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Class: Word Civ 2

This week, instead of following the "Frame it Yourself" in the textbook, we will concentrate on the section of your text, Slavery & Race starting on page 536. The results of American slavery and identity tragically still remain with us today & there are opposing viewpoints as to how this history should be addressed in our society. Re-read this section on pages 536 - 540 then address the following questions: What was the image of slavery before 1500? What factors contributed to a new construction of slavery? Why & how were American slave populations dehumanized? Define the new racial construct which emerged, especially in colonial southern society & the Caribbean, and the justification behind it. Do you see remnants of this in 21st century America? Explain.

1. Before 1500, the image of slavery was not the same as it became after. In the early days of civilization, slavery was seen as a temporary condition and not a permanent one, with the possibility of manumission or release from slavery. The status of slaves was also determined by the religion, ethnic background, and social status of the enslaved person.
2. The new construction of slavery emerged due to several factors, including the growth of the global economy and trade, the development of the Atlantic slave trade, and the need for cheap labor to work on the colonies and plantations of the Americas.
3. American slave populations were dehumanized through a systematic process of racialization, where they were stripped of their rights, identities, and dignity. Slaves were considered property, not people, and were treated as such. This dehumanization was perpetuated through violence, coercion, and the legal system, which classified slaves as sub-human.
4. A new racial construct emerged in colonial southern society and the Caribbean, where white superiority and black inferiority were assumed and reinforced. This justification was based on the belief that black people were inherently inferior and uncivilized, and that they were meant to be slaves and serve the white slave owners. This belief was used to justify the brutal treatment of slaves, including violence, torture, and sexual exploitation.
5. There are remnants of this in 21st century America, such as the ongoing racial disparities in areas such as education, income, and criminal justice. Racism and prejudice continue to be persistent issues in American society, and the legacy of slavery is still present in the systemic inequalities that exist today. The recent protests and movements for racial justice show that the fight against racism is far from over.