



## **US Centre Summer Research Grant**

**Recipient name:** Ryoya Mizuno

**Project title:** The International Thought of Arnold J. Toynbee: The World and the West from the 'Long' First World War to the Global Cold War

### **Summary of the project:**

In this report, I will write about the research project regarding the PhD Summer Research Grant, then make a remark on the research progress grounded on archival research activities in the United States. Next, I will demonstrate gratitude to the Phelan US Centre at LSE and the breakdown of budget expenditures.

## ① The Description of the Research Project

In general, my PhD thesis examines the international thought of Arnold J. Toynbee (1889-1975), a British world historian and student of international relations. The study ranges from its formation during the Balkan Wars to the mid-twentieth century, analyzing Toynbee's writings on history and world politics alongside his institutional activities and media presence in multiple places. In particular, it demonstrates central elements of Toynbee's international thought, including his ideas on modern nation-states, the British Empire, the relationship between Western and non-Western civilizations, and world history. The research also explores the global resonances of Toynbee's international thought, focusing on global receptions and interactions beyond his home country, Britain. Therefore, it can be construed as a study of international/global (intellectual) history, revealing political visions in the global space and circulations of ideas beyond national or regional boundaries.

The United States is a significant case in terms of investigating Toynbee's thought and its global resonances. Shortly before and during the Second World War, when the threat of Nazi Germany loomed in Europe and beyond, Toynbee began to view the United States as a vanguard of Western values. This view persisted in the context of the early Cold War as well. Building on this conception, Toynbee played a critical role as a British intellectual in shaping a transatlantic ideological connection with American counterparts, advocating for 'the Western community' or the 'transatlantic federation' to defend liberty against the threat of totalitarianism. Nevertheless, Toynbee became sceptical of the American role as a leading force in the West in the 1960s, especially after he visited Latin America and witnessed the problem of American informal imperial practices in the region, which he anticipated had a detrimental impact on the relationship between Western and non-Western worlds.

The research project aligns well with one of the LSE Phelan United States Centre's research themes, "Rethinking America's Role in the World." Investigating the transatlantic connections between Toynbee and the American people and the development of Toynbee's thought on the role of the United States in the world contributes to a better understanding of the US-European relationship and the place of the United States in the world from a historical perspective.

## ② The Research Progress from the Archival Research in the United States

Based upon the research project mentioned above, from 24 June to 2 June 2024, I stayed in the United States and carried out archival research in various archives, especially in Princeton University Library in New Jersey and The Rockefeller Archive Center in New York. In Princeton University Library (Firestone Library and Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library), I have investigated numerous primary sources on Council on Foreign Relations Records, 1918-2018 and private papers of some individuals who had personal connections with Toynbee. Through the investigation, I have found many useful

documents to uncover the transatlantic links between Toynbee and American intellectuals in the context of the Cold War, the large part of which derived from the previous period when the rise of totalitarianism, especially German National Socialism, was seen to become a severe existential threat to both Britain and the United States. These historical materials verify the transnational connections between think tanks on world affairs, such as Chatham House and the Council on Foreign Relations, the origins of which could be traced back to the aftermath of the First World War. Put more specifically on Toynbee and his surroundings, some of these documents unearth that Toynbee corroborated with leading American intellectuals on world affairs, including a founder of strategic studies in the United States, Edward Mead Earle, who denounced American isolationism and advocated for American engagement in world affairs since the late 1930s. Toynbee had a personal connection with Earle since the 1920s and made correspondences occasionally, inviting him to give lectures and attend a meeting in the 'Anglo-American Study Group' at Chatham House in the early 1950s. Although further elaborate research is needed, the relationship between Toynbee and Earle would be a crucial case to comprehend the evolution of trans-Atlanticism against the background of the rise of the discourse on totalitarianism from the 1930s to the 1950s.

Furthermore, I visited the Rockefeller Archive Center and found various documents on Toynbee's intellectual activities in the United States. The Rockefeller Foundation funded Toynbee's visit and research in the United States during the late 1940s and the early 1960s, leading to many dialogues with many American people and publications of articles and books. The research in the Rockefeller Archive Center allows me to understand these activities' social and political backgrounds. On the other hand, the historical materials in the archive also demonstrate how Toynbee changed his view of the United States from the late 1940s to 1960s: change from the view that the United States was a vanguard of Western liberal society against the threat of the Soviet Union in the late 1940s and the early 1950s to the view that the United States imperialistically exploits those in Latin American continent and violently suppresses those in Vietnam in the 1960s. Moreover, there were many video archives regarding Toynbee's lectures in the United States during the late 1950s. These historical materials, which could not be found in Toynbee's private papers in the Bodleian Library at the University of Oxford, are quite beneficial to examining Toynbee's ambiguous views of the role of the United States in world affairs during this period. On the one hand, they show Toynbee underscored the significance of transatlantic cohesion between Britain and the United States, in which Toynbee particularly insisted on the importance of American commitment to world affairs, including European affairs. However, at the same time, they also illustrate that Toynbee had misgivings about the American turn of empire in world politics, which he believes was likely to allow the Soviet anti-Western propaganda to gain the upper hand in The Third World and cause negative consequences against the West.

③ Gratitude to Phelan US Centre at LSE

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to Phelan US Centre at LSE. With the research grant from the institute, it was possible to implement archival research in the United States, which is necessary to attain the PhD project. I will write my thesis based on archival research for the rest of this summer and anticipate that the outcome of the research project will enhance our understanding of the changing role of the United States in the world from a historical perspective.