

9. Famous 3 Greek Problems - Using only Euclidean Tools, it is impossible to:

- ① Double the volume of a given cube.
- ② Square a given circle.
- ③ Trisect an arbitrary angle.

① Doubling the Cube - Given a cube with side length  $x$ , it is impossible to construct a cube whose volume is twice that of the original.

Pf: Let a cube w/ edge length  $x$  be given. Then its volume is  $x^3$ .

BWOC, suppose we able to construct a cube with volume  $2x^3$ .

Then, the edge length of that cube would be  $\sqrt[3]{2} \cdot x$ . Dividing by

$x$ , we can construct  $\sqrt[3]{2}$ .

↙ QED

② Squaring the Circle - Given a circle, it is impossible to construct a square w/ the same area as the given circle.

Pf: Left to you on the project.

③ Trisecting an Angle - It is impossible to develop a method that will trisect every angle.

Lemma:  $\cos x = 4 \cos^3\left(\frac{x}{3}\right) - 3 \cos\left(\frac{x}{3}\right)$ .

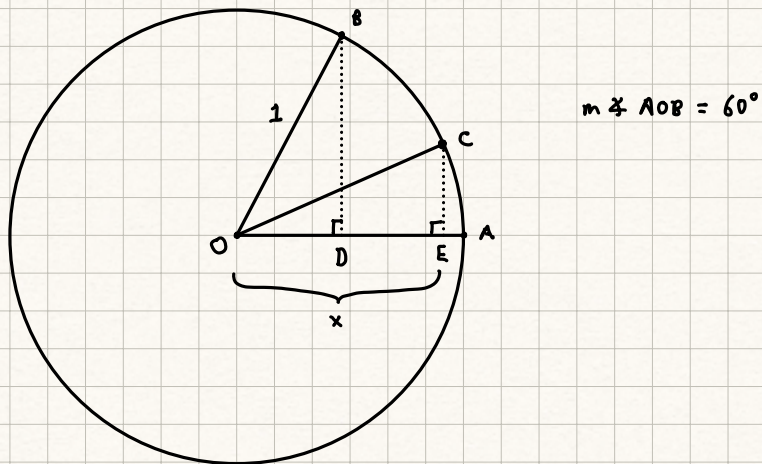
Pf: By the angle addition formula,

$$\begin{aligned}\cos(3\theta) &= \cos(\theta + 2\theta) = \cos\theta \cos 2\theta - \sin\theta \sin 2\theta \\ &= \cos\theta (\cos^2\theta - \sin^2\theta) - \sin\theta \cdot 2\sin\theta \cos\theta \\ &= \cos^3\theta - \cos\theta \sin^2\theta - 2\sin^2\theta \cos\theta \\ &= \cos^3\theta - 3\cos\theta \sin^2\theta \\ &= \cos^3\theta - 3\cos\theta (1 - \cos^2\theta) \\ &= \cos^3\theta - 3\cos\theta + 3\cos^3\theta\end{aligned}$$

$$\cos 3\theta = 4 \cos^3\theta - 3 \cos\theta.$$

Let  $x = 3\theta$  to obtain  $\cos x = 4 \cos^3\left(\frac{x}{3}\right) - 3 \cos\left(\frac{x}{3}\right)$ .  $\square$

Proof of Theorem - It suffices to show the existence of a single angle which cannot be trisected using only Euclidean Tools.



Suppose BWOE that we are able to construct  $\angle AOC \exists: m\angle AOC = \frac{1}{3} m\angle AOB$ .

Construct segments  $\overline{BD}$  and  $\overline{CE}$  perpendicular to  $\overline{OA}$  as shown. Since  $m\angle OB$   
 $= m\angle OC = 1$ , then  $m\overline{OD} = \cos(m\angle AOB)$  and  $m\overline{OE} = \cos(m\angle AOC)$ .

Let  $\theta = m\angle AOB$  (so that  $\frac{\theta}{3} = m\angle AOC$ ). By the lemma,

$$\cos \theta = 4 \cos^3 \left( \frac{\theta}{3} \right) - 3 \cos \left( \frac{\theta}{3} \right)$$

$$\text{Let } x = \cos \left( \frac{\theta}{3} \right); \text{ then } \frac{1}{2} = 4x^3 - 3x$$

$$1 = 8x^3 - 6x$$

$$8x^3 - 6x - 1 = 0$$

Since  $m\overline{OE} = \cos \left( \frac{\theta}{3} \right) = x$ , we have constructed a segment whose length is a solution to  $8x^3 - 6x - 1 = 0$ . It remains to show that all roots of  $8x^3 - 6x - 1$  are non-constructible numbers.

By the Rational Root Theorem, if  $\frac{p}{q}$  is a root of  $8x^3 - 6x - 1$ , then

$p \mid 1$  and  $q \mid 8$ . Therefore, the only possible rational roots of  $8x^3 - 6x - 1$

are  $x = \pm \frac{1}{1}, \pm \frac{1}{2}, \pm \frac{1}{4}$ , and  $\pm \frac{1}{8}$ . It is easy to verify that none of these are

roots. If a number  $a + b\sqrt{c} \in \mathbb{Q}(\sqrt{c})$  is a root, then  $a - b\sqrt{c}$  must

also be a root (you will prove this). Also, since the roots of  $8x^3 - 6x - 1$

must sum to the second leading term's coefficient (which is 0), if  $r$  is the third root (by Fundamental Theorem of Algebra):

$$(a + b\sqrt{2}) + (a - b\sqrt{2}) + r = 0$$

$$2a + r = 0$$

$$r = -2a \in \mathbb{Q}$$

↯ since  $6x^2 - 6x - 1$  has no rational roots.