Research Summary

The research is concerned mainly with Nishida's inquiry of the true self, which culminates in an analysis of the religious experience. After clarification of the logic of religious world of Nishida, I undertake a comparative study between Nishida and Xiong, Shi-li (1885-1968), the founder of modern Neo-Confucianism. To attempt to relate Nishida philosophy to Neo-Confucianism will also be a focus of concern of the research project.

The thesis is divided into four sections. First I characterize one of the common themes between Neo-Confucianism and Nishida: They all claim that through deepening into the ground of self we will meet a paradox of self and cosmos, and use "soku" to express this paradox (section one). I take this issue as my focus of concern and try to explore the way how Nishida and Xiong cast light on this problem. The main theme of Nishida's philosophy is expressed in his claim that in order to understand the true reality, we can only begin with our indubitable direct experience. In section two and three I try to clarify the meaning and implication of pure experience (section two) and religious experience (section three). My claim is that pure experience is for Nishida not a mysterious one, but rather our everyday experience. Starting with this insight Nishida devotes himself to explore the depth-structure of our experience. He is clearly aware of the limitations of subject-object distinction. To overcome this limitation he proposes a logic of topos, which locates ultimately in the religious sphere. We notice that in his later philosophy Nishida relies increasingly on the concept of "soku" or "self-identity of absolute contradictories" to illustrate his non-dualistic project. According to Nishida, the true self is immanent qus (soku) transcendent. In other words, everyday experience is (souk) religious experience. On the other hand, Neo-Confucianism is also keenly aware of the paradoxical character of our experience and also introduced the term "souk" to explain the immanence and transcendence of our experience. So in conclusion (section four) I discuss some interesting points between Nishida's philosophy and Neo-Confucianism, specially the problem of evil. It is my view that, what Nishida and Neo-Confucianism have in common is the concern with the problem of reality. They all declare that reality is a kind of dynamic emptiness. The term "souk" is the expression of this dynamic world, which continues to moves and change. As consequent they all propose a dynamic ontology, which hold that reality is in the process of ceaseless creation and self-transformation. This is in my view the philosophy, which Nishida and neo-Confucianism provide for the world philosophy. I try to shed some light upon this dynamic ontology and believe that the clarifying of it should not only help the mutual understanding of Kyoto school and the Neo-Confucianism, but could also promote a comparative discourse between Japanese philosophy and world philosophy.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation   (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

1) Huang,Wen-Hong, June, 13, 2008,., "Nishida Kitaro on the Logic of Religious World" in Symposium: "East Asia Religious Traditions in the Cross-Cultural Perspectives", Academia Sinica, Taipei, Taiwan

2) Huang,Wen-Hong, July, 26, 2008,., "Nishida Kitaro on the Logic of Religious World", 西田哲学会第６回年次大会、石川県西田幾多郎記念哲学館、石川県かほく市、日本

Thesis   (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

黄文宏、2008年６月、「西田幾多郎の宗教的世界の論理―新儒家の宗教観との比較を兼ねて―」『日本哲学史研究』第５号（京都：京都大学）

Book   (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.