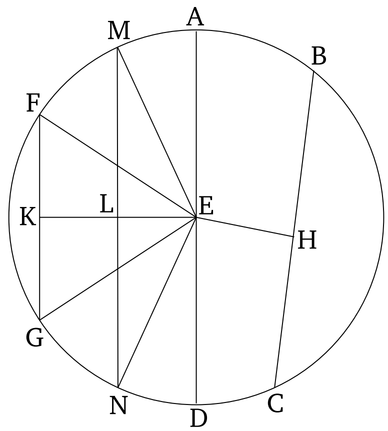
Book 3
Proposition 15

In a circle, a diameter (is) the greatest (straight-line), and for the others, a (straight-line) nearer to the center is always greater than one further away.

Let $ABCD$ be a circle, and let AD be its diameter, and E (its) center. And let BC be nearer to the diameter AD,[†] and FG further away. I say that AD is the greatest (straight-line), and BC (is) greater than FG.

For let EH and EK have been drawn from the center E, at right-angles to BC and FG (respectively) [Prop. 1.12]. And since BC is nearer to the center, and FG further away, EK (is) thus greater than EH [Def. 3.5]. Let EL be made equal to EH [Prop. 1.3]. And LM being drawn through L, at right-angles to EK [Prop. 1.11], let it have been drawn through to N. And let ME, EN, FE, and EG have been joined.

And since EH is equal to EL, BC is also equal to MN [Prop. 3.14]. Again, since AE is equal to EM, and ED to EN, AD is thus equal to ME and EN. But, ME and EN is greater than MN [Prop. 1.20] [also AD is greater than MN], and MN (is) equal to BC. Thus, AD is greater than BC. And since the two (straight-lines) ME, EN are equal to the two (straight-lines) FE, EG (respectively), and angle MEN [is] greater than angle FEG,[‡] the base MN is thus greater than the base FG [Prop. 1.24]. But, MN was shown (to be) equal to BC [(so) BC is also greater than FG]. Thus, the diameter AD (is) the greatest (straight-line), and BC (is) greater than FG.



Thus, in a circle, a diameter (is) the greatest (straight-line), and for the others, a (straight-line) nearer to the center is always greater than one further away. (Which is) the very thing it was required to show.