**Explain the concept of relativist morality.**

A moral relativist would question "what do we mean by good?" when deliberating the best, most moral action to take when faced with an ethical decision. An example of a relativist moral statement is, "I ought not to steal because I will cause suffering to those I still from." This is a reasonable statement, considering the consequences of a potential action. It is teleological, in that it is concerned with ends (Greek word "telos" meaning end or purpose). Relativism is in direct contrast with absolute morality which is deontological and concerned with the actions themselves. A moral relativist would not believe that there is a fixed set of moral rules that apply to all people all times, in all places. Rather, they would leave the morality is changeable and differs culture to culture time to time, and place to place. This idea is known as cultural relativism.

The theory of relativist morality was first established by Protagoras who asked the question "what is good for You?" He did not believe that knowledge was fixed or that it extended beyond our experience in some higher form, as Plato (a moral absolutist) did. He stated that "man is the measure of all things". He maintained the morality depends on how we perceive things. Right and wrong as moral absolutes, do not exist. Rather, they depend on an individual's perception. Morality, Protagoras stated, is changeable and subject to our perceptions of the world around us. Aristotle is another example of a philosopher with a relativistic outlook. He disagreed with Plato's concept of perfect forms that exist beyond our experience; for Aristotle, forms do exist, but in our natural world which we perceive through our senses.

William Sumner went on to describe morality as nothing but socially approved habits. As a relativist he did not believe in the concept of fixed morality. Mackie also went on to develop this idea of cultural relativism in his book: Ethics: Inventing right and wrong? He maintained that "there are no objective values"; rather, morality is subjective and differs according to place, time and culture.

An example of changing morality between cultures is infanticide which was practised by the Greeks and Romans. Everyone in our modern society considers this completely wrong and immoral. However, for them, there was no problem with it. It was socially accepted. Similarly, in Islamic cultures, many of the women choose to wear head scarves as a mark of their faith. Many people in all other cultures see this to be unfair and restricting, a way of taking away the woman's rights to be individual. However the woman make the choice to do it because in their culture and their mind, it is considered morally acceptable and common practice. Advocates of moral relativism see the diverse nature of our world and the existence of many different ethical viewpoints as proof that no moral absolutes exist. For moral relativist thinkers such as Protagoras, Aristotle and more recently Summer and Mackie, morality is relative to place, time and culture. They find examples within our world and differing societies to support the moral viewpoints.