**PERIODS DEFINED BY SETTLEMENTS (issue 518):**

Progress report by Martin Doerr and Athina Kritsotaki

The CASE OF **EH II period** (2650-2200/2150 BC) represented by  Lerna (**Lerna III**)

During the EH II period the increase of population is followed by the development of densely populated settlements and the very significant economic thriving which brings about innovations in the administrative organization and social composition of the EH communities. During this period settlements of an urban character are developed. They are distinguished for their town planning community works (e.g. **fortifications**, community buildings), the technological specialization and further manufacturing development (metalworking), and the intense practice of **trade**. In settlements of Boeotia, the Peloponnese and on Aegina buildings of the same type dominate. These are known as the "Corridor Houses" and are considered economic centres of the communities.  E.g the example of Lerna settlements (Lerna III: House of the Tiles) , which seem to have particular economic and administrative importance .

The exhaustive study of stratigraphy (Korakou, Eutresis, Lerna, Tiryns) and in general of the **EH II** archaeological remains (architecture, pottery) render the distinction in **two cultural sub-phases clear**. The **earliest i**s known as the "Korakou culture" (2650-2450 BC) and corresponds to the **Lerna ΙΙΙA-B architectural phases**. **The late** one (2450/2350-2200/2150 π.Χ.) corresponds to the **Lerna IIIC-D** architectural phases and is characterized by the strong presence of elements of the Lefkandi I-Kastri phase.

During the EH II period as well as the EH III some settlements present marks of partial or total destruction by fire. These traces in combination with the appearance of **new elements in architecture (apsidal buildings), the burial customs (tumuli), pottery** (Lefkandi I, Gray wheelmade, incised/impressed), **tool manufacture** (stone and bronze axes with a hole for fixing a handle) and the use of clay **anchor shaped** objects, led the researchers to the observation of many opposing theories about the time of penetration of new populations of Indo-European origin in the Greek mainland. The overall consideration of the evidence renders clear that at the **end of the EH II and the beginning of the EH III** the south Helladic region **is influenced** by two different cultural regions: western Asia Minor and the islands of the northeastern Aegean, and the south Balkans (Adriatic coast). These influences are indicated on the eastern coast of Central and south Greece (Lefkandi I-Kastri phase), and on the Ionian islands and the northwestern Peloponnese respectively.

On the other hand, **Lerna IV (Early Helladic III)** marked a **fresh start**, **not** as a **fortified** seat of central authority this time, but as **a small town**, with houses of two and three rooms.

Comments:

Activities tie actions to a particular actor and a continuity of intended action. Wider periods as EHII represent a collective behaviour of different actors at different places interacting directly or indirectly.  Therefore, EHII, EHIII should not be regarded as activities, but as consisting of activities.

A well-confined settlement on the other side is maintained cooperatively by a common populace, some having been slaves notwithstanding and therefore qualifies as one activity. The distinction between Lerna A,B,C appears not to be due to any interruption in the population, but rather changing conditions of life and influences, and therefore to be three different instances of E4 Period within one E7 Activity. As presented above, LernaIV appears to be a new activity.

There may have been events in the past when conquering parties more or less completely exchanged the population (massacre and slavery) and repopulated the place. This may not be clear from the archaeological record. If this continuity of population should be regarded as one activity is questionable.