



Seminar

## ILANA F. SILBER

Guest of the Principal, SCAS.  
Associate Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology,  
Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan

*Repertoires of Public Giving:  
Elite Philanthropy in Gift-Theoretical  
and Comparative Perspective*

Tuesday, 9 April, 2019, 2:15 p.m.

In the Thunberg Lecture Hall  
SCAS, Linneanum, Thunbergsvägen 2, Uppsala  
[www.swedishcollegium.se](http://www.swedishcollegium.se)

S W E D I S H  
C O L L E G I U M  
*for* ADVANCED STUDY

## ABOUT ILANA F. SILBER

Ilana Silber's main fields of interest are the sociology of gift processes, charity and philanthropy, to which she also adds a cross-cutting interest in sociological theory, interpretative cultural analysis and macro-comparative historical sociology.

She obtained her Ph.D. in Sociology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and has been a Visiting Fellow at Harvard University, Princeton University and Yale University. Since 2014, she is a Faculty Fellow of the Yale Center for Cultural Sociology, and since 1998, a member of the M.A.U.S.S (Mouvement Anti-Utilitariste dans les Sciences Sociales).

Silber's publications include "The Cultural Worth of Economies of Worth: French Pragmatic Sociology from a Cultural Sociological Perspective" (2016); "Luc Boltanski and the Gift: Beyond Love, Beyond Suspicion...?" (2014); "Neither Mauss nor Veyne? Peter Brown's Interpretative Path to the Gift" (2013); "Emotions as Regime of Justification? The Case of Philanthropic Civic Anger" (2011); "Mauss, Weber et les trajectoires historiques du don" (2010); "Bourdieu's Gift to Gift Theory: An Unacknowledged Trajectory" (2009); "Pragmatic Sociology as Cultural Sociology: Beyond Repertoire Theory?" (2003); "Modern Philanthropy: Reassessing the Viability of a Maussian Perspective" (1998); and *Virtuosity, Charisma and Social Order: A Comparative Sociological Study of Monasticism in Theravada Buddhism and Medieval Catholicism* (Cambridge University Press; 1995).

While at SCAS she will be working at completing a book arguing the benefits of a mutual encounter between the legacy of Max Weber and Marcel Mauss, as well as various strands of contemporary cultural and pragmatic sociology for a better comparative understanding of gift processes in general, and of asymmetric forms of public giving in past and present contexts.

## ABSTRACT

The aim of my talk will be three-fold: first, to position the study of public giving in relation to current trends of gift research and theory; second, to develop the idea of repertoires of public giving, and consider how it may help raise some new avenues of comparative and historical interpretation; third, to discuss the current rise of elite, or as it is now also often called, mega-philanthropic giving, to a place of increasing prominence yet also highly controversial status in the public arena worldwide. I suggest to approach this lopsided configuration and the accompanying embattled confrontation of stances and emotions, from a combined macro-institutional and cultural perspective. This will mean, in particular, drawing attention to the part played by evolving frames of gift-interpretation and the way in which these combine with shifting characteristics of the public sphere at large.