

**Tomáš Marián Schrott. "They did What?" Reaction of Public, State and the Church to the Scandals of Catholic Church in Ireland. Bachelor Thesis. Prague: Charles University, Faculty of Humanities 2022, 57 pp.**

*reader's review*

The bachelor thesis of Mr. Tomáš Schrott deals with an interesting but very demanding topic from the viewpoint of a bachelor's student. His main research question is broadly formulated: To what extent did the scandals of the Catholic Church change Irish society? In fact, the sources used reflect just a part of society and it would be therefore more apt to formulate the thesis as the scandals of the Catholic Church in Ireland in the eyes of the media. From the text, it is evident that the author worked with keen interest and tried to collect arguments of various originators, from governmental, judicial, and church bodies to public opinion. The work, however, reveals a small experience in heuristics and methodology. In the beginning, it would be useful to formulate criteria (research questions) according to which sources should be chosen and classify them into different categories. The point is that not all sources have the same validity. What political orientation do particular media represent? What is the relation between norms and reality? To what extent do they reflect it? The author did not ask such questions. The interpretation should also take account of the different validity of declarations made by official bodies and activist groups.

Regarding the theoretical approach, rather than in prism of scandals, it would be more effective to solve the problem within a discourse of the conflict between the secularization of society and the clericalism of priests. The historical context, which can explain a lot, is absent. The roots of the high share of Catholics in Irish society (more than 80 percent) are why scandals in the Catholic Church have a bigger impact on society there than in other countries. In some places, the author presents a simplified opinion of the Catholic Church. His ahistorical approach is evident from his claim that Christianity did not undergo any bigger changes during 2,000 years (p. 1). He does not reflect that Church has not been unified for a long time and that even the Catholic Church is not unanimous as it may seem at first sight. The need to reform the Catholic Church was discussed at the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) and recently Pope Francis criticizes the clericalism of priests. The problem is that it is difficult to get these ideas through the majority of conservative priests. Surprisingly, I did not find any mention of the attitude of the Association of Catholic Priests, established in Ireland in 2010 as a forum for a free discussion inside the church. If the cited professional literature would be used more thoroughly, it would be possible to avoid many of these shortcomings. It's not customary, by contrast, to cite dictionaries and encyclopedias in professional works.

Despite mentioned criticism, it is necessary to appreciate Mr. Schrott's efforts, particularly his solid analysis of Ferns and Murphy's reports, and to take into account the handicap with the change of supervisor. That is why I recommend grading 3 ("good") for this thesis.