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What was the image of slavery before 1500?

Before the year 1500, the practice of slavery was considered a form of labor that was essential to the economic development of certain societies. This was especially true in the Mediterranean region, which was characterized by a robust economy and widespread use of slave labor. The new construction of slavery was made possible by several factors. Including the expansion of the Atlantic Slave Trade, the arrival of European colonization in the Americas, and the development of a more racially stratified society in the Caribbean and Southern colonies. African-Americans were dehumanized and radicalized as inferior to Europeans to justify their enslavement in the United States. This new racial construct of "whiteness" as being superior to all other races was used to justify the enslavement of African-Americans. The concept of "whiteness" as being superior to all other races was the new racial construct that emerged.

What factors contributed to the new construction of slavery?

The factors that contributed to the new construction of slavery included the European colonization of the Americas, the slave trade, and the development of mercantilism. The slave trade provided a ready supply of African slaves to work in the plantations, mines, and other industries of the Americas. Mercantilism also encouraged European nations to acquire as much wealth and power as possible, which included the acquisition of a large number of slaves. Moreover, the protestant Reformation and the Enlightenment also provided a moral justification for slavery, as the belief in the inherent superiority of European culture and religion was used to justify the subjugation of other peoples.

The opportunity for slaves to follow any sort of religion was often taken away from them, and in its place, the slaves were obliged to conform to the views of their owners. In addition, the

Slaveholders implemented a system of isolation and segregation, which further contributed to the dehumanization of the enslaved people. Slaves were not permitted to mingle with other slaves and were instead sorted into several groups according to their age, gender, and skin color. Slaves were not allowed to socialize with other slaves. They were further cut off from society as a result of their segregation and seclusion, which contributed to the impression that they were subhuman.

Why & how was the American slave population dehumanized?

Slaves in the United States were subjected to a systematic procedure that started when they were first transported to the colonies and continued until the conclusion of the Civil War. This process aimed to dehumanize the slaves of their human traits and rights. Slaves were deprived of their rights and human attributes. Slaves were not only viewed as property but also as commodities, and they were not allowed to exercise fundamental human rights like the right to education, the ability to marry, or the right to be represented in court. Slaves did not only have these rights taken away from them but they were also abused both physically and psychologically. They were also denied the opportunity to practice any form of religion. Last but not least, slave owners instituted a system of segregation and seclusion, which further cut slaves off from society and robbed them of their humanity.

Define the new racial construct which emerged, especially in colonial southern society & the Caribbean, and the justification behind it.

Racial constructs, or the social and cultural categorization of people based on physical characteristics such as skin color, emerged as a justification for slavery and colonization during the 16th to the 19th centuries. The practice was particularly prevalent in colonial southern society and the Caribbean, where European colonial powers enslaved and oppressed indigenous populations and people of African descent. One of the key justifications for this system was the concept of white people supremacy, which held that people were inherently superior to people of other races. This idea was used to justify enslavement and oppression, as well as the exploitation of land and resources in the colonies. The notion of white superiority was also closely tied to the European imperialism and belief in the civilizing mission, which held that European powers had a moral

obligation to bring their way of life and Christian religion to the people of the world. Additionally, the idea of racial hierarchy was used to divide and conquer populations in the colonies, preventing them from uniting against their oppressors. By creating a system in which people of different races were put against each other, colonial power could maintain control with minimal resistance. In the Caribbean, this system of racial classification was known as the “caste system”, and it is used to categorize people of African descent, indigenous people of African descent, indigenous population, and people of mixed ancestry.

Do you see remnants of this in 21st-century America?

Yes! Racism and discrimination in education persist, leading to disparities in employment, and health outcomes for people of color. Addressing and dismantling these racial constructs and the systems of oppression that they perpetuate remains an ongoing challenge.

Reference:

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