

American social sciences in general, both in the USA and in Latin America. Abrão shows how this skewed reading was used politically in Brazil, while Colom focuses on the traditional use of the concept of patrimonialism for Latin America. The two levels of abstraction must be interconnected in order to produce a productive critique of the use of Max Weber in American sciences.

This volume shows that Weber is still the most important thinker both for the construction of “American exceptionalism,” and then for the construction of the idea of USA as the „promised land“ of the ascetic Protestant and his supposed moral superiority; and, on the other hand, for the construction of the idea of the Latin Americans as an inferior and corrupt people. The “culturalistic” approach in US and in Latin America social sciences is still today dominated by the figure and the ideas of Max Weber. Patrimonialism, ascetic Protestantism, modernity, tradition are all terms from Weber’s work which were interpreted by the Americans and Latin Americans in very peculiar ways.

It is precisely this context that profoundly affects the Americas as a whole that the present collection of texts aims to help to clarify. To understand how Weber was used and misused by American and Latin American thinkers and readers is to understand the very scheme of continental domination and the role of ideas in it. Weber is significant both for the legitimation of the USA as a homeland of ascetic Protestantism and freedom, and also for condemning Latin American countries to the backwardness of patrimonialism and tradition. Reviewing these paradigms, decentring methodology and theory is a central objective of CALAS.

### **Author’s biography**

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Jessé de Souza is a Brazilian sociologist, professor at the Federal University of ABC, with research in the areas of inequality, social stratification and critical theory. He is a fundamental reference of contemporary Brazilian social thought, having published on political sociology, peripheral modernization theory and inequalities in contemporary Brazil. Among his recent works, stand out *A Construção Social da Subcidadania* (2006); *A ralé brasileira: quem é e como vive* (2009); *Os batalhadores brasileiros: Nova classe média ou nova classe trabalhadora?* (2010, 2012). More recently he published *A elite do atraso: Da escravidão à Lava Jato* (2017).