

Press release  
15 June 2015



## The prince with the golden torque of Lavau

Unearthed by a team of Inrap archaeologists, the princely tomb of Lavau, dated to the early 5<sup>th</sup> century BC, contains exceptional grave goods: a Mediterranean bronze cauldron with lion heads and the head of Achelous (river-deity), an Attican *oenochoe* with black figures, a *ciste*, bronze basins, etc.

During the National Archaeology Days (19-21 June 2015), Inrap will present the latest results of this excavation, finished only a few days ago.

### The prince with the golden torque

Lying in the center of the tomb, with the head to the south, the prince was inhumed with his two-wheeled chariot. He is decorated with his jewelry. His solid gold torque weighs more than 500 g, which is even more than that of the princess of Vix... This stiff necklace is richly decorated with the double motif of a winged monster, extended by pear-shaped stamps. He has gold bracelets on his wrists, and on his left bicep a lignite armband. These objects are similar to those found in the tomb of Reinheim (Germany).

Near his nape, the archaeologists found several, finely worked amber beads, originally forming a necklace or hair decoration.

Part of his costume has been preserved, including two iron and coral hooks that attached a piece of clothing of which a few leather pieces and a row of rivets highlighting the collar remain. From his shoes the bodkins and bronze hooks remain.

### Prince or princess?

Due to the poor preservation of the bones, it is not yet possible to determine the sex of the individual with certitude. Could the prince of Lavau be a princess? At the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century, between the end of the Hallstatt and beginning of the La Tène periods, several princess tombs exist in the north-east quarter of France, such as that of Vix. We must thus be cautious in our interpretation of these funerary remains belonging to the highest classes of the society. In addition to the study of the tomb and its contents, the aristocrat, and his/her sex, will be the subject of a complete biological anthropological study.

### Inrap

With nearly 2000 collaborators and researchers, Inrap is the largest archaeological research structure in France and one of the most important in Europe. Each year, this national research institute realizes approximately 1,500 archaeological diagnostic operations and 250 excavations in partnership with private and public developers in metropolitan France and its overseas territories.

Its missions also include the scientific exploitation of the results and the diffusion of archaeological knowledge to the public.

Developer **commune of Lavau**  
Curation **Regional Archaeology Service, Drac Champagne-Ardenne**  
Archaeological research **Inrap**  
Site director **Bastien Dubuis, Inrap**

## **Contacts**

Mahaut Tyrrell  
Inrap, media partnerships and relations  
01 40 08 80 24 – [mahaut.tyrrell@inrap.fr](mailto:mahaut.tyrrell@inrap.fr)

Estelle Bénistant  
Cultural development and communication  
Inrap, Interegional direction Grand Est nord  
03 87 16 41 54 – [estelle.benistant@inrap.fr](mailto:estelle.benistant@inrap.fr)