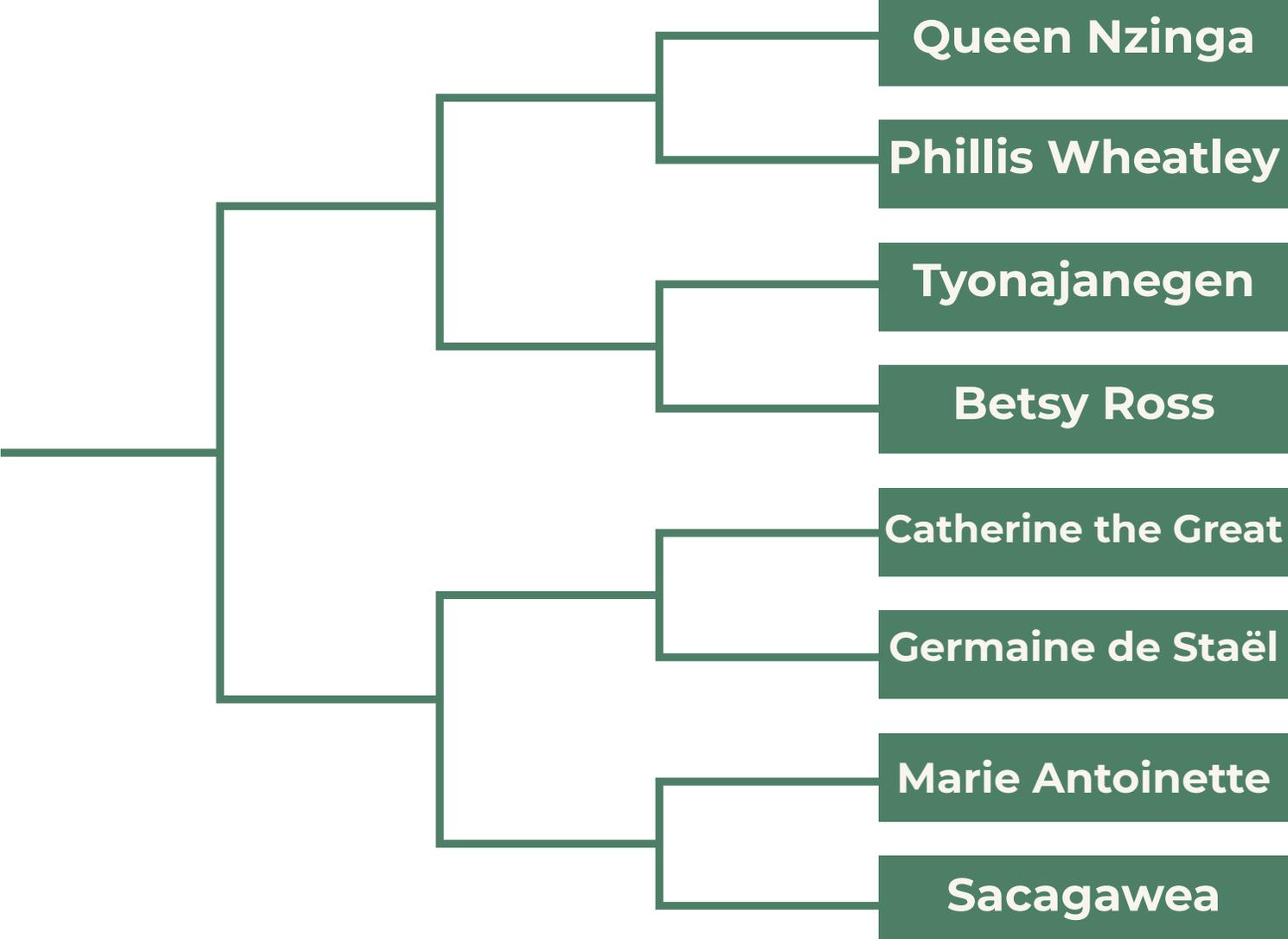
- Supported her family through writing
- Engaged in public intellectual debate
- Produced poetry, biography, and political commentary

Play Style: Rhetorical Precision

Special Ability: “Argument Counter” neutralizes misogynistic attacks with documented evidence and logic.



REGION 3: EARLY MODERN TIMES



Queen Nzinga Ndongo & Matamba (Angola) / Ruled c. 1624-1663



“Negotiating at the table, commanding on the battlefield, refusing to be annexed... QUEEN NZINGA has entered the arena!”

Nzinga ruled in 17th-century Central Africa during Portuguese expansion and the Atlantic slave trade. She negotiated treaties, formed alliances, converted strategically when useful, and led military resistance when necessary.

Stats:

- Ruled for nearly 40 years
- Engaged in both diplomacy and armed resistance
- Outsmarted colonial powers repeatedly

Play Style: Diplomatic warrior

Special Ability: “Alliance Pivot” shifts strategies instantly between negotiation and military defense.



Phillis Wheatley

American Colonies / c. 1753-1784 CE



*“Enslaved child turned published poet —
PHILLIS WHEATLEY takes the court!”*

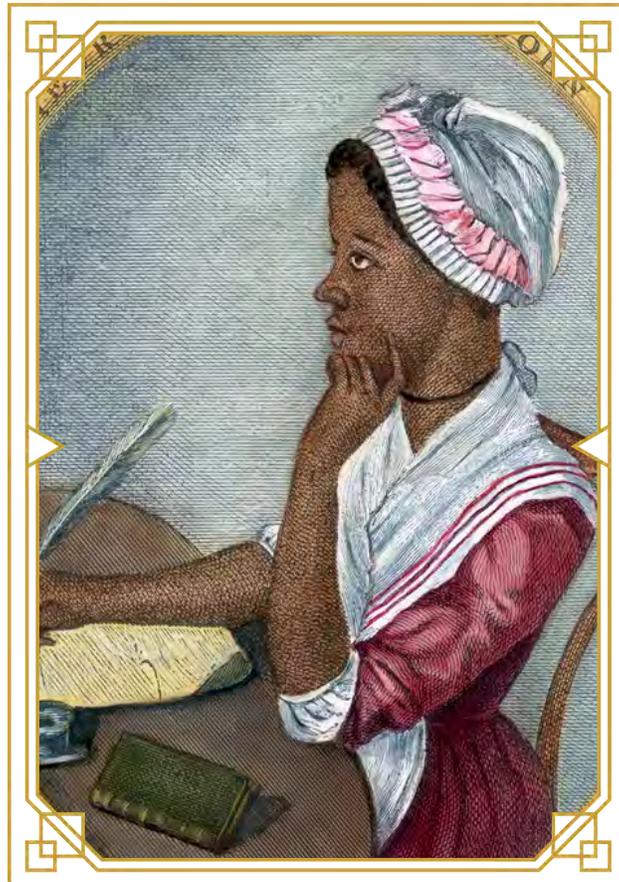
Kidnapped from West Africa as a child and enslaved in Boston, Wheatley became the first published African American poet. Her 1773 book challenged assumptions about race and intellect across the Atlantic world.

Stats:

- Published poetry in both America and England
- Wrote during the Revolutionary era
- Corresponded with prominent leaders

Play Style: Precision Intellectual

Special Ability: “Literary Disruption” uses scholarship and eloquence to dismantle prejudice.



Tyonajanegen (Two Kettles Together) Oneida Nation / c. 1777 CE



“Mounted and battle-ready, representing the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, it’s... T-T-T-T-TYONAJANEGAN!”

An Oneida woman who fought alongside her husband during the American Revolution. She reportedly loaded rifles and participated in combat at the Battle of Oriskany.

Stats:

- Active during the Revolutionary War
- Represented Haudenosaunee involvement in the conflict
- Recognized for courage under fire

Play Style: Battlefield Support

Special Ability: “Rapid Reload” replenishes ammunition under fire, allowing allied troops to sustain combat.



Betsy Ross

American Colonies / 1752-1836 CE



“Thread steady... stars aligned... give it up for BETSY ROSS!”

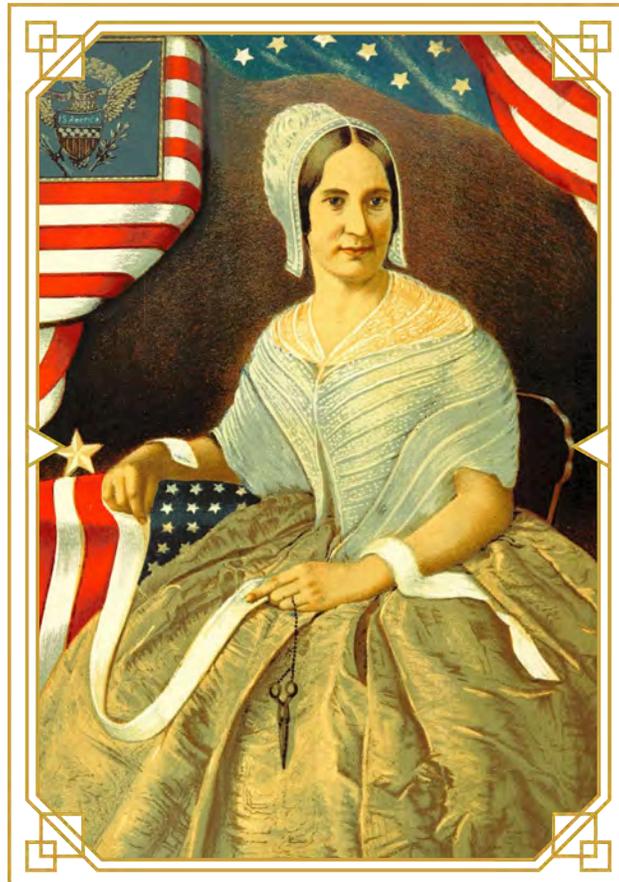
Traditionally credited with sewing the first American flag during the Revolutionary period. While historians debate the full story, her name became permanently stitched into American origin lore.

Stats:

- Upholsterer in colonial Philadelphia
- Associated with early American flag design
- Cultural icon of revolutionary identity

Play Style: Symbol crafter

Special Ability: “Banner Rally” creates powerful unifying symbols that boost collective morale.



Catherine the Great Russia / Reigned 1762-1796 CE



“Coup successful. Crown secured. Expansion mode activated... it’s CATHERINE THE GREAT!”

Born a German princess, Catherine seized power and ruled Russia for 34 years. She expanded territory, supported Enlightenment thinkers, and strengthened imperial authority.

Stats:

- Expanded Russian borders significantly
- Corresponded with Voltaire and Diderot
- Modernized aspects of Russian administration

Play Style: Expansion strategist

Special Ability: “Imperial Growth” rapidly increases territory and centralizes authority.



Germaine de Staël France & Switzerland / 1766-1817 CE



“She may have been banned by Napoleon, but she didn’t let that stop her... it’s GERMAINE DE STAEL!”

A major intellectual force of the French Revolution and Napoleonic era. Her writings on politics, liberty, and culture shaped European liberal thought—even while she lived in exile.

Stats:

- Critic of Napoleon Bonaparte
- Hosted influential salons
- Promoted constitutional government and free expression

Play Style: Intellectual Counteroffensive

Special Ability: “Exile Echo” allows ideas to continue spreading even after suppression.



Marie Antoinette France / 1755-1793 CE



“The crowd is divided. Tension is rising, and the monarchy is on the brink. Welcome to the arena... MARIE ANTOINETTE!”

Queen of France during the buildup to the French Revolution. Became a symbol – fair or unfair – of royal excess in a time of economic crisis.

Stats:

- Married into French royalty at 14
- Central figure during revolutionary upheaval
- Executed in 1793

Play Style: High-stakes monarchy

Special Ability: “Symbol Surge” becomes a lightning rod for public anger during political crisis.



Sacagawea Lemhi Shoshone / c. 1788-1812



"No maps, no GPS, just grit. That's working mom energy. That's... SACAGAWEA!"

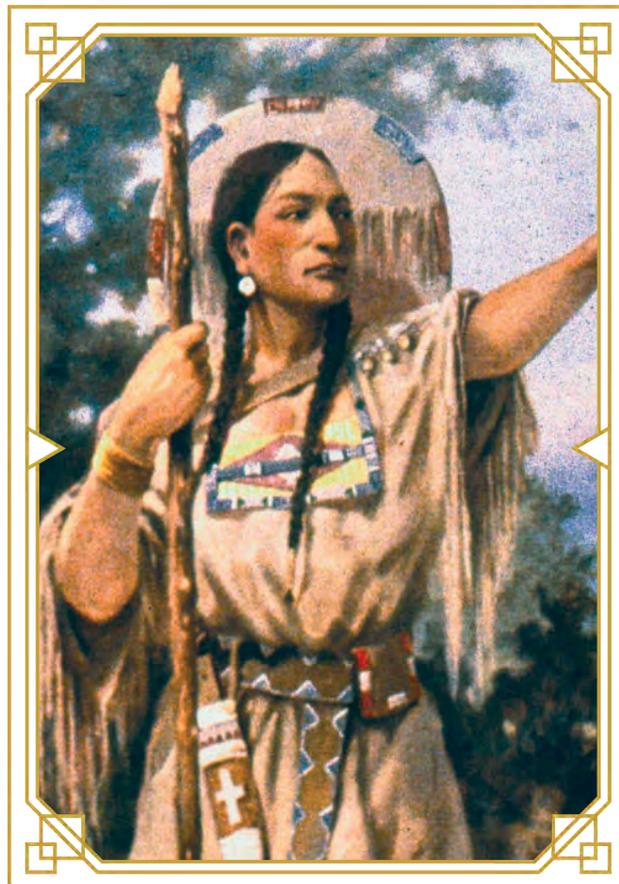
As a young Shoshone woman, Sacagawea traveled with the Lewis and Clark Expedition, serving as interpreter and guide. Her presence helped signal peaceful intentions to Native nations along the route.

Stats:

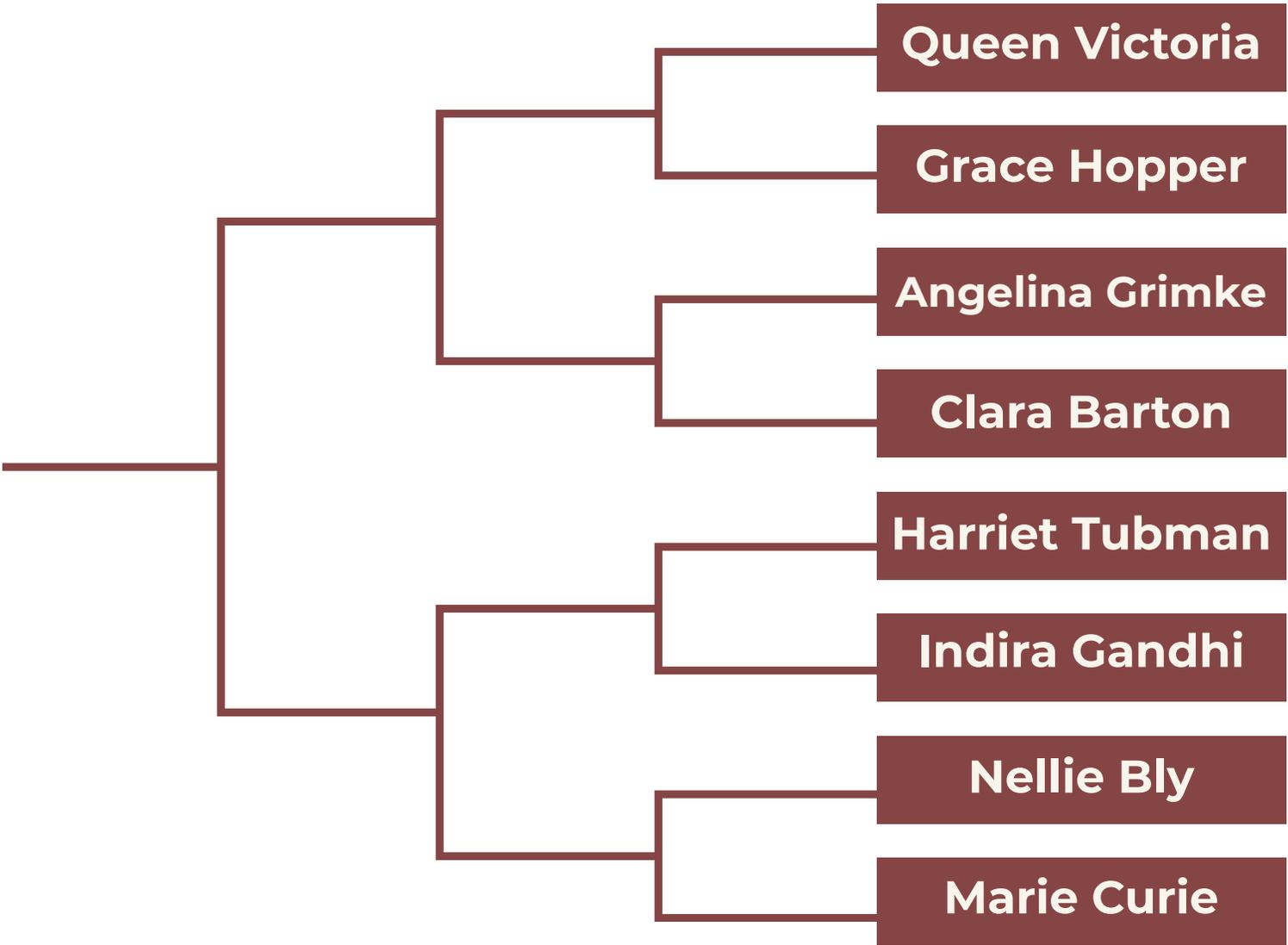
- Traveled thousands of miles across the continent
- Assisted with translation and diplomacy
- Key to expedition survival

Play Style: Expedition support

Special Ability: "Trailblazer Guidance" reduces environmental hazards and improves cross-cultural communication.

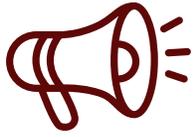


REGION 4: MODERN TIMES



Queen Victoria

United Kingdom / Reigned 1837-1901 CE



“Sixty-three years on the throne. An entire era named after her. She’s more than a queen, she’s an icon. First into the Modern Arena, it’s... QUEEN VICTORIA!”

Queen Victoria ruled during Britain’s industrial expansion and imperial growth. Her reign reshaped global politics and cultural norms.

Stats:

- Reigned 63 years
- Oversaw massive industrial and imperial expansion
- Symbol of Victorian social values

Play Style: Endurance monarch

Special Ability: “Era Stamp” redefines an entire historical period under her name.



Angelina Grimke United States / 1805-1879



“Born into a family of enslavers, but stood up to help tear it down. Next into the arena, it’s... ANGELINA GRIMKE!”

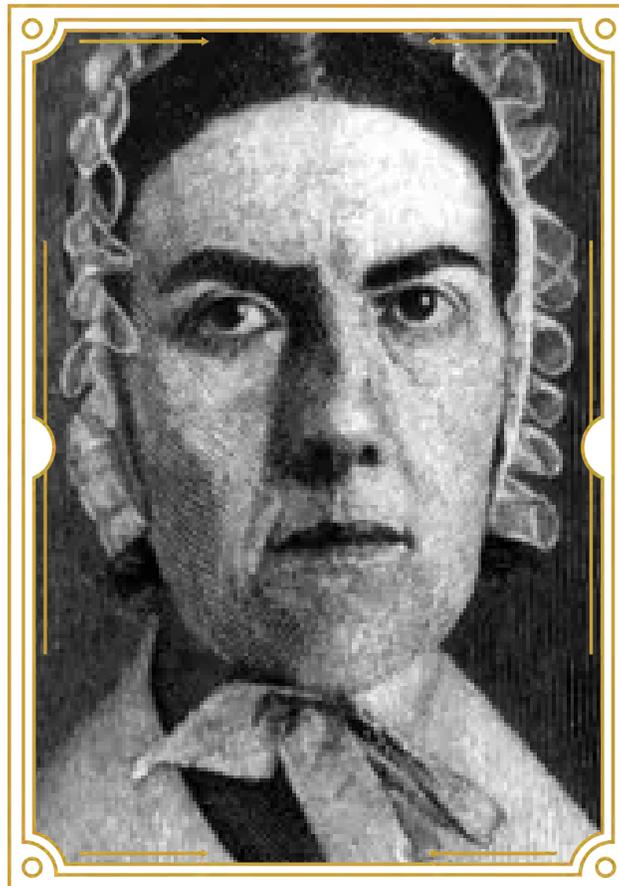
Angelina Grimke left her slaveholding Southern family and became a powerful abolitionist and advocate for women’s rights.

Stats:

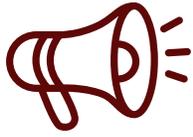
- Early female public speaker
- Campaigned against slavery nationwide
- Linked abolition and women’s rights movements

Play Style: Conscience catalyst

Special Ability: “Moral Confrontation” forces systems to face their own contradictions.



Clara Barton United States / 1812-1912



*“When the battlefield got chaotic, she ran straight toward it.
Here comes... C-C-C-C-CLARA BARTON!”*

Clara Barton nursed soldiers during the Civil War and later founded the American Red Cross.

Stats:

- Earned the nickname “Angel of the Battlefield”
- Founded the American Red Cross in 1881
- Led disaster relief efforts nationally

Play Style: Crisis responder

Special Ability: “Relief Deployment” stabilizes chaos and restores health to the field



Harriet Tubman

United States / c. 1822-1913 CE



*"No spotlight. No fanfare. Just unrelenting courage. That's...
HARRIET TUBMAN!"*

Escaped slavery, then returned again and again to guide others to freedom through the Underground Railroad.

Stats:

- Conducted multiple rescue missions
- Served as a Union scout during the Civil War
- Never lost a passenger

Play Style: Stealth liberator

Special Ability: "Midnight Extraction" safely escorts allies through hostile territory



Nellie Bly
United States / 1864 - 1922 CE



*“When the story needed exposing... she went undercover.
There’s nothing she won’t do for the story, it’s... NELLIE BLY!”*

Investigative journalist who faked insanity to report on asylum abuse, and later traveled around the world in 72 days.

Stats:

- Pioneered undercover journalism
- Exposed institutional mistreatment
- Set a global travel record

Play Style: Risk-Taker Reporter

Special Ability: “Undercover Infiltration” reveals hidden corruption from the inside.



Marie Curie Poland & France / 1867-1934



“Two Nobel Prizes. Two elements discovered. Zero time for doubts. Entering the arena, it’s... MARIE CURIE!”

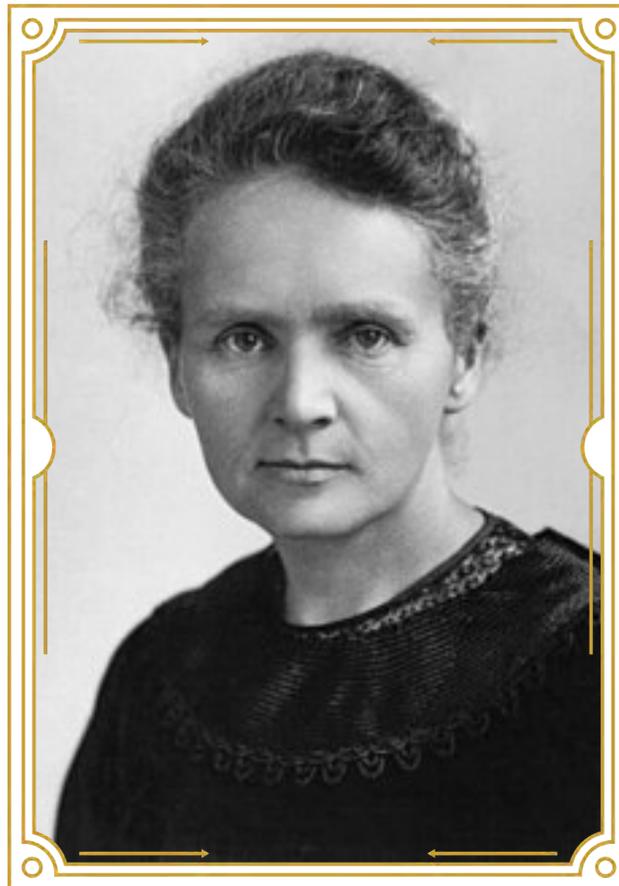
A pioneer in the study of radioactivity, Marie Curie remains the only person to win Nobel Prizes in two different scientific fields.

Stats:

- Discovered polonium and radium
- First woman to win a Nobel Prize
- Only person to win Nobels in Physics and Chemistry

Play Style: Relentless researcher

Special Ability: “Element Discovery” unlocks entirely new scientific fields.



Indira Gandhi India / 1917-1984 CE



“First woman to lead the world’s largest democracy, and she did not lead quietly. Roaring into the arena, it’s... INDIRA GANDHI”

India’s first female Prime Minister. Led during war, political upheaval, and major economic shifts.

Stats:

- Prime Minister for over 15 years
- Oversaw the 1971 war with Pakistan
- Centralized executive power during Emergency rule

Play Style: Command authority

Special Ability: “Centralized Power” consolidates leadership during national crisis.



Grace Hopper United States / 1906-1992 CE



“Binary? Boring. Let’s make computers speak human. Last into the arena, it’s the groundbreaking... GRACE HOPPER!”

Computer scientist and U.S. Navy rear admiral who helped develop early programming languages and popularized the term “debugging.”

Stats:

- Helped create COBOL programming language
- Rear admiral in the U.S. Navy
- Major advocate for accessible computing

Play Style: Systems architect

Special Ability: “Compiler Creation” translates complex systems into usable language.



Well-Trained Mind Press MAD WOMEN Bracket

ANCIENT

- Hatshepsut
- Lei Zu
- Boadicea
- Cleopatra
- Tiye
- Shammuramat
- Dido
- Mulan

- Queen Nzinga
- Phillis Wheatley
- Tyonajanegen
- Betsy Ross
- Catherine the Great
- Germaine de Staël
- Marie Antoinette
- Sacagawea

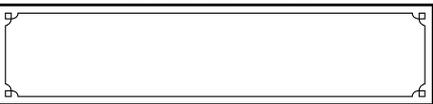
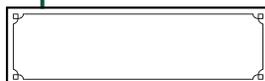
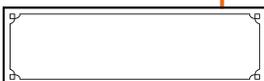
EARLY MODERN

MIDDLE AGES

- Elizabeth I
- Mary, Queen of Scots
- Eleanor of Aquitaine
- Hildegard of Bingen
- Theodora
- Joan of Arc
- Wu Zetian
- Christine de Pizan

- Queen Victoria
- Grace Hopper
- Angelina Grimke
- Clara Barton
- Harriet Tubman
- Indira Gandhi
- Nellie Bly
- Marie Curie

MODERN



WINNER