

The Thinking Machine

A note on how thinking became something measurable, distributable, and increasingly treated as infrastructure.

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Thinking is no longer treated as a uniquely human quality.

Alan Turing did not try to prove that machines think.

He replaced the question with something measurable.

We kept the replacement.

And forgot what it replaced.

Thinking is now treated as something that can be measured.

And something that can be distributed.

But that does not mean we understand it.

We already talk about compute in numbers.

Thinking is starting to move in the same direction.

When I was a child, I was taught that Denmark survives by being smart.

Not by size.

Not by raw strength.

But by thinking.

But what does that mean if thinking can be built and moved?

If the same capacity can be assembled in a machine and placed somewhere else?

Then it is no longer a national trait.

It becomes infrastructure.

I do not yet know what that means.

But that is exactly what needs to be examined.

A “thinking machine” is often described as something that can solve problems.

Not because it understands them.

But because it has enough time and enough capacity.

This is not a new idea.

During war, problems are solved in the same way.

With enough resources, solutions are forced into existence.

The difference is that the machine does not stop.

It continues as long as there is power.

We are building machines that appear increasingly intelligent.

At the same time, we are not consistent in how we use intelligence ourselves.

That is not a contradiction.

It is part of the same system.

If that is what we call thinking, then what is it actually?

Is it just problem solving?

Or does it require something else?

Consciousness.

Self-awareness.

And if we cannot define it, what is it that we are trying to build?

— Dennis Hedegreen, trying to see the structure