

My experience in the GeoSAP program Bonn-Lima was one of the best experiences that I could ever imagine. It is such an opportunity and a privilege saying that I could travel abroad my country to experience how is to study in Europe.

Germany has so many culture and history to tell to the people that want to go there. Before my journey to Bonn, I only knew Germany for the history courses since the XIX century. Also, some stereotypes of how is the German people and how they behave in different situation (academic, social, political, etc). But the reality that I could see was very different.

The courses that offered the program was really complete. I had de opportunity to take courses in the bachellor's and master's program due to the exchange arrangement between the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP) and the University of Bonn. Also, I could go to field trips inside Germany to study the geologic story of the area.

The courses that I took were Isotope Geochemistry and Ichnology of the Master's courses. Also, I took Geological Mapping and Digital Mapping of the bachellor's program. All of the courses that was offering on the university were available to me, but I needed to considerer my personal interests as a future geologist and the language, because my vocabulary on german is limited.

After taking the courses I can say that it wasn't a bad decision at all. As a matter of fact, I think that was the best that I could experience. The professors of the courses Dr. Amber Luguét (Isotope Geochemistry), Dr. Tom McCann (Ichnology) and Dr. Mario Manchego (Geological Mapping and Digital Mapping) were really thoughtful. They never obliged us to talk in german, they all considered to give the lectures in English, answer the questions in English and make the seminars in English. Consider the fact that most of the student were German native people and preferred to talk in their native language rather than a foreign one.

Moreover, the students of the faculty were really friendly and helpful during the lectures and work. Considering that most of the lectures were taken virtually, the students were open to do activities with me after classes like go through the city, go to restaurants of joined my to do an activity that I liked.

During the field work, the group never behave differently or pretend that weren't there, they considered that we didn't know at that time how was the geology of Germany or the rocks that were laying on the floor, however they took a space of their time to explain us how was it and what we should consider the direction of the geological analysis. They were really curious in asking me how was Peru, my country, as people or as a country. The questions were how was the geology in Peru? Is there any mine activity going on? how many people were living in Peru? and more. Questions that I was really pleasant to answer. I really wanted to give a good image of my country to the students so they could open more their perspective outside Europe and change the stereotypes of Latinoamerica.

There is an important difference in the universities in matter of location. In PUCP there is a campus where all the university activities are taking place, classes, sports, laboratories, etc. In the case of the University of Bonn there is not such a campus at all, the university is located around the city divided in the different faculties. The geological boulding is located near from the central station and was near where I was living. Inside the faculty is organised in the classrooms, laboratories, museums and professor's room. I liked very much how was their laboratories and the mineralogical museum inside the boulding.

All of what explained was related to the geoscience faculty which is one of the most important parts of my experience due to my career. However, not only is the professional matter that one student wants to do an exchange program, also the personal experiences with other people. The following lines I'm going to explain about it.

The University of Bonn offer different programs for the international people that travel to Bonn, the incomings. Not only were the students of the DAAD program, but also the Erasmus program (an exchange program inside Europe to continue the studies) and the local foreign people that already were living in Bonn. Meeting different people from different part of the world gave me perspective of how different ideas can people have of my age.

At the beginning was kind of challenging to meet new people of different nationalities, because normally people tend to relate better with people that have similar opinion of culture like the latino culture or even peruvian people. However, I cannot say that there were many people of Peru in the international group of the university. Most of the people were from Spain, England, Italy, France, Ireland, etc. Challenging was the idea to exchange thoughts with people that were not on my continent (America). Nonetheless, most of them were really polite and charming of feeling part of the group. Specially because I was the only peruvian male.

The international groups did many activities organized by the university but also by our own thanks to the pandemic situation. I attended to many events to fell more as a group and I like it since the beginning. I could travel inside the North West part of Germany with the student ticket that the university allowed us to have. Inside this area I could visit Cologne, Essen, Dortmund, Munster, Düsseldorf and a few more.

The infrastructure and how the cities are organized inside Germany are so different than Peru. Every travel around Germany is an opportunity to know the culture, religion, history and celebrations. I enjoyed every time that I entered to one of these facilities and be part of the German culture. Also, people that were there treated me respectfully and with the attitude to help me in understanding in the best way possible the meaning of every activity or construction inside.

I also could do activities that I enjoy so much like playing sports or watching films. In the case of sports, Germany is one of the main points in Europe to do many different sports like the classic ones of soccer, basketball or volleyball, and not so common too like badminton, squash, tennis, and others. Also, many international movies in the original version to spend time with friends or people that wanted to see.

With the DAAD scholarship I could buy many stuffs on the supermarket and on the shops around the city. But also, I could manage to spent it to travel around Europe. Is important to mention that the way to travel inside Europe is easier and cheaper than do it inside South America. There are so many ways to travel like trains, air planes, buses, that in South America we cannot say so easily that we have those ways of transportation. I manage to travel to Barcelona, France, Belgium, Netherlands, Turkey, Switzerland and Luxembourg. However, it is more enjoyable that I did it with people that I liked to spend time with.

Finally, I would like to add that none of this experience could ever be possible if I didn't have the support of the DAAD in all the experience. Since the beginning I felt like a family inside Germany and I returned in the same way. I left my heart inside Germany and one goal that I have now is returned to do more that I did when I was there. The experience that I lived no one can take it me off, and I know that I would never going to experience something like that. However, I need

to continue my professional journey with the lessons and knowledge that the program left me. The different perspective and opinions I would take it and tried to apply it in the different parts of my life.

I would like to specially thanks to Dr. Mario Manchego for been the person in charge to develop this program and make this come true. But also, personally in made us feel at home when we arrived and when we left. Always he took care of us. I wish I could return him the favour later.

In the following lines I'm going to attach some pictures that I took during my experience in Bonn so everyone can have an idea of my experiences.



Image N°1. Photo with all the member of the exchange program, Angela Castro and Elisa Portal. Also with the student and person in charge of the internacional student support of the geological faculty of the University of Bonn, Isabel Wüst.



Image 2. Field trip to Brohtal in the Geological Mapping course.



Image N°3. Photo with all the students of the Geological Mapping course. An unforgettable experience.



Image N°4. Trip to Aachen with the international group from Spain, Italy, India, Turkey, Venezuela and Japan.



Image N°5. My closest international group in Bonn. People from Malesia, Japan, Chile, Spain, Italy, France and Mexico.



Image N°6. Local football team from people of Egypt, Irak, Barcelona, England, Mexico, Germany, France and Camerun.