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**THE HUMAN WORLD: THE PAST, THE  
PRESENT AND THE FUTURE**

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**Introduction**

This year's conference will focus on rethinking Social Studies in light of the changing world we live in. There is no other subject that could possibly be more pertinent at a time like now, when everything concerning human civilization is undergoing exponential change. The world inhabited by humans is one that is always in a state of flux. The social order of the past can no longer provide the same level of order and stability required by modern human civilization.

As a field of study, Social Studies has a responsibility to provide a response to the increasingly changing trend of human civilization. There is a need for practitioners of Social Studies to recreate, rethink, reinvent, reprogramme, and create avenues for elastic thinking that are elastic enough to accommodate the ever-changing posture and momentum of human civilisation. Social Studies teachers also need to make ways for students to think in a flexible way. In this keynote address, we are going to examine the history, as well as the present and the future of human civilization from a very broad perspective.

**The Human World: Xtray into History**

The first signs of human civilization perhaps appeared in Africa millions of years ago. Eurocentric researchers may disagree with

this postulation. Historical, archaeology and anthropology data that was available at the time mirrored the idea that the origin of human civilization was perhaps in Africa. East Africa is perhaps the location of the world's earliest excavation of a Homo sapien. South Africa, East Africa, and other regions of Africa are all thought to have earliest sites of human habitation on earth. It is not a coincidence that the Swahili language, which is perhaps one of the oldest languages in the world, has an African brand to its name. The past will not take up a significant amount of space in this presentation. The realities of both the future and present will be emphasised instead.

Perhaps, the history of humans before the development of agriculture was highly precarious and unpredictable as man was more or less a roving animal moving around the globe gathering fruits and looking for what to eat. Humans are perhaps exclusively living as scavengers. However, the Neolithic revolution, which occurred roughly 12,000 years ago, was the point at which human civilization became serious. The Neolithic revolution, often known as the development of agriculture, began in south-west Asia and eventually expanded throughout a significant portion of the ancient world over the course of the subsequent millennia. In addition to Mesoamerica (about 6000 years ago), China, Papua New Guinea, and the Sahel and West Savannah areas of Africa also experienced it separately. The availability of an abundant food supply paved the way for the first time in human history for the establishment of permanent human settlements, the domestication of animals, and the use of metal tools. It is important to note that farming and a less active way of life were the two main things that led to the rise of early civilization.

According to the hypothesis presented in this literature, the first evidence of human habitation may have been found in Africa. The historical and archaeological writings lend a great deal of support to this position of thinking. It is possible that there were two separate waves of people migrating "out of Africa" at different times. The first wave probably began somewhere between 130000 and 100000 years ago. The second (also known as the southern

dispersion) occurred somewhere between 70000 and 50000 years ago. Homo sapiens went on to settle all of the continents and larger islands, starting in Eurasia 6000 years ago, then Australia around 65,000 years ago, the Americas around 15,000 years ago, and more remote islands like Hawaii, Easter Island, Madagascar, and New Zealand between 300 and 1280 CE.

The development of the Neolithic period prepared the way for the beginning of human civilization in all of its many forms. The more sedentary lifestyle that organised agriculture brought along with it made it possible for the human race to develop various forms of government, from monarchy to democracy. It makes the development of science and philosophy possible, as well as the growth of tools and technology. It also enables the development of religion and spirituality. This, of course, set the stage for the industrial revolution, which had a huge impact on the whole human race in all its many forms.

The development of automated machinery and significant changes in human lives and civilization both resulted from the long process of Industrial Revolution. At this point in time, the industrial revolution developed into contemporary technology, which is advanced over the centuries exponential dimensions. Development of electricity, the invention of penicillin, semi-conductors, the internal combustion engine, the internet, nitrogen fixing fertilisers, aeroplanes, computers, automobiles, contraceptives, nuclear fission, the green revolution, scientific plant breeding, rockets, air conditioning, television, classical and quantum computing, drones, and other major innovations have accelerated the world's progress towards post modernism. The whole human civilization became operated and moderated by constantly increasing technological advancement.

### **Major Ways Technology has Influenced Today's Human World and how Social Studies as a Discipline can respond to these Changes**

The world as we know it now is the product of a scientific and technological revolution. The development of modern technology has paved the way for a number of breakthroughs, like smart

phones, smart watches, and computers, which have made it possible for human existence to become simpler, quicker, and more enjoyable to all and sundry. Unfortunately, the proliferation of technology has also made it simpler, easier, and more damaging for criminals to commit their crimes. In addition, the development of technology has facilitated the rise of new types of criminal activity that did not previously exist. The development of contemporary technology has contributed significantly to one of the most prominent characteristics of modern civilisation, which is an improvement in communication technology. Ever since the year 1876, when Graham Bell first introduced the world to the telephone. Modern world has evolved to a point far beyond Graham Bell invention to a situation where the smart phone is now something that practically everyone on the globe has in their possession. Perhaps, a global village has emerged out of the whole of the planet. We can submit that technology has led to the formation of what we can regard as a “Universal brotherhood of human race” in which everyone in the globe is linked and interconnected. Social Studies as a field must capture the new interconnectedness in this evolving universal brotherhood of man. Education must be both local and global as everything now have both local and global dimension. Technology has collapsed distance and time on all issues.

Furthermore, it should be stated that because of advances in technology, distance and location are becoming irrelevant in matters of human communication. The fact that the smartphone can connect every location on the globe in a split second is something that the discipline of Social Studies has to adapt to. Both the human race and the environment, which houses the human race, need to be protected for future generations. Therefore, the sustenance of the human race in his present environment ought to be the primary objective of the field of Social Studies. In order to ensure the continuation of human civilization, Social Studies practitioners need to remain at the forefront of the campaign for clean and renewable energy in replacement for use of fossil fuel that is depleting our environment

almost to the point of extinction. Green Revolution and the Global Drive for clean and renewable energy as complete replacement for the use of fossil fuels should be a concern for Social Studies practitioners. Hitherto unheard of forms of specialised crime and criminality have recently emerged and have already reached global dimensions. As a direct result of the disintegration of the human family and of traditional family values, unemployment, hunger, and poverty have sprung up all over the globe. Banditry, abduction, juvenile and adult delinquency, drug abuse, financial crime, child trafficking, and prostitution have perhaps taken on a global dimension, with Africa perhaps bearing more than its fair share of the global crisis and poverty.

In terms of societal order and core traditional value principles, things have completely destabilised. The modern world has perhaps placed human civilization under intensive care unit. The ability to think creatively and come up with new ideas may be essential to the survival of human civilisation. Orthodoxy and conventional thinking may not lead us out of our current problems and challenges. The contemporary issues and challenges that may face human civilisation in future, may call for new ways of thinking, reinventing, repackaging, renovating and reprogramming of existing and new ideas. For people who work in Social Studies to understand what the future holds for human civilization, they need to be able to look ahead.

### **The Future of Human Civilisation**

The development and deployment of new technologies may be absolutely necessary for the world's continued existence. The World Economic Forum assembled a particular set of individuals as being at the forefront of technological advancement and it included those individuals in many forum-based activities and events. This group of individuals submit that from 2022 technological advancements will radically alter the planet during the next five years. The following are some of their predictions which I agree with:

**Credit and Business:** Credit and business will be more accessible to those ignored by traditional financial institutions. World economy will become more digitalised. Internet platforms in E-commerce. Food delivery, light sharing, logistics with barriers to wealth creation disappearing. Workers can engage with many platforms in parallel dimensions and earn multiple earnings. Soon digital labour market places will emerge. Conventional barriers in work places may disappear. Economic growth and financial wellbeing may be digitally maximised. That is what the future potends.

Web-3 technologies revolutionised world of commerce: by the year 2025, web-3 technology would have revolutionised the world of commerce the same way we-2 transformed the world. The ease of doing business will be enhanced by digital economy. The smarter rather than the stronger will become millionaires.

The future of human race may witness data industry becoming more inclusive and affordable. The amount of information about human race would have grown exponentially and easily accessible to all and sundry. With this growth will be the erosion of privacy and emergence of new crimes and new danger to humanity.

The future of human race may come to a situation where current digital interaction may be seen as we currently view carbon emission today. Social media has perhaps exposed the perils and danger of communication technology designed without human welfare at the centre. Currently, social media is perhaps harmful to human mental health and emotional wellbeing. Social media has crippled humanity, intimacy, human empathy, human warmth without looking back. Physical intimate interactions that make us feel closed to each other has been eroded by technology. A sociological crisis of “social contact meaninglessness” has perhaps been created by technology. How will Social Studies practitioners react to this menace? Human race must treasure and recapture meaningful contact and meaningful moments involved in intimate physical contacts. Social Studies practitioners must recreate and reinvent to prevent technology from destroying human experience and accompanying face to face intimate interaction.

Battery powered construction will underpin sustain ability efforts: the construction industry account for 40% of global emission currently and much of these is driven by urbanisation drive of mass civilisation. The future may witness a reversal of this trend. The world is now going green for renewable energy. The future growth of the world may be premised on green revolution. The survival of human race must be paramount in the minds of Social Studies practitioners. Social Studies practitioners must build a global consciousness that will allow all human activities to go green and harmonise nature. There may not be any need to practise Social Studies if human race is allowed to destroy itself.

In future, building will respond and adjust to support human wellness and comfort: it is estimated that 90% of life for most human being are spent indoor and paradoxically, 50% of carbon emission are created within the human building apartments. The future may witness the evolution of automated buildings adequately equipped with cost effective sensors and control points. Buildings will automatically respond and adjust to support human wellness and comfort and drastically minimise carbon emission. In short, environmentally friendly buildings may be the future of the construction industry. I hereby propose a fundamental transformation of the construction industry with the emergence of digital twin and 5G and 6G technology as key tools in assessing and optimizing values in the building industry.

The future human civilisation may witness a situation where grid flexibility will phase out fossil fuel and jump start evolution of clean energy culture. Clean energy culture will emerge when there is dynamic interaction between energy supply and demand. The future will involve more committed cultivation of renewable energy sources such as wind, solar etc. grid flexibility is important for these to be achieved.

The future of human race: people will eat more nourishing food than now. Cost of food must go down and poverty and hunger must be equally addressed for the survival of the human race. Food production must take care of geometrically rising human population of the world. Poverty and hunger must not be made an

African brand. The rich countries of the world must assist the less developed countries to banish hunger from the face of the earth.

Financial systems may become global and digital currency may evolve all over the world for economic transaction. Financial inclusion in world economy may improve the life of billions of people globally and the whole world may become a globe accessible to all and sundry. In essence technology will bring best opportunities to the best talents. However, work place culture will revolutionise. The recent covid-19 pandemic has led to some revolution in work place culture. Online jobs are now emerging all over the place. Manufacturing, marketing and delivery of services are now digitally transmitted. Business and marketing are becoming increasingly digitalised. Therefore, the future “change” may be a recurring decimal. The emergence of robotics and artificial may revolutionise health and education practices. Presently, robotics and artificial intelligence with the emergence of drones have revolutionised human military. Technology has made it easier to kill ourselves. The first solar plane has flown, driverless cars have emerged. Technology may remove conventional human interaction in most professions.

Ladies and gentlemen. The future may also witness the emergence of quantum internet and this will revolutionize the world just as the classical internet. Quantum networks are required to build the quantum internet of tomorrow. The quantum internet is expected to have enormous impact on how we live our life by providing high breakthroughs in energy, education and medicine.

### **Conclusion**

Practitioners in the field of Social Studies need to be aware that the future will be fraught with significant difficulties and opportunities, as well as the dissolution of family structures. The proliferation of organised crime throughout the world, which has become possible because of technological advancements, calls on Social Studies practitioners to think creatively and plan strategically in response. The curriculum for Social Studies should

be updated and significantly broadened to accommodate new challenges and difficulties facing human civilization. Sociological themes such as kidnapping, banditry, organised crimes, trafficking, issues of statelessness in some parts of Africa, the dissolution of family values and the rising values of existential impotence, as well as the development of “nonsense culture” among the younger generation are discussed. In order to provide many unemployed and hungry adolescents all around the globe with a feeling of purpose, the topic of youth engagement policies has to be a central focus in the field of Social Studies.

The field of Social Studies has to evolve and recreate in order to keep up with the pace of ever-increasing complexities of human society. The field of robotics has transformed the science fiction of yesteryears into the reality of today. In today's world, humanoid robots, similar to those seen in science fiction movies, are now a common sight in everyday life. Drones now have the ability to kill as well as carry out surveillance and tracking devices, thanks to the advancement of artificial intelligence. The military may now create widespread destruction without the participation of humans. The nuclear tragedy that occurred in Hiroshima, Japan in 1945, may be considered a child's play in comparison with the capacity of today's artificial intelligence for mass destruction. It is possible that in the future we may see the development of very complex machines that will put millions of people out of work. It is possible that driverless automobiles may put people out of work, while drones are becoming more useful in the military and agriculture. Tech giants such as BMW and Tesla are paving the way for the introduction of autonomous automobiles far sooner than was previously anticipated. It is possible that in the future, many people may find that their jobs have been taken over by clever robots. However, it is not quite as horrible as it might be. The economy that is driven by information and technological advancement will come to dominate global affairs. It is possible that people who are able to use technology to conceive, discover, and implement new concepts that are capable of enhancing human connection in a way that is harmonious with the natural

environment and that makes human existence on earth simpler and more productive will rule the globe in the future. Social Studies teachers need to go back to the drawing board and come up with new ways to teach and design lessons that will help school products to live together peacefully both now and in the future and keep on learning new ways of living and adjusting in a world that is ever changing.

Learning must be part and parcel of the survival kits of the citizens of the world new order.