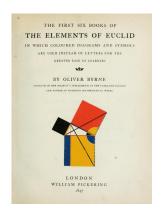
# LOGIC II

WHAT IS COMPUTATION?

Sina Hazratpour Stockholms Universitet Fall 2025 History & Formal Models

# Conception of Computation in Antiquity

- Informal conception of computation: sequence of steps performed according to some kind of recipe.
- This conception goes back to antiquity: The Greek Mathematician Euclid introduced compass-and-straightedge constructions as a proto-algorithmic process in his Elements (c. 300 BC).
- Euclid's algorithm for computing the greatest common divisor (gcd) of two numbers.



#### Conception of Computation in Middle Ages

- The word algorithm comes from the 9th century Persian mathematician Khwarizmi (ca. 825) who worked on arithmetic, equations, and word problems. His treatise Hisab al-jabr w'al-muqabalah gave us the word algebra.
- In his 'Book of Indian computation' he described algorithms on decimal numbers (Hindu–Arabic numerals) that could be carried out on a dust board.





# History of Computing is History of Mechanization

 Blaise Pascal's calculating machine (1642): Pascaline. It could do arithemtic addition and subtraction.

 Leibniz's improved calculating machine (1671): Machina Arithmetica could do all the basic four arithmetic operations.





Machina Arithmetica

Images: Courtesy of Arithmeum

(https://www.arithmeum.uni-bonn.de).

# Mechanical Computers (17th Century)

	Schickard	Schickard, Wilhelm	1623	Ein- bis Dreispeziesmaschine
	Rechenpfennig		1630	Einfaches Rechenhilfsmittel, Rechenpfer
	Rechenpfennig mit Rechenmeister	Hans Krauwinckel	1630	Einfaches Rechenhilfsmittel, Rechenpfer
60000	Pascaline	Pascal, Blaise	1642	Ein- bis Dreispeziesmaschine
	Pascaline (Historischer Nachbau)	Pascal, Blaise	1642	Ein- bis Dreispeziesmaschine
>	Proportionalzirkel 17. Jahrhundert		1650	Ablesegerät mit Skalen, logarithmisch, Proportionalzirkel
-	Morland Multipliziergerät	Morland, Sir Samuel	1664	Ein- bis Dreispeziesmaschine
	Morland Addiergerät	Morland, Sir Samuel	1666	Einfaches Rechenhilfsmittel
	Leibniz machina arithmetica	Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm	1671	Vierspeziesmaschine, Staffelwalze

# Mechanical Computers (18th Century)

Braun / Vayringe (Villingen- Schwenningen)	Braun, Anton	1727	Vierspeziesmaschine, Stellsegment
Braun Sprossenradmaschine	Braun, Anton	1727	Vierspeziesmaschine, Sprossenrad
Rotula Arithmetica von George Brown	G. Adams	1734	Ein- bis Dreispeziesmaschine
Hahn I	Hahn, Philipp Matthäus	1774	Vierspeziesmaschine, Staffelwalze
Stanhope Staffelwalzenmaschine	Stanhope, Charles Viscount Mahon, 3rd Earl of / James Bullock	1775	Vierspeziesmaschine, Staffelwalze
Stanhope Stellsegmentmaschine	Stanhope, Charles Viscount Mahon, 3rd Earl of /	1777	Vierspeziesmaschine, Stellsegment

James Bullock

# Babbage's Difference Engine (19th Century)

- Charles Babbage: Difference Engine (1822) and Analytical Engine (1837).
- Ada Lovelace (1815-1852)
   wrote early computer programs for this machine.
- Babbage's Difference Engine
   (v.2) was designed to calculate
   polynomials up to the seventh
   degree, handling numbers up to
   31 decimal digits in accuracy.



Babbage Difference Engine, 1821, FDM9114, © Arithmeum

#### Computation in the 20th Century

- In the 1910s and 1920s century an increasing variety of mechanical computing devices were developed.
- Yet, most of these devices were limited to specific tasks, such as tabulating mathematical functions or performing basic arithmetic operations.
- In practice, most computations were still done by human "computers" following detailed instructions. World War I and II created huge demand for human computers, map grids, surveying aids, navigation tables and artillery tables, and code breaking.



What was lacking in all these developments up until this point was a **precise** definition of what it means for a function to be computable.

# Hilbert's Famous 23 Problems (1900)

- In 1900 at the International Congress of Mathematicians in Paris, mathematician David Hilbert presented a list of 23 unsolved problems.
- The tenth problem: determine whether a given Diophantine equation has integer solutions.
- A Diophantine equation is a polynomial equation with integer coefficients, seeking integer solutions.
- Hilbert asked for an algorithm to decide this for any such equation.



David Hilbert (1862-1943)

#### A Negative Response to Hilbert

- Much later in the century, this problem was solved in the negative by Yuri Matiyasevich in 1970.
- For this purpose, having a formal model of computability was essential.
- To show that something is computable you describe an algorithm meeting some formal criteria.
- In order to show that no computational procedure can solve Diophantine equations, one has characterize all possible computational procedures!
- It was crucial for Matiyasevich to use a formal model of computation.
- Luckily for him this was developed in the 1930s.

#### Young Gödel at Hilbert's Lecture

"Wir dürfen nicht denen glauben, die heute mit philosophischer Miene und überlegenem Tone den Kulturuntergang prophezeien und sich in dem Ignorabimus gefallen. Für uns gibt es kein Ignorabimus und meiner Meinung nach auch für die Naturwissenschaft überhaupt nicht. Statt des törichten Ignorabimus heiße im Gegenteil unsere Losung: wir müssen wissen, wir werden wissen."



Über formal unentscheidbare Sätze der Principia Mathematica und verwandter Systeme I').

Ny Series and Series a

#### Formal Models of Computation

- Partial recursive functions (Gödel, Herbrand 1930s)
- Lambda calculus (Church 1936)
- Turing machines (Turing 1936)
- String rewriting systems (Post 1940s)
- State register machines (Minsky 1960s)
- Cellular automata (von Neumann 1950s, Conway 1970s)
- Nondeterministic Turing machines (1960s)
- Programmability in programming languages, like ML, C++, or Java.

#### Real World Computers

- Theory of computation predates modern computers by about a decade.
- 1944: IBM—Harvard Automatic Sequence Controlled Calculator (ASCC or Mark I).
- 1945: John von Neumann's design of the EDVAC.
- Subsequent: ENIAC, MANIAC, UNIVAC, and more.

# Going back to Leibniz

- Leibniz in De Arte Combinatoria
   (1666) proposed the idea of a
   universal language (characteristica universalis) and a calculus of thoughts (calculus ratiocinator).
- "All reasoning is just a computation."
- This idea, a radical and prophetic idea in his time, influenced later thinkers like Boole, Frege, and Turing.

