Introduction

1. Scott offers this term in contribution to wider debates within the anthropology of Christianity over what Christianity means in diverse cultural contexts, and how Christianity as a particular ideological system shapes people’s understanding of it, and their attempts to live out Christian beliefs (Barker 2003; Garriott and O’Neill 2008; Robbins 2004; Scott 2005). Working toward a rapprochement between the views of anti-essentialists and culture theorists, Scott argues for a nonmonolithic view of Christianity in which Christians engage simultaneously with multiple interlocking macro and micro Christian logics. A nonmonolithic view in which “whatever points of entrée people engage and re-engage with Christianity, they aspire to systematicity by following through the implications of Christian language, truth claims, and values” (2005: 102).

2. However, Cannell questions the notion that Christianity is exclusively a religion of transcendence, arguing that historically, theologically, and cross-culturally “transcendent” Christianity “was never unambiguously ‘other worldly,’” and even orthodox Christianity contained within it the shadows of its own alternative ways of thinking” (2006).


4. For paradox resulting from two opposing cultural traditions see, for example, Robbins (2004). Another interesting example is to be found in the work of Harris (2006) and Orta (2000, 2004). Where Harris depicts Bolivian Aymara as having to “hide” remnants of traditional culture from the Catholic institution, Orta explores the more recent adherence to an ideology of “inculturation,” in which the Aymara, to be true Christians, must strive to be more Indian.


7. An interesting exception is the work of Lyons (2001; 2005).

1 The Land and the People

1. 2000 census (www.world-gazetteer.com.)

2. In a detailed historical tracing of the concept of the Brazilian Northeast, Albuquerque (1999) has pointed out that it was only through certain specific historical developments that the concept of a “Northeast” became salient at all. During the nineteenth century, Northeastern regionalism began to take hold and the concept of the Northeast began to be romanticized in literature, defined by geographers, and intellectually objectified as having a particular history and character. See also Oliveira de Andrade (2000) for essays on the cultural and intellectual tradition of the region.

3. See, for example, Mitchell (1981).

4. For detail on the sociopolitical causes and consequences of drought in the Northeast, see Andrade (1980); Hall (1981); and Reis (1981). For an anthropological discussion of drought and its link to modern day sugar plantations see Scheper-Hughes (1992). For an account of how drought has impacted upon the region’s culture and become embedded in Northeastern identity see Arons (2004).


6. Some of the most classic and oft-televised novels of Jorge Amado (Gabriela, Cravo e Canela; Tieta do Nordeste; Dona Flor e Seus Dois Maridos) are set in the Brazilian Northeast, and play heavily upon the traditional “backwater” image of the region.

7. For more on the history of the Catholic Church in Brazil see Levine (1980), and Bruneau (1982). On historical and other aspects of folk and popular Catholicism within Brazil, see Azzi (1978) and Brun (1989).

8. For examples of popular works of literature, see the novel Cangaceiros by José Lins do Rego, and the various cordel poems dedicated to the lives and exploits of the famous sertanejo bandit Lampião and the mystic leader Padre Cícero. For examples of scholarly works on religious
mystics and messianic cults in the Northeast see da Cunha (1944); Levine (1992); Pessar (2004); and Slater (1986). For recent scholarly works on banditry and violence in the Northeast, see de Mello (2004); Freixinho (2003), who identifies religious fanaticism, violence, and banditry as the dominant influences on the history and culture of the *sertanejo*; and Marques (2002), who discusses the historical roots of violence in the *sertão* in relation to modern-day manifestations of violence and vendetta among *sertanejo* families.


10. For a detailed description of this kind of agricultural cycle and of the types of labor it involves, see Woortman and Woortman (1997).

11. The use of the term *agricultor* as an occupational description became widespread in the 1980s when state pensions would only be granted to rural people whose identity cards and marriage certificates registered this as their profession. Before this official amendment, women were more likely to define themselves as housewives and men would cite other types of occupation that they perceived as carrying more status than that of *agricultor*.


14. All place names and names of people have been changed to protect identities, with the exception of names of people who requested that their actual names be used.

2 **Marriage in Santa Lucia**

1. Related would include nieces and first cousins from either the mother’s or father’s side.

2. A similar finding is reported by Fukui among peasants of the Sertão (1979: 132).

3. The same practice is noted by Rebhun (1999).

4. With a motorbike a man is also thought to be freer to have sexual encounters with women other than his wife or girlfriend. Therefore wives in particular take a ubiquitously ambivalent attitude toward their husbands’ motorbikes: they appear to appreciate taking lifts on the back of them when in need of transport, but are constantly trying to persuade their husbands to sell them.


6. St Augustine’s doctrine of original sin fused sexuality and sin indissolubly in the imagination of the Christian West. He taught that in
the garden of Eden, married sex had been good—a part of God’s plan. After the Fall, sexuality became a sign of humanity’s inherent sinfulness and disobedience to God.

7. The contraceptive pill is readily available at the village health post, and sterilization operations are widely encouraged for women who already have two or three children.

8. The huge popular devotion within the Northeast of Brazil to the friar Freire Damião is a notable example.


3 The Bearing of Burdens: Suffering, Containment, and Healing

1. For interesting explorations of suffering that do not have gender as an overarching concern, see Asad (1983), Taussig (1987), and Scarry (1985) who, following Foucault (1975), have all observed a relation between pain and confessional discourse in the construction of the truth claims of a dominant institution. In so doing they remind us of the fact that pain as an institutional, juridical, and political idiom is a central social construct in many political cultures. While the focus of these theorists has been upon the painful domination and manipulation of the subject by institutions, others have revealed the subject’s use of pain in order to challenge and resist institutions (Bynum 1987; Caraveli 1986; Dubisch 1995; Seremetakis 1991). In this context, the techniques of domination and the techniques of resistance are characterized by the same problematic: the relationship between the force of suffering and the establishment of truth claims.

2. As Lutz and White point out, the social impact of emotional communication is based on moral inferences shared by social actors. Situated emotional expression can therefore be seen as a “language of the self” that generates and actively reproduces specific social structures and ideational configurations (1986: 417).

3. Following Bakhtin, a speech genre is not a form of language, but a typical form of utterance that corresponds to typical situations of speech communication, typical themes and also to “particular contacts between the meanings of words and actual concrete reality under certain typical circumstances” (1986: 87).

4. Such titles can also apply to men, a topic I discuss further in chapter four.

5. Evil eye is a folk affliction where people are made ill as a result of another’s envy (enveja). Symptoms include general weakness and loss of appetite. It is commonly cured through the prayer of a faith healer (rezador).

6. Of the eleven rezadores that I came to know, only two were men.
7. Certain contextual and sociohistorical differences deserve mention, such as the theological, liturgical, and practical variation between Greek Orthodox Christianity and Roman Catholicism in different parts of the world. In answer to this, I draw on the fact that both of these religions draw broadly upon the same cultural and biblical tradition and share many of the same rituals. As Dubisch herself observes, on the Greek Island of Tinos, Catholicism is felt to be “similar enough to Orthodoxy to be considered a Christian religion whereas Protestantism is not” (1995: 59). Points of theological variation aside, the focus in this chapter (as with much of the literature cited) is not on “official” religious outlook or institutionalized practice, but rather on folk rituals and perceptions.

8. Noting the tendency of Greek women to elaborate on topics of suffering and tribulation in the context of ordinary conversations, Dubisch came to view suffering as a “pervasive cultural expression” (1995: 214). Seremetakis (1991) and Caraveli (1986) observed in similar fashion, that women were just as fond of performing laments in nonritual contexts, such as whilst tending graves, and carrying out agricultural labor or domestic chores.


10. Dubisch, for example, takes lengthy issue with theorists such as Herzfeld who have regarded womanhood as tied unproblematically to “natural” biological processes and the “private” domestic realm and, thus, as not requiring the same public performance as manhood. Dramatic and articulate performance of womanhood is to be found, she argues, in various practices, but particularly within women’s ritual excursions: “Visiting the cemetery, attending a liturgy at a country church, going on a pilgrimage” (1995: 211). In addition to these, Dubisch cites biography encapsulated within the ritual process of lament performance, and women’s accounts about themselves as an example of narrative performance. Such accounts are not simply “personal,” she argues, they are about “being a woman” (1995: 212).

11. With the exception of Christian who points out that it is categorically adult, married women who are most likely to visit shrines and engage in “cycles of purification” (1972: 155).

12. While marriage and childbirth are intrinsically linked, it is interesting to note that married women who are childless are still labeled sofíedoras. This suggests that the link between suffering and marriage cannot be reduced to the “natural” experience of childbirth.

13. Christian use of the term ‘The Passion” describes what happened to Jesus at the end of his life, encapsulating the five sorrowful mysteries described in Mark’s Gospel as the agony in the garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14.32–42); the scourging (Mark 14.61–65; 15.1–15); the crowning with thorns (Mark 15.16–20); the carrying of the cross (Mark 15.21–25); and the crucifixion (Mark 15.25–39). In ordinary modern usage the word passion (paixão) means love (amor),
particularly love expressed in physical terms, or with great intensity. In Christian usage, the term “Passion” encompasses suffering, love, refusal to retaliate, and endurance (Hammond 2007: vii).


4 Working to Sweat: Labor, Narrative, and Redemption

1. For a wider historical overview of the concept of work in Europe, see Anthony (1977), Applebaum (1992), Beder (2000), and Bernstein (1997). For anthropological discussions on work, see for example the collection of essays contained in Wallman (1979). For an ethno-graphic discussion of work relating to Brazil, see Robben (1989).

2. It needs to be borne in mind that historically and up until the present day, peasants in many parts of the Northeastern interior favor a seminomadic existence based on itinerant agriculture, supplemented by hunting, gathering, and fishing. The mobility and inherent flexibility of this way of life enables a type of resistance to the imposition of wage labor and the low salaries and exploitative conditions that accompany it (Carvalho-Branco 1997: 31–32).

3. For a detailed description of this kind of agricultural cycle and of the types of labor it involves, see Woortman and Woortman (1997).


6. Authors of all songs cited are anonymous.

7. Woortman and Woortman (1997: 138–140) make a similar connection between the sexual reproductive life of couples and the reproductive life of crops. There is a symbolic connection made between the flowering crop in its “hottest” phase and the “hot” sexual appetite of women. It is observed that the roçado is analogous to the vagina. When a woman marries, she shaves her pubic hair, a process idiomatically described as “clearing forest” for her husband to “plant” in.

8. For an overview on moral attitudes to commerce in early Christian, Hebrew, Roman, and Greek philosophy, see Hengle (1974) and Beder (2000).

9. In the run up to the 2002 general election, Lula was a popular candidate among villagers because it was well known that he had lost a finger during his time as a metalworker in São Paulo. This, along with the fact that he was also known to have experienced hunger in
childhood, was taken as “proof” that he was a suffered trabalhador and would therefore make a caring and hard working president.

10. For more on the socioeconomic background affecting forms of rural labor in Brazil, see Correia de Andrade (1998); Garcia (1990); and Velho (1982).

11. All names and some details in the following accounts have been changed.

12. The doctrine of predestination is based upon the notion that God’s grace is a gift, not a reward. This means that God has selected some from the mass of fallen humanity who are predestined for salvation. For a fuller discussion, see McGrath (1997 [1994]: 449–451).

13. It is important to note, however, that although the attainment of wealth as a fruit of labor in a calling was a sign of God’s blessing, the pursuit of wealth as an end in itself was highly reprehensible. According to Weber, the Protestant-capitalist ethic involved the pursuit of profit for an end other than the goods, pleasure, and position it could buy. It stressed “worldly asceticism” through “restless, continuous, systematic work,” and the reinvestment of profits into business (Weber 1967: 157).

14. The debate can be traced back to the Pelagian controversy that drew attention to the question of whether salvation was a reward for good behavior, or a gift from God. Grace according to Augustine was God’s freely given and unmerited gift to humanity’s frail condition. In this view, sinners could not earn salvation, in that there was nothing that they could achieve or perform that would oblige God to reward them. For Pelagius, grace was understood as inhering in human faculties, thus supporting the view that humans could earn their salvation through their own achievements. In the late medieval period, the debate continued under the growing influence of voluntarism. Whereas for Aquinas, writes McGrath: “the divine intellect recognizes the inherent value of an action and rewards it accordingly,” the voluntarist approach placed the emphasis upon the divine will, such that “there was thus no direct link between the moral and meritorious value of a human action” (1997 [1994]: 436).

15. On Good Friday, drinking is theoretically prohibited. In reality, men continue to drink, but substitute beer and cane spirit for red wine.

16. See also Seremetakis (1991: 201–206), who observes that rural Greek women make an explicit connection between the pain of agricultural labor and the pain of loss through death.

5 Virtuous Husbands, Powerful Wives: Marriage and the Dangers of Power

1. Rebhun describes something similar when she posed the question to Northeast Brazilians “What does the word amor mean?” and received
answers that focused more on honest business practices, interpersonal respect, public obligations to support and protect the weak and courtesy in general, rather than on deep personal affection, intimate acquaintance, or sexual attraction (1996: 65–66).

2. The *sítio* denotes the land surrounding any one household on which animals are kept and fruits or garden produce grown. It does not include the *roçado*—land which is usually farther a field from the house, used for agriculture or pasture.

3. As parental obligation lies strictly with one’s children, parents habitually welcome their married daughters (and sons) back into their household when they are experiencing marital problems. In such situations, the young husband or wife’s affines have little power of persuasion to make them return. As such, it commonly falls to someone like a parent but slightly more removed such as a maternal aunt, to urge them back to their own house. Sinara, a young woman who had married two years before, was famous for the number of times she had returned. She had reportedly gone back to her parent’s house three times in the first year of her marriage, and in the end it was her maternal aunt who told her off for doing so.

4. For a detailed exploration of the sociopolitical history of the “honor defence” argument in Brazil, see Caulfied (2000).

5. In his critical reflections on the Mexican myths of La Malinche and the Virgin of Guadalupe, Paz (1988) links the devalued “openness” of women to a dominant “master narrative” of the Conquest. In this, it is women, through their openness to rape and marriage, who lay themselves bare to the power and force of European conquistadors. La Malinche was the Indian woman who was given to Hernán Cortés in tribute after he had defeated Indians on the coast of Tabasco in 1519. According to various authors on the topic (Paz 1988), Malinche has come to symbolize the Conquest and the form of the “encounter” between the Spanish invaders and the subjugated native populations. The Virgin of Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego (a converted Indian) in 1531. In the myth, she leads her people, through her suffering and sacrifice, to victory. Hence taken together, both myths attempt to come to terms with the past and the future through the idioms of sexuality, loyalty, and betrayal.

6. *Respeito* is a much used concept in Santa Lucia, the consensus being that one must treat with *respeito* even people who do not have *respeito* for you. For an interesting and resonant exploration of this concept in relation to religious practice and political process among Quichua speakers in highland Ecuador see Lyons (2001; 2005).

7. Although wife murder is relatively infrequent, husbands who desert their families to start up a new life elsewhere are quite common.

8. In 1985 the Conselho Nacional dos Direitos da Mulher (National Council on Women’s Rights) was established in Brazil and a system of “integrated services” was put in place that included the creation of
shelters and new institutions to provide legal and psychological services to victims of domestic and sexual violence (Alvarez 1990).

6 From Innocence to Knowledge

1. On the historical link between children and larger sociopolitical orders, see Szuchman (1988), who argues that children have been vital to Argentinian notions of authority and nationhood, and Del Priori (1999) for treatment of Latin American children in relation to labor, crime, maritime history, and other topics.

2. In theory, older boys should attend church as regularly as girls do. But as men tend to participate far less in official church activities than women, in practice, boys face less pressure.

3. See, for example, DaMatta (1985), who has interpreted the Brazilian carnival as a rite of “disorder” that functions to challenge and invert social hierarchy.

4. The rezadeira has absorbed the evil. Her purity cancels it out which is why it will not, in turn, afflict her. It is important to note, however, that people always stress that theoretically she might become afflicted. In a way, this contributes toward the sense of danger healing holds, and the sacrifice healing involves of the self, on behalf of others. This is how such healers earn their respect.

5. There were various stories of this type. For example, one revolved around the first time a car arrived in the village and how the men, thinking it was some sort of strange beast, started beating it with sticks. Another common version concerned misunderstandings over first sightings of airplanes, in which husbands and wives, thinking the end of the world is nigh, run home to confess to one another their adulterous affairs and other misdemeanors. All such stories suggest, in different ways, a moment of loss of innocence.

6. For a comprehensive summary of practice and performance based theories of ritual, see Bell (1997: 72–79).

Conclusion

1. This challenges the argument put forward by Hubert and Mauss that sacrificial practices are dependent on the presence of an intermediary: “we know that with no intermediary, there is no sacrifice” (1964: 100). According to this line of reasoning, the fact that in most ritual sacrifices the victim is distinct from the sacrifier and the god is important because it separates while uniting them: “they draw close to each other, without giving themselves to each other entirely” (1964: 100). The exception to this, they argue, is the sacrifice of the god, who is at the same time the sacrifier, is one with the victim and sometimes even with the sacrifier. Such mixing is possible, they state, “only for mythical, that is, ideal beings” (1964: 101).
2. I do not utilize Durkheim’s distinction between impurity and profanity as this is not a feature of local thought. Santa Lucian people do not make a clear distinction between impurity as an active violation of the sacred as opposed to profanity as being merely outside the sacred system or beyond it.
Bibliography


BIBLIOGRAPHY


Index

Adam and Eve, biblical story of, see Genesis
adultery, 112, 137
affinity, 61–62
  in cases of ‘speech games’, 163
agreste, 17, 23, 24
alcoholism, 111–112
amor, see love
andocentric, bias in ethnographic literature, 9, 86
anti-clericalism, 9, 31, 62
Antonio Conselheiro, 24
asceticism
  as alternative to marriage, 62–64
  as Christian stereotype, 5
  medieval, 118, see also Bynum, Caroline Walker
  popular mistrust of, 63
techniques-of-the-self, 89, 90, 116
backlands, the, 23–25
bachelor, 62
Bakhtin, Mikhail, 90
bandits, 24
barraca, 25, see also alcoholism
Behar, Ruth, 69
Bible, 32
body, the
  bodiliness of Christ, 117
  closed body, 74
  as container, 74–84
  open body, 74, 78, see also peito aberto
ritual closing of, 76, 78, see also reza de parto
bricks, see house
Briggs, Jean, 165
Burdick, John, 103
Bynum, Caroline Walker, 114, 116, 117, 118
Cannell, Fenella, 3, 117, 129, 183 n 2
carnival, 31
casa de farinha, 19, 25, 26–27, 28, 36, 54, 134
casamento de matuto, 30, 165–172
catechism, 29
cattle
cattlemen, 20, 23
cattle rearing, 20, 23
ranches, 20
celebração da palavra, 30
chá de cozinha, 51
chapel, local, 29, 157–158
child
  in Christian discourses, 173
  in protectionist discourse, 173
  in Santa Lucia, 147
Christ
  depiction of, 35, 88
  emulation of, 32, 34, 72, 114–115, 118
  physicality of, 115–119

Christianity
- anthropology of, 3–5
- and conversion, 4, 5
- language of, 2–5, 183 n 3
- mythology of, 33

Christmas, 30

Churching of women, 79

Colonisation
- of Brazilian Northeast, 21, 23
- see also land

Commerce, see negócio

Confession, 29, 58, 59

Contraception, 45–46, 59, 186 n 7

Cosmology, western, 2

Courtship, 43–51

crénte, see Pentecostalism

dancing, 46–47

dating, see courtship

death, 7, 59
- as social, 137, 143–144
- suicide, 75
- see also Violence

Dependency
- peasant resistance to, 25
- see also patron-client relations

devil, the, 33
- see also evil

dichotomy
- ‘dichotomous women’ and ‘continuous men’, 141
- of spirit – flesh, 5, 116–119

Difference
- as gender trope, 9–12

Disjuncture
- of moral values, see moral: paradox
- worldly, 7

distance
- between human and divine, 32, 116
- and direction of movement toward/away from divine, 180–181
- see also ‘problem of presence’
- ‘doleful abyss’, 2, 6, 7, 14, 36, 181
- see also theology

drought, 7, 21, 22, 28, 68, 71

Dubisch, Jill, 187 nn 8, 10

Durkheim
- ‘Durkheimian problematic’, 5

Eade, John and Michael Sallnow, 91–92

Easter, 30, 31

Elaborated suffering
- definition of, 68
- discussion of within literature, 68–69, 85–87, 187 n 8
- see also suffering

Emotions
- cultural nature of, 69–70
- as spiritual challenge, 60

Engelke, Matthew, 4, 7

Equivalence, see unity

Evil, 33

Evil eye, see mau olhado

Fall, biblical notion of, 2, 33, 131

Farinha, 19, 27

Fatherhood, 112–114
- in definition of a ‘family’, 136
- see also love

Fazenda, 17, 21, 24

Fazendeiro, 24, 28
- see also cattle

Femininity, concept of, 8, 9

Feminist theories in anthropology of Latin America, 8, 9, 69, 144, 145–146

Festas, 30, 46
- see also saint’s days of São Pedro and São João 30, 46, 165, 167

Festivals, religious, see festas

First communion, 156

Forró, see dancing

Freedom, of moral choice, 5, 7

Freyre, Gilberto, 22

Gender
- antagonism, 8, 9, 11, 69, 123, 140–141, 145
of anthropologist and effect on fieldwork, 37–38
as difference, 8, 114, 145–146
in ethnography of Catholic societies, 8–9, 187 n 10
in ethnography of Latin American societies, 8–11, 68–69
as symbolic construct, 10, 11, 34, 146
gendered
division of labor, 8, 132
morality, 10, 139–141
Genesis, 33, 34, 114, 150
gift, 9, 90–92
Gow, Peter, 4, 81
Holy Communion, 30
Holy Week, 31
see also Easter
honor
honor killings in Latin American societies, 139–141
honor-shame complex in Santa Lucia, 142
house
building, 47–50
ownership, 137
household
kinship structure of, 44
percentage data for Santa Lucia, 25–27
Hubert and Mauss, 91, 178, 179, 191 n 1
innocence, 3, 152–155, 191 n 5
and ignorance, 158–159
see also matuto
Jesuit Missionaries, 23
Juazeiro do Norte, see pilgrimage, local forms of
Judeo-Christian models within Western anthropology, 3
knowledge
in a ‘productive life’, 5, 131
types of, 150–151
labor, see work and ideology, 96–97
Laidlaw, James, 89
Lambek, Michael, 125, 126
Lampeão, see bandits
land
average size of holdings in Santa Lucia, 28–29
colonisation of backlands, 23
and latifúndio system, 21, 24
unequal distribution of, 21
Leibovich, Anna, 115
liberation theology, 12, 101–103
‘logical trajectory,” 3
love
agape, 126
and fathers, 112–113
in marriage, 138, see also respect and power, 126–127
iconoclasm, in Protestant tradition, 3–4
identity, social
of Santa Lucian people, 19–20, 27, 185 n 11
sofredor as label of, 73
trabalhador as label of, 104–105
see also matuto
indigenous peoples, of Northeast Brazil, see Tupinamba
infidelity, see adultery
madonna, see Virgin Mary
‘& whore complex’, 140
malandragem, 159, 160
manioc, 26, see also casa de farinha
Marianismo, 68–69
Marriage, 7
advice and spiritual preparation for, 39, 52, 134, 136
pitfalls of, 53–62, 139
pleasures of, 41, 59
machiismo, 13, see also masculinity
Marriage—Continued
politics of being ‘unmarried
anthropologist’, 39, 41
preferences, 45
sacred character of, 42
masculinity, 8, 9, 50, 55, 111
in theoretical approach of
Melhuus, 140
mass, 30, 31
Mater Dolorosa, 85, see also
elaborated suffering
matuto, 20, 166–167
mau olhado, 74, 78, 81, 186 n 5
Melhuus, Marit, 10, 123,
140–141
messianic movements, 23
migration
drought, 22, 28
labor, 25, 28, 61–62
moral
accountability, 58
paradox, 2, 6, 7, 183 n 4; and
paradox of affinity, 61
personhood, 8, 58
transgression, 2, 8, 13, 64–65,
109–112, 119, 139
morality
anthropological theories of, 5–6
and children, 148–149
‘of freedom’, 6, 88–90
physical embodiment of, 115–119
‘of reproduction’, 5–6
as type of play, 165
motherhood, 76–80, 136
see also suffering
motorbikes, see transport
mutirão, 50–51

narrative, 88
see also suffering and labor
negócio, 60–61, 154
Northeast, the
concept of, 20, 184 n 2
division from south, 21
structural subordination of, 12, 22
novena, 29
orgulho, see pride
Original Sin, 173, 174
other worldly, see transcendence
Padre Cicero, 24, 31
parable
biblical, of the camel and the eye
of a needle, 130
of loaves and fishes, 35
knowledge of, 32, 34, 35, 130
moral, of marital relations, 144
paradox, moral
in anthropology of religion, 2–5
in lives of Santa Lucians, 7–8, 14, 15
Parry, Jonathan, 91, 116
Passion, the, 33, 187 n 13
as template for human existence,
34
patriarchy
as analytical term, 13
in social structure, 12–14
patron-client relations, 22, 28–29,
127–128, 129
peasant
farmers of Northeast, 25–28
‘peasantariat’, 25
peito aberto, 75–76
Pentecostalism, 29, 32, 34
personhood, 8
pilgrimage, local forms of, 31
Pina Cabral, João de, 5, 42
plantation system, see sugarcane
play, 159–161
in casamento de matuto, 168–171
as creation of ‘ethical identities’,
172–173
and potential for sin, 159, 160
post-partum prayer ritual see reza
de parto
poverty
in Northeast Brazil, 7, 21
power, 12–14
analytical concept of, 141
and ‘knowledge’, 129–132,
142–143
in legal structure, 144
INDEX 211

local concept of, 125–132
and love, 126–128
men’s over women, 13, 123–125
and pride, 128–129
prefeitura, 28, 152, 169
pregnancy, 76
pride, 126, 128–129, 134, 151
priest, 29, 126
sermons by, 31, 33, 100, 156
priesthood
as alternative to marriage, 62
see also asceticism
‘problem of presence’, 4
promessa, see votive offerings
Protestantism
anthropology of; 3–4, 7
in contrast to Catholicism, 7
see also Christianity, the
anthropology of;
Pentecostalism

Ranch Owners, 24, 28
representation, anthropological
politics of, 39
respect, 190 n 6
between generations, 164
in marriage, 138
between parents and children, 44, 155
responsibility
absence of for young, 43–45
financial, in marriage, 55–56
moral, see morality
social, in marriage, 53
retirantes, see migration
reza de parto, 78–79
rezador/rezadeira, 76, 81–84, 164,
165, 179, 191 n 4
risk, in relation to marriage, 41,
52–53, 58
Robbins, Joel, 5, 6, 148–149
rosary, 29, 30, 31

sacred geography, 5
sacrifice, 90, 115, 119, 178–181,
191 n 1
see also suffering, and sacrificial
discourse
Sahlins, Marshall, 2–3, 181
saint
saint’s days of São Pedro and São
João, 30, 46, 165, 167
sameness
as cultural value and moral-
ontological concept, 11
of moral outlook, see unity
Satan, see devil, the
Scheper-Hughes, Nancy, 22
Scott, Michael, 3, 5, 183 n 1
seca, see drought
self-awareness
local concept of, 131
relation to evil, 152
relation to knowledge, 131, 132,
151, see also knowledge
seminomadic lifestyle, 25, 188 n 2
semisubsistence agriculture, 25
Seremetakis, Nadia, 86, 189 n 16
sertão, 20, 23–24
literature on, 184–185 n 8
and sertanejo, 24, 184–185 n 8
sex
and agricultural work, 103–104,
188 n 7
before marriage, 45–46
differences in sexual
appetite, 137
as knowledge, 151
within marriage, 59–60, 185 n 4
sharecropping, 17, 22, 24, 25, 62
and shared livestock rearing, 26
sin, 59, 77, 103–104
see also moral: paradox; sex;
transgression; Violence
slavery, 22, 23
and labor ideology, 96–97
social inequality, 7
sofredor/sofredora, see suffering as
identity label
‘speech games’, 161–165
speech genre, 71, 72
spinster, 62
spirit-flesh dichotomy, see dichotomy
spiritual
challenge, 7, 14
conflict, 14
healer/healing, see rezador/rezadeira
vitality, 14
‘stable conflict’, 6, 148
status, social
change in after marriage, 55
spiritual, change in after marriage, 58
Stølen, Kristi Anne, 10, 123
Strathern, Marilyn, 11, 124, 146
suffering
as age related, 87
in daily conversation, 71–72
in Dona Lourdes’ narrative, 70–71
effects on the body, 74, 75
as identity label, 73–74
as idiom of containment, 74–84
and labor, 115-116
of the Northeast, 22
and sacrificial discourse, 84, 88–92, 117
as skill, 74–75
in Tia Ana’s life, 67–68
as type of exchange, 90, 92, 189 n 14, see also gift
voluntaristic character of, 90, see also morality, ‘of freedom’
sugarcane, 22
suicide, see death

tenant farming, 23, 24
theology
Calvinist, 110
Catholic, 11
legacy of in human sciences, 2–3
local discussions and versions of, 31–36, 152–153
trabalhador/eira
as identity title, 104–105, 188–189 n 9
trabalho, see work
transcendence, 3, 183 n 2
transgression, see moral
transport, 49–50, 56
Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, see Genesis
trousseau, 51
Tupinamba, 23
unity
essential nature of all persons, 11–12
of moral concerns, 142, 145–146
Valeri, Valerio, 179, 180
Via Sacra procession, 31
Violence
husbands toward wives, 11, 121–125, 134, 135, 190 n 8
men toward families, 109
socio-economic and structural, 12, see also Northeast
of wives toward husbands, 137
virginity, 45–46, 62, 78
Virgin Mary, 9, 79–80, 85, 91
votive offerings, 30
wage labor, 25–26
Warner, Marina, 79
Weber, Max, 110, 189 n 13
wedding
feast and preparation, 51–52
‘shotgun wedding’, see casamento de matuto
work
gendered division of, see gender
historical associations of, 96–97
local definitions of, 98–100
narratives of, 104–109
and religious discourse, 100–103, see also liberation theology
and sin, 103–104
types of within Santa Lucia, 25–28
youth, 43–45
moral status of, 157–159
zona da mata, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23