

2-players/2-teams
10-minutes
Age 8+

WIKI HISTORIES



Wiki Histories are quick little games—fun for adults—engaging for students. Each game is a snapshot of human history, following the same basic rules but adding a unique twist for variety. Download all the up-to-date Wiki Histories on MathPickle.com.

Wiki Histories are not at the fun level of the best games you will find on boardgamegeek.com but that would be missing the point. The real strength of these games is that they are great for teaching problem-solving, history and board game design.

Teaching Board Game Design

Many schools in North America teach board game design, but students are rarely given enough constraints, so most of their game creations are too big and take too long to get played. The solution is for teachers to provide a template game that allows plenty of room for creativity within tight constraints. Wiki Histories take 15 minutes to play—short enough to be played in class. As pencil-and-paper games, they are also inexpensive for the budget-conscious classroom. Most importantly, Wiki Histories offer students a realistic path to publication. After the first books are released, new books will be compiled from submitted designs. Students and their work will be celebrated. That will be inspiring for your students! Look on MathPickle.com for a lesson plan.

Teaching History

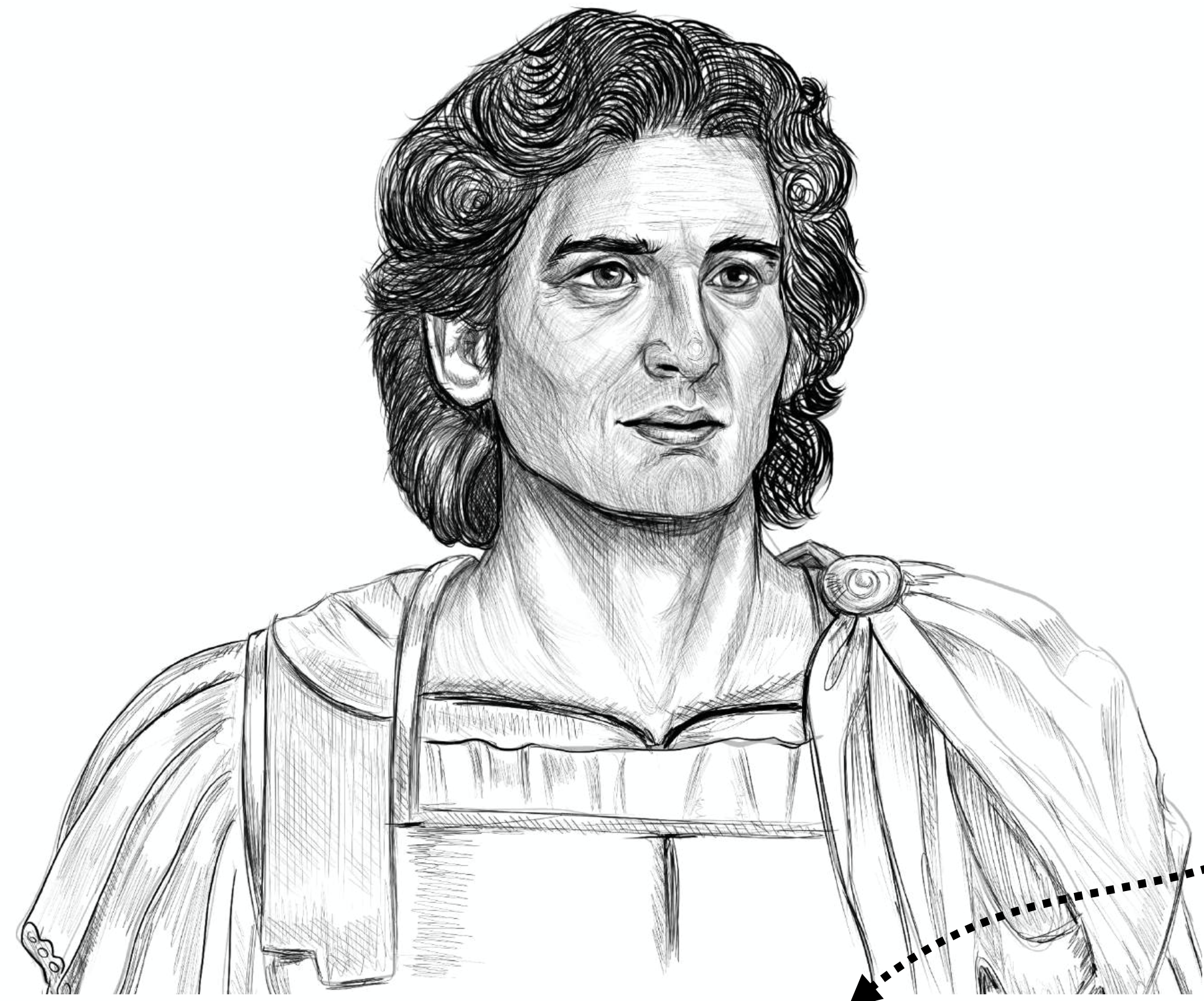
Playing games is one way to discover history. The simple mechanics of Wiki Histories do not seriously attempt to simulate history... however, the accompanying maps and mini-essays highlight little bits of history in a way that sticks with students. The mini-essays are written for high-schoolers, but the content can be simplified for younger students.

Teaching Problem-Solving

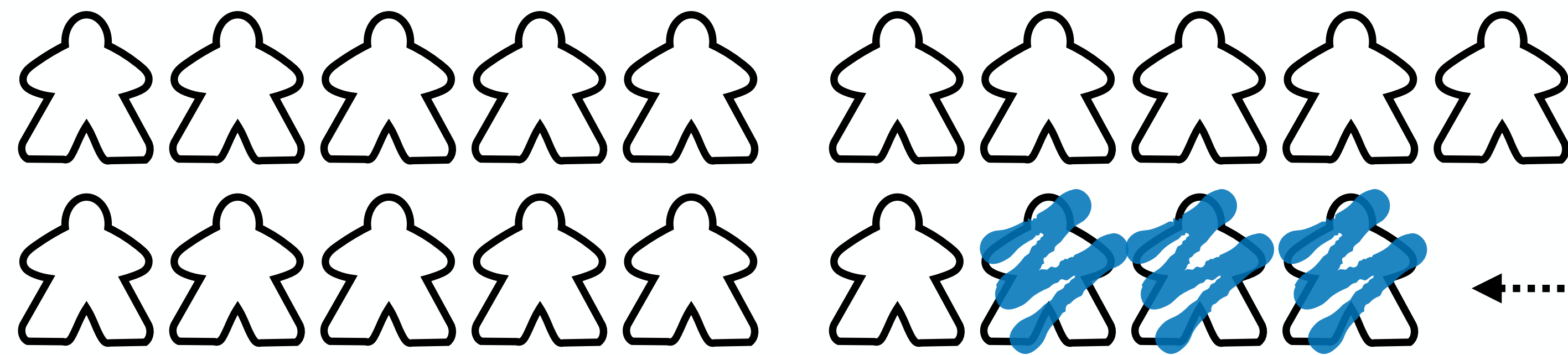
The #1 purpose of the elementary school math classroom is not to learn arithmetic but to get students to problem-solve. Start by splitting your class into two teams and projecting a Wiki History that only has a single map. Get the whole class to play. That's why the territories have letters. Students can be called upon one at a time to claim a territory or attack a territory by just saying its letter.

An unexpected benefit of these games is that most of the maps come with extra information that students should disregard. Students need to filter information—distinguishing vital stuff from the background fluff.

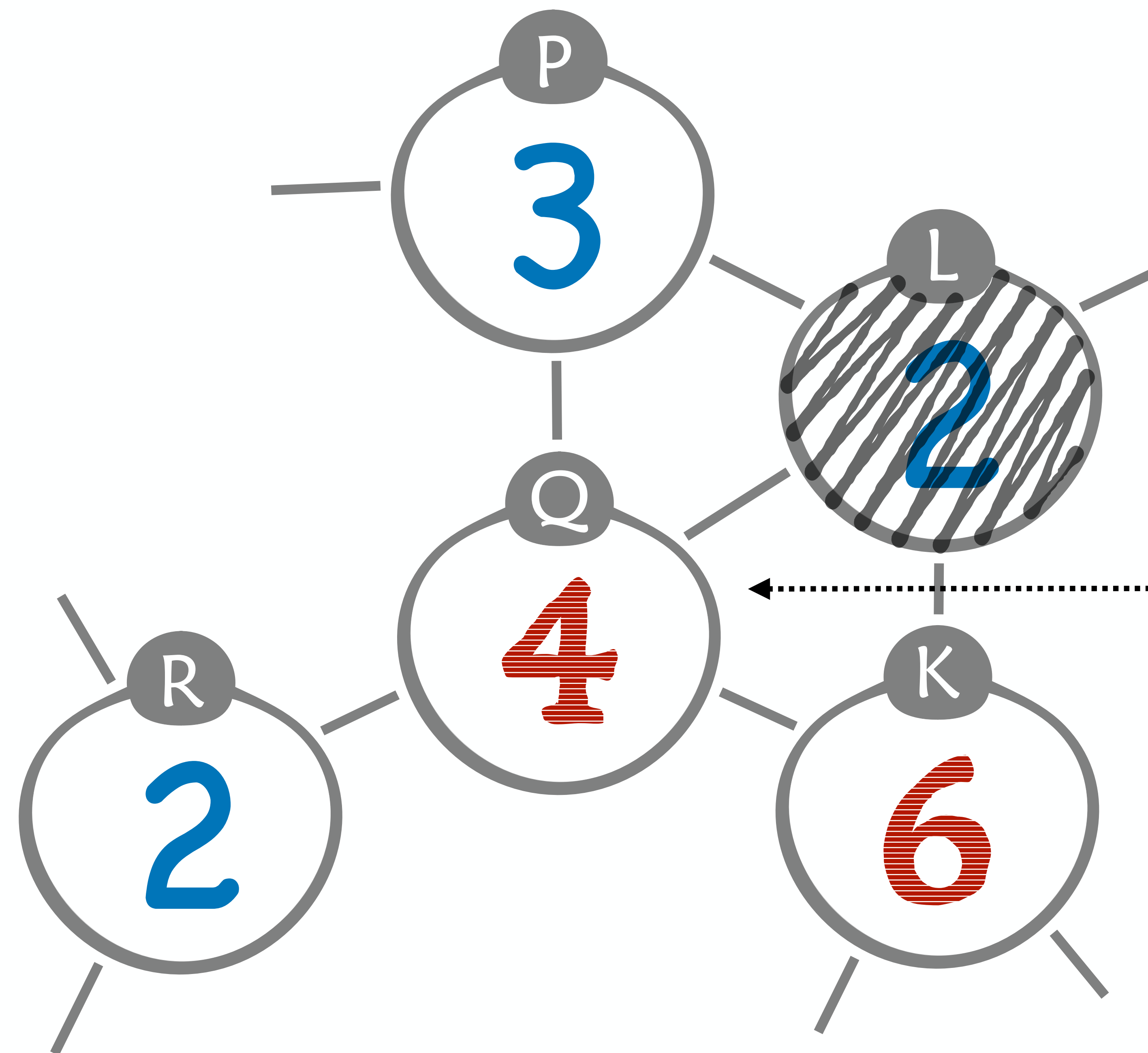
2500 to 500 BCE



Macedonians (19)



Total strength



Rules

1) Setup

- One player chooses a Wiki History and reads aloud the unique rules and the total strength of the two competing groups. The other player then selects one of the groups.
- Optionally, players can read the historical vignette.
- Players need a blue and red pen/pencil.
- **If there are two maps**—the **first player** is the one with a #1 written in the bottom-right corner of their map.
- **If there is a single map**—the **first player** is the one who selected the group higher up on the map.
- The **first player's** color is blue—their opponent's is red.

2) Claiming Territories

- The active player grabs their color and scribbles out a number of meeples. They write the same number on an unoccupied territory. That's its strength.

Example: The blue player scribbles out 3 meeples.

They use that 3 strength to claim a territory by writing a blue "3" in it.

- **If there are two maps**—the opponent must put this same information on their map using the same color. The active player then announces their remaining strength.
- Play alternates back and forth.
- On their turn a player **must** claim a territory if they have some remaining strength and there are some unoccupied territories. Otherwise, they **must** pass. The first player to pass is the **first attacker**.
- If a player passes, their opponent may continue to claim territories as often as they like.
- When both players pass, proceed to the attacking phase.

3) Attacking

- The active player chooses one of their opponent's territories to attack.
- They add up the strengths of **all** their undefeated connected territories.
- They say this combined strength out loud. If it exceeds the opponent's strength in the attacked territory, it is defeated and scribbled out.

Example: The red player has strength 4 in territory Q.

The blue player attacks territory Q with a strength of $3+2=5$.

That is more than 4 so territory Q is defeated and scribbled out.

- **If there are two maps**—the defeated territory must be scribbled out on both maps.
- Defeated territories cannot attack or score.
- Alternate attacking until both players pass.
- If a player passes, their opponent may continue to attack as often as they like.
- When both players pass, proceed to the scoring phase.

4) Scoring

- The player with the most undefeated territories wins.
- In the case of a tie, the **first attacker** wins.

Sharing & Copyright

Wiki Histories are meant to be shared among teachers and parents. It will be my joy if students benefit from them. That's why Wiki Histories is not copyrighted. It is okay for you to share, print and laminate these maps.



Share comments and photos and rate Wiki Histories on the biggest board game website: boardgamegeek.com.

Submissions

If your school class wants to submit a Wiki History, I will next be working on 1500-500 BCE and 1000-1500 CE. Submissions do not have to look beautiful, and the accompanying mini-essay and sketch can be grade-level-appropriate. If it is published, the student or whole classroom will get credit. To submit, please email gord@mathpickle.com with the subject heading **Wiki History Submission**.

Support

The Kickstarter funding of C\$3600 paid for all of **Okan Bülbül's** sketches. In this time of AI, I love supporting human-created art. ;-) A special thanks to **Derek Tellier**, **Aaron Holmes**, **KeeferKicks** and **PippiMD** for contributing so much during the campaign.

A big thank you to MathPickle's long-term supporters! The best way to help me keep developing free classroom resources is by joining my community at patreon.com.

Steven Heller
Gavan Brown
Adam Carpenter
David Wees
Amanda Serenevy
Reed Oei

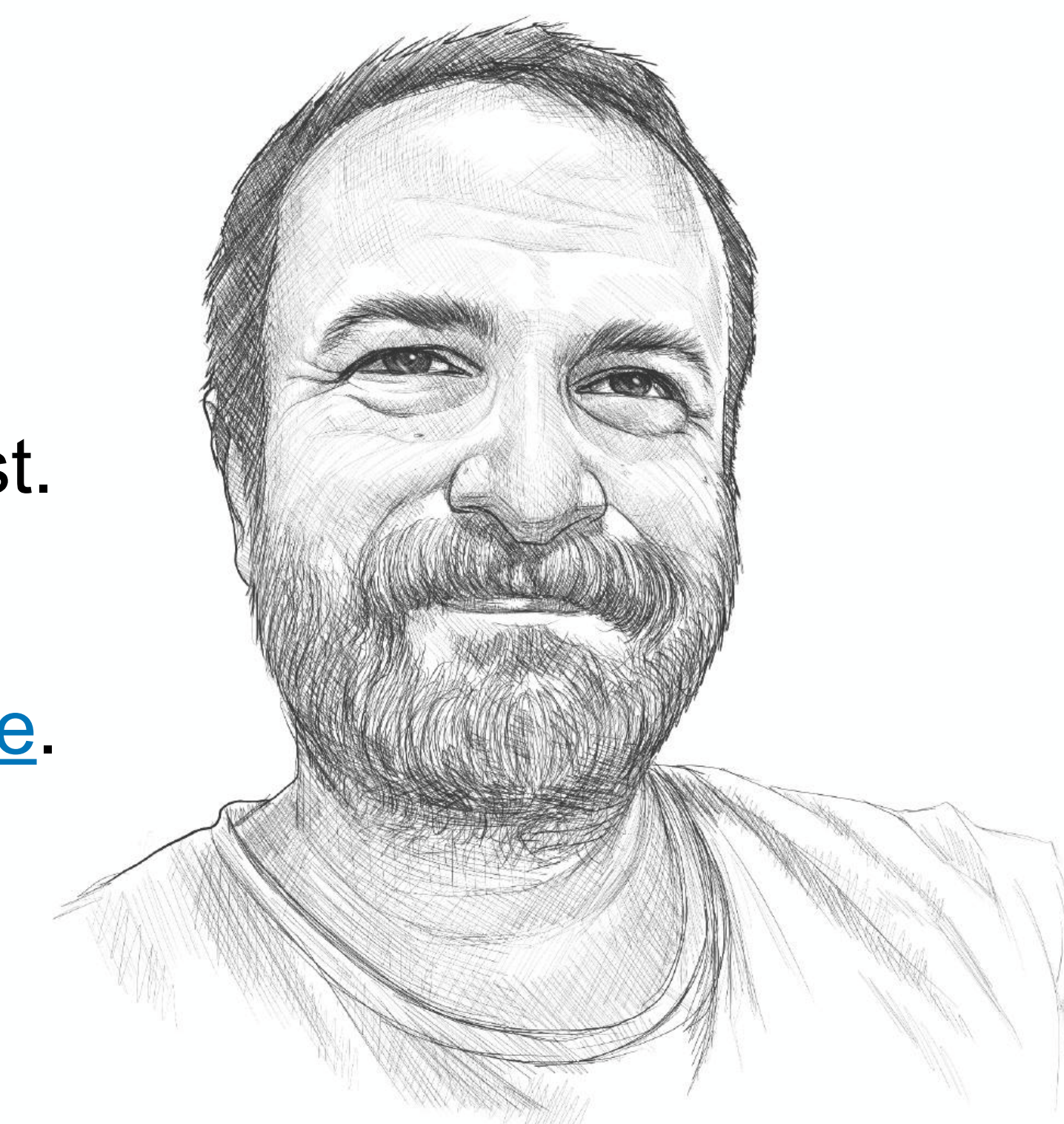
Paula Hamilton
Zenon Berg
Math Makes Sense
Jerry Dean Weimer
Molly Crocker
Simon Cheng

Gabriella Pinter
Kendra Lockman
Aaron Holmes
Charlie Neibel
Antony Chen

Creative People



Gordon Hamilton (aka Dr. Pickle) is the inventor, mini-essay writer and map maker for Wiki Histories. He is best known as the inventor of Santorini and as the director of mathpickle.com. He lives in Calgary, Canada.



Okan Bülbül is an engineer and artist. He did all of the sketches for Wiki Histories. Okan lives in Ankara, Turkey. You can check out his art [here](#).

Mark Burstein was the editor of the mini-essays. Mark's work was supported by **Nancy Blachman**, Founder of the Julia Robinson Mathematics Festival. Both live in California, USA.

Thank you to the playtesters who have their fingerprints all over the game: **Paul Saxberg**, **Derek Tellier**, **Aaron Holmes**, **Julia Hamilton** and **Sanja Brajic**.

Wiki Histories was inspired by **Eric Solomon's** 1973 game, **Aggression**. Eric, in turn, was inspired by **Albert Lamorisse's** 1957 game, **Risk**. We are living through the renaissance of board games. Thank you to those who went before!

Shang Dynasty Power Grab 1600 BCE

The mandate of heaven is bestowed upon a worthy ruler. The argument goes that this follows the natural order of the universe. If a ruler is unjust, the mandate of heaven can be lifted and given to somebody else. The passing of the mandate of heaven from the corrupt Emperor Jie of the Xia to Nobleman Tang of the Shang happened around 1600 BCE.

The new emperor Tang had impressive credentials: His eleventh-great-grandfather had been born when his mother, Queen Jiandi, had nestled an egg of a black bird in her bosom.

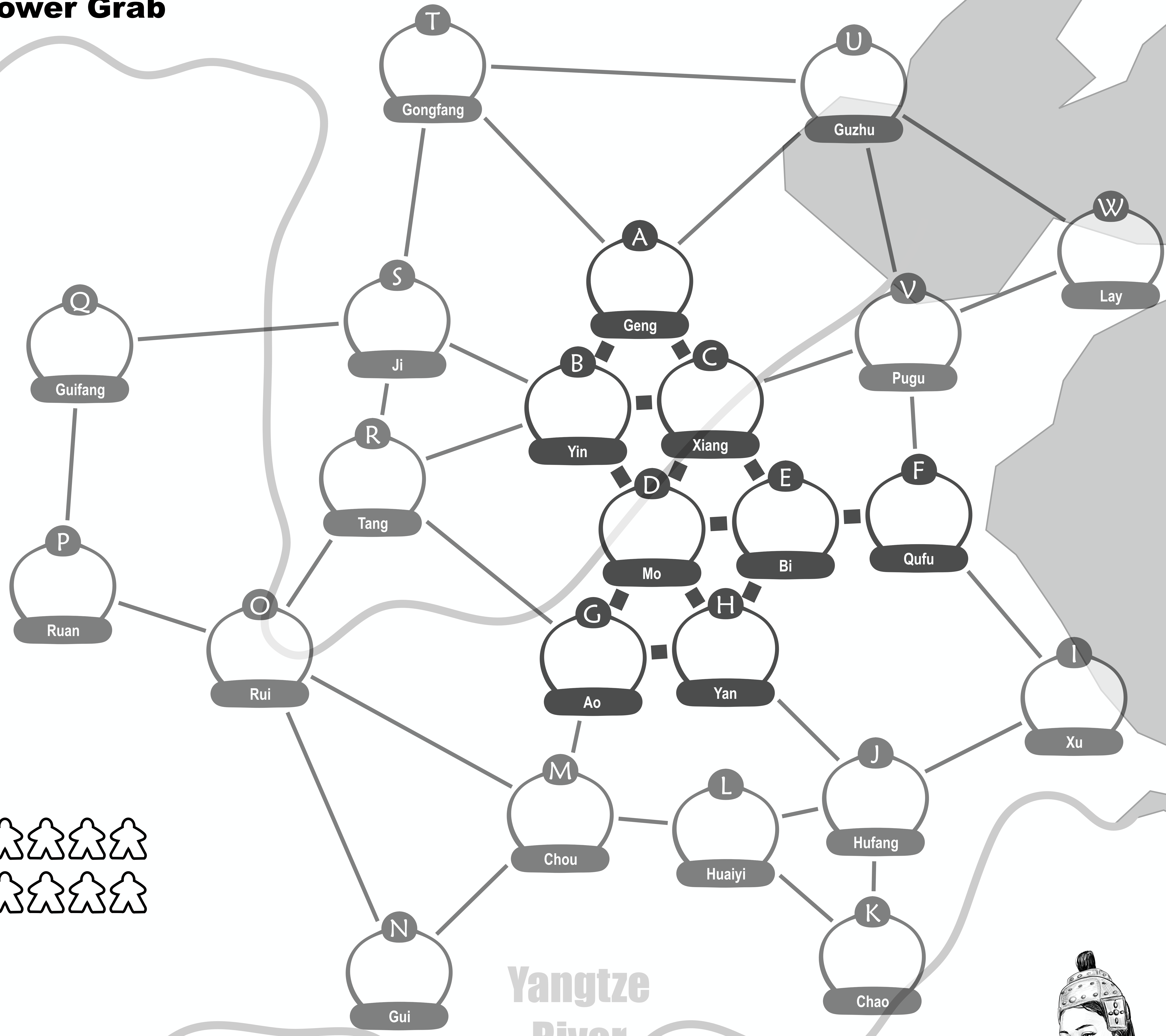
Another option is that the whole Xia dynasty and egg-nestling routine never happened—it was all just a story invented by the Zhou dynasty to justify their coup of 1046 BCE.

Whether it was a coup, or the transferring of the mandate of heaven, it came with bloodshed for those unlucky enough to be around at the time. An ancient Chinese saying goes, "It is better to be a dog in times of tranquility than a human in times of chaos."

Queen Jiandi—with egg



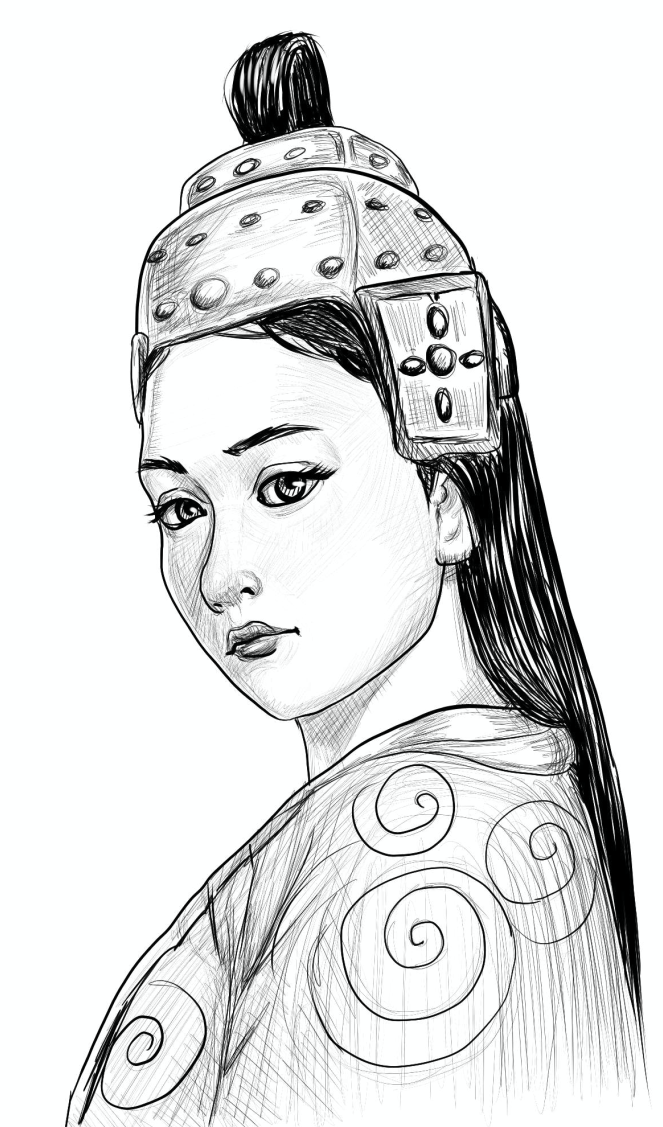
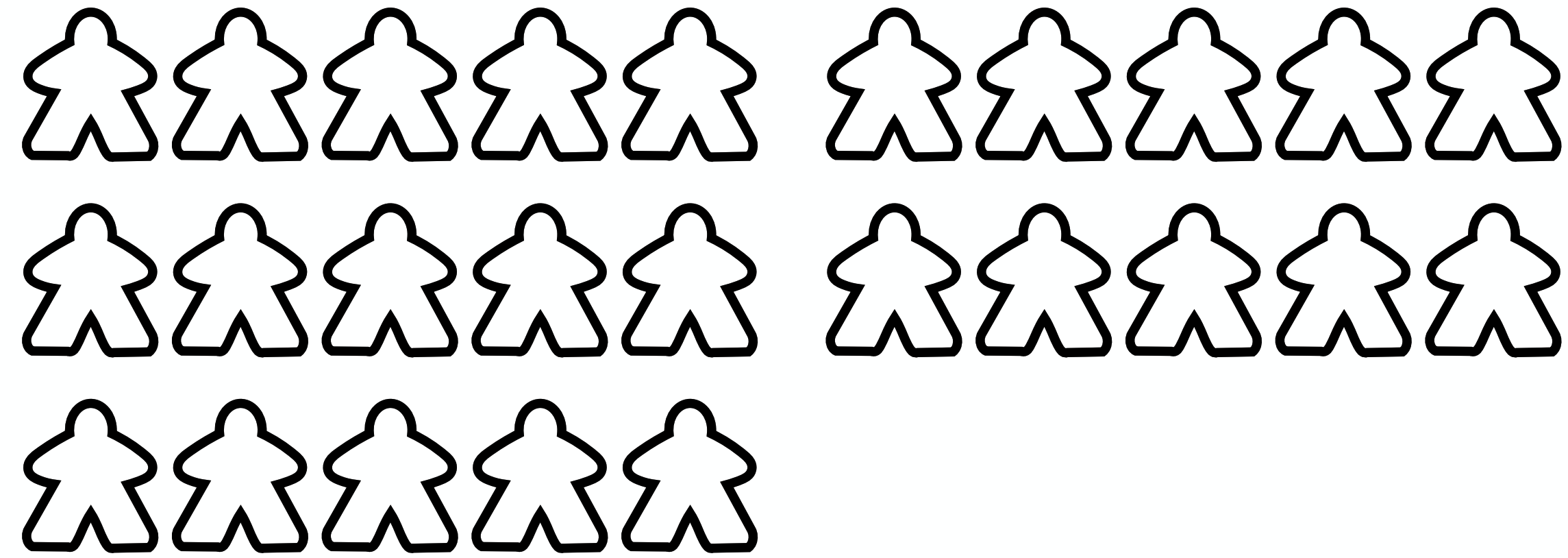
Shang Dynasty Power Grab 1600 BCE



Yellow River

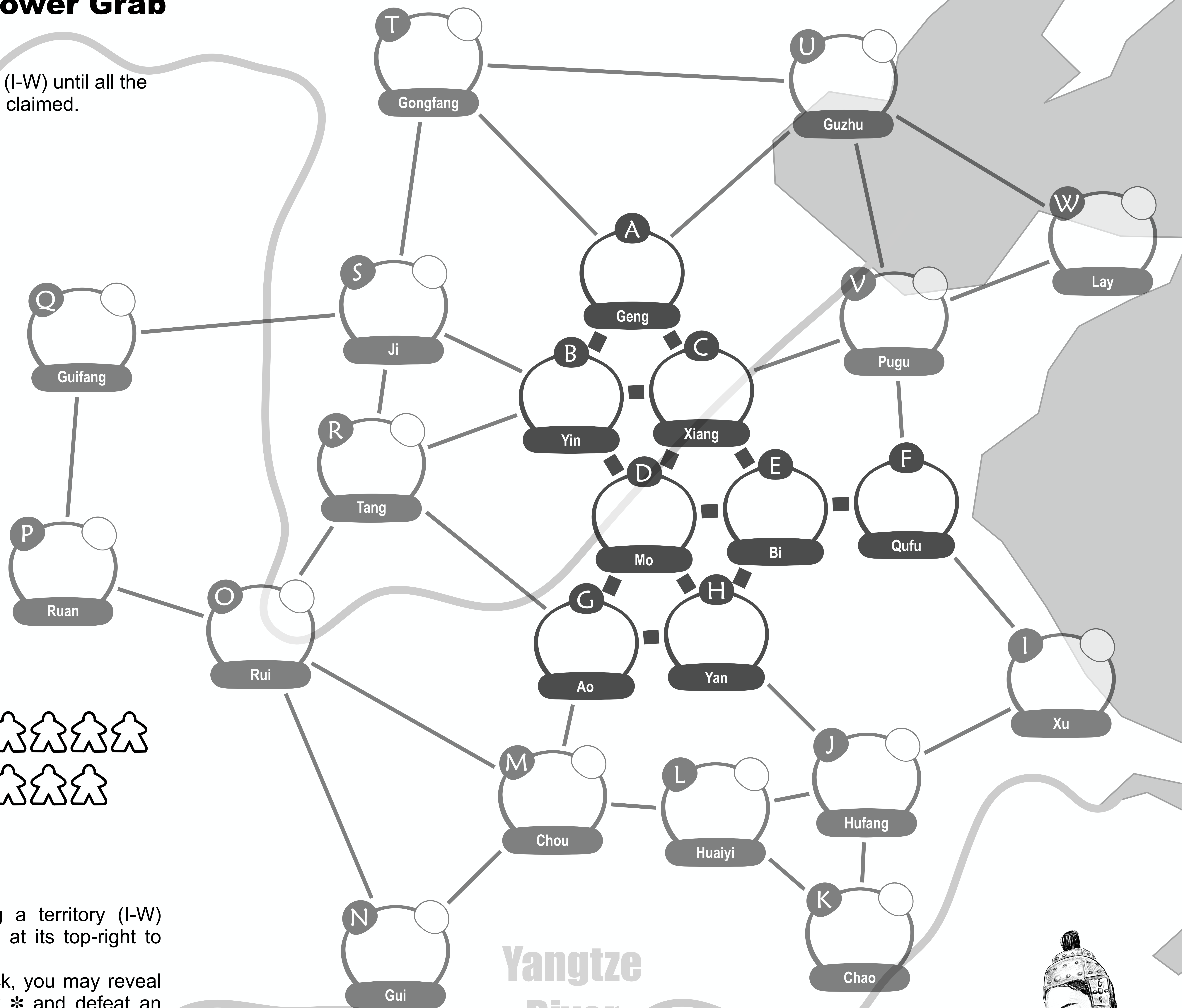
Yangtze River

Xia Dynasty (25)

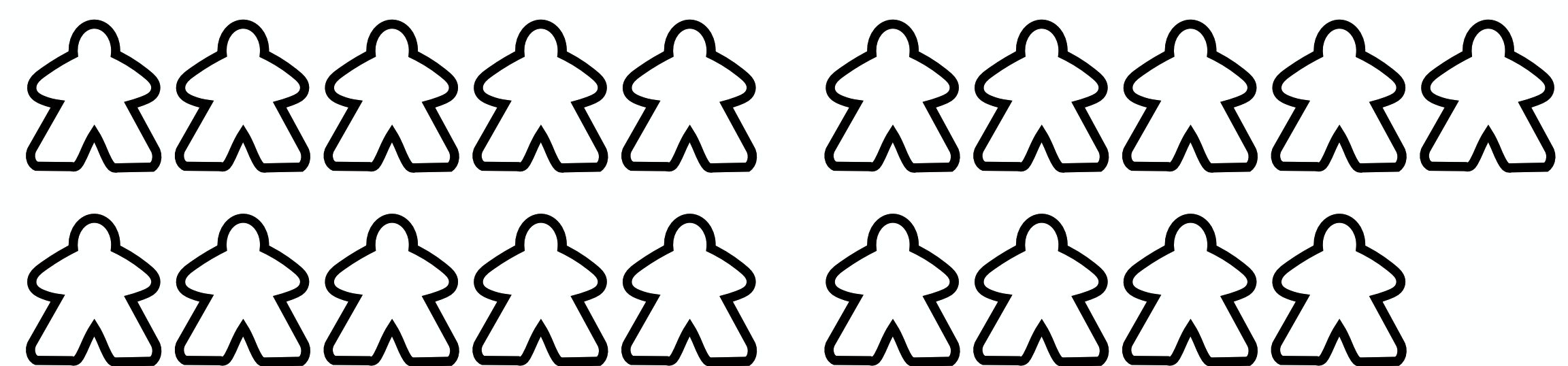


Shang Dynasty Power Grab 1600 BCE

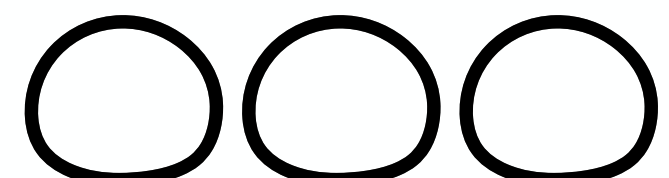
Players cannot claim territories (I-W) until all the original Xia territories (A-H) are claimed.



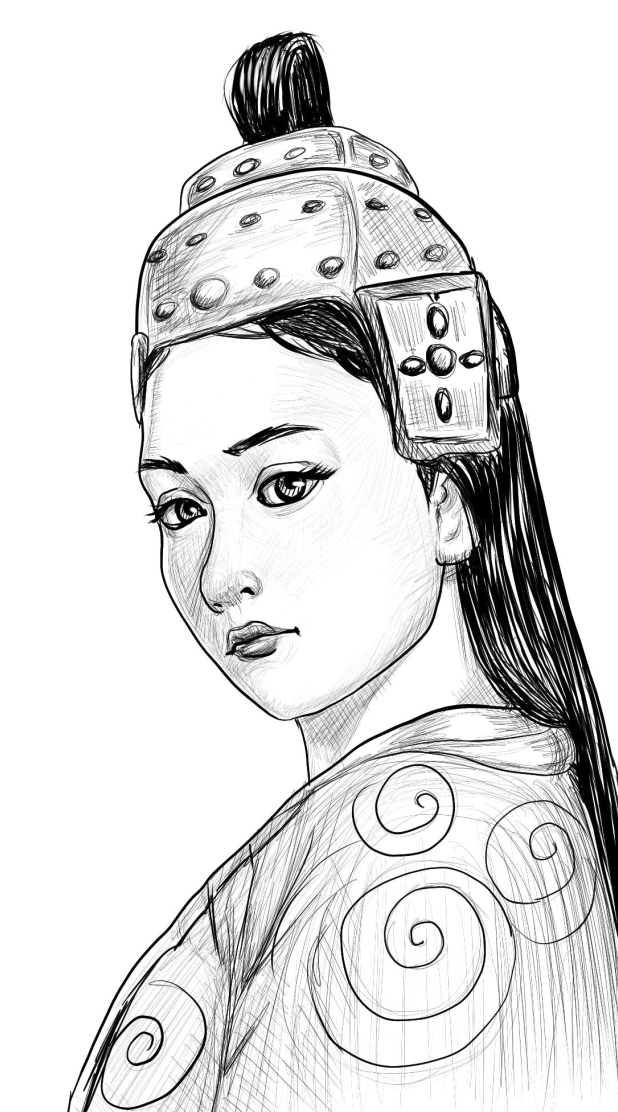
Shang Dynasty (19)



Sneak attack (3)



- Three times when claiming a territory (I-W) secretly put a * in the oval at its top-right to prepare a sneak attack.
- Instead of your normal attack, you may reveal an unrevealed sneak attack * and defeat an enemy of the same or less strength that is one or two connections away.
- That sneak attack cannot be used again. Scribble it out.



Olmec Civilization 1500 BCE

In the pantheon of the Mesoamerican Olmec Civilization, the deities look half-human, half-animal and are depicted as scary monsters. The shaman was mediator between our world and the world of these fantastical beings. Extracts from sacred mushrooms, cacti, flowers, and frog skins made these deities come to life.

The Olmec cosmos was split into the triad of earth, sea, and sky, ruled over by dragon-human, fish-human, and bird-human deities respectively. Unlike most other pantheons, these deities were not obviously male or female.

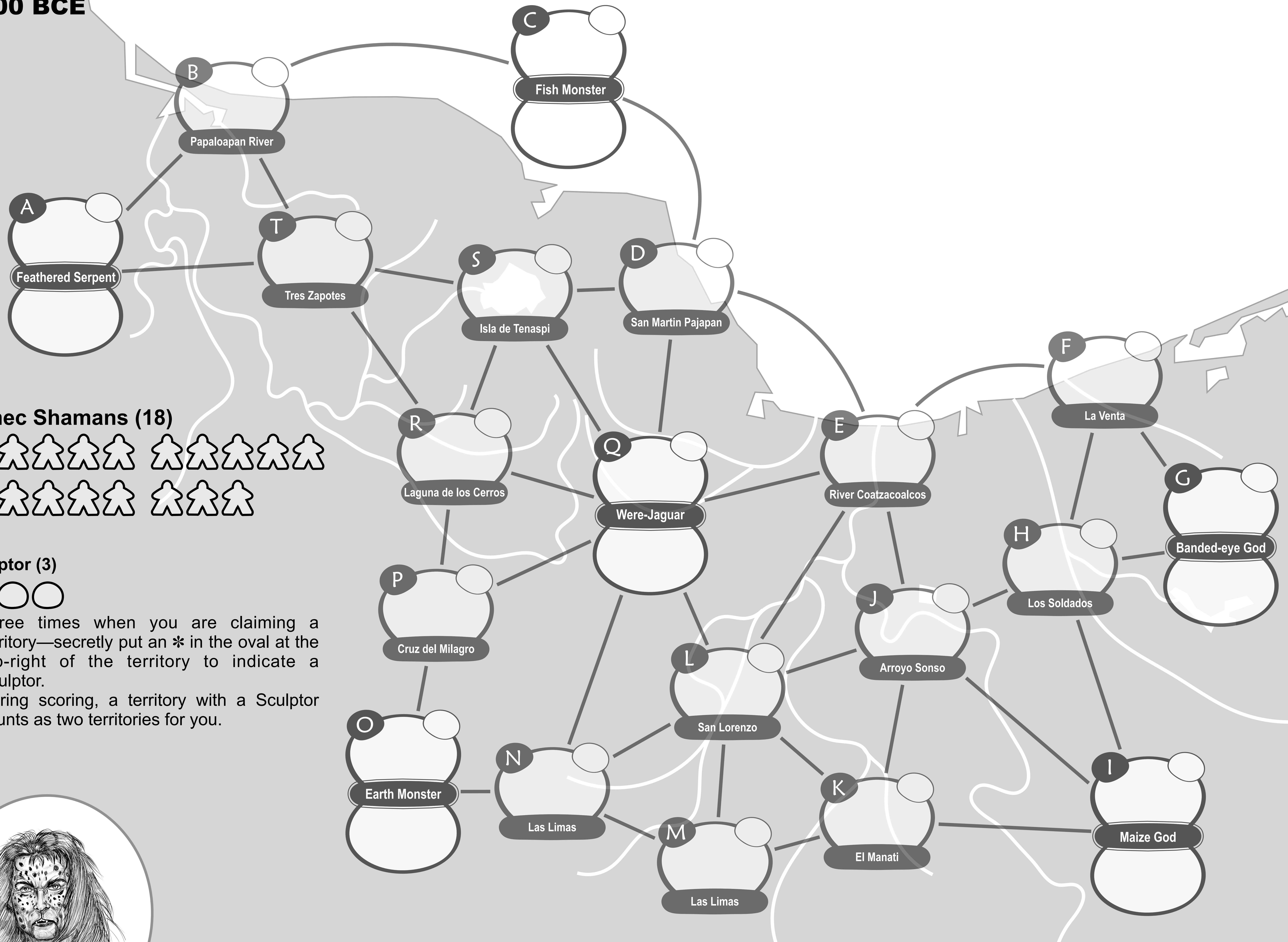
One of the deities was originally thought to be an Olmec equivalent of a werewolf—except based on a jaguar instead of a wolf. This might say as much about the mindset of the anthropologist as about the Olmecs.

Human-Jaguar Deity

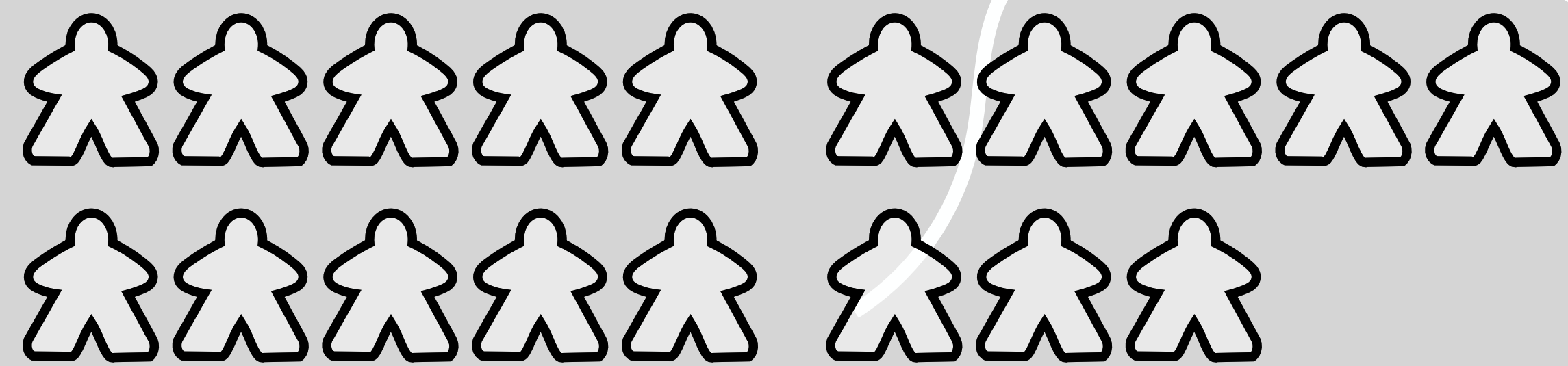


Olmec Civilization

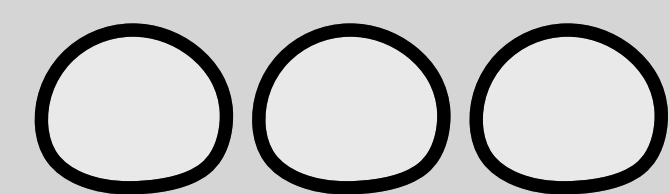
1500 BCE



Olmec Shamans (18)



Sculptor (3)



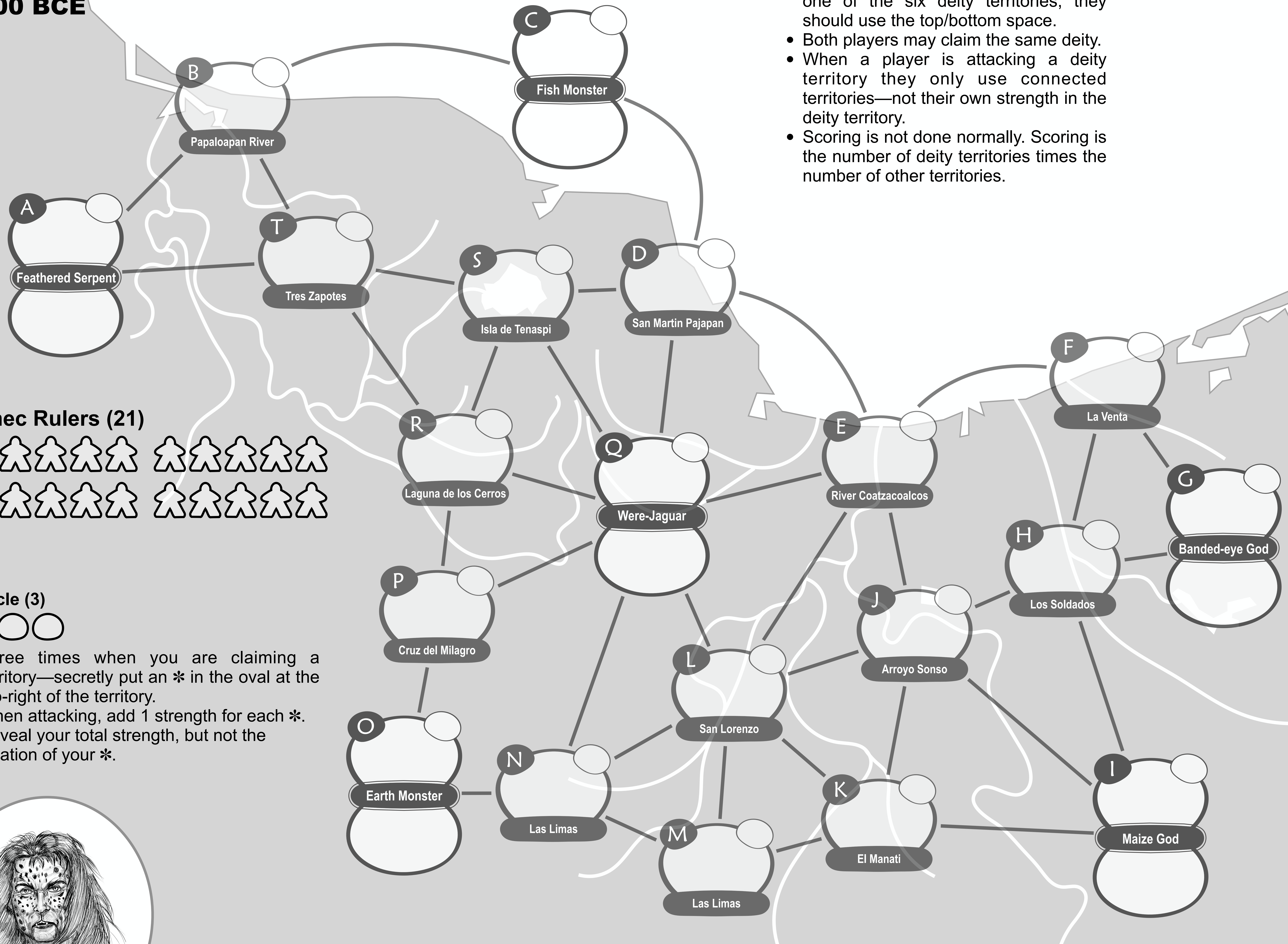
- Three times when you are claiming a territory—secretly put an * in the oval at the top-right of the territory to indicate a Sculptor.
- During scoring, a territory with a Sculptor counts as two territories for you.



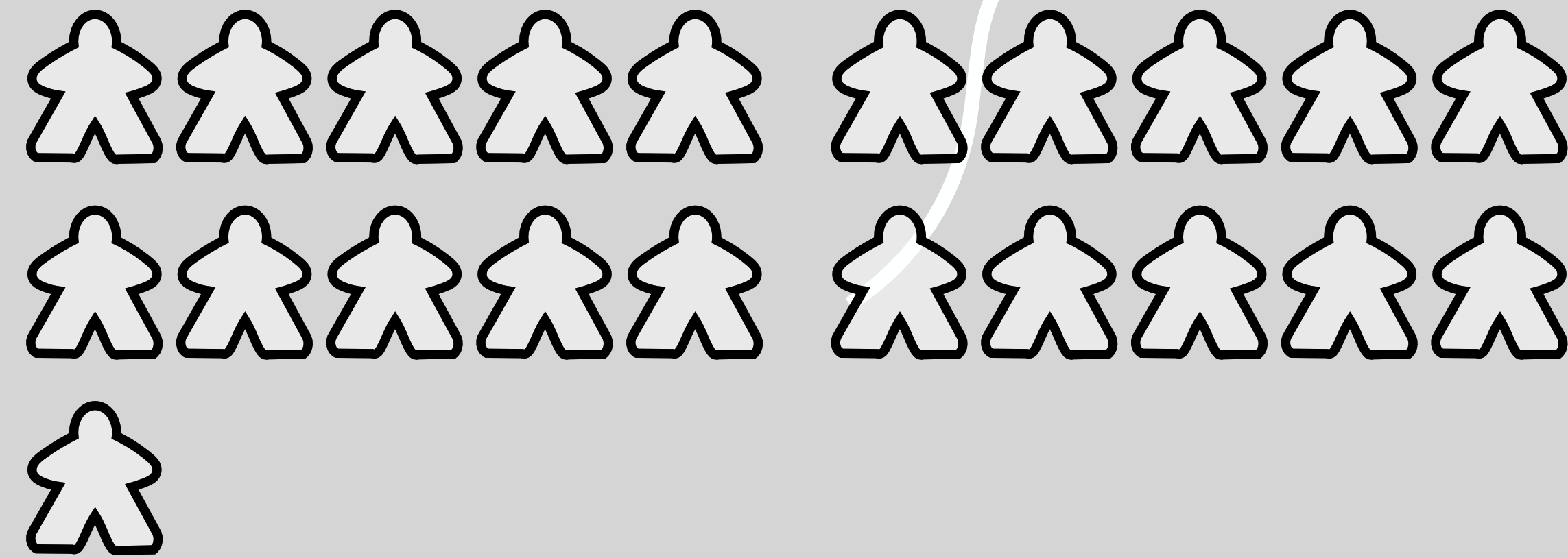
Olmec Civilization

1500 BCE

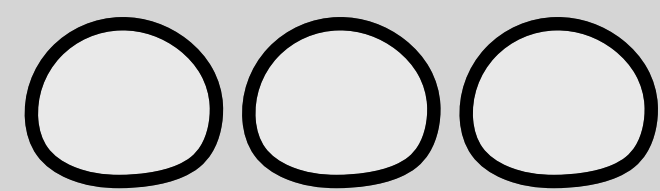
- When Olmec Shamans/Rulers claim one of the six deity territories, they should use the top/bottom space.
- Both players may claim the same deity.
- When a player is attacking a deity territory they only use connected territories—not their own strength in the deity territory.
- Scoring is not done normally. Scoring is the number of deity territories times the number of other territories.



Olmec Rulers (21)



Muscle (3)



- Three times when you are claiming a territory—secretly put an * in the oval at the top-right of the territory.
- When attacking, add 1 strength for each *. Reveal your total strength, but not the location of your *.



War of The Big Lie

522 BCE

If titles are how you win in the game of life, then the Persian King, Darius I (550–486 BCE) won:

King of Kings
Great King
King of Persia
King of Babylon
Pharaoh of Egypt
King of Countries

But Darius was not supposed to win. He was an impious upstart who sneakily grabbed the throne from the former king's younger brother, Bardiya.

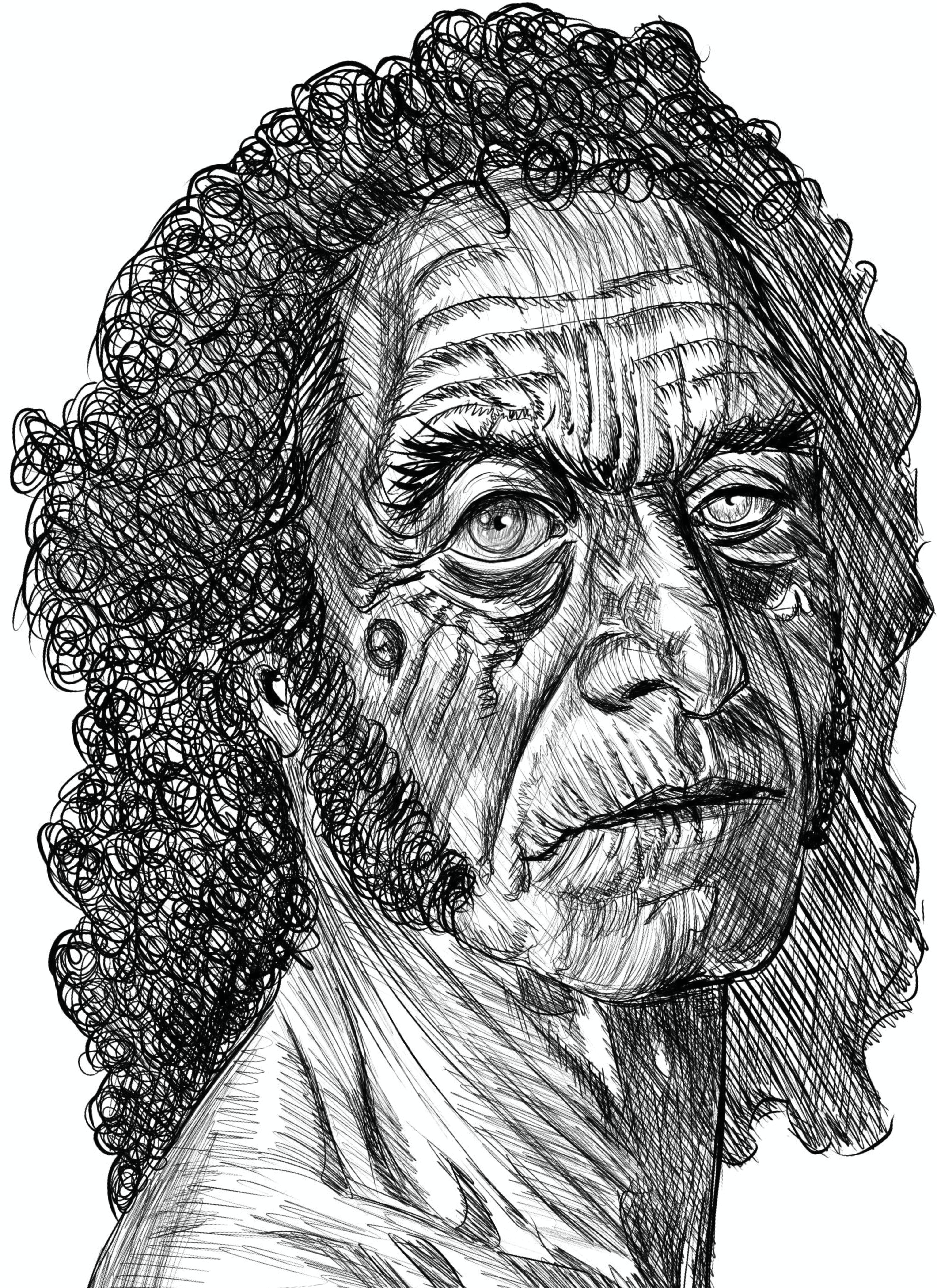
How did he do this? By spreading the lie that Bardiya was actually an evil wizard impostor called Gaumata. According to Darius, Gaumata could be known because he had no ears beneath his turban.

The Gaumata-lie was effective propaganda—It spread virally and was hard to fact-check. It helped that Darius was pretty good on the battlefield. He defeated the troops loyal to the truth in 522 BCE.

Darius was an effective ruler. Too often the focus is on the war against Athens. This is often told from the Athenian perspective, in which his defeat at Marathon plays a central part, but from the Persian perspective, the invasion of modern-day Greece resulted in the acquisition of much new territory, including the conquest of Macedon.

Another legacy of Darius was the construction of what could have been an eighth wonder of the world: The Royal Road. It was an information highway that allowed important information to travel day & night by a relay of horse messengers from the Persian Empire's vital holdings in the West back to the capital city of Susa.

While some parts of the road had been built by the old Assyrian kings, it was Darius who expanded and improved it, turning it into a powerful tool for governing his vast empire.

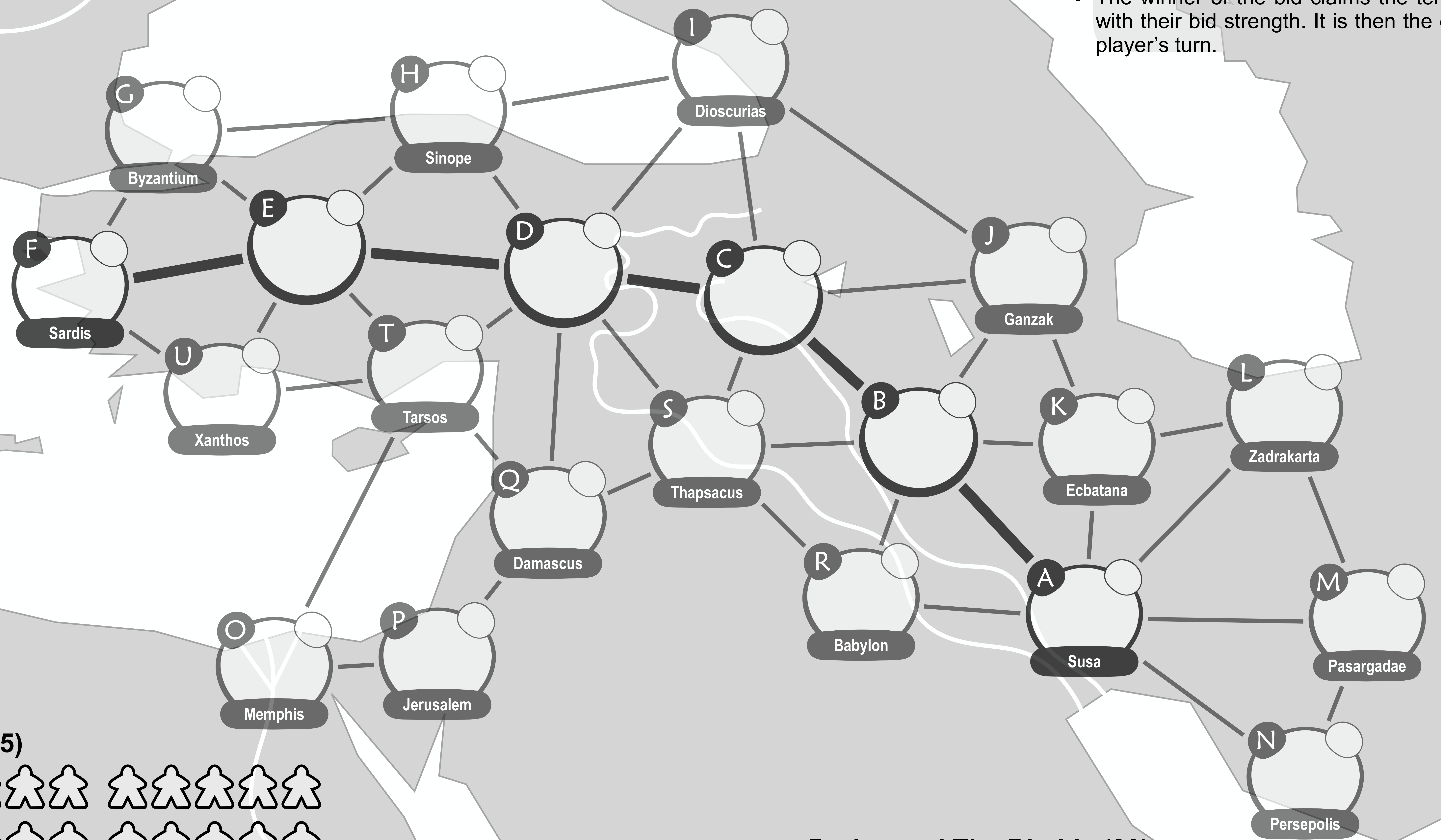


The evil wizard Gaumata

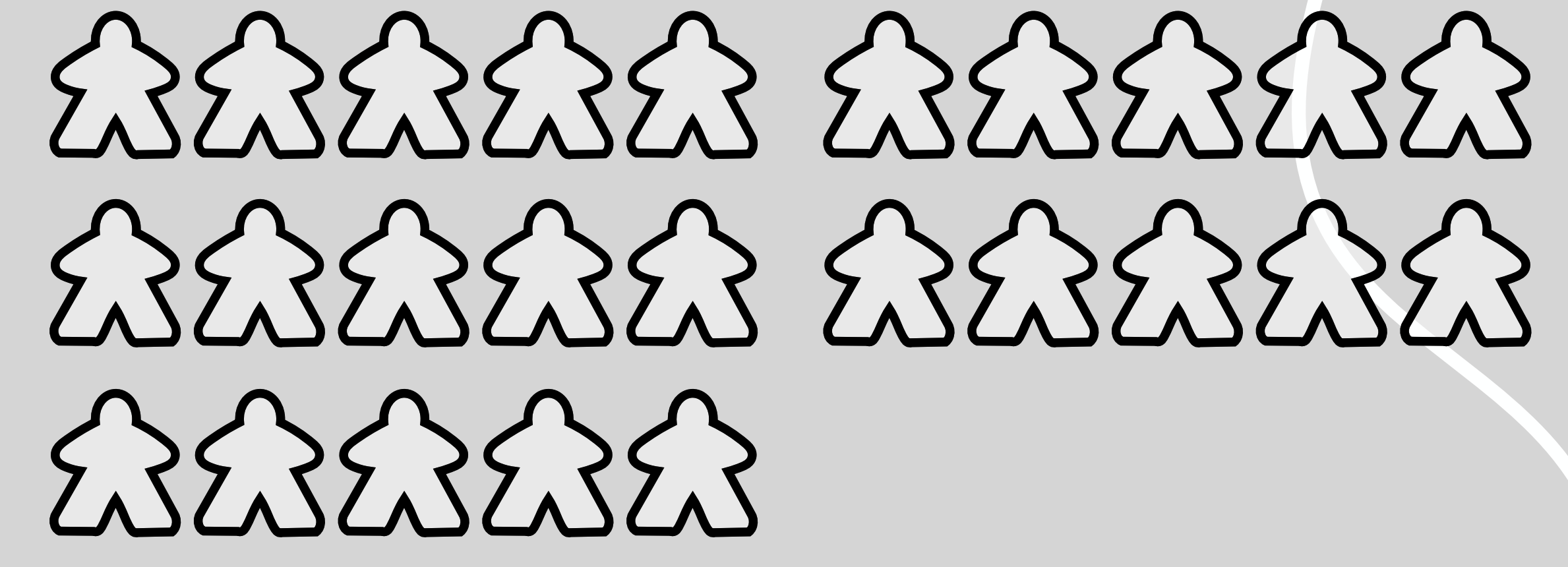
War of The Big Lie

522 BCE

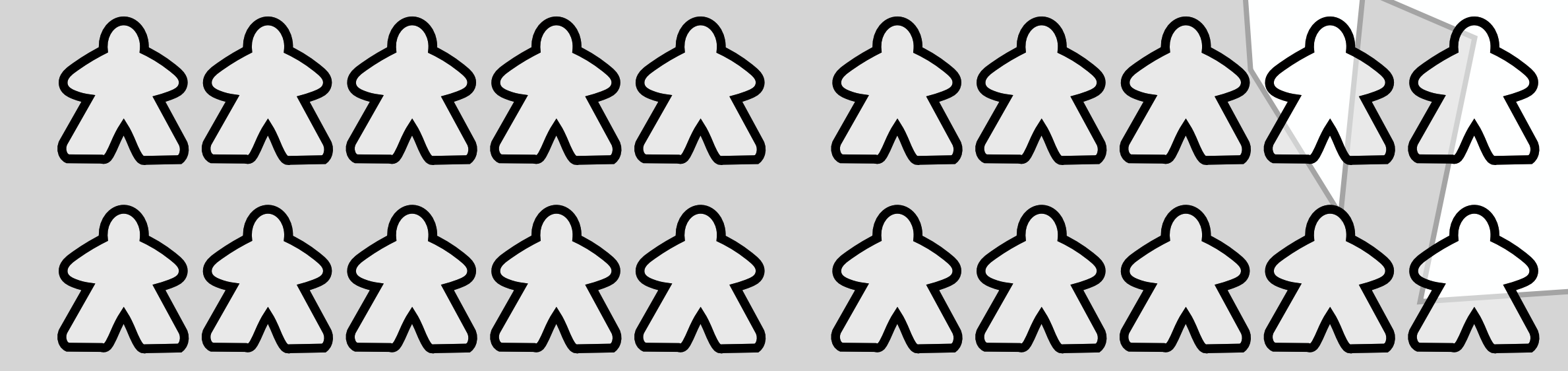
- Instead of claiming a territory on the Royal Road (A-F), you must bid for it. Bidding continues back and forth until one player passes.
- The winner of the bid claims the territory with their bid strength. It is then the other player's turn.



Bardiya (25)



Darius and The Big Lie (20)



- Before the attack phase choose a number. Put a * in the oval at the top right of all Bardiya's territories with exactly that strength.
- Their strength is zero when attacking.