

Center for Latin American Social Policy (CLASPO)

SUMMER FIELD RESEARCH REPORT

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September 1, 2003

Navigating Clientelist Networks:

The Beginnings of a Journey, Neuquen, Argentina 2003

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Field Research Proposal and Objectives

In the 1990s, Argentina went through a process of structural changes, which included economic liberalization and deregulation, a fixed monetary policy, decentralization and state apparatus reduction through privatizations and cut of public employment and services. These policies had certain positive macroeconomic results, such as economic growth, increasing investment and price stability. However, they also had negative results, like increased unemployment, underemployment, poverty and inequality. Moreover, key perverse power structures and political behaviors of the old order were protected and reproduced in the new scheme. Powerful domestic and foreign groups continued to have a privileged position in the governmental decision-making process and political practices such as clientelism, corruption and friendship networks remained central to policy making and state-civil society relationships.

In this contradictory context of large reforms that brought advantages to certain economic and social groups, but disadvantages to growing segments of the population, a wave of political contention gradually developed throughout the country. In 1993, the first *pueblada* (town revolt) in the province of Santiago del Estero showed that the structural socioeconomic changes could produce active popular resistance. After that episode, several towns in various provinces of Argentina that had been negatively affected by the reforms, witnessed intense social protests in which groups of disadvantaged people were the protagonists. Cutral Co, a town in the province of Neuquén that was built around the traditionally state-owned oil company (YPF), was the scene of the first *cortes de ruta* (roadblocks) in 1995. The effects of the privatization of the company and the reform of the provincial government resulted in a steep increase in unemployment and reduction in welfare protection. This type of protest would eventually

become the most popular means of raising labor and social welfare demands throughout Argentina. Indeed, in 1997 there was a total of 140 *cortes the ruta* (roadblocks), steadily expanding their popularity to the extent that in 2002, the number rose to 2154 (two thousand and fifty four), or 195 roadblocks per month.

Nevertheless, the most interesting phenomenon of this movement was not its extension, but its innovative character in terms of the history of Argentine political contention. First of all, the fact that labor unions were not the primary promoters or organizers of these social and labor protests represented a change, since unions had been the dominant institution in charge of channeling labor and welfare demands. Moreover, the other traditional institution that failed to represent societal interests and demands were the political parties, which neither promoted nor organized the roadblocks. The novel character of the wave of protests was later reinforced with the emergence and expansion of other new means of protest since late 2001. The *cacerolazos* (pot-banging), neighborhood assemblies, *escraches* (graffiti protests) and barter clubs were also born outside the traditional channels of representation and used new organizational tactics.

In my M.A. Thesis, which I finished in August 2002, I studied this unique wave of political contention in order to identify its roots beginning in 1993, and to understand its dynamics and characteristics, particularly from 1997 until June 2002. I based my research on primary and secondary sources, including two field trips to Argentina, in which I was able to do several interviews to protesters and actors directly or indirectly involved with the contentious episodes, as well as enriching field observations. The main contributions of my research were four-fold. First, a conceptualization of the different types of protests in terms of means and locus of contention, political and socioeconomic background of participants and protesters organizations. Then, an identification of four contentious phases within the ten-year period, based on the

occurrence of certain mechanisms of contention, level of social unrest, types of protest and participants. Third, the recognition of dynamics of contention and their effects on the scope and consolidation of the different protesters organizations. Finally, the unsuitability and paradoxical effects of governmental policy responses to the protesters demands.

Along these lines, I emphasized the reproduction of certain perverse political behaviors (such as clientelism and corruption) within the protesters organizations and in their relationship with the government and other institutions. In addition, I underlined the virtues and vices of the concentration of resources in certain protesters organizations as opposed to the decentralized origin of the movement, and the controversial nature of the movement's heterogeneity and fragmentation. Inevitably, **new questions** emerged: would the adoption of perverse practices act against (a) the participation of the people in these organizations, which they originally view as a worthy and transparent alternative to politics and demand-making, (b) the prospects of these organizations to fulfill their original *raison d'être*, that is, representing and working for the advancement of disadvantaged people in neoliberal regimes, (c) the possibilities of these organizations to be respected by or to expand their participatory base to other segments of the population? Moreover, would the fragmented, heterogeneous and de/centralizing forces of the movement reduce the capacity of the protesters organizations to build a cohesive and powerful political force in front of the traditional partisan structure of Argentina? Finally, regarding the government policies to appease the protesters, what factors would policy-makers need to take into account in order to close the gap between communal demands and governmental policies or programs?

The **main objective** of opening a new phase in my research through a summer field trip would then be to examine these aspects of the contentious process focusing my attention on a study case. In order to look at the actual practices of protesters

organizations and their relationships with their members, other institutions and government officials at the local, provincial and national level, I will choose a paradigmatic example, the case of Neuquen. In this province, several local and regional picketers groups originated and grew as organizations, the most important national protesters organizations have been represented, neighborhood assemblies were organized, and very interesting institutional processes occurred between picketers, indigenous groups and other activist associations. Moreover, by focusing on the case of Neuquen, I will be able to empirically address the question of generating, designing and implementing community-based social policies. The case of the picketers brings to the front the issues related with the design and implementation of social policies from a bottom-up approach. The (unsuccessful) application of the programs *Trabajar* and *Jefas y Jefes de Hogar*, has shown that even if the government and multilateral agencies were trying to change the locus of management of social policies to the local/community level, they did not reach the objective of truly addressing the issues raised by the mobilized communities. What could we do as researchers in order to help with the process of closing the gap between representatives and community? Is it possible to avoid the recreation of “perverse” organizational behaviors and political practices between governmental officials and community organizations?

In this report I will present the main findings of the field trip to the province of Neuquen, virtues and obstacles of the research methodology applied, description and analysis of the communities visited, policy implications and possible areas that I think are worthy to develop further in future research, taking into account the communities interests and necessities and the institutional mechanisms of the CLASPO network.

National and Provincial Context

At the moment, Argentina is navigating a serious political, economic and social crisis without a clear direction towards better conditions. The most recent administration of Nestor Kirchner stands precariously on a highly fragmented political and economic alliance with diverse sectors of the population and domestic and foreign actors and organizations. While still enjoying the peaceful days of its honeymoon, instability and fragility are the main characteristics of this administration, which took power with only 23% of the electoral votes. With a more enthusiastic atmosphere if compared with the years 2001 and 2002, Argentines believe that "there are no chances of falling further down; the worse of the worst is overcome, now it is time to heal and climb up once again." However, there are no signs of political, economic or social long-term changes. Most of the light improvements in employment rates and economic growth are direct results of the currency devaluation and the massive public employment programs implemented in the last two years. Although beneficial for the citizenry mood, in real terms Argentina is far behind reaching a path towards structural long-term changes.

Regarding Neuquen, it is definitely a very peculiar province, extremely rich because of the "regalias" from its natural resources (oil, gas, energy). In this province, neither the economic crisis nor the retrenchment of the state is as apparent as in other provinces of the country. Although if compared to pre-crisis years Neuquen is not performing as well, its economy is still a healthy and active one. The presence of foreign energy companies is massive; almost everything that used to be from YPF (Yacimientos Petrolíferos del Estado), today is from firms such as Repsol (Spain) and Total (France). While the opening of the market and the privatization of state owned companies left traces in Neuquen - the piqueteros movement origins in this area was directly related to the closing of YPF centers -, the retrenchment of the state is almost a delusion: the state

of Neuquen is omnipresent through its public works, services, employment, programs, assistentialist and clientelistic networks.

Neuquen political party system is more similar to Mexico's PRI than to the bipartisan system of Argentina. The Movimiento Popular Neuquino (MPN) has been the dominant political party of the province for more than forty years, and its present strength suggests that it will stand still in the future. Other parties, such as the Partido Justicialista (PJ) and the Partido Radical (UCR), are a minority and have a history of conflicts and alliances between each other in order to defeat the "todopoderoso" MPN. When compared to the PJ of other Argentine provinces, many *neuquinos* respond with a sad tone "it is worse, because while the MPN has the apparatus does not have the soul of the peronists. The MPN affiliate is not proud of its party, it is everything about convenience." This comment seems to hold true when one looks at the MPN history, walks around and talk with people about it: while the MPN is the "clan" party, patrimonialist, populist, assistentialist, clientelistic, corrupt and (of course) powerful, it does not have the strong identity aspects of the "Movimiento Peronista". It is rather a hierarchical machine that has been working extremely well due to the extraordinary resources the province has managed over the years thanks to its natural advantages and the political capacity of its administrators to deal with the national governments and more recently with the foreign companies in benefit of the provincial arcades.

Despite its wealth and the massive social programs and public services, income distribution in Neuquen falls far behind a desirable one: while the few get most, the more get the least. In this aspect, Neuquen is not such a peculiar case in terms of other provinces of Argentina or other areas of the world. However, Neuquen's peculiarity resides in that its extraordinary wealth has been used to maintain the state/party assistentialist apparatus working well despite economic downturns and conflicting social activism. The informal machinery of income redistribution through clientelist networks

and redirection of public and private funds has been working without stop. While this informal apparatus maintains its strength, lately it has been contested by activist institutions such as unions, *piqueteros* groups, national and international NGOs of diverse types and also mapuche organizations. This contestation has interesting aspects to look at in order to understand the logics of this machinery and the prospects of the claimants' actions. For example, while activists in Neuquen fight clientelism and state corruption, they still demand resources and solutions to come from the state. Be they indigenous rights activists, *piqueteros*, union leaders, urban squatter-settlers or rural mapuches, all have been recipients of public funding or assistance and all demand the public support to be maintained or improved, not to disappear. This contradictory process reflects on the one hand, the high level of embeddedness of the assistentialist/clientelist machinery and on the other hand, the perverse aspects of it; even when opposed to it, many activist organizations and its affiliates survive because of it.

Development has been tied (theoretically and practically) to public assistentialism. However, the results have been poor and a perverse structure including distributors of public goods, claimants and recipients have generated ties of social, political and economic dependency between lower income populations, party brokers and state officials of different ranks, which enforced class stagnation rather than development. Where to cut the chain is a key question that remains to be answered. Clientelism and assistentialism have been the main political mechanisms of income redistribution in most of the Argentine provinces, including Neuquen. However, while this system of income redistribution brought relatively positive results such as material improvements to diverse segments of the population, it has not generated social mobility. On the contrary, it solidified class structure and divisions by increasing the gap between rich and poor and almost nullifying the chances of lower classes to turn into middle classes.

Neuquen has massive (and growing) lower income populations that almost entirely depend on public assistance (be it through housing, public services, social programs or public employment), a considerably important middle class that again entirely depends on public assistance mostly through public employment and housing and, finally, a little high income segment, including high rank government officials and owners of enterprises that work for the state. In this context, the "invisible hand" of the state reaches almost everywhere, be it in a licit or an illicit way. The network of actors that participate in the widespread supply/demand of public resources is a very dense and embedded one; a complex structure that absorbs and redirect a considerable part of the funds devoted to social programs, generally distorting the policies' goals at the time of implementation. By understanding the logics of this informal network, the actors involved and their interrelation, one may help in the design of social programs and implementation strategies in order to reduce the percentage of "lost" funds and gradually break the perverse political cycle of social stagnation, economic dependency and poverty growth.

Addressing Clientelism

Although clientelism is a long-standing phenomenon, academic attention to it has been irregular. In the last few years, there was a new spur of works on this issue by both political scientists and sociologists with the general believe that informal institutions, such as clientelist networks, were as important as formal institutions at times of structural reforms in Latin American and other less developed countries of the world (Stokes: 2003, Helmke and Levitsky: 2003, Corzo Fernández: 2002). The actual (informal and/or illegal) ways of political distribution of resources (be they clientelism, corruption or friendship networks) proved to be solidified and resistant mechanisms to

neoliberal reforms: despite efforts to reduce state participation and arbitrariness in society, enforce the role of the market as the main arbiter in the distribution of resources, awards and punishments, and to increase political and economic transparency, these informal mechanisms of allocation of resources seemed to be dominating an important part of the game.

A new wave of studies have emerged with the two-fold aim of understanding the dynamics of probably one of the strongest power structures of the less developed countries and collaborating in the design of policies and strategies to modify the perverse aspects of the clientelist/corrupt networks. In the specific area of social policies, some of the works deal with the problems of enforcing participatory methods in contexts submerged in clientelist networks (Aranda: 2002, Abers: 2000, Auyero: 2000). In some cases, social participation is either nullified or reshaped by preexisting clientelist practices, which results in a failure of participatory initiatives. In others, the programs' objectives of developing community involvement and labor and civic consciousness get lost in the political uses (or misuses) of the programs. Finally, citizens' involvement in clientelist networks at times means civic or social participation and provides a sense of belonging and identity to certain populations. The clientelist networks are much more than a client/patron relationship, they include a multisided game in which both clients and patrons are dependent on each other and are at the same time claimants and receivers. While initially clientelism could have been a two-sided relationship, after generations and generations, the number, position, interests and capital of the actors involved have multiplied, thus, the complexity of the exchange has increased to unprecedented levels.

In terms of the methodology, the studies are mostly based in qualitative research. Authors such as Auyero and Aranda reveal interesting findings on the clientelist logics with their detailed studies of certain cases, squatter settlements of Gran Buenos Aires

and Neuquen, respectively. Participant observations and interviews with the diverse array of actors involved in the networks are a key aspect of their research. I followed these methodological lines as well; in my field trip to Neuquen I dedicated most of the time to both walk around different settings (urban squatter settlements, diverse indigenous communities, *fiscaleros* lands, public offices, activist organizations, etc.) and talk with as many actors as possible (urban and rural squatter settlers, indigenous *pobladores*, government officials of different ranks, activists leaders and followers, neighbours, etc.) With the intention of mapping the clientelist network in Neuquen, I looked at the diverse perspectives of the actors of both their roles and the others positions. In general, the interviews were open-ended conversations and the interviewees were glad to express their opinions. The participant observations were very important to achieve a better perception of the context in which all these actors were involved. These observations included reading of local newspapers, listening to local and alternative radio stations, walking around the diverse areas of the city of Neuquen and other parts of the province, and taking notes of all these experiences.

In my opinion, there is a need of spending a long period of time in the community of study in order to look at the dynamics of the process cross time and also to get familiar with the place and the people. With the aim of getting the confidence of the people, it is also necessary to spend some time around them, be transparent in the management of information and also be able to show that ones' actions are consistent and coherent. While in some cases, the interviewees are ready and eager to talk, sometimes takes a longer time and more than one meeting to get to a higher level of comfort and confidentiality between the parts. Another relevant issue is the researcher's capacity of multiplying the original quantity of contacts and interviews: this process takes time and staying longer in the place of study definitely helps the researcher to expand the "agenda". In this respect, the CLASPO network turns to be more efficient if the

visiting researcher has enough time to “adjust” to the local researchers’ schedule. While the CLASPO researchers always have a positive and helpful attitude, their agendas might be full at the time of the visit (a longer period would then facilitate the coordination among the researchers).

The Communities Visited

Urban squatter settlers around the city of Neuquen, various *poblaciones* mapuches and the *fiscaleros* (rural squatter settlers), are all low-income populations, generally under the poverty line. All these communities are tied to the assistentialist/clientelist network of the state, political parties and other organizations such as Evangelist and Catholic Churches, unions or *piqueteros* organizations. Whether located in the surrounding areas of the city of Neuquen or in isolated rural areas of the province, all these communities enjoyed of public services and programs, such as public housing, light, gas and road services, social plans for single mothers and unemployed people, popular kitchens (provision of food), and public schools and hospitals. The presence of the state and the main political parties in all these areas was very strong; signs of the Movimiento Popular Neuquino (MPN) dominated the scene, although there were also graffiti of the Partido Justicialista (PJ) and the Unión Cívica Radical (UCR).

The Mapuches

The mapuches are a very heterogenous group. They are organized in diverse communities, which live in different *parajes*. In the province of Neuquen there are around 50 communities (the number varied from 46 to 52 according to the source of information). These communities are rural, but the mapuches have migrated to towns and cities; approximately half of the mapuche people live in urban areas. There are

social, cultural, political and economic differences between the rural and the urban mapuches mainly due to the transition from rural to urban ways of living.

The mapuche community is represented *vis a vis* the state and other institutions by the so-called “Confederación,” which was created in 1968 by the national government with the purpose of recognizing and identifying one unique entity in negotiations with the mapuches. While the communities are formally represented by the Confederación, they still have autonomy in their internal system of power and organization. In the present, approximately half of the communities are participating in the Confederación meetings and actions, the rest of the communities do not participate due to disagreement in terms of political conduction or simply because of geographical distance barriers. The members of the organizations are a minority in terms of the mapuche population, nevertheless they have remained active for considerably long periods of time.

At the present there are several mapuche organizations working for the expansion of their culture and language and also defending the rights of diverse mapuche communities that are facing legal problems with the state or private firms. These organizations are autonomous in their action and funding; there are some conflictive issues between them as well. One of the main divisions between the organizations is political/ideological: while the current leaders of the Confederación have a leftist ideological frame and a political strategy of hard confrontation with the state, the firms and the white people. Other organizations of Neuquen like We Kvyeh, We Kimun and the Comisión Política Mapuche have a more moderate position and work within the state apparatus. In the rural areas, the conflict between the mapuche pobladores and the Confederación lies in the issue of representation, distribution of resources from the top to the bottom and transparency of information. In sum, the mapuches are not an homogenous group of people, but a heterogeneous one, with activist and passive, rural and urban groups with different interests, ideas, objectives and strategies.

Economically, most of the mapuches are definitely part of lower income segments of the population - some urban mapuches, mostly siblings of rural migrants, have become middle class populations, with undergraduate degrees. Most of the rural mapuches have been assisted by the state mainly through housing and the provision of public services, schooling, roads and health services. Politically, the mapuche communities are internally governed by a system of chiefs -*loncos*- (elected by heritage and charisma) but at the same time are Argentine citizens, and as such, they vote –that is, they are populations of interest for the political parties, particularly on rally times. Consequently, and tied to the economic aspect, the mapuches are not excluded from the assistentialist/clientelistic political network of the provincial and municipal levels of government.

Socially, the mapuche communities have gone through decades and decades of discrimination, both evident in rural and urban mapuche communities because of spatial, cultural and economic segregation. Culturally, the mapuche communities have a rich heritage and struggle with the conservation and recuperation of their culture mostly through religious ceremonies, the practice of the language and the intergenerational oral communication of their culture.

The activist mapuche organizations have a strong interest in the conservation and reproduction of their culture, the fight of the mapuche activists is more cultural than economically or politically driven. However, all these are tied together in practice.

The Fiscaleros

The so-called *fiscaleros* are people that migrated mostly from Chile around the 1950s and established in rural areas of the province of Neuquen (in fiscal lands, thus their name). The fiscaleros are not an indigenous group, and they do not have identity

issues as the mapuches. Although they are a smaller group than the mapuches, they are also organized in front of the state and through their leaders they manage to make their claims to the provincial and municipal authorities. The fiscaleros are recipients of public services and social programs, and they have recently achieved “tenencia precaria” (precarious property title) of the land and houses in which they live. Although these titles are precarious, they give them the chance of becoming full regular owners after a certain amount of years (depending on the area, from 10 to 20 years).

Economically, the fiscaleros are devoted to rural activities, mostly cattle since the climate conditions of the area are not very favorable for growing crops. They are very used to treat with government officials and *punteros* (party brokers). For example, they manage bureaucratic jargon and dedicate a considerable part of their days to go to the municipality or other public agencies in order to claim for social programs or other issues. As in the case of the rural mapuches, the families are very numerous (an average of six kids per family) and there is a high rate of single mothers. The poor conditions in which they live, the low-income they perceive and their unstable (if existent) employment situation do not seem to be a burden for women to become pregnant and give birth to at least four kids at a considerably young age. Fertility control programs do not accompany the accessibility to public health institutions, social programs and public services from the part of the state; assistentialism and clientelism have in this case a contradictory result. While the social assistance is spread all over Neuquen’s territory, its planning is poor and cruel: an average of six kids are born in high-technology hospitals to then live in homes under the line of poverty with high chances of falling in bad-nourishment problems and without concrete possibilities of growing towards a better future but rather to reproduce their poor situation. The same scenario is found in the squatter settlements of the city of Neuquen.

Urban Squatter Settlers

Likewise, the settlers are a heterogeneous group of people. There are groups of immigrants from Chile as well as mapuches from rural areas and poor people from other parts of the province of Neuquen and other surrounding provinces. The squatter settlements vary in size and age: there are many settlements that are now more than thirty years old, most of which have all the public services installed and many of the residents possess the precarious property title of their houses –most of which have been improved, rebuilt or built by the Instituto Provincial de la Vivienda, IPV (the provincial housing institute). At the same time, there are newer settlements, which are in the process of obtaining public services, and finally, there are very recent squatter settlements that are fighting against the state in order to get public services and thus, the “informal” permission of the government to stay in the area. In general terms, the settlers are mostly unemployed, recipients of social and unemployment plans, and users of public services, schools and hospitals. The average number of kids per family is eight kids, once again showing the discrepancy between the provision of certain public services, the presence of the state, political parties and other organizations and the lack of planning or control over certain basic issues such as fertility.

Another problematic aspect in the case of the squatter settlements is related to the funds used to build and improve the houses and also in the installation and provision of public services. Along several conversations with workers of the IPV and constructors, the issues of clientelism and corruption remained to be the most dominant. The construction of those houses (as well as the provision of the endless list of social programs) has the main political objective of building a clientele and avoiding activism and conflict. At the same time, a significant part of the budget devoted to these housing projects is “redirected” towards bribery –the construction firms know that they will only

obtain a part of the amount published in the official contract. The financial result of this is on the one hand, a big loss for the state arcades, and on the other hand, a big conquest to the private arcades of politicians and “ghost firms and foundations.” The paradox of Neuquen is that despite the perversity of the installed system of assistentialism, clientelism and corruption, the provincial state is still working thanks to the province’s extraordinary wealth based on its natural resources and beneficial agreements with the national governments and energy firms in taxes and “regalias” issues. Notwithstanding this wealth and the humongous funds devoted to poor populations, the poverty and inequality rates keep growing and upward social mobility starts to disappear both as a concrete phenomenon and as a collective dream of the less privileged and middle-income populations. All these processes have collaborated to the expansion and maintenance of high levels of activism in this province. Most of the activist groups fight against clientelism and corruption, but the battle is directed not only against the government and political parties (the “patrons”) but also towards their own current and potential affiliates (the “clients”): while the activists raise the protesters’ demands, it is the state through its clientelist mechanisms who provides. Thus, the activist organizations are themselves “trapped” by the clientelist network in the sense that while they are competing against it, they need its resources. It is a very risky game, particularly when it comes to obtaining followers and building commitment and loyalty. Self-interest and short-term necessities stand still in front of collective goals and long-term promises.

Further Research

One of the main findings of my field trip to Neuquen was the necessity of developing further research on the mechanisms and logics of the actual means of

redistribution of public resources in place: the assistentialist/clientelist networks. I believe that reaching a better understanding of these networks will help the researchers and policy designers to identify (a) the points of distortion of the social programs and policies planned, (b) strategies to improve the probabilities of reaching the desired policy goals, which may include a change in the actors implementing the policies, the ways of financing the programs, a complimentary set of policies oriented to develop the recipients education and aims, among others (c) means to gradually change the state of affairs probably by working with and through the existing informal mechanisms of redistribution of public resources, (d) factors (and ways to include them in traditional analysis) that should be included at the time of policy evaluation, and finally, (d) to map a more realistic picture of the context in which the policies (if worthy) would be implemented.

In a more particular level, taking into account the necessities and demands of the communities visited, there are several areas that could be addressed such as fertility control programs, health and primary care education. In order to develop programs on these areas, I think that it would be worthy to try to design a strategy to avoid the vices of the clientelist system while at the same time remain active in implementing at least limited solutions to serious problems such as high fertility rates, bad-nourishment and primary care illnesses. On the whole, a fundamental puzzle emerges: how to combine global reform strategies oriented to dismantling perverse power structures and targeted programs in such a way that the efforts directed towards the improvement of serious issues do not vanish as soon as they enter the logics of the informal structures of resource reallocation? Building consensus among key social, political and economic actors and organizations may be accompanied by long-term civil society processes of cultural change. Short vs. long-term interests as well as self vs. collective goals are only

a small example of the dimensions that are involved in the contested path of societal change.

To end with, in terms of future research prospects, I would like to “complete” the map of Neuquen’s clientelist networks and also choose another case study in order to illuminate the clientelist logics in a comparative perspective. To my knowledge, a good comparative case could be Brazil, both because of certain similarities, but mainly because there is some literature about this issue, particularly analyzing the experience of the participatory budget and how this initiative faced the clientelist tendencies embedded in their society. In general, the final balance of this field research trip to Neuquen is positive; I was able to gather very enriching material mostly based on personal interviews and participant observations which will serve as a solid starting point in this research ‘journey on clientelist networks’. On the *piqueteros* movement in Neuquen, I was able to explore most of the questions in the proposal; the results will be incorporated in a revised version of my M.A. thesis. For example, I clarified the role of certain union organizations have played in the maintenance of *piqueteros* groups until the present, because of their institutional capacity to manage resources and organize mobilizations, verified the local and regional strength of the *piqueteros* movement against centralization forces, and found testimonies on the difficulties of their struggle with clientelist apparatuses. This field research to Neuquen was definitely a very enlightening experience both for improving existing projects and designing new ones.

List of People Interviewed

- Miguel, Instituto Provincial de la Vivienda de Neuquen, Accounting, Former inspector of projects in several mapuche communities (July 30, 2003)
- Hernan, poblador mapuche, Quila Quina – Curruhuinca, Neuquen (August 2, 2003)
- Yolanda, pobladora mapuche, Quila Quina – Curruhuinca, Neuquen (August 2, 2003)
- Carlos De Vicente, Ministerio de Desarrollo de la Provincia de Neuquen (August 4, 2003)
- Miriam Barreto, Veterinary, Active member of ATEN (Asociación de Trabajadores de la Educación de Neuquen), Former veterinary in several mapuche communities, Neuquen (August 4 and 6, 2003)
- Marite, Instituto Provincial de la Vivienda y Urbanismo, Inspector, Neuquen (August 6, 2003)
- Crisitina, Instituto Provincial de la Vivienda y Urbanismo, Inspector, Neuquen (August 6, 2003)
- Maria, Manager of Artesanías Neuquinas (August 6, 2003)
- Day-Trip to Añelo – Chihuido (August 7, 2003)
- Maria, COM (Coordinadora de Organizaciones Mapuches) Neuquen (August 8, 2003)
- Pablo Bestard, Porfesor Universidad de Comahue, Former participant in mapuche's veranadas for 17 years, Neuquen (August 8, 2003)
- Carlos, Capataz Comunidad Mapuche de Aluminé, Rucachoroi (August 9, 2003)
- Ignacio Armida, Gerente, Ministerio de Trabajo de la Nacion, Neuquen (August 11, 2003)
- Hugo Carballo, Secretario de Prensa y Difusión, Asociación de Trabajadores del Estado (ATE), Neuquen (August 11, 2003)
- Miguel Sanchez, Federacion Tierra y Vivienda (FTV), Central de Trabajadores Argentinos (CTA), Neuquen (August 11, 2003)
- Sonia, Federacion Tierra y Vivienda (FTV, CTA) Neuquen (August 11, 2003)
- Mario Pilatti, Ministro de Educacion de la Provincia de Neuquen (August 12, 2003)
- Field-trip to Squatter Settlements in Neuquen –with Marite, IPVU – (August 12.2003)

- Fernando, Head of Household in a Squatter Settlement (August 12.2003)
- Raul Aranda, Municipalidad de Neuquen, Secretaria de Cultura (August 13, 2003)
- Eduardo Montiel, Municipalidad de Neuquen, Secretaria de Cultura, Extension Cultural Mapuche (August 13, 2003)
- Visit to Ceramicos Zanon, Empresa tomada por obreros, Neuquen (August 13, 2003)

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