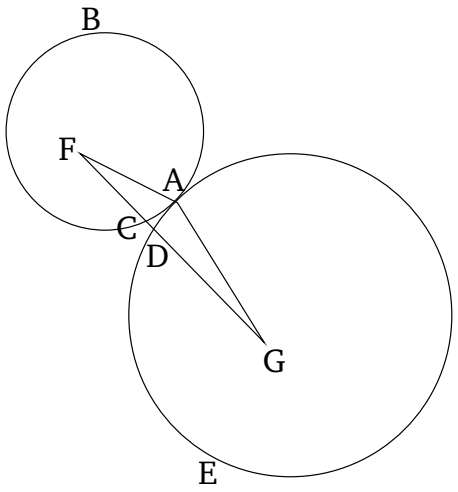
Book 3
Proposition 12

If two circles touch one another externally then the (straight-line) joining their centers will go through the point of union.



For let two circles, ABC and ADE, touch one another externally at point A, and let the center F of ABC have been found [Prop. 3.1], and (the center) G of ADE [Prop. 3.1]. I say that the straight-line joining F to G will go through the point of union at A.

For (if) not then, if possible, let it go like $FCDG$ (in the figure), and let AF and AG have been joined.

Therefore, since point F is the center of circle ABC, FA is equal to FC. Again, since point G is the center of circle ADE, GA is equal to GD. And FA was also shown (to be) equal to FC. Thus, the (straight-lines) FA and AG are equal to the (straight-lines) FC and GD. So the whole of FG is greater than FA and AG. But, (it is) also less [Prop. 1.20]. The very thing is impossible. Thus,

the straight-line joining F to G cannot not go through the point of union at A. Thus, (it will go) through it.

Thus, if two circles touch one another externally then the [straight-line] joining their centers will go through the point of union. (Which is) the very thing it was required to show.