

Disrupting the 'one great man' narrative in mathematics

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The 'one great man' theory

"The history of the world is but the biography of great men"

Thomas Carlyle

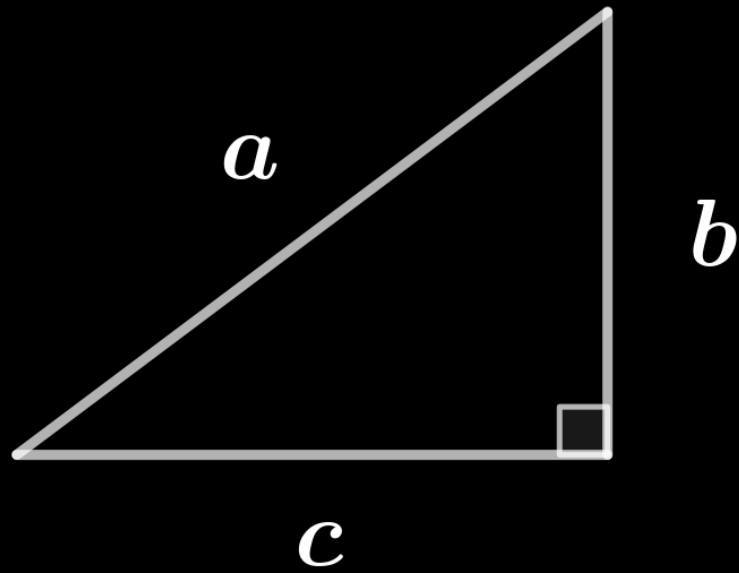
Alternative perspectives on history

"...the genesis of a great man depends on the long series of complex influences ...

... Before he can remake his society, his society must make him."

Herbert Spencer

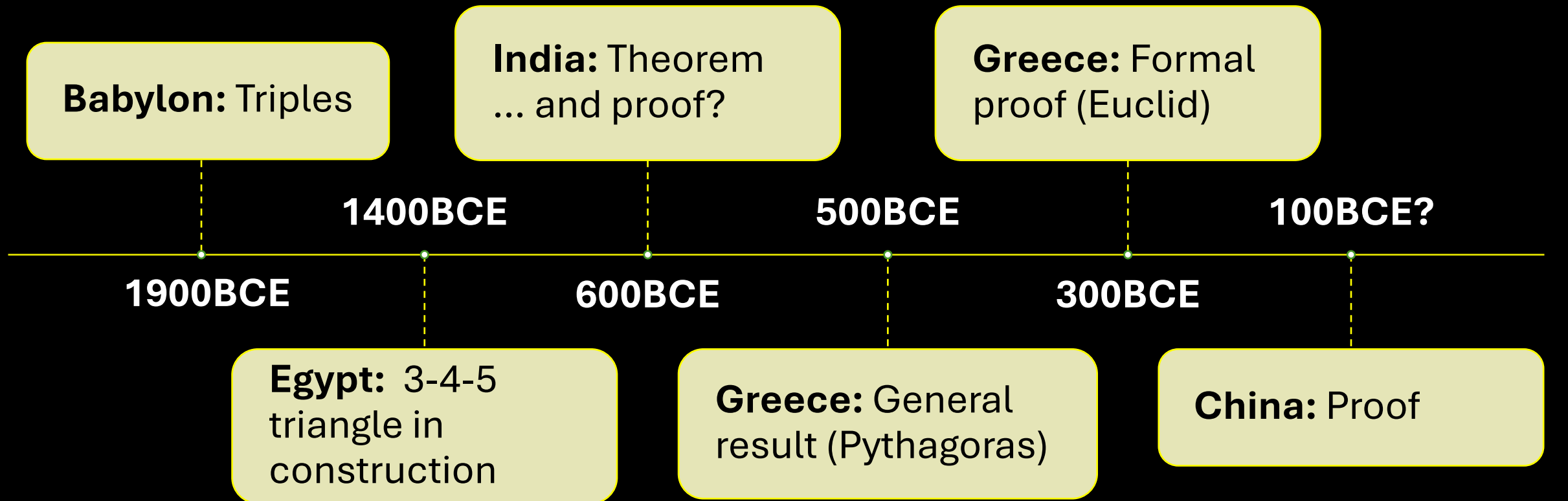
Pythagoras' Theorem



$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$



Timeline



All dates are approximate

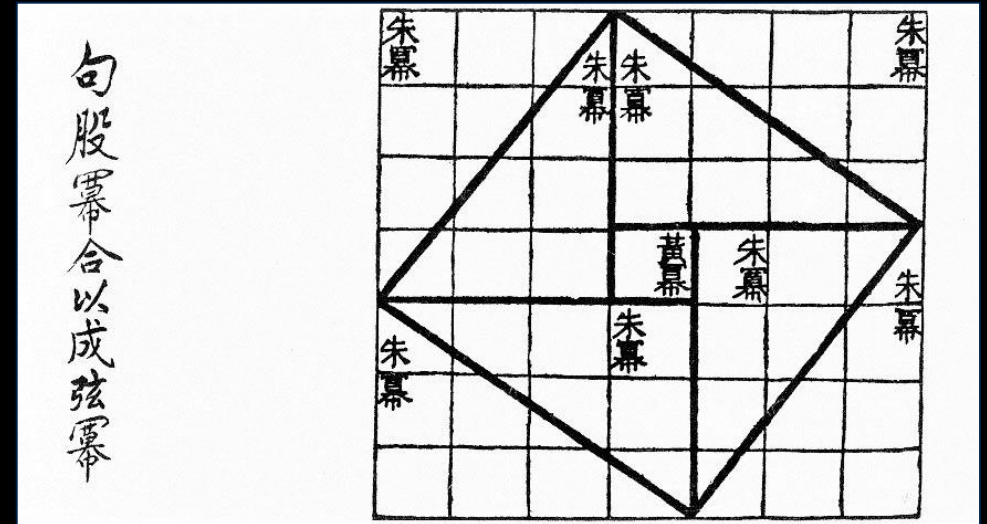
Impact of the context

- Based on 2 or 3 accounts written by Romans 150-200 years after he died
- Pythagorean 'Brotherhood':
Relatively high status for women



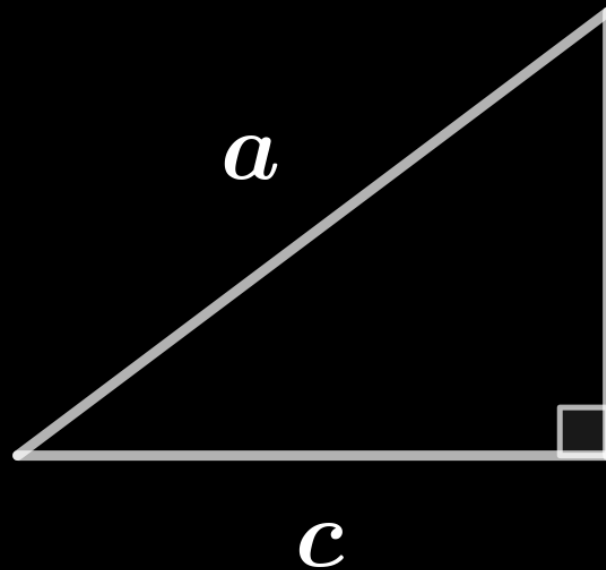
Other names for the theorem

- In China it is often known as the '*Gougu theorem*'
- It is sometimes known as The '*Right Angle triangle theorem*'



How could we name it?

The Right-Angle Triangle Theorem



$$a^2 + b^2 = c^2$$

Name results and theorems after
the maths and not the men!