



OWL SYMBOLISM

Image from <http://blogs.crikey.com.au/northern/2010/12/13/bird-of-the-week-the-killer-owls-of-durham-county>



Text from <http://www.pure-spirit.com/more-animal-symbolism/400-owl/>



Through pop culture references, like Winnie the Pooh, and through folklore, we all associate owls with wisdom at some time or other.

Image from <http://www.acmeanimation.com/poohpg.html>



Rather than intellectual wisdom, though, owls are connected with the wisdom of the soul.



However, there are other qualities that owl has. Owls are often seen as mysterious, mostly because many owls are strictly nocturnal and humans have always found night to be full of mystery and the unknown.



Owls live within the darkness, which includes magic, mystery, and ancient knowledge.



Related to the night is the moon, which owls are also connected to.



It becomes a symbol of the feminine and fertility, with the moon's cycles of renewal.



Even the mythology relates owl to this wisdom and femininity. The owl was a symbol for Athena, goddess of wisdom and strategy, before the Greeks gave their pantheon human forms.



According to myth, an owl sat on Athena's blind side, so that she could see the whole truth.

Image from
<http://dailyapple.blogspot.com/2011/08/apple-539-owls.html>



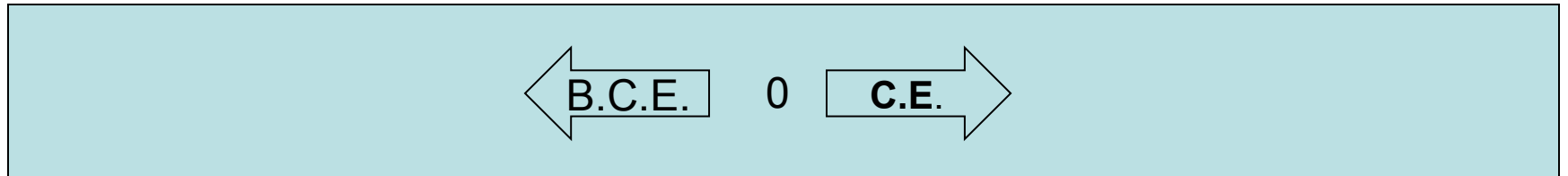
<http://www.uimages.org/athena-acropolis/>



<http://www.mlahanas.de/Greeks/Mythology/Athena.html>

In Ancient Greece, the owl was a symbol of a higher wisdom, and it was also a guardian of the Acropolis.

Time Line



**Ancient
Greece
800-400
B.C.E.**

**Roman
Empire
50 B.C.E.
to 500
C.E**

**Vikings
800 to
1050 C.E.**

**2011
C.E.
(now)**

Ancient Greece

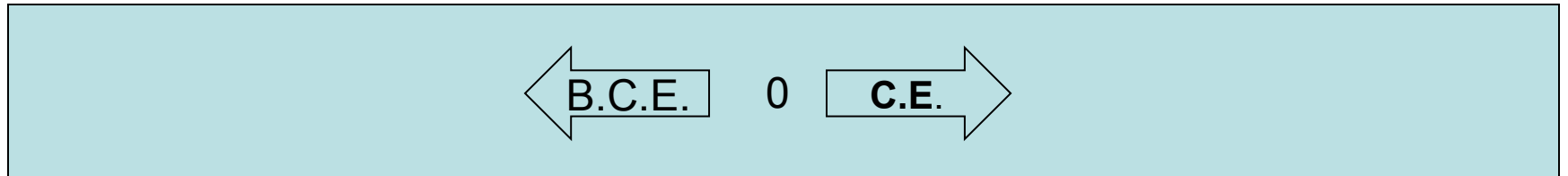
About 800 to 400 B.C.E.





Diana, the Roman response to Athena, was strongly associated with the moon, and also the owl.

Time Line



**Ancient
Greece
800-400
B.C.E.**

**Roman
Empire
50 B.C.E.
to 500
C.E**

**Vikings
800 to
1050 C.E.**

**2011
C.E.
(now)**

Roman Empire

About 50 B.C.E. to 500 C.E.



Image from <http://www.roman-empire.net/maps/empire/extent/trajan.html>



Image from <http://factzoo.posterous.com/?page=3>

The Pawnee and the Sioux saw the owl as a messenger (*akicita*) to the first of all evil creatures (*Unktehi*).

TRIBES OF THE INDIAN NATION



North American Indians (= Native Americans)



<http://www.legendsofamerica.com/na-pawnee.html>

Pawnee Indians in the late 1800's



http://www.flickr.com/photos/heirs_with_him/galleries/72157623438594043

Recent photo of Sioux children

While the Lakota tribe had an “Owl Society,” where the warriors fought primarily at night and painted dark rings around their eyes because they believed that would allow them to have an owl’s acute vision.

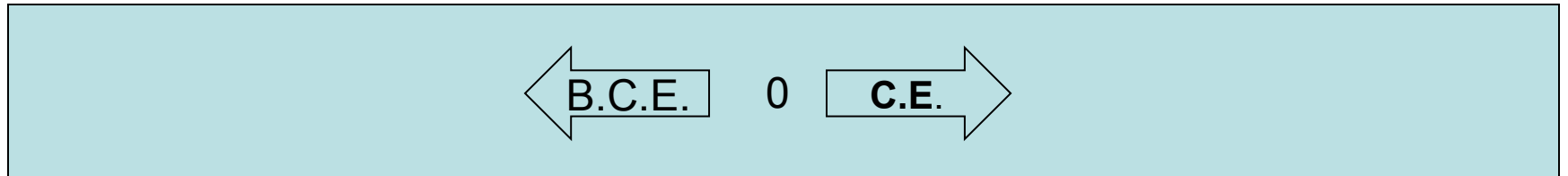


There are many superstitions surrounding the owl, many of which focus on death. In Europe and America, owl was seen as a harbinger of death.



This was due to certain peoples, like the Dakota, and some Germanic tribes and Scandinavian Vikings, who would signal the approach of attack with the hoot of an owl. This was and still remains the easiest bird call to imitate.

Time Line



**Ancient
Greece
800-400
B.C.E.**

**Roman
Empire
50 B.C.E.
to 500
C.E**

**Vikings
800 to
1050 C.E.**

**2011
C.E.
(now)**

Vikings

About 800 to 1050 C.E.



Image from <http://screenrant.com/outlander-exclusive-movie-pic-release-news-vic-4919/>

Image from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Vikings-Voyages.png>



Territories and voyages of the Vikings

Bogdan Giuscă / Wikipedia
2005

The Mayans called the screech owl of the Yucatan “the moan bird,” and believed that it meant death.





Mayan Civilization About 700 to 900 C.E.



http://www.stevequayle.com/Giants/Ancient.Civ_Technol/041116.Mayans.html

Modern Mayans in Guatemala



<http://makinapacalatxilbalba.blogspot.com/2009/06/mayan-timeline-from-25000-b.html>

There are myths and legends from all over the world, from the Americas to the Far East. Owls, as they always have, continue to be a source of wisdom, spiritual and intellectual.

