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Plan

- 1873–1963: The Continuum Problem up to Cohen
- 1963–1987: The first step in the post-Cohen theory
- 1987–present: Toward a solution of the Continuum Problem

1. 1873–1963: The Continuum Problem up to Cohen



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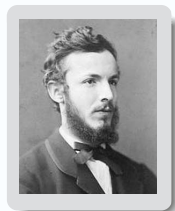
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↔ equivalently: Every uncountable set of reals has the cardinality of \mathbb{R} .

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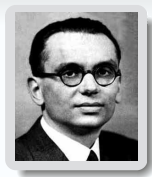
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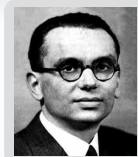
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- **First question.**— Is CH or \neg CH (negation of CH) **provable** from ZF?

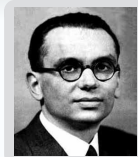
Two major results



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- **Conclusion.**—



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- **Conclusion.**— The system ZF is **incomplete**.
 \rightsquigarrow Discover further properties of sets, and adopt an extended list of axioms!

- **Question.**— How to recognize that an axiom is **true**? (?)

Example: CH **may** be taken as an additional axiom, but **not** a good idea...

2. 1963–1987: The first step in the post-Cohen theory

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- Quite **natural** axioms (= iteration of the basic postulate that infinite sets exist),
but no evidence that they are true or, rather, **useful**



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- An infinitary statement of a special type:
 $\exists a_1 \forall a_2 \exists a_3 \dots ([0, a_1 a_2 \dots]_2 \in A)$ or $\forall a_1 \exists a_2 \forall a_3 \dots ([0, a_1 a_2 \dots]_2 \notin A)$.
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- “Corollary” (Woodin).— PD is true.

“Proof”: PD is both natural (as a large cardinal axiom), and

3. 1987–present: Toward a solution of the Continuum Problem

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Approach 1: **Neutralizing** forcing

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- **Theorem** (**Foreman–Magidor–Shelah**, 1988).— Under **ZF+PD**,
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Approach 2: **Restricting** to forcing-invariant properties

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Turing reducibility

- But the complexity of larger and larger fragments **should** be higher and higher.
↪ **Impossible** to stick to such a point of view...

Approach 3: **Identifying** one satisfactory universe

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- (Kunen, 1971) Universe $L[U]$: compatible with large cardinals up to the level of **one measurable cardinal**
- (Mitchell–Steel, 1980–90’s) Universe $L[E]$: compatible with large cardinals up to the level of **PD** (infinitely many Woodin cardinals)
- **But**: how to hope completing the program, as there is an endless hierarchy of increasingly complex large cardinals?

• **Theorem** (Woodin, 2006).— There exists an explicit level (one **supercompact** cardinal) such that the (possible) L -like universe that is compatible with large cardinals up to that level is automatically compatible with all large cardinals.

↑
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- Still to do (2011): Give an **explicit** construction of **ultimate- L** , and complete the proof that it is **L -like** (= as canonical and well understood as L , $L[U]$, $L[E]$).

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