Climate Change, Cosmology, and Cultural Resilience
An Andean Case Study

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The Issue and The Question

- Climate Change
- Cosmology
- Cultural Resilience

*How does climate change affect indigenous ideology and influence cultural resilience?*
Methods and Limitations

- Fieldwork
  - 10 days in Vito, Peru

- Participant observation

- Interviews

- Study abroad
  - SIT: Indigenous Peoples and Globalization

- Limitations
  - Language
  - Time
Literature

- *Indigenous People and Climate Change in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Kronick and Vertner: World Bank) and IPCC
- *Semblanza de Vito*
- Julio Alegría, Centro Bartolomé de las Casas (Cusco), and PACC (Programa de Adaptación al Cambió Climatico)
- Andean cosmovision (Holly Wissler)
- Since 2010, noticeable increase in anthropological attention, little argument
- Ecological anthropology: how humans relate to and interact with their environment (Selin)
- Shift in discourse (Peterson and Broad)
- Importance of indigenous knowledge, input, and contextually appropriate solutions (Puntenney, Browman, Kronick and Vertner)
Hypotheses

• Climate change does not affect indigenous ideology. Instead, it is modern religion alone that hinders cultural resilience.

• Climate change is not affecting the environment and modern religion is not altering indigenous ideology. Thus, cultural resilience is not an issue.

• Climate change and modern religion alter indigenous ideology and hinder cultural resilience.
Data

• Effects of climate change
  – Disappearance of water sources (drought, glacial reduction, drying of springs) and longer dry season
  – Increase in highs, decrease in lows
  – Torrential downpours, erosion
  – Insufficient harvests and unhealthy livestock

• Lack of resources and infrastructure
  – Little trade
  – Unsatisfactory education
  – Migration

• Traditional religion
  – Ayni (reciprocity)
  – Disrupted equilibrium between humans and nature

• Presence of Evangelism
  – Organization
  – Education
  – Blasphemy! But no priest...
Concluding Argument

Cultural resilience in the face of climate change depends on cooperation between modern religion and traditional knowledge systems based on indigenous cosmology.