To us, time is a fundamental and very familiar concept. Our calendars are determined by the number of days in the calendar month and the number of months in a year. The day is further subdivided in hours, minutes and seconds. Although these categories are based on regular and periodic astronomical phenomena, there are many different ways in which people may conceive time. For most premodern societies, “time” is closely related to environmental conditions and socio-economic structures and is not a physical entity in itself. Thus, we may speak of “social time” on one hand, and of “astronomical time” on the other. Astronomical time, as defined by celestial movements, need not necessarily be married to “social time” framed by human activities, structures, habits, values and so on.

In this talk I will present monuments, objects and texts connected with the measurement of time from Ancient Egypt, Greece and the Roman Empire and discuss them in a socio-economic context.

Engelska Parken room 2-2033, Wednesday January 8th, 2020 at 13:15