

Book 10

Proposition 80

Only one medial straight-line, which is commensurable in square only with the whole, and contains a rational (area) with the whole, can be attached to a first apotome of a medial (straight-line).[†]



For let AB be a first apotome of a medial (straight-line), and let BC be (so) attached to AB . Thus, AC and CB are medial (straight-lines which are) commensurable in square only, containing a rational (area)—(namely, that contained) by AC and CB [Prop. 10.74]. I say that a(nother) medial (straight-line), which is commensurable in square only with the whole, and contains a rational (area) with the whole, cannot be attached to AB .

For, if possible, let DB also be (so) attached to AB . Thus, AD and DB are medial (straight-lines which are) commensurable in square only, containing a rational (area)—(namely, that) contained by AD and DB [Prop. 10.74]. And since by whatever (area) the (sum of the squares) on AD and DB exceeds twice the (rectangle contained) by AD and DB , the (sum of the squares) on AC and CB also exceeds twice the (rectangle contained) by AC and CB by this (same area). For [again] both exceed by the same (area)—(namely), the (square) on AB [Prop. 2.7]. Thus, alternately, by whatever (area) the (sum of the squares) on AD and DB exceeds the (sum of the squares) on AC and CB , twice the (rectangle contained) by AD and DB also exceeds twice the (rectangle contained) by

AC and CB by this (same area). And twice the (rectangle contained) by AD and DB exceeds twice the (rectangle contained) by AC and CB by a rational (area). For both (are) rational (areas). Thus, the (sum of the squares) on AD and DB also exceeds the (sum of the [squares] on AC and CB by a rational (area). The very thing is impossible. For both are medial (areas) [Props. 10.15, 10.23 corr.], and a medial (area) cannot exceed a(nother) medial (area) by a rational (area) [Prop. 10.26].

Thus, only one medial (straight-line), which is commensurable in square only with the whole, and contains a rational (area) with the whole, can be attached to a first apotome of a medial (straight-line). (Which is) the very thing it was required to show.