The Challenge of Cultural Relativism Reading Notes

* Different Cultures Have Different Moral Codes
	+ “Sophisticated outlook should appreciate between cultures”
	+ What is thought as right in one group may horrify members of another group
	+ If we assume that our ethical ideas will be shared by all cultures, we are merely being naive
* Cultural Realism
	+ There are no universal moral truths
	+ To call a custom right or wrong would imply that one can judge that custom by a standard of right or wrong not connected to a certain culture
	+ Every standard is culture-bound
	+ Claims made by cultural relativists
		- Different societies have different moral codes
		- The moral code of one society determines what is right and wrong in that particular society
		- No objective standard
		- The moral code of one society is not better than another
		- Arrogant to judge other cultures but alway be tolerant
	+ Cultural relativists take pride in their tolerance
* Cultural Differences Argument
	+ Employ a certain form of argument
		- Begin with facts about cultures and end by drawing a conclusion about morality
	+ For a good argument to be sound, its premises must all be true and the conclusion must logically follow them.
* What Follows from Cultural Relativism
	+ Consequences
		- No longer determine that customs from other cultures are morally inferior to ours
		- No longer criticise the code of our own society
		- The idea of moral progress is called into doubt
	+ These consequences have lead to many rejecting the idea
* Why There is Less Disagreement That It Seems
	+ Cultural Relativism= watching cultures differ in views of right and wrong
		- Differences can easily be exaggerated
	+ Many factors work together to create the customs of a society
	+ Society values are not only important but so are religious and factual beliefs and the environment
	+ “Cultures may differ in what they regard as legitimate exceptions to rules but disagreement exists against a broad background of agreement”
	+ Not every moral rule varies from society to society
* Judging a Cultural Practice to Be Undesirable
	+ Does this practice promote or hinder the welfare of the people affected by it?
* What We Can Learn From Cultural Relativism
	+ Warns about the danger of assuming that all practices are based on a universal rational standard
	+ Keep an open mind
	+ Many of the practices and attitudes we find natural are really only cultural products
	+ Avoid arrogance and be open to new ideas