

WOMEN LEADERS IN HISTORY



2o GEL DRAPETSONAS

2020-2021

INDEX

Cleopatra, Egyptian pharaoh

Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni

Hypatia, Ancient Greek philosopher

Theodora, Empress of Byzantium

Joan of Arc, Martyr and military leader

Catherine de' Medici, Italian-born queen of France

Elizabeth I, Queen of England

Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia

Laskarina Bouboulina, Heroine of the Greek Revolution

Sacagawea, Shoshone interpreter

Manto Mavrogenous, Heroine of the Greek War of Independence

Ada Lovelace, Mathematician

Victoria, Queen of England

Florence Nightingale, Founder of Modern Nursing

Emmeline Pankhurst, British Political Activist

Marie Curie, Scientist

Isadora Duncan, American dancer

Helen Keller Author, Disability Rights Advocate, Political Activist And Lecturer

Dorothy Levitt, Racing driver

Virginia Woolf, British Modernist Novelist

"Coco" Chanel, Fashion Designer and Businesswoman

Eleanor Roosevelt, First Lady, Diplomat and Activist

Anna Akhmatova, Russian Poet

Amelia Earhart, Aviation Pioneer

Katina Paxinou, Greek actress

Frida Kahlo, Mexican artist

Simone de Beauvoir, Writer, Philosopher

Mother Teresa, Roman Catholic Nun, Human Rights Activist, Philanthropist

Rosa Parks, Civil Rights Activist

Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India

Fanny Blankers-Koen, Dutch Olympian Athlete

Melina Mercouri, Greek Actress, Singer, Socialist and Politician

Anne Frank, Victim of the Holocaust

Maria Callas, Opera Singer

Margaret Thatcher, Prime Minister of Great Britain

Elizabeth II, Queen of the United Kingdom

Helene Glykatzi-Ahrweiler, Greek Byzantinologist

Oprah Winfrey, Talk show Host, Television Producer, Actress, Author and Philanthropist

Katerina Sakellaropoulou, President of Greece

Diana, Princess of Wales

Nadia Comăneci, Romanian Olympian Gymnast

Sofia Bekatorou, Sailing Greek Olympian

Malala Yousafzai, Activist for female education

Greta Thunberg, Environmental activist

INTRODUCTION

On the occasion of the International Women's Day, March 8, we decided to take a closer look to those women throughout history, who, one way or another, changed things for the better, not only for their countries or their era, but also for mankind for all eternity.

Women who led armies or invented machines, reigned empires or created masterpieces, scientists and athletes, authors and businesswomen, activists and pioneers, from Cleopatra to Greta Thunberg, they all deserve our deepest respect and admiration.

Let us not forget, though, the billions of everyday women around the world who struggle daily for the same universal values and fundamental rights that are still not applied in full.

In this feature on women leaders in history we have tried to include representative individuals from various fields, nationalities and historical periods. On no account do we claim to have covered all worth-mentioning, only an indicative number of those who are icons, famous or not so famous!

We hope you enjoy the ride!

The overseeing teacher

E. Karaiskou

The 2nd and 3rd grade students

2nd General Lyceum of Drapetsona
2020-2021

Cleopatra, 69 BC - 30 BC, Egyptian pharaoh



Cleopatra VII ruled ancient Egypt as co-regent (first with her father, then with her two younger brothers and finally with her son) for almost three decades. She was part of a dynasty of Macedonian rulers founded by Ptolemy, who served as general under Alexander the Great during his conquest of Egypt in 332 B.C. Well-educated and clever, Cleopatra could speak various languages and served as the dominant ruler in all three of her co-regencies. Her romantic liaisons and military alliances with the Roman leaders Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, as well as her supposed exotic beauty and powers of seduction, earned her an enduring place in history and popular myth.

Boudicca, c.30–61 AD, Queen of the Iceni



Queen of the Iceni tribe during the Roman occupation of Britain. In either 60 or 61 AD Boudicca united different tribes in a Celtic revolt against Roman rule. Leading an army of around 100,000 she succeeded in driving the Romans out of modern-day Colchester (then capital of Roman Britain), Londinium and Verulamium (St Albans). Her success led Roman emperor Nero to consider withdrawing from Britain entirely, until the Roman governor, Paullinus finally defeated her in a battle in the West Midlands. Shortly afterwards Boudicca died, probably either by suicide or through illness.

It has been suggested that Elizabeth I's speech to her troops at Tilbury before the invasion by the Spanish Armada might have taken something from Boudicca's oratorical display.

Hypatia, c.355-415, Ancient Greek philosopher



Hypatia of Alexandria was a female philosopher and mathematician, born in Alexandria, Egypt possibly in 370 CE (although some scholars cite her birth as c. 350 CE). She was the daughter of the mathematician Theon, the last Professor at the University of Alexandria, who tutored her in math, astronomy, and the philosophy of the day which, in modern times, would be considered science.

She was murdered in 415 CE by a Christian mob who attacked her on the streets of Alexandria. The primary sources, even those Christian writers who were hostile to her and claimed she was a witch, are generally sympathetic in recording her death as a tragedy.

Theodora, c497-548 AD, Empress of Byzantium



Theodora exercised considerable influence as wife of the emperor Justinian I, handling political affairs and corresponding with foreign rulers. She is remembered as one of the first rulers to recognise the rights of women, altering divorce laws to give greater benefits to women and prohibiting the traffic in young girls.

Theodora is a saint in the Eastern Orthodox Church and in the Oriental Orthodox Church, commemorated on 14 November and 28 June respectively.

Joan of Arc, 1412-1431, Martyr and military leader



Joan was born in 1412, nearly 80 years into the Hundred Years' War, which had seen the English take control of a large portion of France. She convinced the future French King Charles VII that religious visions had instructed her to support him. Aged just 17 she was sent to the Siege of Orléans. When the siege was lifted shortly afterwards, Joan became a religious figurehead for a renewed French offensive, helping to achieve further French victories and advising on military strategy. Joan was eventually captured by the Burgundians and put into English custody. In 1431, she was found guilty of heresy and burned at the stake. She became a French martyr and was canonised in 1909.

Catherine de Medici, 1519-89, Italian-born queen of France



Caterina Maria Romola di Lorenzo de Medici was born in Florence on 13 April 1519. Her father was Lorenzo de Medici, Duke of Urbino and ruler of Florence and her mother was Madeleine de la Tour d' Auvergne, cousin of Francis I, King of France.

Queen of France and mother of three kings, Catherine de' Medici held a hugely influential position in the nation's politics throughout the 16th century. Civil war and religious tensions often led her to take drastic measures, yet she is also remembered for her tenacious nature and artistic patronage.

Elizabeth I, 1533 – 1633, Queen of England



Elizabeth I was queen of England and Ireland from 1558 to 1603 and was the last monarch of the Tudor period. She was the daughter of Henry VIII and his second wife, Anne Boleyn. She succeeded to the throne in November 1558 following the death of her sister Mary I and went on to reign for 45 years. Elizabeth never married but saw herself as wedded to her country. Her finest hour was arguably in 1588 when she defeated the Spanish Armada, a great fleet of ships sent by King Philip II of Spain to invade England. Elizabeth is also referred to as the Virgin Queen, Good Queen Bess and 'Gloriana'.

Elizabeth restored the value of England's currency, she established a national church, the country was fundamentally stable and united and she elevated England's status internationally. And she did all of this despite the prevailing prejudice against female rulers.

Catherine the Great, 1729-1796, Empress of Russia



Russia's longest-ruling female leader, Catherine was head of the country as it modernised, expanded, and strengthened. A patron of arts and a supporter of education, her reforms led her to become one of the most influential rulers in Russian history.

Catherine was greatly influenced by the Enlightenment which accounts for her education, which shaped her to become very intelligent and wise. Catherine built new hospitals and schools, introduced a new legal code, and supported religious tolerance. Catherine requested the construction of many academic buildings, for example, the first public library was made by her command (now called the Russian National Library).

During her reign she extended the Russian empire southwards and westwards, adding territories which included the Crimea, Belarus and Lithuania. Agreements with Prussia and Austria led to the ownership of three portions of Poland, extending Russia's borders well into central Europe.

She continued the process of Westernisation started by Peter III.

Laskarina Bouboulina, 1771- 1825, Heroine of the Greek Revolution



Laskarina "Bouboulina" Pinotsi was a Greek naval commander, heroine of the Greek War of Independence in 1821, and considered the first woman-admiral of the Imperial Russian Navy.

She married twice, first Dimitrios Yiannouzas and later the wealthy shipowner and captain Dimitrios Bouboulis, taking his surname. After his death, Bouboulina took over and had four more ships built at her own expense, including the large warship *Agamemnon*. It is said that Bouboulina joined the Filiki Etaireia, being one of a few women, but she is not named in historical members lists. She bought arms and ammunition at her own expense and brought them secretly to Spetses in her ships, to fight "for the sake of my nation." She also organized her own armed troops composed of men from Spetses. She used most of her fortune to provide food and ammunition for the sailors and soldiers under her command.

Laskarina Bouboulina was killed in 1825 as the result of a family feud in Spetses.

Jane Austen, 1775-1817, English novelist



The rom-com queen, Jane Austen defined an entire literary genre with her shrewd social observations and wit. Born into a family of eight children in England, Austen started writing her now classic novels, such as *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*, in her teens.

Her novels are funny, endearing, and questioned women's roles within society. Austen had to hide her identity as the author of some of the most popular novels of her day and it wasn't until her death that her brother, Henry, revealed to the public that she was the real author. Her literary influence remains and the themes and lessons from her novels still hold up today.

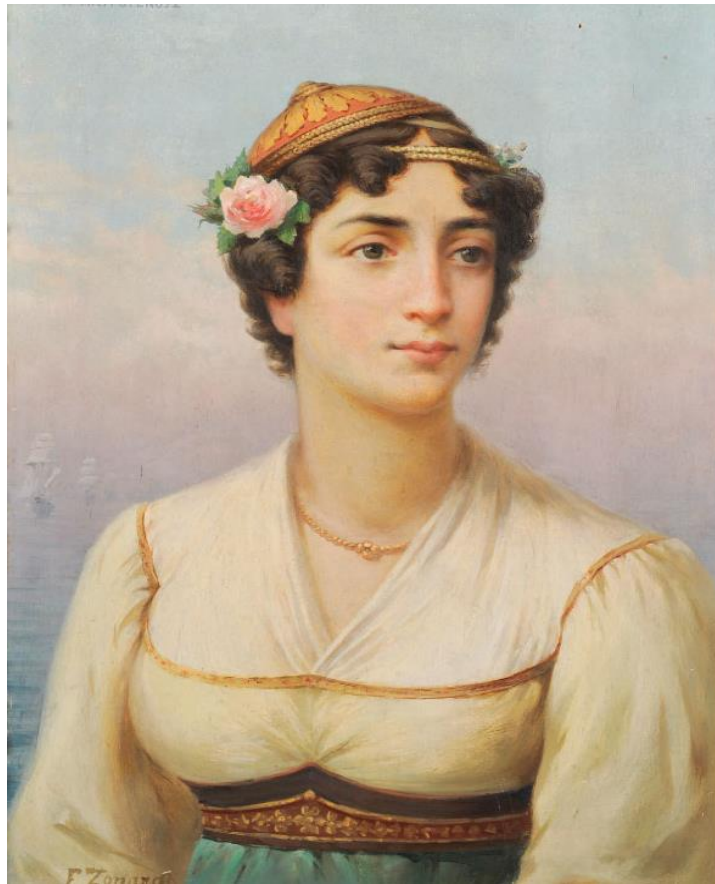
In 1816, Jane began to suffer from ill-health, probably due to Addison's disease. She travelled to Winchester to receive treatment, and died there on 18 July 1817. Two more novels, 'Persuasion' and 'Northanger Abbey' were published posthumously and a final novel was left incomplete.

Sacagawea, 1788-1812, Shoshone interpreter



As a female Native American, Sacagawea's story could easily have been lost to history. But her role as a vital member of Lewis and Clark's Corps of Discovery, helping them forge relationships with Native Americans all while carrying her newborn baby on her back, ensured this wasn't the case. Sacagawea travelled thousands of miles with the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1804-6 – from the Mandan-Hidatsa villages in the Dakotas to the Pacific Northwest – acting as an interpreter and allaying the suspicions of the tribes they encountered.

Manto Mavrogenous, 1796 – 1848, Heroine of the Greek War of Independence



Manto Mavrogenous was a Greek heroine of the Greek War of Independence. A rich woman, she spent all her fortune for the Hellenic cause. Under her encouragement, her European friends contributed money and guns to the revolution. A beautiful woman of aristocratic lineage, she grew up in an educated family, influenced by the Age of Enlightenment. She studied ancient Greek philosophy and history at a college in Trieste, and spoke French, Italian and Turkish fluently.

Mavrogenous led enlightenment expeditions in Europe and addressed an appeal to the women of Paris, to side up with the Greeks. She moved to Nafplio in 1823, in order to be in the core of the struggle, leaving her family as she was despised even by her mother because of her choices. It is at this time that Mavrogenous met Demetrius Ypsilanti, with whom she was soon engaged.

she died on Paros in July 1848, alone and impoverished, having spent all her fortune for the War of Independence.

Ada Lovelace, 1815 – 1852, Mathematician



Ada Lovelace was an English mathematician and the world's first computer programmer. Lovelace was born into privilege as the daughter of a famously unstable romantic poet, Lord Byron (who left her family when Ada was just 2 months old) and Lady Wentworth.

Ada was a charming woman of society who was friends with people such as Charles Dickens, but she is most famous for being the first person ever to publish an algorithm intended for a computer, her genius being years ahead of her time.

Lovelace died of cancer at 36, and it took nearly a century after her death for people to appreciate her notes on Babbage's Analytical Engine, which became recognised as the first description for computer and software, ever.

Victoria, 1819–1901, Queen of England



Victoria remains one of the UK's most iconic monarchs, more than a century after her death. Crowned in 1837, at the age of eighteen, she oversaw the nation and its empire throughout a remarkable period of social, technological and economic change. Arts flourished, many social, religious, and political movements started, and there was a move on border expansion and political reforms.

It was a time where the population exploded into the 30 million mark. For the first time in Britain's history, no major epidemic occurred, thanks to the improvement of health and environmental standards, and the discoveries and advancements made in nutrition and medicine.

Inventions at the time also helped make life easier. The developing science and technology brought on such discoveries as the steam-powered engine and telephone. Improved sanitation techniques turned filthy streets into clean roads, and incandescent glass mantles brightened everyone's lives. She died on the Isle of Wight in 1901. The last British monarch of the House of Hanover, she was succeeded by her son Edward VII of the House of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha.

Florence Nightingale, 1820–1910, Founder of modern nursing



Florence Nightingale was an English social reformer, statistician and the founder of modern nursing. Nightingale came to prominence while serving as a manager and trainer of nurses during the Crimean War, in which she organised care for wounded soldiers at Constantinople. She gave nursing a favourable reputation and became an icon of Victorian culture, especially in the persona of "The Lady with the Lamp" making rounds of wounded soldiers at night.

In recognition of her pioneering work in nursing, the Nightingale Pledge taken by new nurses, and the Florence Nightingale Medal, the highest international distinction a nurse can achieve, were named in her honour, and the annual International Nurses Day is celebrated on her birthday. Her social reforms included improving healthcare for all sections of British society, advocating better hunger relief in India, helping to abolish prostitution laws that were harsh for women, and expanding the acceptable forms of female participation in the workforce.

Emmeline Pankhurst, 1858 – 1928, British political activist



Political activist Emmeline Pankhurst was a leader in the British suffragette movement in the late 1800's and is credited with helping women gain the right to vote in Britain.

Pankhurst went on several hunger strikes and was arrested numerous times on her mission to winning the women's vote, and in 1918 this right was finally given to some women in the UK, those over the age of 30, who were property-owners or university graduates.

Marie Curie, 1867 –1934, Scientist



Marie Skłodowska Curie was a Polish and naturalized-French physicist and chemist who conducted pioneering research on radioactivity. As the first of the Curie family legacy of five Nobel Prizes, she was the first woman to win a Nobel Prize, the first and the only woman to win the Nobel Prize twice, and the only person to win the Nobel Prize in two scientific fields.

She was the first woman to become a professor at the University of Paris in 1906. She named the first chemical element she discovered *polonium*, after her native country. In 1995 she became the first woman to be entombed on her own merits the Panthéon in Paris.

Isadora Duncan, 1877-1927, American dancer



Isadora Duncan's teaching and performances helped to free ballet from its conservative restrictions and presaged the development of modern expressive dance. She was among the first to raise interpretive dance to the status of creative art. She performed to great acclaim throughout Europe.

Born and raised in California, she lived and danced in Western Europe and the Soviet Union from the age of 22 until her death at age 50 when her scarf became entangled in the wheels and axle of the car in which she was travelling in Nice, France.

Duncan took inspiration from ancient Greece and combined it with a passion for freedom of movement. This is exemplified in her revolutionary costume of a white Greek tunic and bare feet. Inspired by Greek forms, her tunics also allowed a freedom of movement that corseted ballet costumes and pointe shoes did not. Costumes were not the only inspiration Duncan took from Greece: she was also inspired by ancient Greek art, and utilized some of its forms in her movement (as shown in photo).

Helen Keller, 1880 –1968, Author, Disability Rights Advocate, Political Activist And Lecturer



Helen Keller was an American author, disability rights advocate, political activist and lecturer. Born in Alabama, she lost her sight and hearing after a bout of illness at the age of nineteen months. She then communicated primarily using home signs until the age of seven when she met her first teacher and life-long companion Anne Sullivan, who taught her language, including reading and writing; Sullivan's first lessons involved spelling words on Keller's hand to show her the names of objects around her. She also learned how to speak and to understand other people's speech using the Tadoma method.

After an education at both specialist and mainstream schools, she attended Radcliffe College of Harvard University and became the first deafblind person to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree. She worked for the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) from 1924 until 1968, during which time she toured the United States and travelled to 39 countries around the globe advocating for those with vision loss.

Dorothy Levitt, 1882 – 1922, Racing driver



Dorothy Elizabeth Levitt was the first British woman racing driver, holder of the world's first water speed record, the women's world land speed record holder, and an author. She was a pioneer of female independence and female motoring, and taught Queen Alexandra and the Royal Princesses how to drive.

In 1905 she established the record for the longest drive achieved by a lady driver by driving a De Dion-Bouton from London to Liverpool and back over two days, receiving the soubriquets in the press of the Fastest Girl on Earth, and the Champion Lady Motorist of the World.

Levitt's book *The Woman and the Car: A Chatty Little Handbook for all Women who Motor or Who Want to Motor*, recommended that women should "carry a little hand-mirror in a convenient place when driving" so they may "hold the mirror aloft from time to time in order to see behind while driving in traffic", thus inventing the rear-view mirror before it was introduced by manufacturers in 1914.

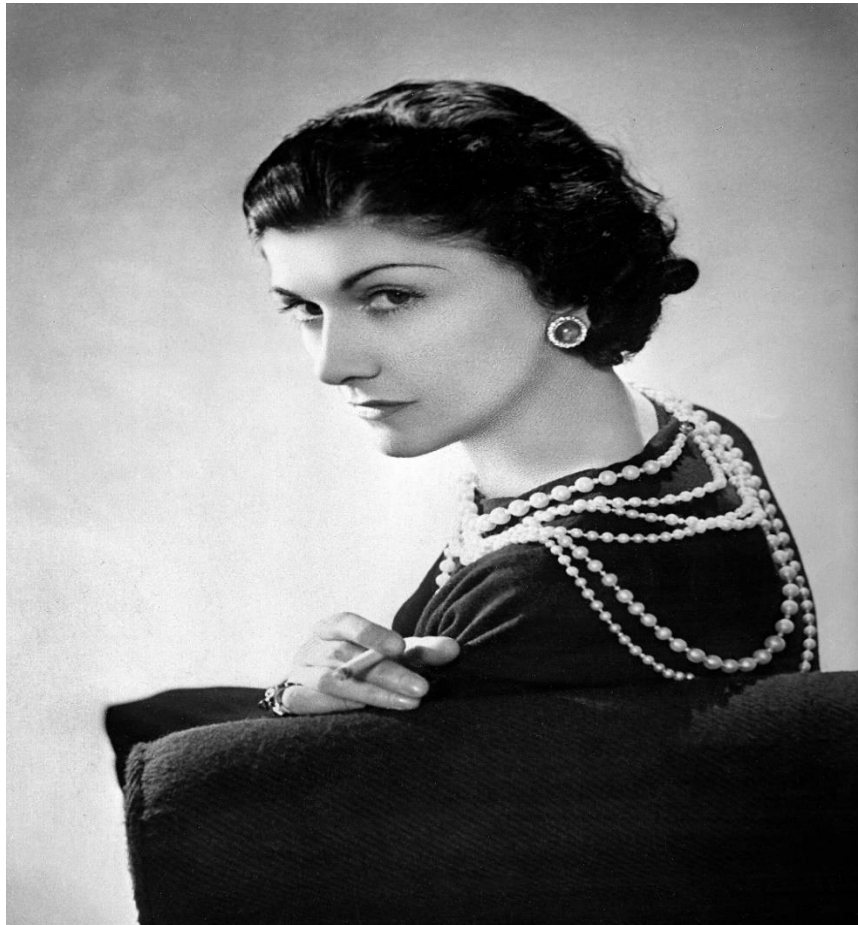
Virginia Woolf, 1882-1941, British modernist novelist



Virginia Woolf was an English writer, considered one of the most important modernist 20th century authors and also a pioneer in the use of stream of consciousness as a narrative device. Most famous for her works including *Mrs Dalloway* and *A Room of One's Own*, the English author Virginia Woolf was also one of the founders of the influential literary set the Bloomsbury Group. Her complex personal life and sometimes controversial viewpoints have led her to become both an influential and divisive figure.

Woolf became one of the central subjects of the 1970s movement of feminist criticism and her works have since garnered much attention and widespread commentary for "inspiring feminism". Her works have been translated into more than 50 languages. A large body of literature is dedicated to her life and work, and she has been the subject of plays, novels, and films. Woolf is commemorated today by statues, societies dedicated to her work and a building at the University of London.

Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel, 1883–1971, Fashion designer and businesswoman



Gabrielle Bonheur "Coco" Chanel was a French fashion designer and businesswoman. The founder and namesake of the Chanel brand, she was credited in the post-World War I era with popularizing a sporty, casual chic as the feminine standard of style, replacing the "corseted silhouette" that was dominant beforehand.

A prolific fashion creator, Chanel extended her influence beyond couture clothing, realizing her design aesthetic in jewellery, handbags, and fragrance. Her signature scent, Chanel No. 5, has become an iconic product. She is the only fashion designer listed on *Time* magazine's list of the 100 most influential people of the 20th century. Chanel herself designed her famed interlocked-CC monogram, which has been in use since the 1920s.

Eleanor Roosevelt, 1884 –1962, First Lady, diplomat and activist



Anna Eleanor Roosevelt was an American political figure, diplomat and activist. She served as the First Lady of the United States from March 4, 1933 to April 12, 1945, during her husband President Franklin D. Roosevelt's four terms in office, making her the longest-serving First Lady of the United States.

Roosevelt served as United States Delegate to the United Nations General Assembly from 1945 to 1952. President Harry S. Truman later called her the "First Lady of the World" in tribute to her human rights achievements.

Anna Akhmatova, 1889-1966, Russian poet



Anna Akhmatova was one of the most significant Russian poets of the 20th century. She was shortlisted for the Nobel Prize in 1965¹ and received second-most (three) nominations for the award the following year. Akhmatova's career as a poet, which spanned a period of war, totalitarianism and revolution, saw her mix the personal with the political to chronicle a tumultuous chapter in Russian history. The strong and clear leading female voice struck a new chord in Russian poetry. Her work and sympathies were often met with official opprobrium, and many of those around her were executed, detained or deported.

Amelia Earhart, 1897- 1937, Aviation pioneer



Amelia Mary Earhart was an American aviation pioneer and author. Earhart was the first female aviator to fly solo across the Atlantic Ocean. She set many other records, wrote best-selling books about her flying experiences, and was instrumental in the formation of The Ninety-Nines, an organization for female pilots.

In 1932, piloting a Lockheed Vega 5B, Earhart made a nonstop solo transatlantic flight, becoming the first woman to achieve such a feat. She received the United States Distinguished Flying Cross for this accomplishment. In 1935, Earhart became a visiting faculty member at Purdue University as an advisor to aeronautical engineering and a career counselor to women students. She was also a member of the National Woman's Party and an early supporter of the Equal Rights Amendment.

During an attempt at becoming the first female to complete a circumnavigational flight of the globe in 1937, Earhart and navigator Fred Noonan disappeared over the central Pacific Ocean near Howland Island.

Katina Paxinou, 1900–1973, Greek actress



She started her stage career in Greece in 1928 and was one of the founding members of the National Theatre of Greece in 1932. The outbreak of World War II found her in the United Kingdom and she later moved to the United States, where she made her film debut in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1943) and won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress and the Golden Globe Award for Best Supporting Actress. She appeared in a few more Hollywood films, before returning to Greece in the early 1950s. She became a naturalized citizen of the United States in 1951. She then focused on her stage career and appeared in a number of European films including *Rocco and His Brothers* (1960).

Paxinou died after a long battle with cancer in Athens on 22 February 1973 at the age of 72. Her remains are buried at First Cemetery of Athens.

Frida Kahlo, 1907 - 1954, Mexican artist



Frida Kahlo is remembered for her self-portraits, pain and passion, and bold, vibrant colours. She is celebrated in Mexico for her attention to Mexican and indigenous culture and by feminists for her depiction of the female experience and form.

Kahlo, who suffered from polio as a child, nearly died in a bus accident as a teenager. She suffered multiple fractures of her spine, collarbone and ribs, a shattered pelvis, broken foot and a dislocated shoulder. She began to focus heavily on painting while recovering in a body cast. In her lifetime, she had 30 operations.

Life experience is a common theme in Kahlo's approximately 200 paintings, sketches and drawings. Her physical and emotional pain are depicted starkly on canvases, as is her turbulent relationship with her husband, fellow artist Diego Rivera, who she married twice. Of her 143 paintings, 55 are self-portraits.

Kahlo did not sell many paintings in her lifetime, although she painted occasional portraits on commission. She had only one solo exhibition in Mexico in her lifetime, in 1953, just a year before her death at the age of 47.

Simone de Beauvoir, 1908- 1986, Writer, philosopher



Simone Lucie Ernestine Marie Bertrand de Beauvoir was a French writer, intellectual, existentialist philosopher, political activist, feminist, and social theorist. Though she did not consider herself a philosopher, she had a significant influence on both feminist existentialism and feminist theory.

Beauvoir wrote novels, essays, biographies, autobiographies and monographs on philosophy, politics, and social issues. She was known for her 1949 treatise *The Second Sex*, a detailed analysis of women's oppression and a foundational tract of contemporary feminism; and for her novels, including *She Came to Stay* and *The Mandarins*. Her most enduring contribution to literature are her memoirs, notably the first volume, "Mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée" (1958), which have a warmth and descriptive power.

Mother Teresa, 1910 – 1997, Roman Catholic nun



Mother Teresa, in full St. Teresa of Calcutta, founder of the Order of the Missionaries of Charity, a Roman Catholic congregation of women dedicated to the poor, particularly to the destitute of India. The congregation manages homes for people who are dying of HIV/AIDS, leprosy and tuberculosis. It also runs soup kitchens, dispensaries, mobile clinics, children's and family counselling programmes, as well as orphanages and schools. Members take vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, and also profess a fourth vow – to give "wholehearted free service to the poorest of the poor." She was the recipient of numerous honours, including the 1979 Nobel Prize for Peace. She was canonized by Pope Francis I on September 4, 2016.

Rosa Parks, 1913 – 2005, Civil Rights movement activist



Rosa Louise McCauley Parks was an American activist in the civil rights movement best known for her pivotal role in the Montgomery bus boycott. The United States Congress has called her "the first lady of civil rights" and "the mother of the freedom movement".

On December 1, 1955, in Montgomery, Alabama, Parks rejected bus driver James F. Blake's order to vacate a row of four seats in the "colored" section in favor of a white passenger, once the "white" section was filled. Parks wasn't the first person to resist bus segregation, but the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People believed that she was the best candidate for seeing through a court challenge after her arrest for civil disobedience in violating Alabama segregation laws, and she helped inspire the black community to boycott the Montgomery buses for over a year. She became an international icon of resistance to racial segregation, and organized and collaborated with civil rights leaders.

Indira Gandhi, 1917-1984, Prime minister of India



India's first and only female prime minister to date is remembered for her political steel and often controversial legacy. She ruled the country on two occasions, from 1966 to 1977 and from 1980 until 1984 when she was assassinated by her own bodyguards.

Gandhi was known for her political intransigency and unprecedented centralisation of power. She went to war with Pakistan in support of the independence movement and war of independence in East Pakistan, which resulted in an Indian victory and the creation of Bangladesh, as well as increasing India's influence to the point where it became the sole regional power of South Asia.

Fanny Blankers-Koen, 1918-2004, Dutch Olympian Athlete



A Dutch track and field athlete who won four gold medals at the 1948 Olympic Games in London, along with five European Championship golds between 1946 and 1950. While the press dubbed her 'the flying housewife', the fact that she had two children before her 1948 triumphs helped to undermine the popular notion that being a mother and being an elite athlete were mutually exclusive.

Melina Mercouri, 1920 – 1994, Greek Actress, Singer, Socialist and Politician



Maria Amalia "Melina" Mercouri was a Greek actress, singer, socialist and politician. She came from a famous political family. She received an Academy Award nomination and won a Cannes Film Festival Best Actress Award for her performance in the film *Never on Sunday* (1960). Mercouri was also nominated for three Golden Globes and two BAFTA Awards in her acting career.

As a politician, she was a member of the PASOK and the Hellenic Parliament. In October 1981, Mercouri became the first female Minister of Culture and Sports.

At the time of the coup d'état in Greece by a group of colonels of the Greek military on 21 April 1967, she was in the United States, playing in *Ilya Darling*. She immediately joined the struggle against the Greek Military Junta and started an international campaign, travelling all over the world to inform the public and contribute to the isolation and fall of the colonels. As a result, the dictatorial regime revoked her Greek citizenship and confiscated her property. She argued passionately for the Marbles' reunification. She said the Marbles are more to Greece than just works of art: they are an essential element of Greek heritage, which ties directly into cultural identity. She said: "You must understand what the Parthenon Marbles mean to us. They are our pride. They are our sacrifices. They are our noblest symbol of excellence. They are a tribute to the democratic philosophy. They are our aspirations and our name. They are the essence of Greekness."¹

Maria Callas, 1923 - 1977, Opera singer



She was one of the most renowned and influential opera singers of the 20th century. Many critics praised her bel canto technique, wide-ranging voice and dramatic interpretations. Her repertoire ranged from classical opera seria to the bel canto operas of Donizetti, Bellini and Rossini and, further, to the works of Verdi and Puccini; and, in her early career, to the music dramas of Wagner. Her musical and dramatic talents led to her being hailed as La Divina ("the Divine one").

Her artistic achievements were such that Leonard Bernstein called her "the Bible of opera" and her influence so enduring that, in 2006, *Opera News* wrote of her: "Nearly thirty years after her death, she's still the definition of the diva as artist—and still one of classical music's best-selling vocalists."

Anne Frank, 1929 – 1945, Victim of the Holocaust



Annelies Marie "Anne" Frank was a German-Dutch diarist of Jewish heritage. One of the most discussed Jewish victims of the Holocaust, she gained fame posthumously with the publication of *The Diary of a Young Girl* in which she documents her life in hiding from 1942 to 1944, during the German occupation of the Netherlands in World War II. It is one of the world's best-known books and has been the basis for several plays and films.

Margaret Thatcher, 1925–2013, Prime minister of Great Britain



She started her political career at Oxford University where she was president of the Conservative Association. In 1959, though, she won the parliamentary seat in Finchley and became Margaret Thatcher MP.

But she really made history in 1975 when she became leader of the Conservative Party - one of the two major political parties in the UK - and later, in 1979, the first female British Prime Minister.

She had some pretty radical views and even earned herself the nickname the Iron lady. She was forced to quit in 1990, but not before she'd become the longest continuously serving prime minister of the 20th century.

As with most political figures, some people loved her, while others didn't. Some thought she saved Britain when it was having many economic problems. Others thought she ruined the lives of millions of workers.

Whatever people think, there's no question that her strong-mindedness certainly meant she left her mark on British politics.

Elizabeth II, 1926 - today, Queen of the United Kingdom



Elizabeth II (Elizabeth Alexandra Mary is Queen of the United Kingdom and 15 other Commonwealth realms) was born in Mayfair, London, as the first child of the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George VI). Her father ascended the throne on the abdication of his brother King Edward VIII in 1936, from which time she was the heir presumptive. She was educated privately at home and began to undertake public duties during the Second World War, serving in the Auxiliary Territorial Service. In 1947 she married Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, a former prince of Greece and Denmark, with whom she has four children: Charles, Prince of Wales; Anne, Princess Royal; Prince Andrew, Duke of York; and Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex.

She is the longest-lived and longest-reigning British monarch. She is the longest-serving female head of state in world history, and the world's oldest living monarch, longest-reigning current monarch, and oldest and longest-serving current head of state.

Helene Glykatzi-Ahrweiler , 1926 – today, Greek Byzantinologist



Helene Glykatzi-Ahrweiler is a Greek academic Byzantinologist. She is also a UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador for Greece. In 2008 she was named amongst the 100 greatest Greeks of all time. By becoming Deputy Principal and Principal of the University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne , she did not only become the first woman to hold this post in the 700-year history of Sorbonne but, most importantly, the first woman in the world to hold the post of a Principal in a world-renowned University.

President Mitterrand named her as Rector of the Academy of Paris and Chancellor of the Universities of Paris. From February 1989 to August 1991, she was president of the Centre Georges Pompidou. She is also the Principal at the University of Europe in Paris, President of the Ethics Committee of the National Centre of Scientific Research in France, President of the European Cultural Centre of Delphi in Greece and Honorary President of the International Committee of Byzantine Studies. President Jacques Chirac offered her the Medal of the Battalion Commander of the Legion of Honour. Throughout her academic career, she also became an Honorary Doctor of various universities in the world, including the ones of London, Belgrade, New York, Nouveau Brunswick, Lima, American University of Paris, Harvard and Haifa. She is also a member of various Academies in. In 2007, she received the title of Honorary Doctor of the Media Studies Department of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki.

Oprah Winfrey, 1954 – today, Talk Show Host, Television Producer, Actress, Author And Philanthropist.



Oprah Gail Winfrey is an American talk show host, television producer, actress, author, and philanthropist. She is best known for her talk show, *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, broadcast from Chicago, which was the highest-rated television program of its kind in history and ran in national syndication for 25 years, from 1986 to 2011.

Dubbed the "Queen of All Media," she was the richest African American of the 20th century and North America's first black multi-billionaire, and she has been ranked the greatest black philanthropist in American history. By 2007, she was sometimes ranked as the most influential woman in the world.

Katerina Sakellaropoulou 1956 - today, President of Greece



Katerina Sakellaropoulou is the President of Greece. She was elected to succeed former President of Greece, Prokopis Pavlopoulos, by the Hellenic Parliament on 22 January 2020. Prior to her election as President of Greece, she served as President of the Council of State, the highest administrative court of Greece. She has been a member of the Association of Judiciary Functionaries of the Council of State. During her tenure at the association, she has served as its Secretary-General (1985–1986), Vice-President (2006–2008), and President (1993–1995, 2000–2001).

Sakellaropoulou is the first female president of Greece.

Diana, 1961 – 1997, Princess of Wales



Diana, Princess of Wales (born Diana Frances Spencer), was a member of the British royal family. She was the first wife of Charles, Prince of Wales—the heir apparent to the British throne—and was the mother of Prince William and Prince Harry. Diana's activism and glamour made her an international icon and earned her enduring popularity as well as unprecedented public scrutiny, exacerbated by her tumultuous private life.

She became known for her involvement with AIDS patients and campaign for the removal of landmines. She also raised awareness and advocated ways to help people affected with cancer and mental illness.

She died in a car crash in a Paris tunnel in 1997. Her legacy has had a deep impact on the royal family and British society and is remembered as the "People's Princess".

Nadia Comăneci, 1961 – today, Romanian Olympian Gymnast



Nadia Comăneci is a Romanian retired gymnast and a five-time Olympic gold medalist, all in individual events. In 1976 at the age of 14, Comăneci was the first gymnast to be awarded a perfect score of 10.0 at the Olympic Games. At the same Games (1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal), she received six more perfect 10s for events en route to winning three gold medals. At the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow, Comăneci won two more gold medals and attained two more perfect 10s. During her career, Comăneci won nine Olympic medals and four World Artistic Gymnastics Championship medals.

Comăneci is one of the world's best-known gymnasts and is credited with popularizing the sport around the globe. In 2000, she was named as one of the Athletes of the 20th Century by the Laureus World Sports Academy. She has lived in the United States since 1989, when she defected from then-Communist Romania before its revolution in December that year.

Sofia Bekatorou, 1977 - today, Sailing Olympian



Sofia Bekatorou is a Greek sailing champion living in Athens. She has participated in over hundreds of main class events including 2004 Summer Olympics sailing competition, where she won the gold medal in the women's double-handed dinghy event in the 470 with her pair Emilia Tsoulfa (Greece)

Bekatorou started the Hellenic #MeToo movement (#MeTinSofia) after revealing a sexual harassment and abuse episode involving a senior Hellenic Sailing Federation (HSF) member in his hotel room, shortly after trials for the 2000 Sydney Olympics. The interview triggered a wave of resignations in the HSF and echoed massively across Greece and eventually inspired other victims to come forward with their own stories of sexual harassment and abuse.

Malala Yousafzai, 1997- today, Activist for female education



Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani activist for female education and the youngest Nobel Prize laureate. She is known for human rights advocacy, especially the education of women and children in her native land, where the local Pakistani Taliban had at times banned girls from attending school. Her advocacy has grown into an international movement.

On 9 October 2012, while on a bus to school, Yousafzai and two other girls were shot by a Pakistani Taliban gunman in an assassination attempt in retaliation for her activism; The attempt on her life sparked an international outpouring of support for Yousafzai. The Pakistani Taliban were internationally denounced by governments, human rights organizations and feminist groups.

Following her recovery, Yousafzai became a prominent activist for the right to education.

Greta Thunberg, 2003 - today, Environmental activist



Greta Tintin Eleonora Ernman Thunberg is a Swedish environmental activist, who is internationally known for challenging world leaders to take immediate action against climate change. Thunberg initially gained notice for her youth and her straightforward speaking manner, both in public and to political leaders and assemblies, in which she criticises world leaders for their failure to take what she considers sufficient action to address the climate crisis.

In August 2018, at age 15, she started spending her school days outside the Swedish Parliament to call for stronger action on climate change by holding up a sign reading *Skolstrejk för klimatet*. After Thunberg addressed the 2018 United Nations Climate Change Conference, student strikes took place every week somewhere in the world.

ΒΙΒΛΙΟΓΡΑΦΙΑ - ΠΗΓΕΣ

<https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/inspirational-women-leaders-from-history-100-years/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/>

<https://www.history.com/news/women-leaders>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/42872803>

<https://www.britannica.com/biography/>

<https://www.marieclaire.com.au/famous-women-in-history>

<https://www.historyextra.com/100-women/100-women-results>

<https://britishheritage.com/history/legacy-queen-victoria>

<https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-history>

<https://www.fridakahlo.org/>