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NAVIGATING THE TIDES OF CHANGE: A SOCIO-ETHICAL ANALYSIS OF GLOBALIZATION'S IMPACT ON ANGA'S TRADITIONAL BELIEF SYSTEMS IN AFRICA

By

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Abstract

This research presents a comprehensive socio-ethical examination of the multifaceted impacts of globalization on the traditional belief systems of the Angas (Ngas) people of Plateau State, Nigeria. Utilizing a qualitative methodological framework grounded in ethnographic literature review, critical discourse analysis, and systematic examination of contemporary sources spanning 1990-2024, the study argues that globalization—manifested through Christian evangelism, formal education, digital media proliferation, economic integration, and political restructuring—operates as a dialectical force within Angas society. It simultaneously dislocates core Angas socio-ethical structures—ancestral veneration (kum nengs), sacred ecology (shar nan), rites of passage (mus ko), and communal ethics (pang da jin)—while paradoxically catalyzing new forms of religious syncretism, identity renegotiation, and strategic cultural preservation. The paper identifies significant ethical tensions arising from this interaction, including the systematic erosion of indigenous environmental stewardship protocols, the progressive marginalization of elder knowledge custodians (Nde Kpung), the commodification of ritual practices within capitalist frameworks, and the generation of intergenerational epistemic fractures. Conversely, it documents adaptive resilience through the strategic appropriation of global platforms for cultural advocacy, the reformulation of traditional beliefs within modern religious and developmental frameworks, and the emergence of transnational cultural entrepreneurship. The conclusion underscores the necessity for ethical globalization models that prioritize intercultural dialogue, epistemic justice, and cognitive democracy, ensuring Angas traditional beliefs are not merely archived as museum artifacts but continue as living, evolving, and respected components of a genuinely pluralistic global heritage. The study contributes to ongoing scholarly conversations on indigenous knowledge systems, religious change in Africa, and the ethics of cultural encounter in an increasingly interconnected world.

Keywords: *Globalization, Traditional Beliefs, Angas/Ngas, Nigeria, Socio-Ethical Impacts,*

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INTRODUCTION

Globalization, characterized by the intensified flow of capital, ideas, technologies, information, and people across increasingly porous national and cultural borders, represents one of the most profound paradigmatic shifts confronting indigenous communities worldwide in the twenty-first cent ury (Steger, 2020; Held et al., 2019). Its multifaceted forces penetrate the most intimate spheres of human existence challenging epistemologies, value systems, moral frameworks, and social structures that have sustained societies for generations, in some cases for millennia (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2019; Eze, 2021). The encounter between globalizing forces and local cultural systems is rarely, if ever, neutral; it is fraught with power asymmetries, contested meanings, and ethical complexities that demand careful scholarly attention (Tomalin, 2020; Nnaemeka, 2022).

The Angas (also known as Ngas) people, an agrarian and increasingly urbanized community predominantly residing in the plateau region of central Nigeria—specifically in areas encompassing Jos South, Kanam, and Langtang North local government areas—possess a rich and intricate traditional belief system inextricably tied to land, ancestry, kinship networks, seasonal cycles, and communal harmony (Fwatshak, 2018; Danfulani, 2019). This cosmological and

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ethical system, governed by a complex socio-moral code transmitted orally across generations, dictates relationships between individuals, the extended family (gba), the broader clan (pang), the spirit world (kunung), and the natural environment (nan) (Nankap, 2021; Bulus, 2020). For the Angas, as for many African indigenous communities, religion is not a compartmentalized sphere of life but rather the invisible threads that weave together the fabric of daily existence, agricultural practice, healing traditions, conflict resolution, and moral education (Mbiti, 2015; Awolalu & Dopamu, 2019).

While previous scholarship has documented aspects of Angas history, linguistics, and ethnography (Tapgun, 1996; Jungraithmayr & Ibriszimow, 2018; Fwatshak, 2011), and while broader studies have examined globalization's impact on African traditional religions in general terms (Iweriebor, 2016; Adogame, 2021), a focused, systematic analysis on the socio-ethical implications of globalization specifically on Angas belief systems remains significantly underexplored. Existing studies have tended to subsume the Angas experience under broader regional analyses of the Nigerian Middle Belt or generalized discussions of "African traditional religion," thereby obscuring the specificities, nuances, and particularities of Angas cosmological and ethical frameworks (Umaru, 2021; Kwasau, 2020). Furthermore, the ethical dimension—how globalization transforms not merely what Angas people believe but how they construct moral personhood, negotiate right action, and understand their obligations to ancestors, community, and environment—has received insufficient scholarly attention (Babawale & Alagoa, 2019).

This study aims to address this significant lacuna by providing a granular, community-specific case study grounded in systematic analysis of contemporary sources spanning the period 1990-2024, with particular emphasis on post-2000 developments that have accelerated globalization's impact. The research is animated by the conviction that understanding the particularities of the Angas encounter with globalization offers not only intrinsic value for documenting cultural change but also illuminates broader theoretical questions about cultural resilience, ethical transformation, and the possibilities for genuinely intercultural dialogue in an increasingly interconnected world (Santos, 2018; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020).

The research is guided by a primary question: How do the principal vectors of globalization—religious (Christian evangelism in its multiple denominational expressions), educational (formal Western-style schooling), mediatic (digital technologies, social media, satellite television), economic (market integration, labor migration, commodification), and political (state formation, legal frameworks, development discourse)—specifically impact the core tenets, practices, and ethical frameworks of Angas traditional beliefs? Secondary questions interrogate the consequent socio-ethical tensions within contemporary Angas society, the generational and gender dynamics implicated in differential responses to globalization, and the ways Angas actors resist, adapt, appropriate, and rearticulate their beliefs in a globalizing context.

Employing a critical socio-ethical lens, this research moves beyond mere cataloging of cultural change to evaluate its implications for human flourishing, distributive justice, identity formation, social cohesion, ecological sustainability, and intergenerational equity (Pieterse, 2020; Sen, 2019). The study draws upon multiple theoretical traditions: globalization theory (Appadurai, 1996; Ritzer & Dean, 2019), postcolonial theory (Mignolo, 2021; Mbembe, 2019), African religious studies (Mbiti, 2015; Olupona, 2021), and ethical theory (Wiredu, 2020; Gyekye, 2019). This interdisciplinary approach enables a nuanced analysis that attends simultaneously to macro-structural forces and micro-level lived experiences.

The Angas People and Their Traditional Belief Systems

The Angas people inhabit the high plateau region of central Nigeria, an area characterized by rolling hills, granite outcrops, and elevations ranging from 1,200 to 1,800 meters above sea level (Fwatshak, 2018). This geographical location has historically provided relative isolation and protection, contributing to the preservation of distinctive cultural practices while also facilitating trade and interaction with neighboring groups including the Berom, Ron, Kulere, and Mwaghavul peoples (Danfulani, 2019). The term "Angas" (alternatively "Ngas" in indigenous orthography) refers both to the people and their language, which belongs to the West Chadic branch of the Afroasiatic language family (Jungraithmayr & Ibriszimow, 2018).

Contemporary population estimates for the Angas vary considerably, ranging from 400,000 to 800,000 individuals, with significant communities now residing in urban centers including Jos, Bukuru, Langtang, and increasingly in cities across Nigeria such as Abuja, Lagos, and Kano (National Population Commission, 2023). The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have witnessed substantial outmigration driven by educational opportunities, economic pressures, and more recently, ethno-religious conflicts that have displaced communities in Plateau State (Higazi, 2020; Krause, 2021).

Traditional Angas society was organized around segmentary lineage systems, with the pang (clan) serving as the primary unit of social, political, and ritual organization (Fwatshak, 2011). Each pang traced descent from a common ancestor (neng pang) and was led by a council of elders (Nde Kpung) who exercised authority based on seniority, wisdom, ritual knowledge, and demonstrated moral integrity (Nankap, 2021). Below the clan level, the gba (extended family) constituted the everyday unit of production, consumption, and socialization. This segmentary structure provided both flexibility and stability, enabling the Angas to maintain social order without centralized hierarchical political institutions characteristic of some African kingdoms (Fortes & Evans-Pritchard, 2015; Kopytoff, 2019).

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Age-grade systems (mus ko) played crucial roles in socialization, labor organization, and military preparedness. Initiation ceremonies marked the transition from childhood to adulthood, transmitting esoteric knowledge, ethical teachings, and clan histories to new generations (Bulus, 2020). These age-sets created cross-cutting ties that bound together different lineages and fostered pan-Angas solidarity while also providing mechanisms for social control and mutual assistance.

Angas traditional cosmology posits a hierarchical ordering of spiritual forces, all ultimately derived from and subordinate to the supreme being, Nen (also referred to as Nan or Nen Nan—literally "Owner of the Land") (Danfulani, 2019). Nen is conceived as the creator and sustainer of all existence, the ultimate source of moral order, and the final arbiter of human destiny. Unlike the high gods in some African cosmologies who are sometimes described as otiose or withdrawn, Nen remains engaged with creation, though typically approached through intermediaries rather than directly (Mbiti, 2015).

Below Nen, the most significant spiritual beings are the nengs (ancestors)—the living-dead who have completed their earthly existence but continue to participate in community life from the spirit realm (Awolalu & Dopamu, 2019). Ancestors are not worshipped in the strict sense but are venerated, honored, and consulted. They serve as mediators between the living and Nen, guardians of traditional morality, and enforcers of social norms through their capacity to bless obedience and punish transgressions with misfortune, illness, or death (Opoku, 2021). The condition of ancestors in the spirit world is understood to depend partly on the proper conduct of their descendants in performing funeral rites, making offerings, and maintaining family cohesion (Nankap, 2021).

Beneath the ancestors are various nature spirits (kunung nan) associated with specific geographical features—mountains, rivers, forests, rocks—and natural phenomena. These spirits are not inherently malevolent but must be respected and propitiated according to established protocols (Bulus, 2020). The spiritual significance of the land itself (nan) constitutes what scholars have termed "sacred ecology"—an understanding that the physical environment is imbued with spiritual meaning and moral significance (Berkes, 2018; Murove, 2020).

The Angas traditional religious system is maintained and transmitted by various categories of ritual specialists whose authority derives from different sources. The Nde Kpung (Council of Elders) comprises senior men and women whose authority rests on age, lineage position, and accumulated wisdom. They oversee community rituals, resolve disputes, and transmit oral traditions (Fwatshak, 2018). Bəlləm (diviners) are specialists who diagnose the spiritual causes of misfortune, illness, and social conflict through various techniques including casting objects, interpreting dreams, or entering trance states. Diviners identify which ancestors or spirits require attention and what offerings are necessary to restore harmony (Danfulani, 2019). Wur (priests/priestesses) are individuals, often hereditary, responsible for maintaining specific shrines (mbang), conducting prescribed rituals, and mediating between the community and particular spiritual forces (Nankap, 2021). Kpam (healers) are experts in herbal medicine who combine empirical knowledge of plant properties with understanding of the spiritual dimensions of illness. Healing in Angas tradition addresses physical, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects simultaneously (Bulus, 2020). Gbong (chiefs/traditional rulers), while chieftaincy institutions in their current form were influenced by colonial indirect rule, traditional leadership positions existed in various forms, combining political, judicial, and ritual functions (Fwatshak, 2011).

Angas traditional religion is profoundly practical and life-affirming, with rituals marking critical transitions and maintaining cosmic and social equilibrium. Birth and naming (Mang Ko) rituals welcome newborns into the community, establishing their connection to ancestral lineages and conferring identity and protection (Bulus, 2020). Initiation (Mus Ko) involves complex rituals marking the transition to adulthood, including seclusion, instruction in esoteric knowledge, physical trials, and ceremonies reintegrating initiates into the community with new status and responsibilities (Nankap, 2021). Marriage (Kum) entails extended processes involving negotiations between families, bride wealth transfers, rituals transferring the woman's spiritual allegiance from her natal lineage to her husband's, and celebrations cementing alliances between clans (Dalla & Bagu, 2020). Funeral (Pus Di Kum) involves elaborate multi-stage rituals ensuring the deceased's successful transition to ancestorhood, protecting the living from spiritual dangers associated with death, and eventually incorporating the deceased into the community of ancestors honored at lineage shrines (Danfulani, 2019). Agricultural rituals are seasonal ceremonies marking planting, first fruits, and harvest, acknowledging the spiritual dimensions of food production and ensuring cosmological blessing on community sustenance (Fwatshak, 2018). The Mos Festival is the most prominent annual celebration, occurring at the end of the farming season, involving communal feasting, dancing, sacrifice, and renewal of social bonds (Bawa, 2022).

The ethical framework embedded within Angas traditional religion emphasizes several interconnected values. Communalism (Pang Da Jin) is the fundamental principle that personhood is constituted through relationships. A person is not an isolated individual but a node in networks of kinship, lineage, and community. Moral obligations flow from these relational connections (Gyekye, 2019; Wiredu, 2020). Ancestral authority positions ancestors as the ultimate moral arbiters, their approval sought for major decisions and their displeasure feared as a source of misfortune. This creates powerful incentives for conformity to established norms and maintenance of family solidarity (Opoku, 2021). Eldership wisdom (Kpung Shi) frames respect for elders not merely as social convention but as ethical necessity, grounded in recognition of their accumulated knowledge, their proximity to ancestors, and their role as transmitters of tradition (Nankap, 2021). Reciprocity and mutual assistance require

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extended kinship obligations to share resources, participate in ceremonies, and provide support during crises. Generosity is valued while stinginess attracts moral condemnation (Murove, 2020). Ecological ethics arise from the spiritual significance of land, creating environmental ethics of stewardship rather than exploitation. Certain trees, groves, and water bodies are protected because of their sacred associations (Berkes, 2018). Restorative justice in conflict resolution emphasizes restoring relationships and community harmony rather than punitive retribution. Apologies, compensation, and rituals of reconciliation repair social breaches (Elechi, 2019).

This intricate cosmological and ethical system, developed over centuries and adapted to changing circumstances, now confronts the multifaceted forces of globalization—a confrontation whose dimensions and implications this study systematically examines.

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Globalization, despite its ubiquity in academic and popular discourse, remains a contested concept requiring careful theoretical specification. Steger (2020, p. 15) defines globalization as "the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa." Held et al. (2019) emphasize the dimensions of extensity (stretching of social relations), intensity (deepening of interconnectedness), velocity (speed of interactions), and impact (local effects of distant events).

Scholars have identified multiple, interrelated dimensions of globalization. Economic globalization involves integration of markets, transnational production, financial flows, and neoliberal policy frameworks (Rodrik, 2018; Stiglitz, 2022). Political globalization encompasses the spread of nation-state system, international governance institutions, and transnational social movements (Held & McGrew, 2020). Cultural globalization entails the flow of ideas, images, information, and practices across borders, along with the spread of consumer culture (Pieterse, 2020; Tomlinson, 2019). Religious globalization involves transnational religious movements, missionary activities, and digital religion (Adogame, 2021; Csordas, 2021). Technological globalization includes digital connectivity, social media, and mobile communication (Castells, 2020).

Theoretical approaches to globalization range from hyperglobalist perspectives celebrating convergence and integration to skeptical views emphasizing regionalization and continued national differences (Ritzer & Dean, 2019). Between these poles, transformationalist approaches—adopted in this study—view globalization as a contingent, contradictory, and uneven process whose outcomes depend on local contexts and power dynamics (Held et al., 2019).

Early theories of cultural globalization often emphasized homogenization—the spread of Western consumer culture undermining local diversity (Ritzer, 2019). The "McDonaldization" thesis suggested that principles of efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control were transforming societies worldwide (Ritzer, 2019). Critics, however, noted that homogenization models underestimated local agency and creativity. Pieterse (2020) offers an influential alternative in his concept of hybridization, arguing that global and local elements blend to create new, distinctive cultural forms. Rather than simple imposition or adoption, cultural encounters produce creative syntheses that transcend binary oppositions of global/local or traditional/modern. Similarly, Robertson (2018) introduced "glocalization" to describe how global phenomena are adapted to local contexts, while local practices are reframed within global discourses.

Appadurai's (1996) foundational framework conceptualizes global cultural flows through five interrelated "scapes": ethnoscapes (movement of people), mediascapes (distribution of information and images through media technologies), technoscapes (global configuration of technology flows), financescapes (rapid movement of capital across borders), and ideoscapes (circulation of ideologies and political worldviews). This framework's value lies in recognizing both the complexity of global flows and the disjunctures between different dimensions—economic integration may proceed faster than cultural change, technological flows may exceed political regulation.

Critical globalization studies emphasize the power asymmetries embedded in globalizing processes. Ritzer and Dean (2019) distinguish between globalization—processes that can flow from multiple centers and "grobalization"—imperialistic ambitions of powerful nations and corporations to impose themselves globally. This distinction highlights how some global flows carry greater weight and institutional backing than others. World-systems theory, originating with Wallerstein (2019), situates globalization within the historical development of capitalist world-economy, with core, periphery, and semi-periphery zones maintaining systematic inequalities. From this perspective, contemporary globalization represents the latest phase of capitalist expansion, incorporating previously marginal areas into circuits of accumulation while maintaining hierarchical divisions.

Postcolonial and decolonial theorists have further sharpened attention to the epistemic dimensions of globalization (Mignolo, 2021; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020). The concept of "coloniality" identifies how colonial power relations persist after formal independence, operating through knowledge systems, educational institutions, and cultural hierarchies that privilege Western frameworks while marginalizing indigenous alternatives. Santos (2018) introduces "epistemicide"—the destruction of alternative knowledge systems—to describe how Western modernity has systematically devalued and suppressed other ways of knowing.

Scholarship on African traditional religions has evolved significantly over recent decades. Early missionary anthropology often depicted African religions as primitive superstition or devil worship, reflecting the hegemonic

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frameworks within which cultural encounter occurred (Parratt, 2021). The pioneering work of scholars like Mbiti (2015), Idowu (2018), and Awolalu and Dopamu (2019) challenged these representations, demonstrating the sophistication, coherence, and ethical depth of African religious systems. Contemporary scholarship has moved beyond simple defense of African traditional religions to examine their dynamics under conditions of rapid change. Olupona (2021) explores how traditional religions adapt to urbanization, migration, and religious pluralism. Adogame (2021) examines African religious forms in transnational contexts, showing how they travel with migrants and transform in diaspora. Hackett (2020) analyzes the politics of religious identity in Africa, including contests over the place of traditional religion in public life.

Research specifically on globalization and African traditional religions has identified multiple trajectories (Iweriebor, 2016; Chitando, 2021). Decline narratives emphasize erosion of traditional practices, loss of ritual knowledge, and youth disaffection. Resilience perspectives document persistence and adaptation of traditional elements within new contexts. Syncretism approaches examine creative combinations of traditional, Christian, and Islamic elements. Revival studies track movements reclaiming and revitalizing indigenous spiritual practices.

Nigeria presents a particularly complex religious landscape, with roughly equal populations of Muslims and Christians alongside practitioners of traditional religions, though census data on the latter are notoriously unreliable (Pew Research Center, 2020). Religious identity is deeply implicated in regional, ethnic, and political divisions, with the Middle Belt—including Angas territory—constituting a religious frontier zone where Christian and Muslim populations intersect (Ukah, 2021; Ostien, 2020). Pentecostal Christianity has grown explosively in Nigeria since the 1970s, with profound implications for traditional religions (Ukah, 2016; Kalu, 2018). Pentecostal discourse typically demonizes traditional religious practices as "idolatry" and "witchcraft," creating powerful pressures toward abandonment. Marshall (2019) analyzes how Pentecostalism offers new moral frameworks and forms of subjectivity that appeal particularly to youth and women seeking alternatives to gerontocratic and patriarchal traditional structures.

Studies of religious change in the Middle Belt specifically have documented complex patterns of conversion, competition, and coexistence (Danfulani, 2021; Umaru, 2021). The region has experienced severe ethno-religious conflicts, particularly in Plateau State, where violence between Christian and Muslim communities has displaced hundreds of thousands (Higazi, 2020; Krause, 2021). These conflicts have hardened religious boundaries and intensified pressures toward religious identification, often at the expense of traditional identities and practices.

Scholarly literature specifically focused on Angas people and their traditions remains limited but has grown in recent decades. Tapgun (1996) provided foundational ethnographic documentation of Angas culture, including descriptions of traditional religion, social organization, and material culture. Fwatshak (2011, 2018) has contributed substantially to Angas historiography, analyzing pre-colonial political organization, colonial transformations, and contemporary challenges. Linguistic studies by Jungraithmayr and Ibriszimow (2018) have documented the Angas language and its relationships within the Chadic family, while preserving valuable cultural vocabulary related to traditional religion. Anthropological work by Danfulani (2019, 2021) has examined religious change in the Middle Belt, including analysis of Angas traditional religion's encounter with Christianity and Islam. Recent studies have addressed more specific aspects of Angas culture under conditions of change. Dalla and Bagu (2020) examine transformations in marriage rites, documenting how economic pressures and Christian influence reshape traditional practices. Bawa (2022) analyzes diaspora involvement in cultural preservation, showing how remittances support traditional festivals. Nankap (2021) investigates intergenerational transmission of indigenous knowledge, identifying significant discontinuities alongside creative adaptations.

This study integrates insights from multiple theoretical traditions to construct an analytical framework adequate to the complexity of Angas-globalization encounter. Critical globalization theory (Appadurai, 1996; Santos, 2018) provides concepts for analyzing global flows while attending to power asymmetries and local agency. Postcolonial and decolonial theory (Mignolo, 2021; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020) illuminates the epistemic dimensions of cultural encounter and the persistence of colonial hierarchies within globalizing processes. African religious studies (Mbiti, 2015; Olupona, 2021) grounds analysis in deep understanding of indigenous cosmological and ethical frameworks. Ethical theory (Wiredu, 2020; Gyekye, 2019) enables normative evaluation of globalization's impacts beyond descriptive documentation.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design based on systematic review and critical analysis of existing literature. The qualitative approach is appropriate for investigating complex socio-cultural phenomena where meaning, interpretation, and context are central concerns (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Flick, 2022). The design enables in-depth exploration of how globalization impacts Angas traditional belief systems while attending to the perspectives, experiences, and agency of Angas actors as represented in available sources.

Data were collected from multiple categories of sources to ensure comprehensiveness and triangulation. Peer-reviewed academic literature included ethnographic studies specifically focused on Angas people and culture (n=28), historical analyses of the Nigerian Middle Belt (n=35), sociological and anthropological studies of religious change in Africa (n=42), globalization theory and cultural studies scholarship (n=38), African religious studies and theology (n=31), and environmental anthropology and indigenous knowledge

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systems (n=24). Reports from cultural and development organizations encompassed UNESCO documentation on intangible cultural heritage in Nigeria, reports from the Nigerian National Commission for Museums and Monuments, publications from cultural preservation NGOs working in Plateau State, and development agency reports addressing indigenous knowledge and sustainability. Credible journalistic and documentary sources included in-depth feature articles on cultural change in Nigerian media (Premium Times, The Guardian Nigeria, Daily Trust), documentary films and radio programs addressing Angas traditions, and online platforms dedicated to Angas culture and language preservation. Grey literature and digital sources comprised theses and dissertations from Nigerian universities, conference proceedings, online community archives and cultural advocacy websites, and social media content related to Angas cultural practice and advocacy. Indigenous knowledge documentation included published collections of Angas oral traditions, proverbs, and folktales, linguistic studies documenting traditional vocabulary, and ethnographic descriptions of rituals and ceremonies.

Sources were selected according to inclusion criteria requiring relevance to Angas people, Middle Belt cultures, or comparable African indigenous contexts; publication date primarily within 1990-2024 (with foundational earlier works included for historical context); scholarly rigor (peer-reviewed sources prioritized); credibility of non-academic sources; and accessibility in English (the working language of the study). Exclusion criteria eliminated sources lacking clear methodological or evidentiary basis, purely polemical or advocacy materials without empirical grounding, duplicate or redundant content, and sources inaccessible despite reasonable effort.

Data analysis employed thematic analysis within a critical interpretive framework (Braun & Clarke, 2022; Fairclough, 2020). The analytical process involved familiarization through comprehensive reading of collected materials, initial note-taking and identification of recurrent themes, and development of preliminary analytical categories. Systematic coding identified text segments relevant to research questions and coded according to themes (ancestral veneration, sacred ecology, ritual change, etc.), attending to both manifest content (explicit statements) and latent content (underlying assumptions, silences). Theme development grouped codes into broader analytical themes, identified relationships between themes, and constructed a coherent analytical narrative. Critical interpretation contextualized findings within theoretical frameworks, attended to power relations and epistemic hierarchies, and identified implications for ethics, policy, and practice.

As a literature-based study not involving direct human subjects, this research raises minimal ethical concerns regarding informed consent or confidentiality. However, broader ethical considerations guide the research process. The study strives to represent Angas beliefs and practices respectfully, avoiding exoticization or reductionism, and attends to Angas voices and perspectives as expressed in available sources. The researcher acknowledges positionality as an academic situated within Nigerian and global scholarly institutions, with both privileges and responsibilities in representing indigenous knowledge. The study aims to contribute to recognition of Angas traditional knowledge and to support efforts toward epistemic justice and cultural preservation. The research seeks to be accountable to Angas communities through accurate representation and through dissemination that may inform advocacy and preservation efforts.

This study acknowledges several limitations. Analysis relies on existing literature rather than direct ethnographic fieldwork, providing mediated rather than immediate access to Angas lived experience. Published literature may not capture most recent developments, particularly in rapidly evolving digital and diaspora contexts. Some aspects of Angas traditional belief may be underdocumented, limiting analysis. Reliance on English-language sources may exclude valuable materials in Angas or Hausa. Findings are specific to Angas context and may not directly apply to other groups, though theoretical insights may have broader relevance. These limitations suggest directions for future empirical research while not undermining the value of systematic literature-based analysis for addressing the research questions.

Socio-Ethical Impacts: Dislocation, Tension, and Transformation

The cornerstone of Angas traditional religion is the veneration of ancestors (kum nengs), who occupy an ontological position between the living community and the supreme deity (Nen). Ancestors are understood to maintain active interest in family affairs, to enforce moral norms through blessing and punishment, and to require ongoing recognition through offerings and proper conduct by descendants (Danfulani, 2019; Nankap, 2021). This ancestral framework constitutes not merely a set of beliefs but an entire ethical system in which moral obligations to family, lineage, and community are grounded in relationships that transcend death.

Globalization has brought this ancestral framework into direct confrontation with alternative religious systems, particularly Christianity in its multiple denominational expressions. Christian evangelism among the Angas began in earnest during the colonial period with missions including the Sudan United Mission and Catholic missionaries establishing churches and schools (Fwatshak, 2011). The post-independence period, and especially the Pentecostal explosion since the 1980s, has intensified this encounter (Ukah, 2016). The theological confrontation operates at multiple levels. At the explicit doctrinal level, Christian teaching typically rejects ancestral veneration as incompatible with exclusive devotion to God through Christ. Umaru (2018, 2021) documents how missionary and indigenous Christian discourse has systematically framed Angas ancestral practices as "idolatry," "ancestor worship," and in more extreme Pentecostal versions, as demonic activity requiring deliverance. This theological delegitimation strikes at the heart of Angas traditional ethics,

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removing the spiritual foundation for filial piety, lineage solidarity, and respect for elders.

The ethical consequences of this confrontation are most acutely felt within families. Conversion to Christianity, particularly in its Pentecostal forms, often requires converts to renounce participation in ancestral rituals, to destroy or abandon household shrines, and to refuse offerings to ancestors (Umaru, 2018). Among Angas families with both Christian and non-Christian members, this creates profound ethical tensions. Elders who maintain traditional practices experience the Christian rejection of ancestors as disrespect not merely to them personally but to the entire lineage and its history. The ancestors, they reason, cared for the family through generations; to abandon them now constitutes ingratitude and moral failure (Nankap, 2021). Christian converts, by contrast, experience pressure to participate in ancestral rituals as a threat to their new faith, potentially exposing them to spiritual dangers according to Christian theology (Marshall, 2019).

These tensions manifest concretely in disputes over funeral practices (pus di kum), which are among the most important ancestral rituals. Traditional funerals involve extended ceremonies, animal sacrifice, feeding of participants, and eventual incorporation of the deceased into the community of ancestors honored at lineage shrines (Danfulani, 2019). Christian converts increasingly demand simplified, church-based funerals that omit these elements, generating conflicts with traditionalist relatives who view proper funeral observance as essential for the deceased's safe passage to ancestorhood and for family well-being (Dalla & Bagu, 2020).

Beyond specific conflicts, Christian influence fundamentally reconfigures the ethical framework within which Angas persons understand moral obligation and accountability. Traditional ethics locate moral responsibility within webs of relationship extending backward to ancestors and forward to unborn generations. Individual actions have consequences not only for oneself but for family and lineage, with ancestral blessing or punishment mediated through collective outcomes (Wiredu, 2020; Gyekye, 2019). Christian soteriology, particularly in its Protestant and Pentecostal forms, emphasizes individual salvation, personal relationship with God, and moral accountability primarily to divine judgment rather than to ancestors or community (Marshall, 2019). This shift has profound ethical implications. Decisions about marriage, career, residence, and lifestyle become matters of individual calling and conscience rather than communal and ancestral expectation. The moral gravity of offending ancestors through improper conduct is replaced by concern for personal spiritual state and eternal destiny.

Angas traditional cosmology assigns profound spiritual significance to the physical environment. The land (nan) is not inert matter for human exploitation but a living reality imbued with spiritual presence and moral meaning (Danfulani, 2019). Specific geographical features—hills, rivers, rocks, forests—are associated with particular spirits (kunung nan) and require respect, propitiation, and careful treatment according to established protocols (Bulus, 2020). The sacred hill Ambul, for example, is not merely a prominent geographical feature but a spiritual center where important rituals occur and where certain activities are prohibited. Sacred groves scattered across Angas territory contain trees that may not be cut, animals that may not be hunted, and plants that may not be gathered except under specific conditions and with proper ritual preparation (Nankap, 2021). Rivers and streams have spirits that must be appeased before fishing or crossing, and certain water bodies are reserved for ritual use only.

This sacred ecology generates distinctive environmental ethics. Because the land is spiritually inhabited, human-nature relationships are understood in moral terms—proper treatment brings blessing, while disrespect brings spiritual sanctions in the form of failed crops, illness, or misfortune (Berkes, 2018; Murove, 2020). Traditional conservation practices emerge not from abstract environmentalism but from this cosmological framework. Particular species are protected, resource extraction is limited by ritual prescriptions, and certain areas function as de facto nature reserves through their sacred status.

Economic globalization, operating through multiple channels, fundamentally challenges this sacred ecological framework. Three interrelated processes are particularly significant. Land commodification has transformed traditional Angas land tenure, which understood land as belonging to the lineage, held in trust for ancestors and future generations, and not subject to individual sale (Fwatshak, 2018). Economic globalization, mediated through Nigerian state legal frameworks derived from colonial property concepts, has progressively commodified land—transforming it from relational commons to alienable private property (Maiangwa, 2013, 2019). Land sales, leasing arrangements, and individual title registration increasingly replace lineage-based tenure, severing the connection between land, ancestors, and community that grounded traditional environmental ethics.

Mineral extraction has intensified as Plateau State sits atop significant mineral deposits, including tin, columbite, and various construction materials. Global demand for these resources has driven intensive mining activities, particularly around Jos and surrounding areas (Higazi, 2020). Mining operations—both industrial and artisanal—physically transform landscapes, destroying sacred sites, polluting water sources, and disrupting agricultural systems. The ethical framework shifts from one of reciprocal stewardship to utilitarian resource exploitation, with land valued primarily for extractable commodities rather than spiritual significance (Maiangwa, 2013).

Agricultural intensification through integration into regional, national, and international markets creates pressures for monocropping, chemical inputs, and mechanization that differ fundamentally from traditional farming practices embedded in ritual cycles and ecological relationships (Ajayi & Adedeji, 2020). Cash cropping for market replaces diversified subsistence production, with corresponding shifts in how land is valued and treated. The environmental degradation resulting

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from these processes is not merely ecological but profoundly spiritual and ethical. When a sacred grove is cleared for farming or mining, what is lost is not simply biodiversity but a site of encounter with spiritual forces, a place where ancestors are remembered, and rituals performed. When a river spirit is polluted by mining tailings, the spiritual relationship is damaged, and the protective presence withdraws (Maiangwa, 2019).

Elders interviewed in various studies express this loss in explicitly spiritual terms. Nankap (2021) documents testimonies of Angas elders describing how the land has "cooled"—lost its spiritual vitality—as sacred sites have been destroyed and proper rituals neglected. This cooling is understood not metaphorically but as actual diminishment of the land's life-giving power, with consequences for agricultural productivity, human health, and community well-being. The ethical implications extend beyond the spiritual realm. Traditional sacred ecology provided effective conservation mechanisms—protected areas, sustainable harvesting practices, seasonal restrictions—that maintained environmental quality over generations (Berkes, 2018). As these mechanisms erode, environmental degradation accelerates, creating negative feedback loops that further undermine traditional livelihoods and cultural practices. Ajayi and Adedeji (2020) document how loss of sacred groves in the Middle Belt correlates with reduced biodiversity, soil degradation, and water scarcity—material consequences that compound spiritual loss.

Rituals in Angas traditional society serve multiple functions simultaneously: they mark critical life transitions, transmit cultural knowledge, reinforce social bonds, enact cosmological relationships, and maintain spiritual equilibrium (Danfulani, 2019; Bulus, 2020). Initiation (mus ko), marriage (kum), and funeral (pus di kum) ceremonies are particularly significant, each involving extended processes, multiple stages, and participation of the entire community. These rituals were not optional additions to life but constitutive of personhood and community membership. One who had not been properly initiated, married according to custom, or honored with proper funeral remained incomplete—their status ambiguous, their relationships to ancestors uncertain, their full integration into community life incomplete (Mbiti, 2015).

Economic globalization, operating through multiple channels, profoundly pressures traditional ritual systems. The costs of proper ritual performance have always been significant, but traditional economies provided mechanisms for meeting them through communal contributions, livestock accumulation, and extended family support (Fwatshak, 2018). Integration into monetized economies transforms these dynamics. Cost escalation occurs as contemporary rituals increasingly incorporate monetary expenditures—purchased food and drink, hired transportation, consumer goods as gifts—that exceed traditional requirements (Dalla & Bagu, 2020). The social pressure to display prosperity through lavish ceremonies creates economic burdens that delay or prevent proper ritual performance. Young men unable to accumulate bride wealth may postpone marriage indefinitely or seek alternatives like elopement that bypass traditional requirements. Time constraints emerge as participation in extended traditional rituals requires significant time commitment from multiple participants, yet urban employment, labor migration, and formal employment schedules make such time commitments increasingly difficult (Ibrahim, 2021). Rituals are compressed, abbreviated, or scheduled around modern work requirements rather than traditional temporal frameworks. Commodification of ritual services transforms traditional ritual specialists (bəlləm, wur, kpam) who operated within economies of reciprocity and obligation—their services compensated through gifts, shares of sacrificial animals, or reciprocal obligations rather than fixed fees (Nankap, 2021). Monetization transforms these relationships into commercial transactions, potentially altering the quality of ritual performance and the nature of specialist-community relationships.

Beyond material pressures, globalization introduces value frameworks that challenge the communal logic of traditional ritual. Neoliberal values of individual autonomy, economic efficiency, and personal choice penetrate Angas society through multiple channels—formal education curricula emphasizing individual achievement, media celebrating individual success stories, labor migration separating individuals from extended family networks (Ibrahim, 2021; Comaroff & Comaroff, 2019). Among urbanized youth and educated elites, there is growing ethical tension between filial and communal obligations to participate in expensive, time-consuming traditional rituals and modern values emphasizing individual choice and economic rationality. Why, some ask, should limited resources be expended on ceremonies whose meaning they do not fully accept and whose benefits they question? (Dalla & Bagu, 2020).

Christian churches offer alternative life-cycle rituals that compete directly with traditional ceremonies. Church weddings, infant dedications, and Christian funerals provide frameworks for marking transitions that are often less expensive, less time-consuming, and aligned with modern religious identities (Ukah, 2016; Dalla & Bagu, 2020). For individuals navigating multiple value systems, these alternatives offer pathways that reduce conflict between religious affiliation and ritual participation. The competition is not simply between options but between ethical frameworks. Christian rituals emphasize different values—personal faith rather than ancestral connection, church community rather than lineage, individual salvation rather than collective well-being (Marshall, 2019). Choosing a church wedding over traditional marriage (kum) is not merely selecting a different ceremony but positioning oneself within an alternative moral universe.

Angas traditional ethics are fundamentally communitarian. Personhood (gba shi) is constituted through relationships—to ancestors, lineage, clan, and community—rather than existing prior to them (Gyekye, 2019; Wiredu, 2020). The proverb commonly cited across African societies, "A person is a person through persons," captures this understanding, which

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has deep roots in Angas moral philosophy. This communitarianism generates specific ethical obligations. Resources must be shared with kin, participation in community rituals is mandatory, decisions affecting the lineage require consultation with elders, and individual achievement is understood as reflecting on and benefiting the entire community (Murove, 2020). The person who hoards wealth, refuses to participate in ceremonies, or makes major decisions without consultation is not merely imprudent but morally deficient.

Multiple dimensions of globalization promote individualism at the expense of communitarian frameworks. Formal Western-style education emphasizes individual achievement, critical thinking independent of tradition, and personal career trajectories (Fwatshak, 2011; Ibrahim, 2021). The educated individual is encouraged to question received wisdom, pursue personal goals, and define identity through educational and professional attainment rather than inherited community membership. Labor migration drives Angas youth to urban centers—Jos, Abuja, Lagos, Port Harcourt—seeking employment and opportunity. Migration physically separates individuals from extended family networks, reducing daily participation in community life and weakening the relationships that sustain communitarian ethics (Ibrahim, 2021). The migrant learns to navigate urban environments as an individual, making decisions based on personal calculation rather than collective consultation. Digital media through social media, satellite television, and internet access expose Angas youth to global media content celebrating individual achievement, personal branding, and consumer choice (Ibrahim, 2021; Adesina, 2022). YouTube influencers, Instagram celebrities, and global entertainment figures model forms of personhood organized around individual distinction rather than community integration. Neoliberal economic frameworks accompanying globalization—market liberalization, privatization, individual credit—presuppose and promote individual economic actors making rational calculations in their self-interest (Rodrik, 2018; Comaroff & Comaroff, 2019).

The individualizing forces of globalization generate acute intergenerational ethical conflict. Elders socialized within communitarian frameworks experience youth individualism as moral crisis—abandonment of ancestral values, neglect of family responsibility, erosion of the very foundations of Angas identity (Nankap, 2021). When a young professional fails to remit earnings to extended family, refuses to participate in lineage rituals, or makes marriage decisions without consultation, elders interpret these actions not as personal choices but as ethical failures threatening community survival. Youth, by contrast, may experience communitarian expectations as constraints on legitimate aspiration. Why, they ask, should their hard-earned income be distributed to relatives who did not earn it? Why must they submit decisions to elders whose education and experience are irrelevant to modern conditions? Why should they sacrifice individual goals for collective projects whose benefits are uncertain? (Ibrahim, 2021).

Adaptation, Syncretism, and Resilience

Despite the profound dislocations documented above, the Angas belief system demonstrates remarkable resilience through strategic adaptation, creative syncretism, and reclamation of cultural resources. Angas actors exercise agency within globalizing contexts, appropriating global tools and frameworks for local purposes while maintaining continuity with tradition.

Syncretism—the blending of elements from different religious traditions—has been variously understood in African religious studies. Early missionary scholarship often viewed syncretism negatively, as corruption of pure faith (Parratt, 2021). More recent scholarship recognizes syncretism as creative adaptation, reflecting the agency of religious actors who selectively combine elements from multiple traditions to construct meaningful frameworks for contemporary life (Lucas, 2019; Chitando, 2021). African religious history is characterized by pervasive syncretism. Traditional religions incorporated elements from neighboring groups over centuries. Christianity and Islam in Africa have been shaped by indigenous frameworks, producing distinctive African expressions. Contemporary religious life involves ongoing negotiation among traditional, Christian, Islamic, and secular elements (Olupona, 2021).

Research on Angas religious practice documents multiple patterns of syncretism. Pragmatic layering, as described by Lucas (2019), involves individuals maintaining Christian affiliation while continuing to consult traditional diviners (bəlləm) for specific purposes—diagnosing illness, addressing misfortune, navigating life crises. This layering reflects practical orientation toward spiritual efficacy: different sources address different needs, and the wise person draws on multiple resources. Complementary framing sees some Angas Christians reinterpret traditional elements within Christian frameworks. Ancestors may be understood as part of the "communion of saints" rather than demonic spirits. Traditional ecological ethics may be framed as "stewardship of creation" consistent with Christian teaching. This complementary framing enables continuity with tradition while maintaining Christian identity (Umaru, 2021). Ritual bricolage increasingly combines elements from multiple traditions in life-cycle rituals. A wedding may include a church ceremony, traditional family gatherings, and elements from both traditions interwoven. Funerals may incorporate Christian prayers alongside traditional mourning practices and post-funeral rites (Dalla & Bagu, 2020). These hybrid rituals reflect negotiation among family members with different religious commitments and create spaces for multiple meanings. Situational switching enables individuals to participate in Christian worship for Sunday services and traditional ceremonies for family rituals, shifting frameworks according to context and maintaining multiple religious identities without requiring their integration into a single coherent system (Lucas, 2019).

Ironically, the same digital technologies that disrupt traditional transmission also provide powerful tools for

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cultural preservation and reclamation. Angas cultural advocates have strategically appropriated digital platforms for multiple purposes. Language preservation occurs through YouTube channels and social media groups dedicated to Angas language instruction and use, helping maintain linguistic heritage threatened by dominance of English and Hausa. Language learning materials, recorded conversations, and written content in Angas orthography support continued language use, particularly in diaspora communities (Bawa, 2022). Ritual documentation through video recordings of festivals, ceremonies, and rituals creates archives accessible to future generations and diaspora members unable to attend in person. While such documentation cannot substitute for embodied participation, it provides resources for cultural memory and transmission (Christen, 2020). Oral tradition archiving through recordings of elders telling stories, reciting clan histories, and sharing proverbs preserves oral traditions that might otherwise disappear as elders pass away. Digital archives make these materials available for educational and cultural purposes (Nankap, 2021). Cultural discussion forums on Facebook groups, WhatsApp communities, and online platforms enable Angas speakers worldwide to discuss cultural matters, share information, and maintain connections, supporting continued cultural engagement among geographically dispersed populations (Ibrahim, 2021).

Angas diaspora communities, concentrated in Nigerian cities and increasingly abroad, play crucial roles in cultural preservation and reclamation. Bawa (2022) documents how diaspora remittances support traditional festivals like the Mos celebration, providing resources that enable continuation despite economic pressures. Diaspora members commission traditional rituals, sponsor cultural events, and invest in cultural infrastructure. This diaspora engagement transforms traditional practices in complex ways. Diaspora involvement brings new resources but also new expectations and influences. Festivals may be adapted to diaspora schedules and preferences. Cultural performances may be stylized for external audiences. The meaning of practices shifts when performed partly for distant viewers and sponsors (Bawa, 2022). Yet diaspora engagement also enables cultural survival under adverse conditions. When local economic pressures threaten festival continuity, diaspora resources sustain them. When youth disengage from tradition, diaspora interest may stimulate renewed attention. When local knowledge erodes, diaspora documentation efforts may preserve it.

Emerging forms of cultural entrepreneurship reframe Angas traditions within contemporary economic and cultural markets. Cultural festivals attract tourists and generate revenue. Traditional crafts find markets among collectors and decorators. Cultural performances become commodities for hire at events and functions. Traditional knowledge, particularly in healing and spirituality, attracts paying clients (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2019). Cultural entrepreneurship generates both opportunities and tensions. It provides economic incentives for cultural preservation and creates platforms for cultural expression. Yet commodification risks transforming practices oriented by different values—spiritual efficacy, communal obligation, ancestral respect—into products for sale (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2019). Angas cultural entrepreneurs navigate these tensions strategically, seeking to maintain cultural integrity while engaging markets. Some restrict commodification to practices considered less sacred, maintaining ritual protocols for spiritually significant activities. Others frame commodified performances as "cultural education" distinct from authentic ritual.

Global development discourse has increasingly recognized "indigenous knowledge" as valuable resource for sustainable development, environmental conservation, and community empowerment (Agrawal, 2022; Berkes, 2018). International institutions including the World Bank, UN agencies, and major NGOs have programs documenting and promoting indigenous knowledge. This recognition creates opportunities for Angas communities to reframe traditional practices within legitimating development frameworks. Angas traditional ecological knowledge, for example, can be presented as "indigenous natural resource management" relevant to contemporary sustainability challenges. Traditional healing practices become "community-based healthcare" contributing to primary health care objectives. Ritual conservation of sacred groves becomes "community-based conservation" supporting biodiversity protection (Ajayi & Adedeji, 2020).

Collaborations with NGOs and development organizations enable Angas communities to access resources, platforms, and advocacy networks. Partnerships focused on environmental conservation have supported documentation and protection of sacred sites. Health-focused NGOs have engaged traditional healers in primary healthcare delivery. Cultural preservation organizations have supported documentation of oral traditions and ritual practices (Ajayi & Adedeji, 2020). These partnerships involve complex negotiations. Communities must present their practices in terms intelligible and acceptable to external partners—framing traditional knowledge as "scientific" or "evidence-based," emphasizing aspects aligned with development goals while downplaying those less compatible. External partners bring resources and legitimacy but also their own agendas and constraints (Agrawal, 2022). Yet these strategic framings can be empowering. When Angas traditional ecological knowledge is recognized as valuable for conservation, it gains legitimacy denied within frameworks that dismiss it as superstition. When traditional healers are incorporated into health systems, their knowledge gains recognition and respect.

In response to challenges to traditional modes of intergenerational cultural transmission, Angas communities are developing innovative transmission strategies that adapt traditional content to contemporary forms. Formal education integration sees some schools in Angas areas incorporate elements of local culture into curricula—teaching Angas language, including local history and traditions, inviting elders to share knowledge with students. While limited by standardized national curricula, these initiatives create structured transmission opportunities (Fwatshak, 2018). Community-based cultural education involves cultural organizations and concerned elders organizing workshops,

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camps, and educational programs specifically designed to transmit cultural knowledge to youth. These programs adapt traditional content to formats accessible to youth socialized in modern institutions—structured sessions, written materials, visual aids—while maintaining connection to elders and tradition (Nankap, 2021). Digital educational resources provide platforms for cultural learning—language apps, video tutorials, online archives—allowing youth comfortable with digital media to access these resources independently, supplementing or substituting for traditional transmission channels (Bawa, 2022). For diaspora youth, transmission occurs through different channels—family visits to homeland, diaspora cultural events, online engagement, formal education in diaspora contexts—adapted to conditions of distance and limited community immersion (Bawa, 2022).

Discussion: Toward an Ethics of Intercultural Encounter

The foregoing analysis reveals Angas traditional belief systems as existing within a complex, contested field shaped by multiple forces. Globalization operates not as monolithic external imposition but as diverse flows and structures that intersect with local dynamics in contingent ways. Angas actors exercise agency within these encounters, selectively appropriating, resisting, adapting, and reinterpreting global influences according to their situations and interests. Yet agency operates within constraints. Power asymmetries characterize many global-local encounters. Western-modern frameworks—scientific, economic, legal, religious—carry institutional backing, material resources, and discursive legitimacy that indigenous frameworks lack (Santos, 2018; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020). The choices available to Angas actors are shaped by these asymmetries, even as creative responses emerge.

At the heart of globalization's impact on Angas traditional beliefs lies an ethical crisis rooted in what Santos (2018) terms "epistemic injustice" and "cognitive violence"—the systematic delegitimation of non-Western knowledge systems within dominant global frameworks. Angas traditional knowledge—cosmological, ethical, ecological, therapeutic—has been systematically devalued through multiple mechanisms: missionary discourse framing it as "idolatry" and "superstition"; educational curricula presenting Western knowledge as universal while ignoring indigenous alternatives; legal frameworks that recognize only rights grounded in Western property concepts; development discourse that dismisses traditional practices as "backward"; media representations that exoticize or ridicule indigenous cultures (Umaru, 2018; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020).

This epistemic injustice has concrete ethical consequences. When sacred ecology is dismissed, communities lose grounds for protecting their environments. When ancestral ethics are delegitimated, the moral frameworks that sustained social cohesion erode. When traditional healing is denigrated, valuable therapeutic knowledge is lost. When ritual knowledge is not transmitted, communities are impoverished culturally and spiritually. The ethical crisis is compounded by the difficulty of resistance within frameworks that define legitimacy. Angas communities seeking to defend traditional practices must often do so in terms set by dominant discourse—framing ancestral lands as "cultural heritage" within UNESCO frameworks, presenting ecological knowledge as "science" within development discourse, arguing for traditional rights within human rights language (Mutua, 2022). These strategic framings can achieve concrete gains but may also reshape traditional practices in ways that align with external expectations.

The Angas case suggests limitations in both simple homogenization narratives (globalization erases local difference) and uncritical celebration of hybridization (global-local blending produces creative new forms). Both dynamics operate, but their ethical implications require nuanced assessment. Homogenization pressures are real and consequential. The spread of Pentecostal Christianity does displace traditional religious frameworks. Integration into global markets does transform land relations and environmental ethics. Digital media do expose youth to value frameworks divergent from tradition. These pressures produce genuine losses—of knowledge, practices, relationships, meanings—that should not be minimized (Iweriebor, 2016). Yet hybridization is equally real. Angas Christians who maintain connection to ancestors, incorporate traditional elements into worship, and consult diviners while attending church are not simply confused or syncretistic but creatively constructing meaningful frameworks from available resources (Lucas, 2019). The Mos festival sustained by diaspora remittances and documented on YouTube is not the same as pre-globalization festival but represents adaptive continuity (Bawa, 2022). Youth who learn about tradition through digital media are not abandoning heritage but engaging it through contemporary channels (Ibrahim, 2021).

Santos (2018) proposes "cognitive justice" or "epistemologies of the South" as frameworks for redressing epistemic injustice. Cognitive justice requires recognition that multiple knowledge systems offer valid ways of understanding and engaging the world. It does not require uncritical acceptance of all knowledge claims but rather genuine openness to learning from different traditions and willingness to assess them on their own terms rather than through externally imposed criteria. For Angas traditional beliefs, cognitive justice would entail recognition of Angas cosmological, ethical, ecological, and therapeutic knowledge as legitimate knowledge systems, not mere "beliefs" or "superstitions." This recognition would extend across domains—education, law, development, healthcare, environmental management—where such knowledge has relevance (Santos, 2018). It would require engaging Angas traditional knowledge with respect for its internal coherence, sophistication, and practical wisdom, moving beyond extractive approaches that mine indigenous knowledge for useful bits while dismissing its broader frameworks (Christen, 2020). It demands providing resources for documentation, transmission, and practice of traditional knowledge, with cultural preservation receiving institutional support commensurate with that provided to

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Western knowledge systems (UNESCO, 2020). It necessitates protecting rights to practice traditional religion, maintain sacred sites, transmit cultural knowledge, and govern according to customary norms within limits consistent with human rights, requiring legal frameworks that accommodate cultural difference rather than imposing uniform standards (Ibhawoh, 2018). It calls for creating spaces for genuine dialogue between knowledge systems, where Angas traditional knowledge can inform broader conversations about sustainability, health, community, and ethics, with Western frameworks also open to learning and transformation (Santos, 2018).

Translating cognitive justice principles into practice requires concrete changes across multiple domains. Education needs curriculum reform that includes Angas history, language, and cultural knowledge as legitimate content, not merely folklore, along with pedagogical approaches that value oral tradition and elder wisdom alongside written texts and credentialed expertise (Fwatshak, 2018). Environmental governance requires recognition of sacred sites in land use planning and environmental regulation, inclusion of traditional ecological knowledge in conservation strategies, and respect for community protocols regarding access to and use of natural resources (Ajayi & Adedeji, 2020; Berkes, 2018). Healthcare benefits from integration of traditional healing within health systems where appropriate, with respect for healers' expertise and patient choice, and research collaborations that recognize traditional knowledge contributors appropriately (Bulus, 2020). Legal pluralism demands accommodation of customary law within legal frameworks, with mechanisms for resolving conflicts between customary and statutory norms, and recognition of traditional governance institutions alongside state structures (Ostien, 2020; Vaughan, 2020). Development practice requires engagement with communities on their own terms, respecting local protocols and decision-making processes, and framing development goals in dialogue with community values rather than imposing external priorities (Agrawal, 2022). Digital ethics necessitates development of protocols for documenting and sharing traditional knowledge that respect community ownership and control, with platforms designed with indigenous users' needs and preferences in mind, and protection of sacred or restricted knowledge from inappropriate circulation (Christen, 2020).

Achieving cognitive justice requires action at multiple levels. The Nigerian state bears primary responsibility for creating legal and policy frameworks that protect cultural rights, support cultural preservation, and ensure equitable treatment of diverse knowledge systems. This requires moving beyond symbolic recognition to substantive support—resources for cultural institutions, curriculum reform, protection of sacred sites, accommodation of customary governance (Fwatshak, 2018; Vaughan, 2020). International frameworks also matter. UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage program provides mechanisms for documentation and support, though its effectiveness depends on national implementation (UNESCO, 2020). The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples articulates standards for treatment of indigenous communities, including rights to maintain and transmit cultural heritage (United Nations, 2007). Human rights mechanisms can address violations of cultural and religious rights (Mutua, 2022; Ibhawoh, 2018). Yet international frameworks are not straightforwardly beneficial. They operate within the same epistemic hierarchies that marginalize indigenous knowledge, often imposing external categories and criteria. Indigenous communities must navigate these frameworks strategically, using them for protection while resisting their assimilative pressures (Santos, 2018).

Conclusion

This research has delineated the profound and paradoxical socio-ethical impacts of globalization on the traditional belief systems of the Angas people of Plateau State, Nigeria. The forces of religious, educational, economic, mediatic, and political globalization have destabilized the ethical universe anchored in ancestral communion (kum nengs), sacred geography (shar nan), ritual practice (mus ko), and communal responsibility (pang da jin), fostering significant tensions, dislocations, and transformations across multiple domains.

Ancestral veneration confronts Christian soteriology that frames it as idolatry, generating intra-family conflict and reconfiguring moral frameworks from ancestral accountability toward individual salvation. Sacred ecology faces assault from economic globalization that commodities land, extracts minerals, and intensifies agriculture, producing environmental degradation experienced as spiritual as well as material loss. Ritual systems struggle with economic pressures that escalate costs, time constraints from urban employment, and competition from Christian alternatives that offer less expensive, individually oriented ceremonies. Communitarian ethics compete with individualizing forces from formal education, labor migration, digital media, and neoliberal frameworks, generating intergenerational ethical conflict and transforming understandings of personhood and obligation.

Yet within this crucible of change, resilience emerges through multiple forms of adaptation. Creative syncretism enables Angas actors to combine traditional and Christian elements in pragmatic, layered spiritual frameworks that maintain connection to ancestors while engaging modern religious institutions. Strategic appropriation of global tools—digital platforms, diaspora networks, NGO partnerships—supports cultural preservation, documentation, and transmission. Innovative educational strategies adapt traditional content to contemporary formats. Cultural entrepreneurship creates economic incentives for maintaining and performing tradition.

The Angas case thus illustrates both the disruptive power of globalization and the creative agency of communities navigating its forces. Traditional beliefs are not simply eroded but transformed through complex processes of negotiation, adaptation, and selective preservation. The outcome is not predetermined but contingent on community responses, external engagements, and broader political-economic contexts.

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This study contributes to multiple scholarly conversations. For Angas studies, it provides the first systematic socio-ethical analysis of globalization's impacts, synthesizing available literature and identifying patterns that previous research has treated separately. For African religious studies, it offers a granular case study that illuminates general dynamics of religious change under globalization while attending to specificities that broader analyses may miss. For globalization theory, it demonstrates the value of attending simultaneously to macro-structural forces and micro-level agency, to power asymmetries and creative responses, to disruption and resilience. For ethical theory, it shows how indigenous frameworks offer resources for evaluating globalization's impacts and imagining alternatives grounded in cognitive justice.

The study's limitations suggest directions for future research. The reliance on existing literature, while necessary and productive, cannot substitute for direct ethnographic engagement. Future research should include ethnographic fieldwork in Angas communities enabling direct observation of contemporary religious practice, interviews with diverse community members, and documentation of perspectives and experiences unavailable in published sources. Quantitative studies through survey research could quantify patterns of religious affiliation, ritual participation, attitudes toward tradition, and generational differences, complementing qualitative findings with systematic data. Diaspora research would illuminate how traditional beliefs are transformed through migration and transnational connection, and how diaspora engagement shapes homeland practices. Comparative studies with neighboring groups (Berom, Mwaghavul, Ron) would illuminate which patterns are specific to Angas and which reflect broader regional dynamics, enabling more robust theoretical generalization. Youth-focused research would illuminate how tradition is being reproduced—or not—among emerging generations. Gender analysis would illuminate how globalization differentially affects Angas women and men, and how gender relations are transformed through these processes. Policy research would inform advocacy for more supportive policy environments.

The future viability of Angas traditional beliefs hinges not on isolation from global forces—impossible and arguably undesirable—but on the global community's ethical commitment to cognitive justice: the right of different knowledge systems, including indigenous spiritual-ethical frameworks, to coexist and inform global conversations on sustainability, community, health, and human flourishing. This requires moving beyond the extractive approaches that have characterized much engagement with indigenous knowledge—mining it for useful bits while dismissing its broader frameworks, celebrating its products while ignoring its practitioners, documenting its practices while undermining its transmission. Genuine cognitive justice requires relationships of reciprocity, respect, and mutual learning—engagements in which Western knowledge systems are also open to transformation through encounter with indigenous alternatives.

For Angas communities, the challenge is to maintain meaningful continuity with ancestral heritage while adapting creatively to contemporary conditions. This is not a choice between preservation and change but an ongoing process of selective transmission, creative adaptation, and strategic engagement—a process Angas actors have already begun and will continue. The outcome will depend on their agency, on external support and pressures, and on broader struggles for epistemic justice in which indigenous communities worldwide are engaged.

The Angas traditional belief system, like all living traditions, has always changed through encounter with new circumstances. What is new in the current moment is the intensity and scope of globalizing forces, and the extent to which they are backed by institutional power and discursive legitimacy. Whether Angas beliefs survive as living traditions—evolving, adapting, but maintaining meaningful connection to ancestral foundations—depends on whether these encounters can be transformed from imposition to dialogue, from domination to mutual respect, from cognitive violence to cognitive justice.

The stakes extend beyond Angas communities. In a world facing ecological crisis, social fragmentation, and spiritual disorientation, indigenous knowledge systems offer resources urgently needed—ecological wisdom, communal values, spiritual depth, alternative visions of human flourishing. The loss of any such system diminishes not only its practitioners but humanity's collective heritage and future possibilities. The ethical imperative is clear: to ensure that Angas traditional beliefs, and the countless other indigenous knowledge systems worldwide, are not merely archived as museum artifacts but continue as living, evolving, and respected components of a genuinely pluralistic global heritage.

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