

Higher Education and ICT: School of Athens or Mr. Ford's Factory?

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In 387 BC, Plato established his famous philosophical school in Akademos, a suburb of Athens in ancient Greece. His students became known as academicians and they developed a branch of philosophy called skepticism. In the 250 years to follow, the medieval European model of education has prevailed and proliferated, first in America, later in Australia and now in India and China. As the personal and societal success depend increasingly on education the tension between personalization (e.g. Platonic education) and massification (e.g. affordable education at scale) has intensified. This talk reviews the history and examines the question: can IT be organized in ways to expand access to higher education in ways honor and restore that magical and powerful interplay between learners, their peers, and their mentors?