**Moral dilemma, media and propaganda**

Kant believes that religion should be an example of the **obedience to the moral law.**

(Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

It can be argued that soldiers in Abu Graib were in a moral dilemma because:

1. Many Abu Ghrab solders were Evangelists, who tend to have a higher trust in the government (which they believe have been put into place by God) and existing to secure order through violence (Gushe, 2014).
2. They were morally affected by the media representation of the USA, that they are**"fighting global evil"** in the name of freedom. In fact, this was just a propaganda (Dews, 2007, p. 2)
* As the media is owned by the people with power, so they can use the media as a tool to achieve their goal and also to free themselves of the responsibility of their evil acts. They were blaming soldiers for this scandal in Abu Ghraib. From this point of view solders are victims of this situation as well. This war in Iraq, served the economic interests of the elite, which links to Marxism and conflict theory.
* Ethicists as Kant (1971/1797), Mill (1979/1861) and Ross (1930, 1939) have assumed that an adequate moral theory should not allow genuine moral dilemmas (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)
* However, in the last sixty years, philosophers begun to challenge this assumption. Nevertheless, opponents of moral dilemmas must show that **appearances are deceiving and misleading**. **In fact, these soldiers lacked morality.**

**Obedience to authority and Conformity**

Evil acts similar to the Abu Ghraib torture would not be able to happen if the lower layers of the power structure are not obedient.

Zimbardo found similarities between Abu Graib prison abuse and:

* Stanford Prison Experiment (conforming to group norms)
* Milgram's experiment (obedience to authority)
* Ash’s experiment (conformity)

(Zimbardo, 2007, pp. 258-350)

These studies show that social pressures and external situations can have a very strong effect on people. Solders in Abu Ghraib were strongly affected by these external factors. However, Descartes (Dekart) stated that people have free will, so they can choose not to follow authority and not to conform. But these soldiers did not have the inner strength and morality to confront external factors.

Sergeant Ivan Frederick was given a harsh sentence. The military's unwillingness to accept any of the many mitigating circumstances that had directly contributed to his abusive behaviour and should have reduced his harsh prison sentence. The prosecutor and judge refused to consider any idea that situational forces could influence individual behaviour. They believed that the fault was entirely "dispositional", the consequence of Sergeant Chip Frederick's freely chosen rational decision to engage in evil.

(Zimbardo, 2007, p. x)

**We contrasted different concepts of evil and we concluded that it would be evil to blame a single evil. Instead a more holistic approach is needed to understand evil acts like Abu Ghraib.**

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