ABSTRACT

After the mid-nineteenth century, owing to the political, social and economic instability in China and the need for cheap labour in Southeast Asia by the western countries, a large number of Chinese labourers migrated to Nanyang to search for a better life. Although they were away from China, they remained spiritually binding to China, and were remained politically aware of what happened in China. This was especially so when Japan intensified its territorial aggression on China after the 1920's and 1930's. The Tsinan Incident in May 1928 in which the Japanese forces of the Federation of Chinese Relief Fund of the South Seas barbarously bombarded the Chinese army in the provincial capital of Shandong, and the Mukden Incident in September 1931 in which all the three provinces of Manchuria were quickly occupied by the Japanese forces, stimulated especially the nationalistic, anti-Japanese sentiment among the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia in general, and the overseas Chinese in British Malaya in particular. Their political consciousness led them to be more involved with the Chinese National Salvation Movement when a full-fledged but undeclared Sino-Japanese war began on July 7, 1937.

There was a strong, overwhelming and consistent response from the Nanyang Chinese, especially Malayan Chinese for the anti-Japanese National Salvation Movement from 1937 to 1942.
The movement contributed significantly to the eventual victory of China over Japan, and compelled the Japanese surrendering to the Allies in August 1945. The present study is aimed at an intensive research on the activities and achievements of the Malayan Chinese in that movement. I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Associate Professor Lee En Han (李恩翰副教授), of the Department of Chinese Studies, National University of Singapore.

Structurally, this Academic Exercise is divided into six chapters. Chapter one is a brief introduction of the topic. Chapter two analyses the background of the Malayan Chinese to thank my friends for their help and encouragement. National Salvation Movement. Chapter three discusses the Chinese leader, Tan Kah Kee and his leadership in the establishment of the Federation of Chinese Relief Fund of the South Seas. Chapters four and five deal with the activities undertaken by the Malayan Chinese National Salvation Movement and the achievements of this movement. Chapter six concludes with an assessment of the contribution and effects of the Malayan Chinese National Salvation Movement to China and Malaya.