



REPRESENTING

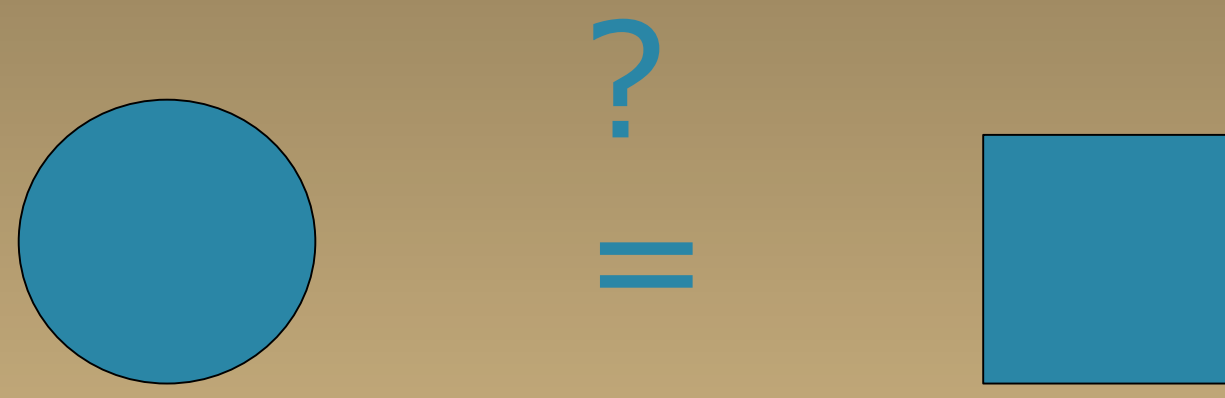
THE THREE GREAT PROBLEMS OF GREEK ANTIQUITY

From ancient Greece to the 19th century, these problems have fascinated mathematicians.

Codex Vindobonensis 2554 (vers 1250), Österreichische Nationalbibliothek.

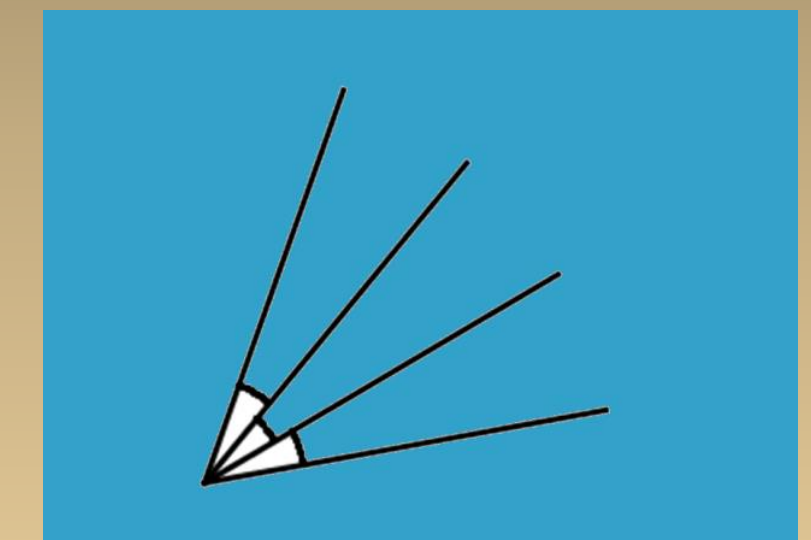


The Quadrature of Circle :
Construct an area equal to that of a given circle with a straightedge and compass.



The problem amount to calculate : π
The quadrature of the circle seemed possible to the Greeks while they were searching for a fraction equal to the ratio of the circumference to the diameter. Their results were only good approximations to π .
This is one of the problems that will lead to the emergence of the notion of irrational numbers.

Trisecting an angle :
Divide a given angle into three parts with a straight-edge and compass



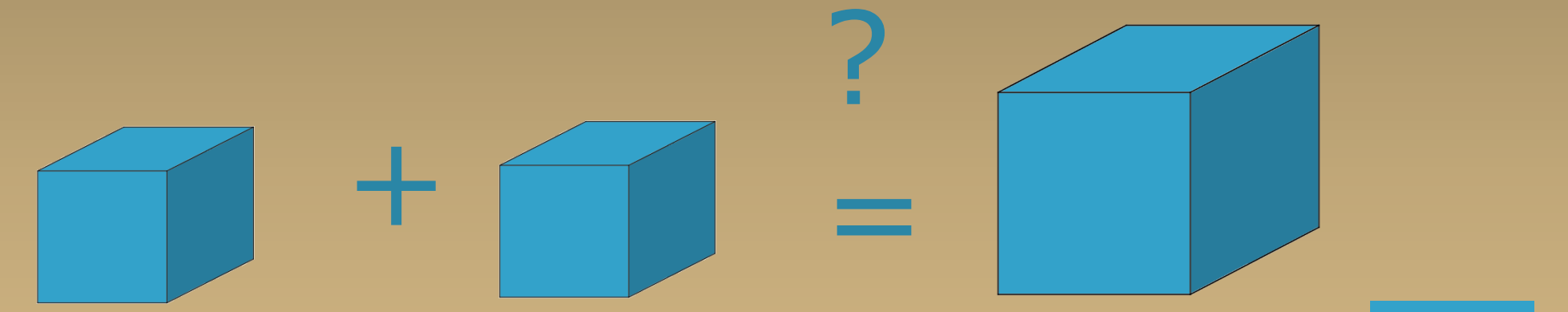
Why just straightedge and compass?

Greek geometers chose the simplest objects in view of the formalization of geometry: the straight line and the circle (the most perfect shape, according to Proclus) They sought geometric constructions obtained by intersections of lines and circles without using the notion of measure.
The first two assertions Euclid postulates in the book I of The Elements (the foundation of mathematics), are the possibility of drawing a straight line from one point to another, and of drawing a circle of given center and radius.



Can geometry save the inhabitants of Delos from the plague?
In order to eradicate an epidemic of the plague, the Delphic oracle demands doubling the altar consecrated to Apollo, which is in the form of a perfect cube.

Doubling a cube:
Construct a cube with twice the volume of given cube, using a straight-edge and compass.

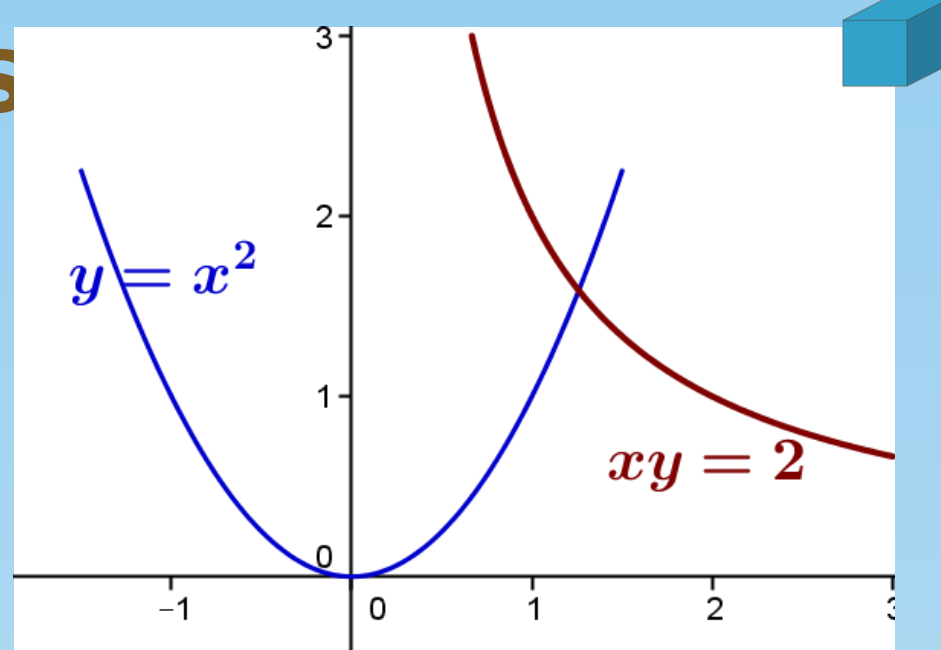


The problem amount to constructing $\sqrt[3]{2}$
This problem leads to the solution of third degree equations by Cardan at the start of the 16th century.

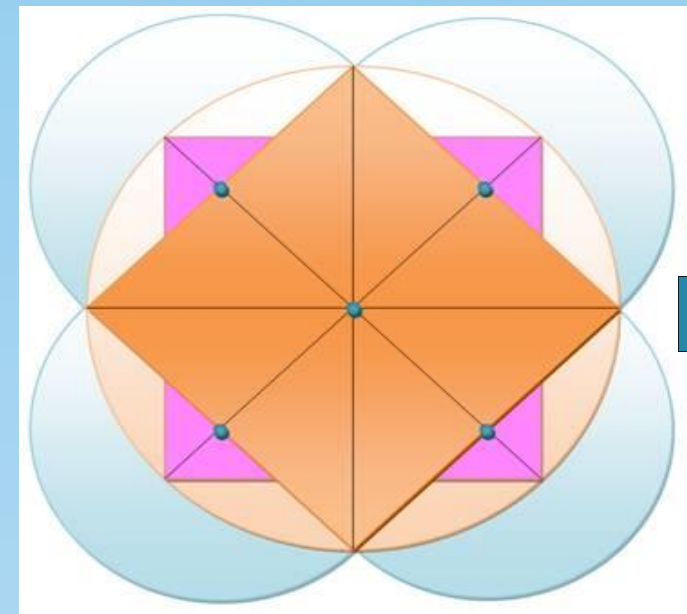
And if we try with other tools?

CURVES

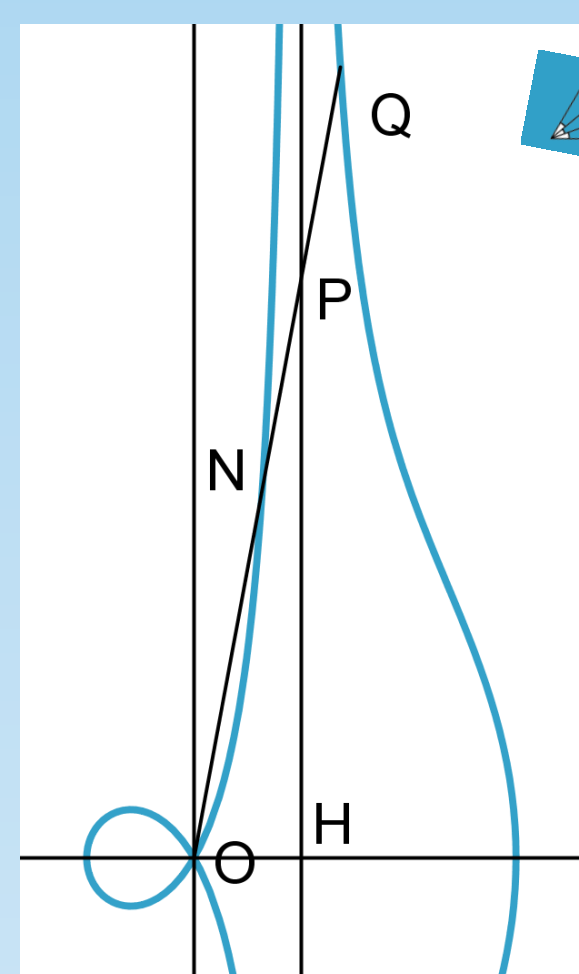
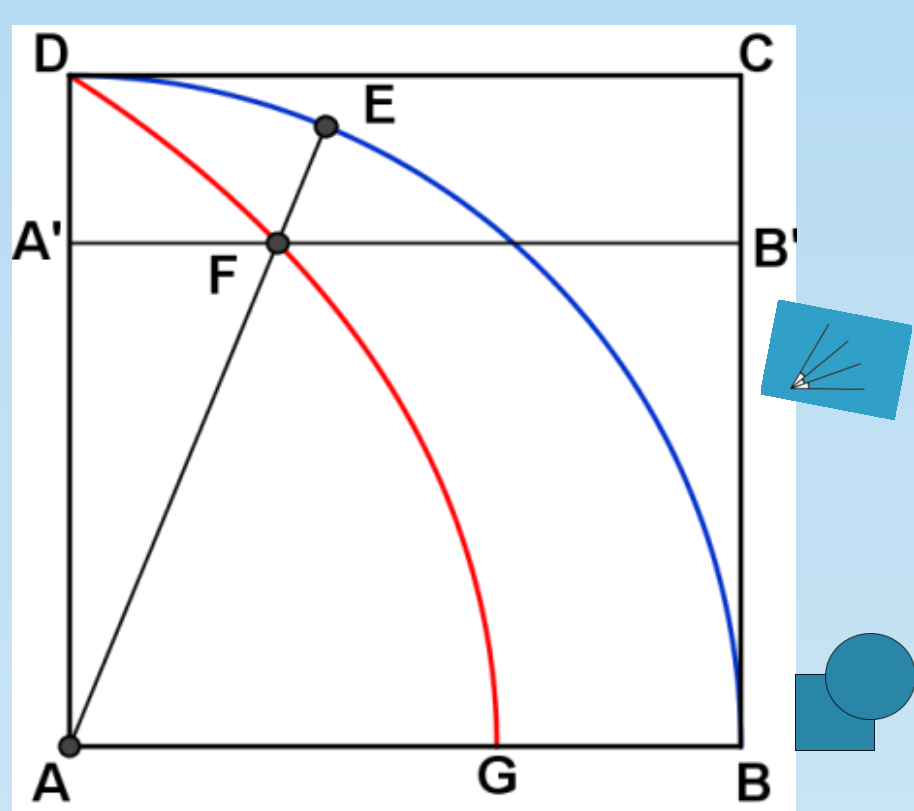
MENAECHMUS
Conics



HIPPOCRATES of CHIOS
Lunules

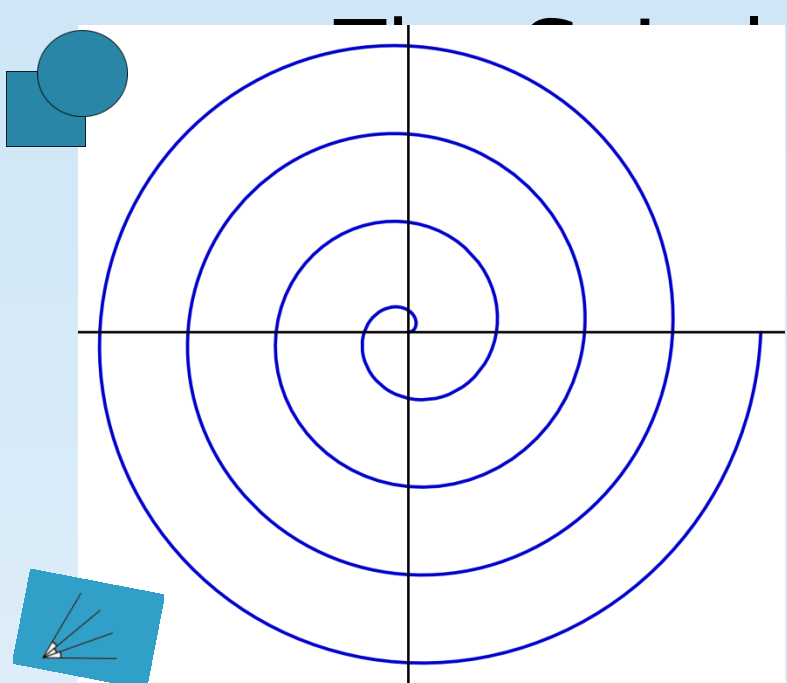


HIPPIAS of ELIS
The Quadratrix of Dinostratus

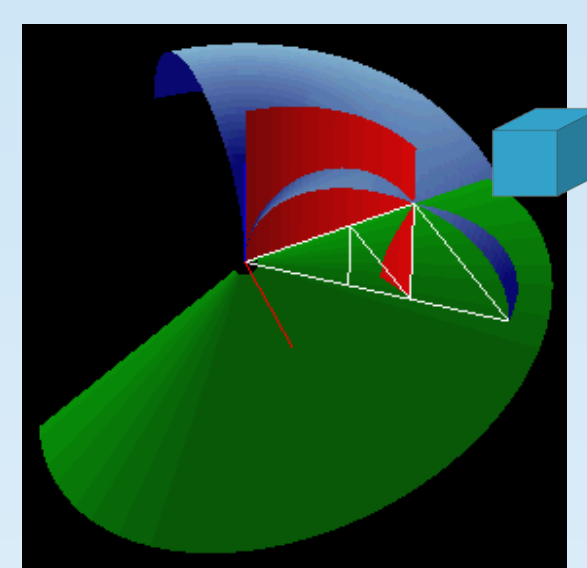


NICOMEDES
The Conchoid

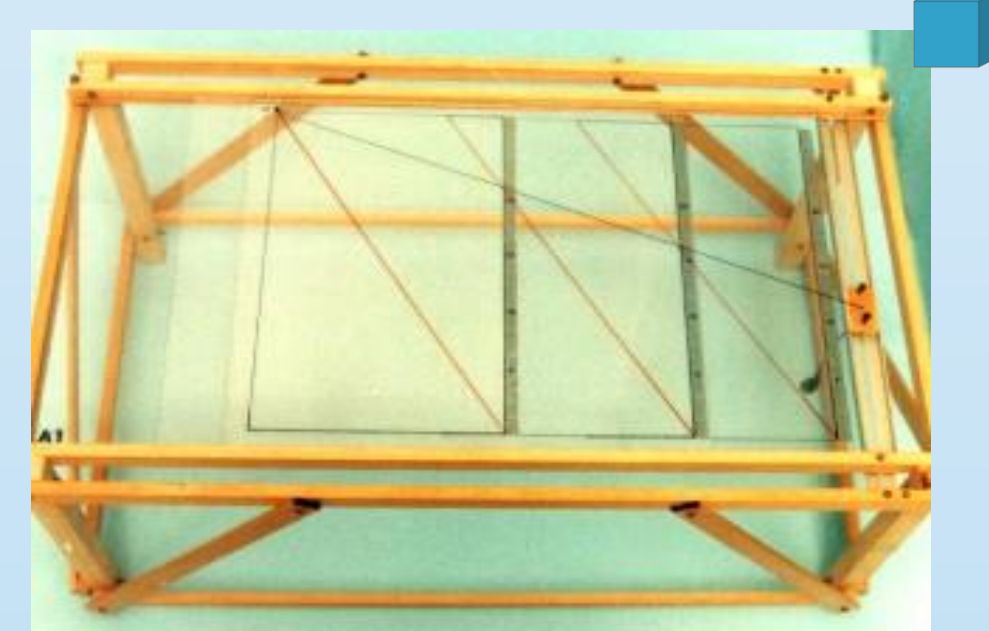
ARCHIMEDES et Eutocius of Ascalon



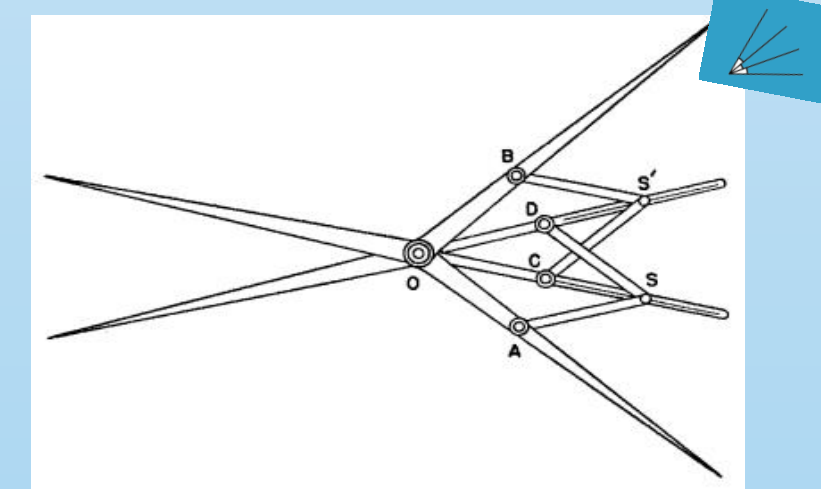
ARCHYTAS de TARENTUM
A solution in 3D



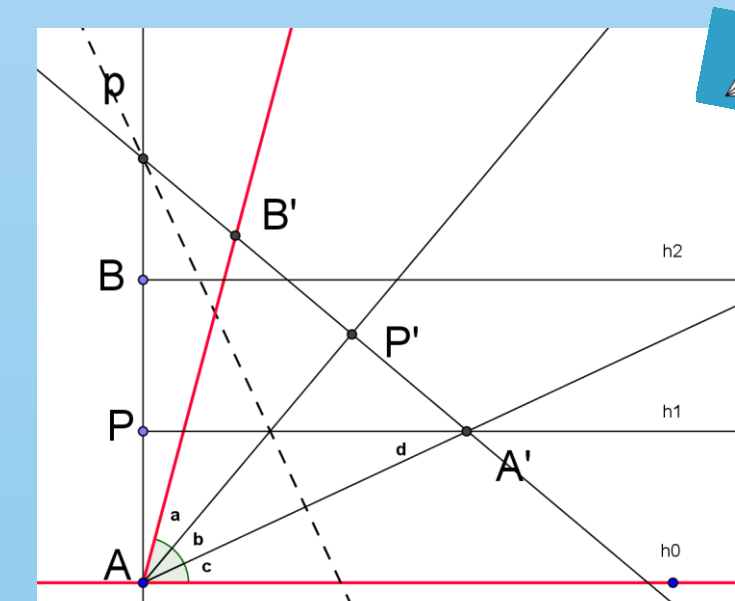
ERATHOSTENES
The Mesolabe



LAISANT
The trisector

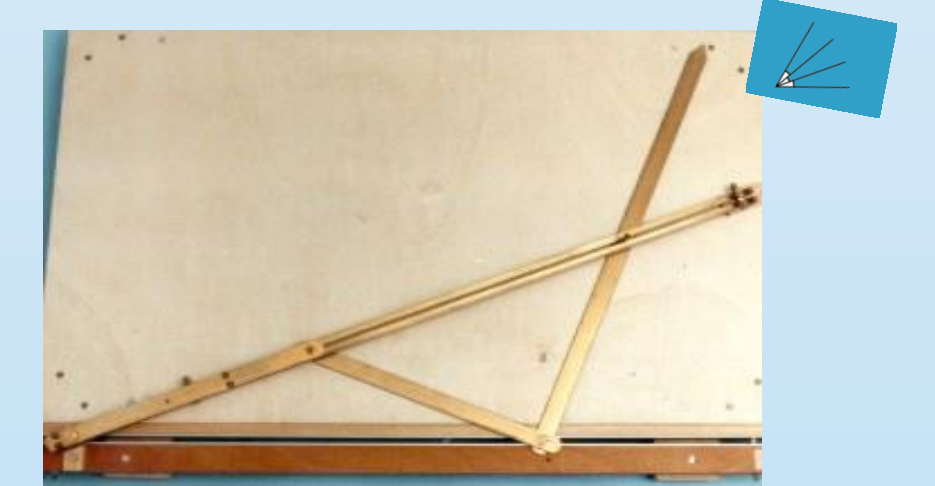


ABE, 1980
Paper folding

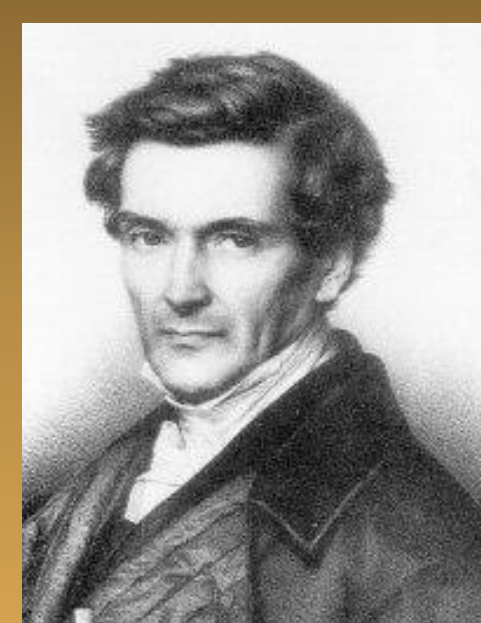
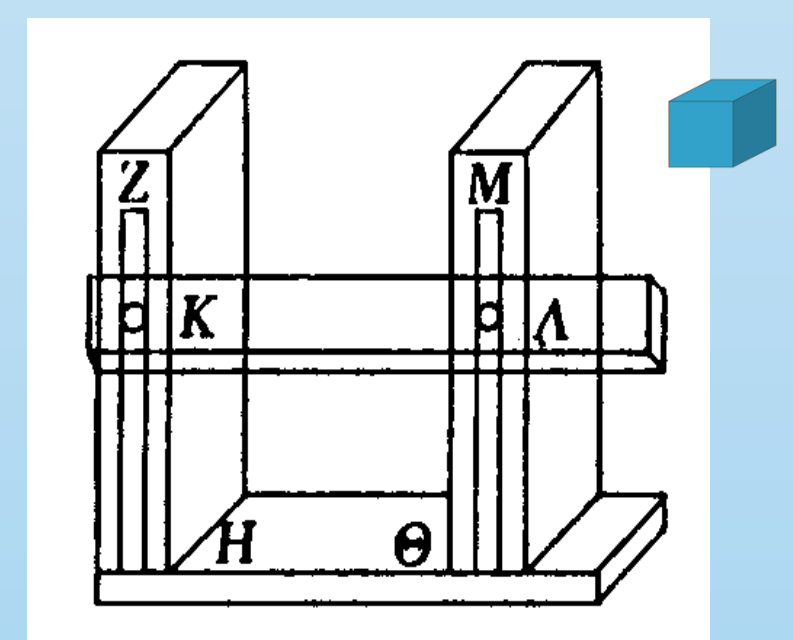


INSTRUMENTS

ARCHIMEDES
The ruler with two markings



PLATO'S
Machine



In 1837 Pierre-Laurent WANTZEL demonstrated that these three problems are not constructible with just a straightedge and compass. Moreover, Ferdinand von LINDEMANN showed the transcendence π of in 1882.

