



Are we all equal? Religion and income in Census 2010

Somos todos iguais? Religião e renda no Censo 2010

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Abstract

This article discusses the long-held theory in the Social Sciences that there would be a predilection of Pentecostals for poor people. At other times, there was, indeed, and this was part of its constitutional process as a recent religion in need to find room to expand in major urban hubs. However, through the years, this predilection has changed and Pentecostalism got into other income social strata, gaining ground and strength. Attention to poorer people, those with an income lower than 1 minimum wage, was not overlooked and assistance to individuals who are within the income strata ranging from 1 to 2 minimum wages has gained ground in its temples, in addition to other individuals, who are wealthier. The Catholic Church, in turn, while seeing its believers walking out the door of its churches, invested in this segment, poor people, and took upon itself the task of dealing with them. Ten years have passed since Census 2000 and, today, looking at data from the census count in 2011, it is virtually impossible to distinguish, regarding their distribution in the various income strata, Catholics and Pentecostals.

Keywords: Census 2010. Religion. Income. Pentecostalism. Catholicism.

Resumo

Este artigo discute a tese há muito defendida nas Ciências Sociais de que haveria um predileção dos pentecostais pelos pobres. Em outros tempos, houve mesmo, e isso fez parte de seu processo constituinte enquanto uma religião recente que precisava encontrar espaço para se expandir nos grandes centros urbanos. Contudo, com o passar dos anos, essa predileção foi mudando e o pentecostalismo adentrou outros estratos sociais de renda, ganhando espaço e força. O cuidado com os mais pobres, aqueles com renda inferior a 1 salário-mínimo, não foi deixado de lado e ganhou espaço em seus templos o atendimento a indivíduos que se situam nos estratos de renda que vão de 1 a 2 salários-mínimos, além de outros indivíduos, mais abastados. A Igreja Católica, por sua vez, ao mesmo tempo que via seus fiéis saindo pela porta de suas igrejas, investiu nesse segmento, os pobres, e tomou para si a lide com estes. Dez anos se passaram desde o Censo de 2000 e, hoje, olhando para os dados da contagem censitária de 2011, torna-se praticamente impossível diferenciar, no que se refere à sua distribuição nos diferentes estratos de renda, católicos e pentecostais.

Palavras-chave: Censo de 2010. Religião. Renda. Pentecostalismo. Catolicismo.

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Introduction

Some beliefs on religions in Brazil deserve to be discussed in the light of data from the Demographic Census 2010 and its occasional comparison to data from the penultimate official survey of statistical data, namely, the Demographic Census 2000. According to data collected in 2010, recently released, it became impossible to support the argument that Pentecostalism attracts more believers among the lower income groups. In comparative terms, there are fewer differences in income between the overall population and the set of Catholic and Pentecostal population than the discrepancy in wage levels between the overall population and that which declared itself as Spiritualist.

The relationship between the sociological phenomenon of Pentecostal growth and poverty is continuously debated. We think, following clues from various authors who reviewed the relevant literature, such as, for instance, Almeida (2009, p. 41-45), that the first interpretive key for this phenomenon was based on a functionalism rooted in the concept of anomie. The move to Pentecostalism would be, from this view, like a damping during a crisis phase, marked by poverty and population migration towards big cities.

At first, until the 1970s, sociologists of religion sought to interpret what is the general sense of the growth of Pentecostal effervescence in Latin America. Theoretical discussions, in general terms, were influenced by modernization theories inspired by readings of Émile Durkheim and Max Weber's work, especially Weber (2004), and, to a lesser extent, by the "dominant Marxism" in the academy during the 1960s and 70s. In the beginning, people asked what was the role of Pentecostalism in face of the dilemmas of underdevelopment, whether it would have a modernizing role concerning social relations as the historic Protestantism had someday or it was only an element for strengthening and accommodating the capitalist ideologies among the poorest groups (the North American origin of the movement reinforced this thesis).

To date, explanations in terms of lack (of rationality, modernization, or secularism) or imbalance (caused by inequality between rich and poor, boosted by rural exodus) are used to account for the Pentecostal growth among the poorest social strata¹.

Intensified case studies in Pentecostal communities led the central theses to be relativized. On the one hand, it was found that it was difficult to fit the phenomenon in the current theoretical dichotomies. The rationalization of social relations would not necessarily imply development towards a liberal society, and it could even strengthen family and traditional ties. The emergence of the Brazilian Neopentecostalism in the late 1970s (especially the Universal Church of the Kingdom of God), as a Pentecostal “third wave” (FREESTON, 1994), also led to the emergence of a wave of new objects into the theory that extends until now. The relationships between religion, the media, and politics (CORTEN, 1997), as well as the tension created in the religious field by Neopentecostal agents, among them Oro (1997), were incorporated as themes of importance by the social scientists of religion.

The relationship between Pentecostalism and poverty also remained under discussion. Mariano (2005, p. 12), citing data from the survey “New Birth”, by the Higher Institute of Religious Studies, conducted in the mid-1990s, points out that “compared to the overall population, the income and education level of Pentecostals are very lower”. It is certain, too, that the Brazilian reality in these 10 years between one census and the other has changed, that the poorest people had some progress in their income through an actual increase or their inclusion in government programs and policies aimed at income generation, and we do not put this into question. What we put into discussion is the thesis claiming that there is, historically, a certain predilection on the part of Pentecostals for the poor people – when comparing the national income distribution and that of other religions to data concerning the Pentecostal segment; today, this thesis, in face of a comparative analysis of the last

¹ The limitations of this traditional model of analysis were exposed for Algranti (2009) and Robbins (2004).

two censuses, 2000 and 2010, no longer holds, because, as discussed over the text, when verifying the income levels, the discrepancy between national data and those related to Pentecostals become difficult to support.

Some data revealed by Census 2010 had already been calculated in the community of those who study religion in Brazil some years ago. The decreased number of Catholics, in face the increased number of Evangelicals and those who regard themselves as with no religion, has always been considered by analysts as something expected (FRESTON, 2010). However, some new elements have emerged in the census' sample, which will probably be the subject of investigation in the coming years. Data signalize, in our view, an increased fragmentation within the Evangelical environment², besides raising aspects not yet thought through on income and spatial distribution of religions. Some of these considerations may be relevant for analyzing data in the states. We take cases in the Brazilian states of Goiás and Rio Grande do Sul, insofar as they may be relevant for further research.

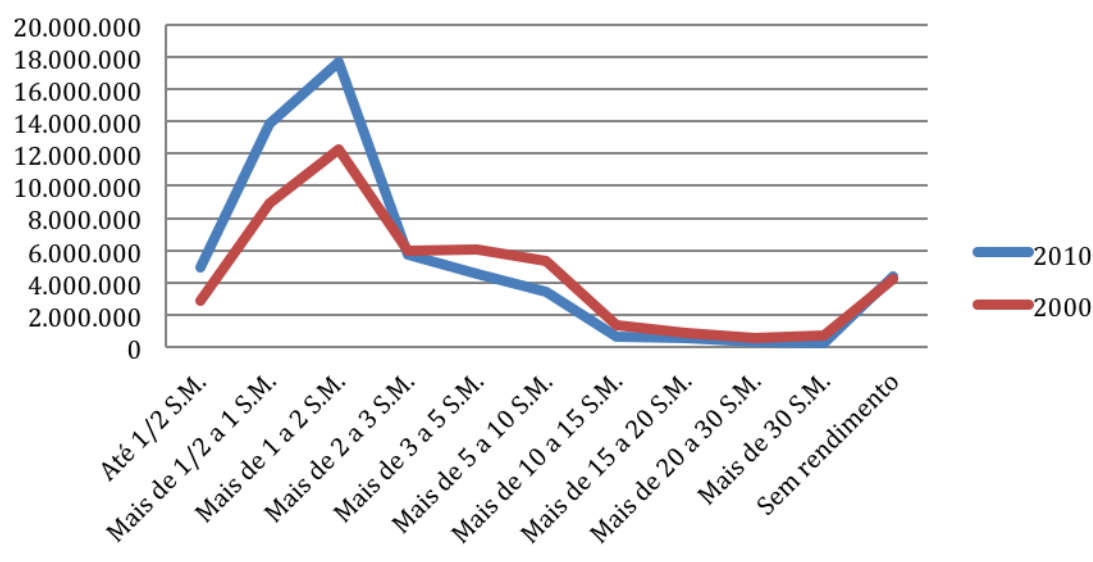
1 Some considerations on the national scope

At the national level, data from Census 2010 show that, increasingly, the socioeconomic profile of those belonging to churches of Pentecostal origin gets close to the profile traditionally attributed to Catholicism and that, keeping the respective proportions between them, their usual distribution when plotted on a graph, does not allow distinguishing which curve represents Catholics or Pentecostals. We compared the income profiles observed in Census 2000 to those of Census 2010. Although the minimum wage rose from R\$ 151.00 in 2000 to R\$ 510.00 in 2010, the number of individuals who earn from 1 to 2 minimum wages significantly increased both among Catholics and those of Pentecostal origin.

² See Alves (2012).

Regarding Catholics, although the number of individuals receiving up to 2 minimum wages increased about 50%, rising from around 12 million people in 2000 to almost 18 million in 2010; among those who are in the wealthier strata, what is observed is a gradual drop in their income profile, especially among those earning between 3 and 15 minimum wages, stratum where this decrease is more abrupt, as shown in Graph 1.

Graph 1: Income distribution, in minimum wages, among those who, in censuses 2000 and 2010, declared themselves as Catholics (unit of analysis: Brazil).

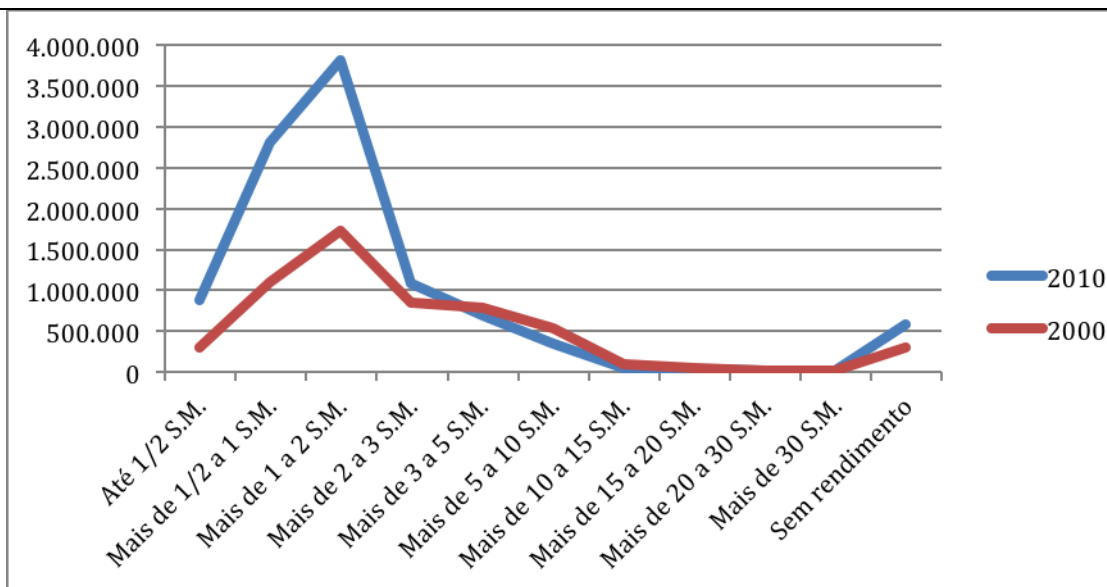


Source: Prepared by the authors.

Regarding the segment of Pentecostal origin, as shown in Graph 2, the curve of income follows the same pattern with a small difference from Catholics, namely, that the upward curve of income between those who earn from 1 to 2 minimum wages is much more marked and that, contrary to the Catholic growth, they more than doubled

the number of those who are in this income segment, rising from about 1.8 million people who earned this income in Census 2000 to just over 3.8 million in 2010 something which denotes a growth of 105% in the number of those who, today, when compared to 2000, started being part of this segment.

Graph 2: Income distribution, in minimum wages, among those who, in censuses 2000 and 2010, declared themselves as Pentecostals (unit of analysis: Brazil).



Source: Prepared by the authors.

Another interesting question that must be addressed lies on the fact that there was virtually no impoverishment of other strata located in other segments that earn a higher income, as occurs among Catholics. This finding, in addition to denote some closeness between the income profiles of those who make up the Catholic and Pentecostal segments and put into question the “option” of Pentecostalism for the

poor, also, somehow, point out the pathways that, at least nationally, follow the Brazilian religious transit, so that, by comparing the upward income curves shown in graphs 1 and 2 for 2010 to those for 2000, we see that, at least visually, the direction of those who leave Catholicism is the same that sets the growth boundaries in the Pentecostal segment, thus, besides gaining new believers in every census count, they show no significant changes within the various income strata, keeping, from a census to another one, the same performance and income distribution curve among their believers.

Table 1: Comparison between the number of those who declared themselves as Catholics and Pentecostals, by income stratum, in minimum wages, in the census counts of 2000 and 2010, in Brazil

| Income stratum | Catholics | | | Pentecostals | | |
|-------------------------|------------|------------|-----------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| | 2010 | 2000 | Balance 1 | 2010 | 2000 | Balance 2 |
| Up to ½ MW | 4,948,923 | 2,854,893 | 2,094,030 | 880,025 | 312,283 | 567,742 |
| From ½ to 1 MW | 13,891,871 | 8,952,843 | 4,939,028 | 2,811,546 | 1,111,558 | 1,699,988 |
| From 1 to 2 MW | 17,715,805 | 12,263,132 | 5,452,673 | 3,809,450 | 1,732,769 | 2,076,681 |
| From 2 to 3 MW | 5,794,205 | 6,001,839 | -207,634 | 1,083,734 | 857,398 | 226,336 |
| From 3 to 5 MW | 4,553,364 | 6,063,724 | -1,510,360 | 688,772 | 789,163 | -100,391 |
| From 5 to 10 MW | 3,432,601 | 5,300,654 | -1,868,053 | 352,524 | 543,259 | -190,735 |
| From 10 to 15 MW | 663,637 | 1,348,324 | -684,687 | 45,952 | 97,149 | -51,197 |
| From 15 to 20 MW | 541,509 | 881,727 | -340,218 | 29,853 | 50,378 | -20,525 |
| From 20 to 30 MW | 302,265 | 507,695 | -205,430 | 13,715 | 22,165 | -8,450 |
| More than 30 MW | 207,284 | 706,867 | -499,583 | 9,691 | 27,653 | -17,962 |
| No income | 4,366,282 | 4,199,366 | 166,916 | 579,241 | 311,215 | 268,026 |
| SUBTOTAL | 56,419,756 | 49,083,064 | 7,336,692 | 10,306,513 | 5,856,990 | 4,449,523 |

Source: Prepared by the authors.

* Positive balance indicates a gain of believers in the income stratum.

** Negative balance indicates a loss of believers in the income stratum.

This becomes even more evident when we look at the absolute numbers (Table 1), where we notice that the Pentecostal growth and the maintenance of its performance and profile of income distribution is directly linked to the losses of believers suffered by Catholicism, so that the number of believers who leave Catholicism is almost equal to the number of those who, from 2000 to 2010, started being accounted among those who make up the religious segment of Pentecostal origin.

Table 2: Comparison between the growth rates of the number of those who declared themselves as Catholics and Pentecostals, by income stratum, in minimum wages, in the census counts of 2000 and 2010, in Brazil

| Income stratum | Catholic growth rate | Pentecostal growth rate |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Up to ½ MW | 42.3 | 64.5 |
| From ½ to 1 MW | 35.6 | 60.5 |
| From 1 to 2 MW | 30.8 | 54.5 |
| From 2 to 3 MW | -3.6 | 20.9 |
| From 3 to 5 MW | -33.2 | -14.6 |
| From 5 to 10 MW | -54.4 | -54.1 |
| From 10 to 15 MW | -103.2 | -111.4 |
| From 15 to 20 MW | -62.8 | -68.8 |
| From 20 to 30 MW | -68.0 | -61.6 |
| More than 30 MW | -241.0 | -185.3 |
| No income | 3.8 | 46.3 |

Source: Prepared by the authors.

* Positive growth rates indicate a gain of believers in the income stratum.

** Negative growth rates indicate a loss of believers in the income stratum.

Furthermore, regarding the fragmentation of the Catholic and Pentecostal segments, the data presented in Table 2 indicate that:

- a) in the first two income strata, those earning up to 2 minimum wages, Pentecostalism has obtained the highest percentage growth, but, nevertheless, it is Catholicism that, in absolute numbers, had a higher growth, showing its greater predilection for those in the lower income strata, since this growth in the number of believers is four times higher (around 12 million believers) than that observed among Pentecostals (around 3 million believers);
- b) among those earning between 2 and 3 minimum wages there was a higher growth among Pentecostals, indicating the existence of an upward curve that denotes an increase in the average income of the Pentecostal believer within the segment itself, and, among Catholics, no growth was observed in this income stratum, so that they even lost believers;
- c) still concerning the income stratum between 2 and 3 minimum wages, the 3.6% loss of Catholic believers corresponds to slightly less than the 20.9% gain in the number of believers found out among Pentecostals, as shown by the numbers highlighted in bold in Table 1;
- d) among those who earn between 3 and 5 minimum wages, in both cases, there was a decreased number of believers, but it will also be Catholicism that accounts for the highest losses of believers in the income stratum, and, in percentage terms, this corresponds to a loss among Catholics that is little more than twice that observed among Pentecostals;
- e) in the income segments above 5 minimum wages, namely, those who earn between 5 and 10, 10 and 15, and 15 and 20 minimum wages, losses in the number of believers in each of these strata are almost the same, and those among Pentecostals are often higher than those observed among Catholics, however, never above about 10% of that observed in the other segment;
- f) among those who earn between 20 and 30 minimum wages, Catholics accounted the highest losses, which are around 10% higher than those observed among Pentecostals;

- g) in the highest income stratum, of those who earn more than 30 minimum wages, despite losses in the number of believers are significant and higher than those observed in the other income strata – something which implies a decrease from 60% to 80% in the number of believers who are located in this stratum – it will be Catholicism that accounts for the highest losses, these, in percentage, 30% higher than those observed among Pentecostals;
- h) although the percentage growth in the number of Pentecostal believers who are among those declaring to have no income is about 12 times higher than that observed among Catholics, in absolute numbers, this growth shows to be much lower, since the 3.6% growth observed among Catholics corresponds to just over 166,000 believers, while among Pentecostals these 46.3% account just over 268,000 faithful, that is, a difference of just over 100,000 believers between them; and, finally,
- i) still regarding the previous item, if we account only absolute numbers in the census count conducted in 2010, the number of Catholic believers situated in the income stratum regarded as with no income is about 7.5 times higher than that accounted among Pentecostals.

From this we conclude that, nationally, although the performance of both segments shows certain congruence with regard to loss and gain of believers in the various income strata in percentage terms, it will be Catholicism that, in absolute numbers, presents a greater predilection for social strata located in the lower income groups.

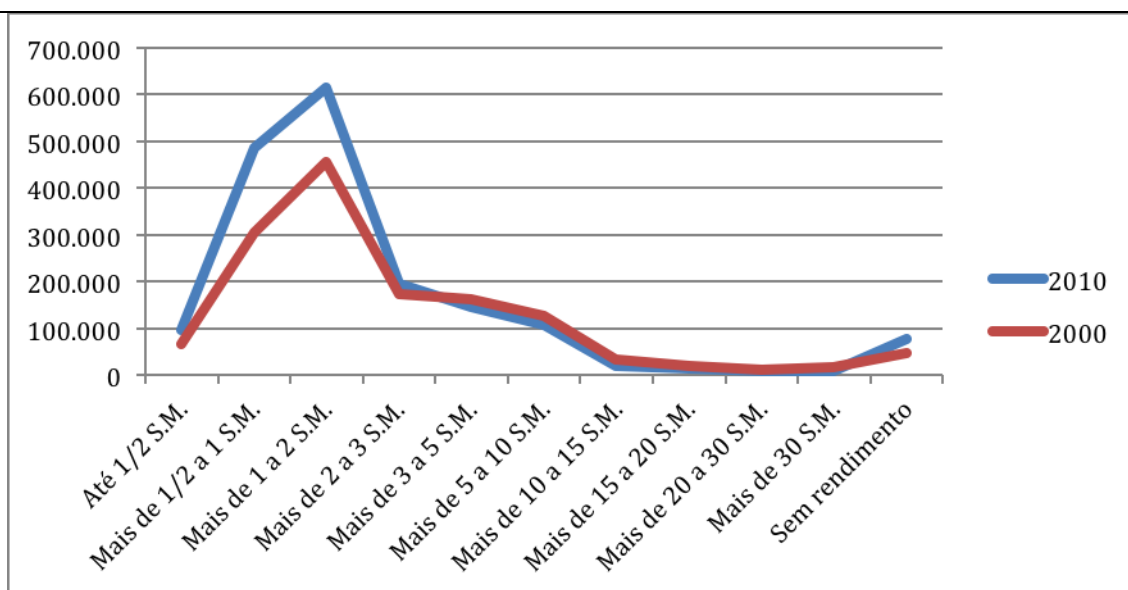
To this we add that, among those situated in higher income strata, it will also be Catholicism that accounts the higher losses. Now, the question is, as we are going to see in the following items, if, when we delimit the unit of our analysis to the states of Rio Grande do Sul and Goiás, as well as to their capital cities, namely, Porto Alegre and Goiânia, this predilection of Catholics for poorer people remains.

2 The case of the state of Goiás

Regarding the state of Goiás, a movement similar to that observed nationally as for Catholics is present. However, the variation between the distal points for each of the years when the census counts were performed, 2000 and 2010, is lower than that observed for the country, insofar as, in the stratum where those earning from 1 to 2 minimum wages are located, the growth in the number of believers is around 30% in this unit of the Federation, which, in 2000, had around 457,000 believers and that, in 2010, started accounting just over 614,000 believers, while nationally this growth in that stratum was around 50%, as we have seen.

Another highlight is the fact that, also in the higher income strata, little or no variation was observed, so that additions and losses in the number of believers in the state of Goiás do not follow, to a large extent, the national trend, remaining relatively stable in both census counts with which we are concerned here, as shown in Graph 3.

Graph 3: Income distribution, in minimum wages, among those who, in censuses 2000 and 2010, declared themselves as Catholics (unit of analysis: Goiás).



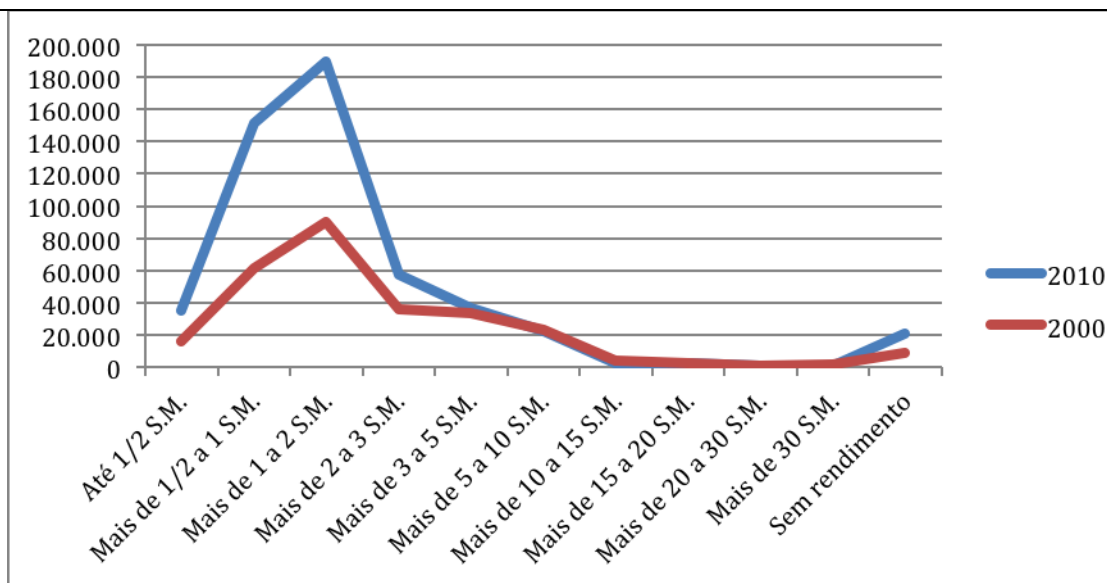
Source: Prepared by the authors.

In the case of the Pentecostal segment, the national trend is also present in the lower income strata. Among those earning from 1 to 2 minimum wages, the growth observed is almost the same. In turn, regarding the immediately subsequent stratum, those who earn from 2 to 3 minimum wages, its growth in the state of Goiás is twice higher in percentage than that observed for this segment nationally.

Still in the direction indicated above, it is noteworthy that, in the higher income strata, namely, those who earn from 3 to 5, 5 to 10, 10 to 15, 15 to 20, 20 to 30 minimum wages, and, also, those earning more than 30 minimum wages, there was virtually no reduction or significant growth in income and they maintained an usual distribution very similar in both census counts, so that there were few losses and gains separating these ten years between a count and another one, as shown in Graph 4, where the lines are overlapping.

And, finally, regarding those who declared themselves as with no income in both census counts, Pentecostals, as observed nationally, follow equivalent growth patterns in the state of Goiás, while in this particular stratum the Catholic growth was lower than that observed for Brazil in the same period.

Graph 4: Income distribution, in minimum wages, among those who, in censuses 2000 and 2010, declared themselves as Pentecostals (unit of analysis: Goiás).



Source: Prepared by the authors.

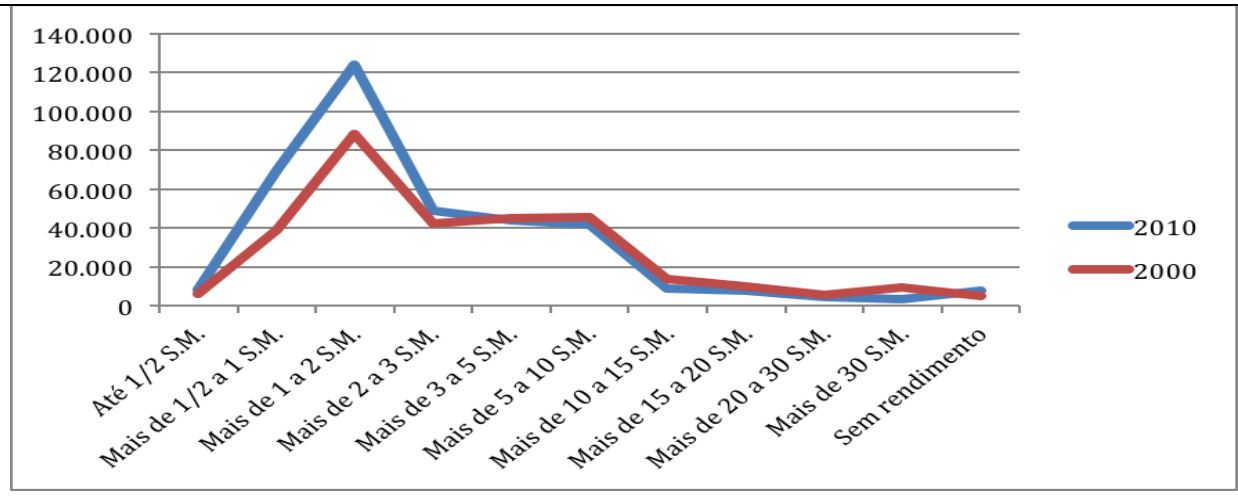
From this we conclude that, as observed nationally, where, in percentage terms, there is a higher growth in the Pentecostal segment in the income strata earning less, in absolute numbers, the predilection for poor people is more marked, too, among Catholics.

2.1 Goiânia and the thesis of predilection for poor people

As in the state of Goiás, Goiânia has a pattern of growth in the number of believers located in the income strata from 1 to 2 minimum wages, that is, an increase around 30% in the absolute number of believers who are located in this stratum. In turn, regarding the immediately subsequent income stratum, those who earn from 2 to 3 minimum wages, we observe a slight increase, just over 10%, the absolute number of Catholic believers who are within this stratum. Meanwhile, concerning the higher income strata, they follow the national trend again and account, mostly, in both

census counts with which we are concerned, small losses in the number of believers connected to this segment, as shown in Graph 5.

Graph 5: Income distribution, in minimum wages, among those who, in censuses 2000 and 2010, declared themselves as Catholics (unit of analysis: Goiânia).



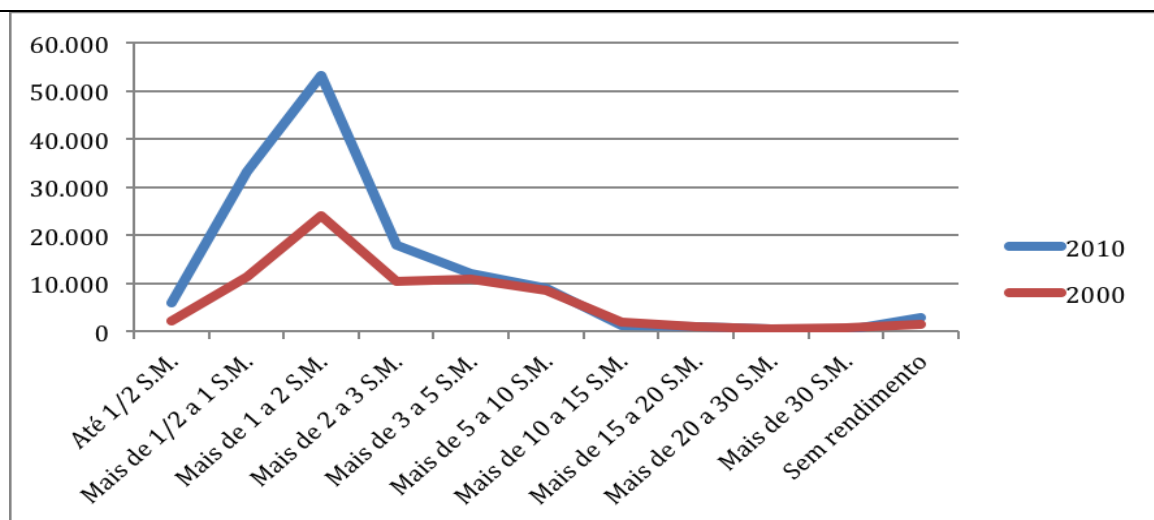
Source: Prepared by the authors.

In turn, in Graph 6, where the performance of Pentecostals in the city of Goiânia is shown regarding the census counts of 2000 and 2010, the curve shows up almost like a mirror of that related to the state of Goiás, so that all considerations woven about the said state reverberate and are situated in Goiânia, its capital city. However, two highlights show up as relevant, namely:

- a) Although all income strata over 3 minimum wages show a decrease, it is clear that, as the income level increases, the decrease in the number of believers gets more marked; and
- b) Although in percentage terms the preference for those located in the lower strata seems to refer to Pentecostals, as shown by the end of the curve, which slightly rises, in absolute numbers, as in previous cases, it will be

among Catholics that a higher number of believers is accounted within this specific income strata.

Graph 6: Income distribution, in minimum wages, among those who, in censuses 2000 and 2010, declared themselves as Pentecostals (unit of analysis: Goiânia).



Source: Prepared by the authors.

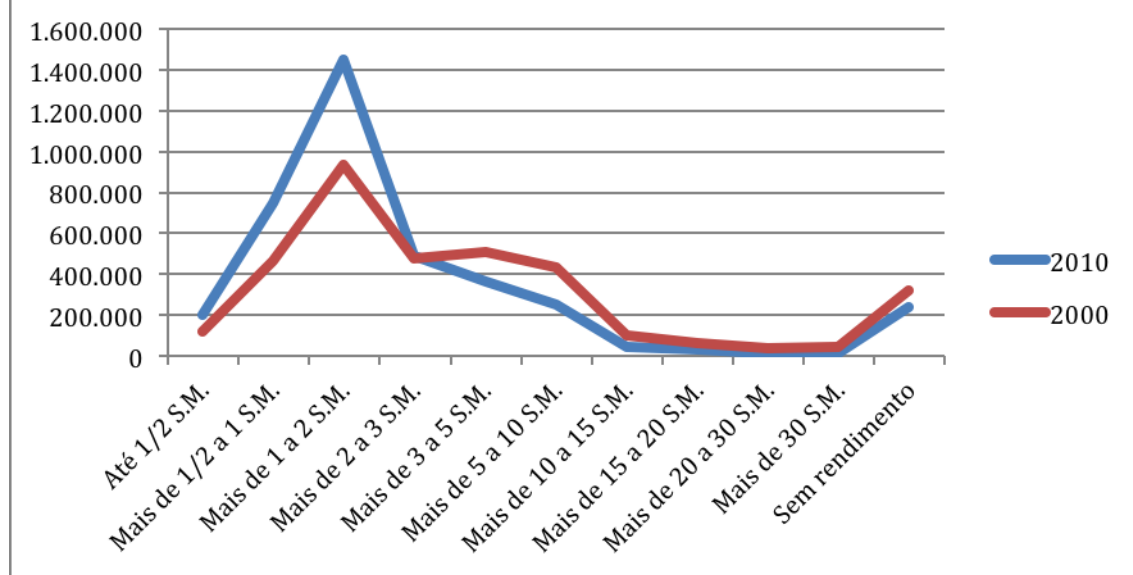
3 The case of the state of Rio Grande do Sul

Unlike the case of Goiás, Rio Grande do Sul, *mutatis mutandis*, reflects, among Catholics, the finding concerning the country, namely, an upward growth in the number of Catholics who are located in the income stratum from 1 to 2 minimum wages, a fall in the number of believers located in the strata ranging from 2 to 3, 3 to 5, 5 to 10, and 10 to 15 minimum wages and, also, a slight decrease in the number of those located in the higher income strata, even among those who declared themselves as with no income in the census counts of 2000 and 2010.

It is worth highlighting, however, that, despite the income distribution curves in Rio Grande do Sul reflects the national scene, and, *mutatis mutandis*, there is in

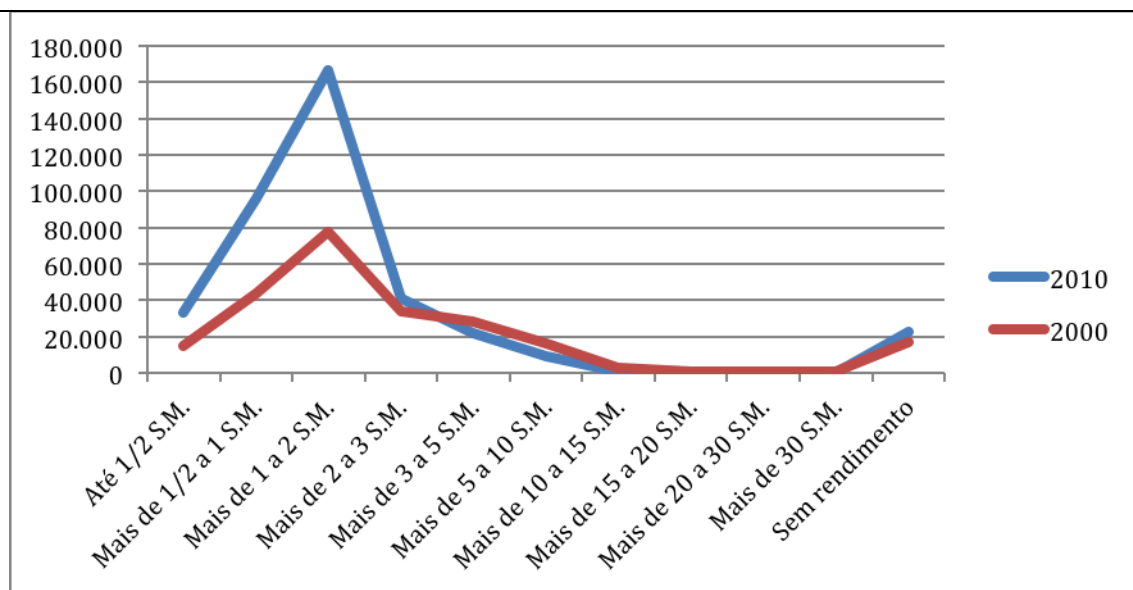
Rio Grande do Sul, as in the case of Brazil, a trend towards impoverishment of wealthier segments, as shown in graphs 7 and 8, where, as what has been observed in the national scenario, this trend is present within the Pentecostal segment, but in this, it is less marked than that perceived among Catholics.

Graph 7: Income distribution, in minimum wages, among those who, in censuses 2000 and 2010, declared themselves as Catholics (unit of analysis: Rio Grande do Sul).



Source: Prepared by the authors.

Graph 8: Income distribution, in minimum wages, among those who, in censuses 2000 and 2010 declared themselves as Pentecostals (unit of analysis: Rio Grande do Sul).



Source: Prepared by the authors.

Regarding the Pentecostal segment, again, the national trend is present and the usual distribution observed in the state of Rio Grande do Sul tends to reflect the results observed in the country. However, in order to avoid repetitions, we do not get into details and the analysis of each income stratum, since these, within the state, reproduce the behavior observed in the country.

However, we are interested in just highlighting that, in Rio Grande do Sul, growth in the income stratum where those earning from 1 to 2 minimum wages are located is around 20% higher in percentage than that corresponding to the same segment in the country and, also, that, in absolute numbers, its growth is much higher than that observed among Catholics in the state, as we can notice by comparing the performance lines presented in graphs 7 and 8, that growth in the absolute number of believers, when compared only to this income stratum, is about twice higher – 110% –

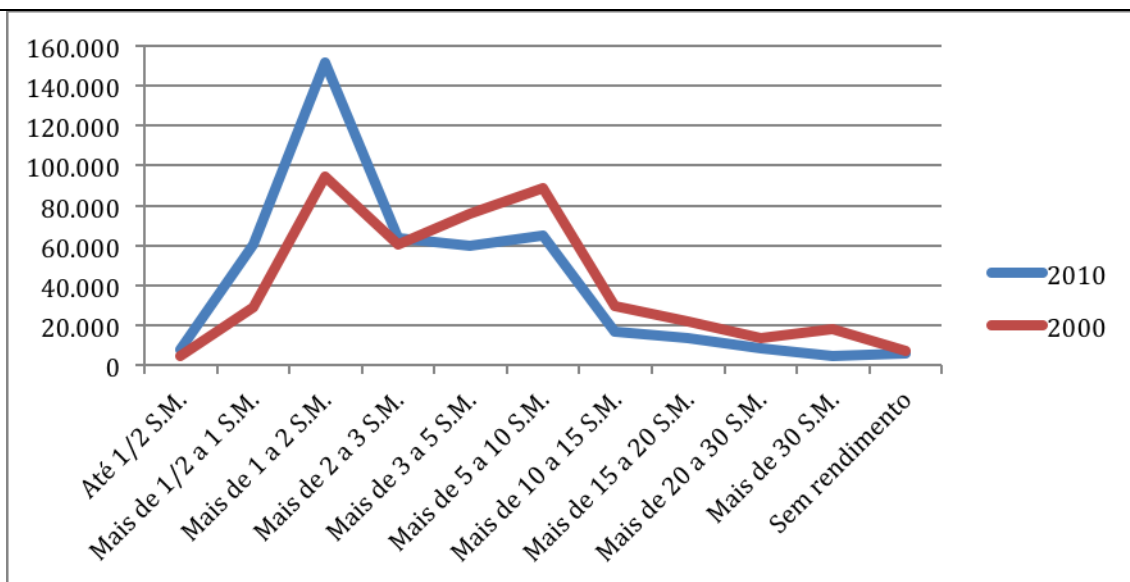
among Pentecostals than among Catholics, where this percentage increase is around 51%.

Having this in mind, again, it becomes, here, clear what was found out over the article, i.e. that in the state of Rio Grande do Sul Catholic predilection for poorer people is also present. And in the capital city of “gaúchos”, does this also occur? Let us see, because we finish our analysis and go on towards the final remarks with it.

3.1 Porto Alegre and the thesis of predilection for poor people

Regarding Porto Alegre, more than in the country, in the state of Goiás, and its capital city, Goiânia, the impoverishment process of the wealthier income strata is present, up to the point that, visually, “stand out” in the 2010 count from the values observed for the same segment in Census 2000, as shown in Figure 9.

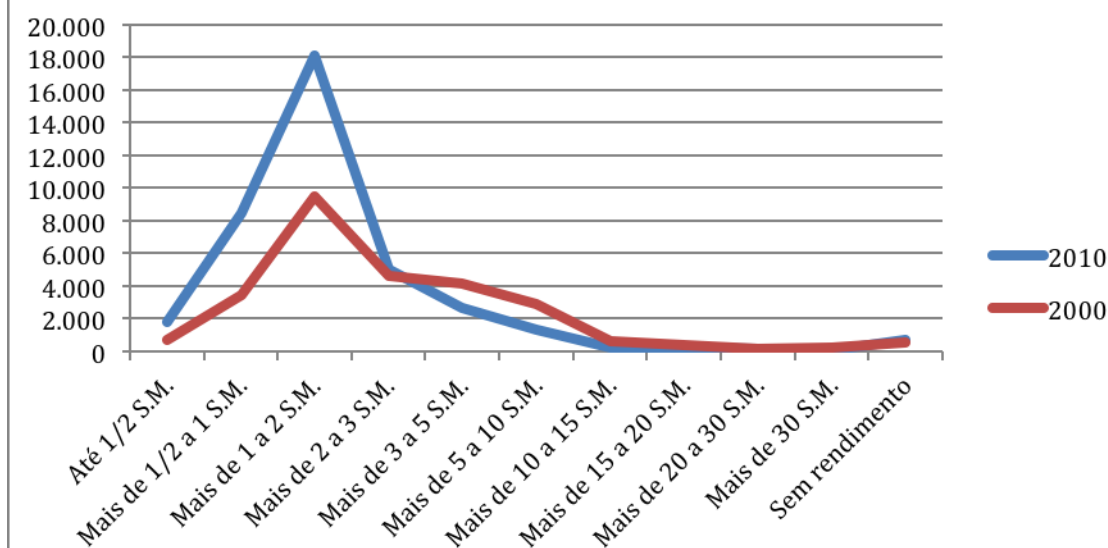
Graph 9: Income distribution, in minimum wages, among those who, in censuses 2000 and 2010, declared themselves as Catholics (unit of analysis: Porto Alegre).



Source: Prepared by the authors.

Also in this sense, the same growth in the income stratum located in the range from 1 to 2 minimum wages is latent in Porto Alegre, which follows, in this particular case, more than in others, the national and state trend pointed out in the previous sections of this article. It is clear, however, that these believers are moving from a segment to another one, but, in this case, it seems that this does not occur in Porto Alegre as elsewhere in the country and, also, in the state of Goiás and its capital city, as shown in Graph 10, which we will address in our analysis before closing this section.

Graph 10: Income distribution, in minimum wages, among those who, in censuses 2000 and 2010, declared themselves as Pentecostals (unit of analysis: Porto Alegre).



Source: Prepared by the authors.

Particularly concerning what is shown in Graph 10, although data point out a certain transit between the Catholic and Pentecostal segments, where the losses of believers on the part of the former serve to fill the ranks of the latter, a finding that is present in all analyzes performed so far, it seems, in the case of Porto Alegre, that this

relationship does not show up that mechanical. What we intend to say with this is that, in the case of Porto Alegre, what is observed goes beyond what is found out within both segments, so that, although in some cases this relationship is almost mechanical, in others, such as the case of the city mentioned above, it is not.

Thus, a possible explanation for this emptying movement of the middle sectors both of Catholicism and Pentecostalism that, in graphs 9 and 10 is represented by a downward curve that, in the case of Goiás and Goiânia was filled by those who came out of Catholicism and joined Pentecostalism, in the case of Porto Alegre, this does not occur, and both the row of Catholics and that of “stray” Pentecostals have migrated to other religious segments not focused in this article, highlighting a new predilection of the Pentecostal segment.

However, this new Pentecostal segment, which emerges with Census 2010, is formed by the so-called undetermined Pentecostals, who are free from the yoke of the large institutionalized designations. These, consisting of a multitude of ministries, pastorates, and apostolates that, in Porto Alegre, total over 400, already have a defined target audience and it has, surreptitiously, fought for and taken to its ranks those who, coming from Catholicism, do not seat among the most traditional Pentecostals of the large temples and they end up taking place in these small ministries, pastorates, and apostolates.

Having this in mind, then, it is noteworthy that, despite those that fall in income strata between 2 and 3 minimum wages are not, in the case of Porto Alegre, very accustomed to traditional Pentecostalism, and those who are also within the income strata from 3 to 5, 5 to 10, and 10-15 minimum wages do not seat among them, it will be among these other Pentecostals, the so-called “undetermined” that they sit down.

And, this way, we close this section and move on towards the final remarks, putting in vogue what data also point out, that is, that also among the poorer people, i.e. among those who fall within the income stratum from 1 to 2 minimum wages, there is also a greater predilection of Catholicism for them.

Final remarks

What is observed in the reported data sets, in our judgment, a demographic rearrangement related to the expansion of Pentecostalism in the Brazilian society. With such expansion, it becomes even expected that the income profile of a universalist conversion religion rather resembles the whole population. Methodologically, considering a well-built sample and having the same number of Catholics and Pentecostals in Brazil, it is hoped, relying on census data, that they do not differ much with regard to the income distribution structure, neither among themselves or from the national distribution of these data. If Spiritualists were sampled, on the contrary, we could expect that the difference from the national population emerges.

Regarding the state of Goiás, what is observed is a greater presence of Catholicism than Pentecostalism and that, although, in percentage terms, Catholicism has grown less in the lower strata, this still remains hegemonic in the state, so that the same is observed in Goiânia. To this is added that, although Catholicism loses more believers day after day, it still keeps dictating the rules of the game in the religious field, so that, as well as in the national scenario, in this state and in its capital city those stray from Catholicism end up, roughly, seating in traditional Pentecostalism – that of the large temples, the institutionalized megachurches – institutionalized churches –, which, like Catholicism, is characterized by having strong hierarchical and verticalized administrative structures. An element common to both religious expressions, beyond the centralized structural characteristic, is the openness made available to individuals who are close to them, in order to turn religion into an

intimate experience, interpreted from a viewpoint of the individual myth³. Either in the Catholic Charismatic Renewal space or in Pentecostalism, this keynote on the individual religious experience represents what is more dynamic in these religions, in their relationship with a company that gets diversified and detraditionalized⁴.

In turn, regarding the state of Rio Grande do Sul, the situation is not much different and what we observe concerning Brazil, the state of Goiás, and its capital city, Goiânia, is present to a lesser or greater extent. Likewise, as we have seen, we can no longer say that there is a certain predilection of Pentecostals for poor people, but that, today, this income segment, consisting of those who earn up to 1 minimum wage per month, is also among those on whom, today more than ever before, the Catholic Church focuses its attention.

We also saw that, in Brazil, with the exception of Porto Alegre, there is a tendency that the believers who leave Catholicism start filling the ranks of traditional Pentecostalism. However, in Porto Alegre, this does not happen so mechanically and, in the capital city of “gaúchos”, the Pentecostals connected to small ministries, pastorates, and apostolates start fighting for, against traditional Pentecostals, another set of believers, namely, those who traditionally left Catholicism and joined the Pentecostalism of large churches, but that, now, start seating among the so-called undetermined Pentecostals.

³ And not from Catholic cosmologies settled in the codes of the promises to the patron saint anymore, described, for instance, as expressed by Fernandes (1994).

⁴ For this theme of detraditionalization, see Pierucci (2006) and Hervieu-Lèger (2008), among many others.

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