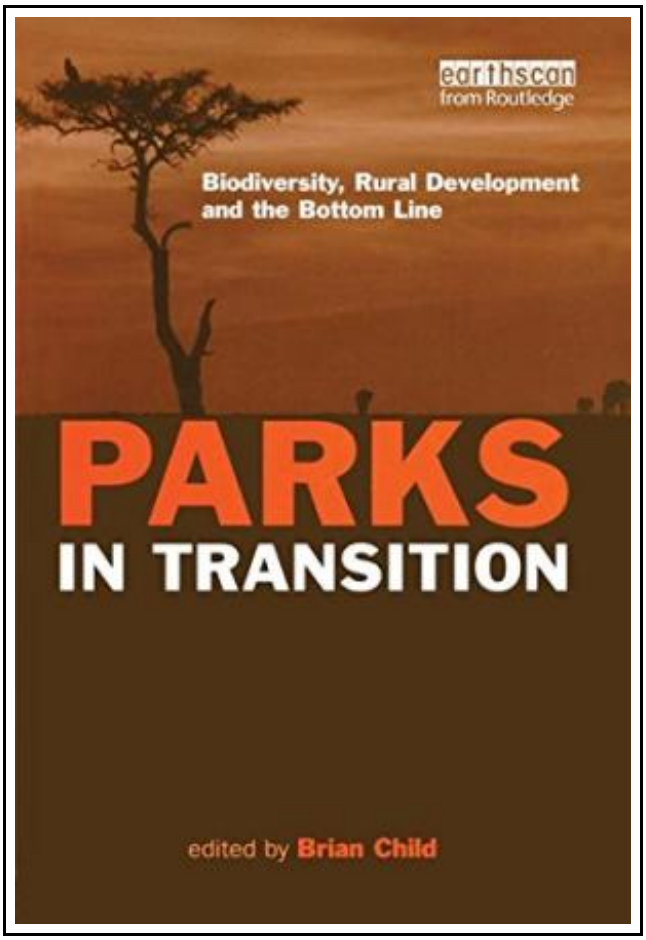
The Babylonian Theorem The Mathematical Journey to Pythagoras and Euclid



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Reviews

Complete guideline for publication lovers. it was writtern really properly and useful. Once you begin to read the book, it is extremely difficult to leave it before concluding.
(Treva Hamill)

THE BABYLONIAN THEOREM THE MATHEMATICAL JOURNEY TO PYTHAGORAS AND EUCLID

Prometheus Books. Hardcover. Book Condition: New. Hardcover. 248 pages. Dimensions: 9.1in. x 6.1in. x 0.9in.In this sequel to his award-winning How Mathematics Happened, physicist Peter S. Rudman explores the history of mathematics among the Babylonians and Egyptians, showing how their scribes in the era from 2000 to 1600 BCE used visualizations of how plane geometric figures could be partitioned into squares, rectangles, and right triangles to invent geometric algebra, even solving problems that we now do by quadratic algebra. Using illustrations adapted from both Babylonian cuneiform tablets and Egyptian hieroglyphic texts, Rudman traces the evolution of mathematics from the metric geometric algebra of Babylon and Egyptwhich used numeric quantities on diagrams as a means to work out problemsto the nonmetric geometric algebra of Euclid (ca. 300 BCE). Thus, Rudman traces the evolution of calculations of square roots from Egypt and Babylon to India, and then to Pythagoras, Archimedes, and Ptolemy. Surprisingly, the best calculation was by a Babylonian scribe who calculated the square root of two to seven decimal-digit precision. Rudman provocatively asks, and then interestingly conjectures, why such a precise calculation was made in a mud-brick culture. From his analysis of Babylonian geometric algebra, Rudman formulates a Babylonian Theorem, which he shows was used to derive the Pythagorean Theorem, about a millennium before its purported discovery by Pythagoras. He also concludes that what enabled the Greek mathematicians to surpass their predecessors was the insertion of alphabetic notation onto geometric figures. Such symbolic notation was natural for users of an alphabetic language, but was impossible for the Babylonians and Egyptians, whose writing systems (cuneiform and hieroglyphics, respectively) were not alphabetic. Rudman intersperses his discussions of early math conundrums and solutions with Fun Questions for those who enjoy recreational math and wish to test their understanding. The Babylonian Theorem is a...

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