

COLLOQUIUM

Jean-Paul Carvalho
Assistant Professor of Economics
UCI

“Identity-Based Organizations”

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SSPA 2112

4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Identity formation is an inescapably social process entailing negative externalities and free rider problems. Identity-based organizations emerge to solve these problems. We show that organizations at high tension with mainstream society can sustain higher levels of strictness and are more successful at identity formation. Competition moderates the strictness of organizations, but can also lead to forms of escalating extremism. Success in identity formation tends to be self-undermining leading to various types of cyclic dynamics. We apply these insights to Islamic movements in the Middle East.