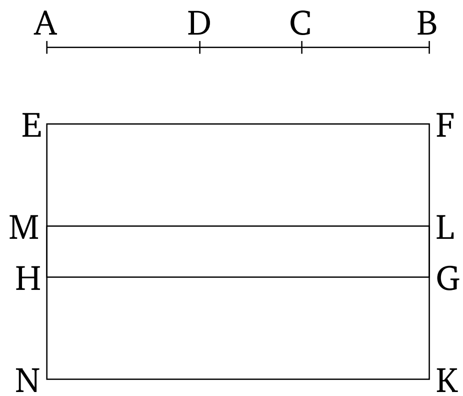
Book 10
Proposition 47

The square-root of (the sum of) two medial (areas) can be divided (into its component terms) at one point only.†



Let AB be [the square-root of (the sum of) two medial (areas)] which has been divided at C, such that AC and CB are incommensurable in square, making the sum of the (squares) on AC and CB medial, and the (rectangle contained) by AC and CB medial, and, moreover, incommensurable with the sum of the (squares) on (AC and CB) [Prop. 10.41]. I say that AB cannot be divided at another point fulfilling the prescribed (conditions).

For, if possible, let it have been divided at D, such that AC is again manifestly not the same as DB, but AC (is), by hypothesis, greater. And let the rational (straight-line) EF be laid down. And let EG, equal to (the sum of) the (squares) on AC and CB, and HK, equal to twice the (rectangle contained) by AC and CB, have been applied to EF. Thus, the whole of EK is equal to the square on AB [Prop. 2.4]. So, again, let EL, equal to (the sum of) the (squares) on AD and DB, have been applied to EF. Thus, the remainder—twice the (rectangle contained) by AD and DB—is equal to the remainder, MK. And since the sum of the (squares) on AC and CB was assumed (to be) medial, EG is also medial. And it is applied to the rational (straight-line) EF. HE is thus rational, and incommensurable in length with EF [Prop. 10.22]. So, for the same (reasons), HN is also rational, and incommensurable in length with EF. And since the sum of the (squares) on AC and CB is incommensurable with twice the (rectangle contained) by AC and CB, EG is thus also incommensurable with GN. Hence, EH is also incommensurable with HN [Props. 6.1, 10.11]. And they are (both) rational (straight-lines). Thus, EH and HN are rational (straight-lines which are) commensurable in square only. Thus, EN is a binomial (straight-line) which has been divided (into its component terms) at H [Prop. 10.36]. So, similarly, we can show that it has also been (so) divided at M. And EH is not the same as MN. Thus, a binomial (straight-line) has been divided (into its component terms) at different points. The very thing is absurd [Prop. 10.42]. Thus, the square-root of (the sum of) two medial (areas) cannot be divided (into its component terms) at different points. Thus, it can be (so) divided at one [point] only.