The Racial Underpinning of Capital

For Marx, capital maximizes its profits through the rendering of abstract labor. Capital also maximizes its profit through the production of differences mark by race. Capital’s earliest renderings of the production of differences took the forms of Black slavery and the seizure of indigenous land. The transatlantic slave trade became the western world’s first multinational corporation responsible for the exportation of almost 12 million African to the so-called New World where they were sold as commodities on the slave market. The seizure of indigenous land involved the forced removal of 70,000 Native Americans to reservations beginning in the 1830s. This paper examines how the racial doctrine of “separate but equal” following slavery kept blacks within market reach of capital while also providing the socio-spatial structure needed for the continuous authentication of whiteness.