

I am a participant in Lisa Bernstein's panel, "Ethnic-Based Trade Revisited: A Roundtable." I will be discussing chapter 5 of my new book, *Economic Success of Chinese Merchants in Southeast Asia: Identity, Ethnic Cooperation and Conflict: Integrating the Social Sciences with Evolutionary Biology*. (Landa, December 2016). My book's central theoretical chapter (chapter 5) provides an original theory of the economic success of Chinese merchants in Southeast Asia, analyzed from a law-and-economics/New Institutional Economics perspective: The ethnically homogeneous middleman group (EHMG) is an informal, low-cost organization for the provision of club goods--e.g. contract enforcement--lowering transaction costs, hence contributing to Chinese merchant success. I will also discuss extensions of my theory of the EHMG, drawing not only from the law-and-economics/NIE literature, but also from the other social sciences, and beyond to evolutionary biology. Empirical material from my fieldwork forms the basis for my theory of the EHMG, with important policy implications for understanding ethnic cooperation and conflict in multiethnic societies where minority groups dominate merchant roles.