

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RELICS OF DAK R'LAP DISTRICT, DAK NONG PROVINCE, IN THE REGIONAL PREHISTORIC CONTEXT

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Abstract

This article systematizes the documentation of prehistoric archaeological relics and artifacts from Dak R'lap District, Dak Nong Province. The article also presents the results of investigations, new discoveries, and surveys conducted by the author together with archaeologists from the Vietnam Institute of Archaeology. The author outlines the characteristics, properties, and dates of relics and artifacts; describes the locations, roles, and close relationship of relics and artifacts discovered in Dak R'lap District with the prehistory of Dak Nong in particular and the Central Highlands and Southeast in general. This research provides more data for the construction of prehistoric archaeological maps; facilitates researching, compiling, and educating on local history; and promotes sustainable cultural tourism development in Dak Nong Province in general.

Keywords: Central Highlands; Dak R'lap; Metal Age; Neolithic.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Archaeological research claims that humans appeared in Dak Nong Province tens of thousands of years ago. Prehistoric communities went through the process of existence and development, forming close relationships with each other historically, culturally, and socially. In Dak R'lap District, archaeologists have discovered a series of archaeological sites and artifacts related to the residential activities of prehistoric residents, such as stone tool manufacturing sites, residential sites, residence-manufacturer sites, and burials.

Archaeological data from Dak R'lap District have been partly published but not yet updated and systematized. In recent years, the author has participated directly in archaeological research, investigation, and excavation in Dak R'lap District. Most of the sites and artifacts related to the prehistoric inhabitants date back to the Late Neolithic and Early Metal periods, portraying the picture of socioeconomic life, relationships, and cultural exchanges within the archaeological site and between the site and other cultural regions in the Central Highlands and Southeast in primitive times.

This article systematizes, updates, and publishes archaeological records of the prehistoric age in Dak R'lap District. From research papers on sites and artifacts, the author outlines their characteristics and cultural relationships, and assesses the potential of conservation, research, and promotion of the archaeological heritage in Dak R'lap District and Dak Nong Province.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA OF DAK R'LAP DISTRICT

2.1. Discovery and research

In January 1979, at the Doan Van site in Doan Van hamlet,¹ Geological Group 500 discovered an almond-shaped tool crafted from a long oval pebble. The tool's manufacturing technique is biface, and it is believed to be an implement of Late Paleolithic residents, dating from 20,000 to 30,000 BP (Nguyễn, 2004a). In 1987, the archaeological site of Doi Cho in the town of Kien Duc was discovered by local people. From this site, local people obtained 32 stone artifacts, including stone hoes, rectangular axes, a grooved maul, net weights, and some prehistoric ceramic fragments (Nguyễn, 2004b).

In April 1991, archaeologists from the Dak Lak Provincial Museum investigated the Quang Truc site (Quang Truc Commune). On a hillside along the banks of the Dak Ke stream, they collected 15 stone artifacts, including two quadrilateral axes, five buffalo tooth-shaped cleavers, and eight ax-shaped objects. This artifact collection was researched and dated as Late Neolithic by Nguyễn (2004b, pp. 132–133).

In 1995, archaeologists from the Institute of Archaeology discovered seven more prehistoric sites around Kien Duc. Nguyễn (2004b) stated that the artifacts obtained from these sites are similar to those found at the Nghia Trang site in Kien Duc, dating to the

¹ It now belongs to Nhan Co Commune, Dak R'lap District, Dak Nong Province.

Late Neolithic, about 4,000–3,500 BP (Nguyễn, 2004b). The Nghia Trang site was excavated over an area of 30 m² by the staff of the Institute of Archaeology. The collected artifacts are stone tools and pieces of rough pottery. Notably, this collection includes quadrangular full-body grinding axes, ax-shaped objects, bracelet pieces, grinding stones, raw stones, scraps, and more than 3,000 shards of prehistoric pottery. This is a Late Neolithic residence and stone tool manufacturing site, dating back to about 4,000 BP (Nguyễn, 2004b).

In 2005, the Institute of Archaeology investigated some areas of Dak Nong Province. This is the first archaeological investigation since Dak Nong Province was established in 2003. The investigation discovered several new archaeological sites in Dak R'lap District, such as Village 6 of Dak Wer (formerly Village 7 of Nhan Co Commune), and Suoi Ba in Village 17 of Nhan Co Commune (Nguyễn & Lê, 2006). The data suggest that many other archaeological sites may be discovered in Dak R'lap District and Dak Nong Province.

In 2008, the Dak Nong Provincial Museum coordinated with the Institute of Archaeology to investigate archaeological sites in the two communes of Dak Sin and Hung Binh (Dak R'lap District). Four more archaeological sites were discovered along the banks of the Dak Sin stream. These locations are named on the basis of geographical names, such as Hamlet 3, Hamlet 5, Hamlet 14, and Hamlet 18 (Lê et al., 2009, pp. 128–130). Researchers believed that this area had a system of archaeological sites dating from the Late Neolithic to the Early Metal period, distributed along the banks of the Dak Sin stream in two communes: Dak Sin and Hung Binh. If the investigation is expanded, the number of archaeological sites in this area may be more substantial (Lê, 2010, pp. 89–90). With information from local people, the Dak Nong Provincial Museum verified and investigated a number of sites and artifacts in burial jars at Suoi Ba (Nhan Co Commune) in 2009 and 2010 (Nguyễn et al., 2012, pp. 52–53). The burial goods collected from the burial jars are quadrangular axes, triangular axes, and small pebbles with grinding marks.

In 2013, the Dak Nong Provincial Museum continued to coordinate with the Institute of Archaeology to investigate two new prehistoric sites discovered in Dak R'lap District (Lê & Vũ, 2013): (1) Village 4 is on Mr. Hoang Xuan Quy's farm, and its coordinates are 11°53'04.9" N, 107°29'04.4" E. The field is two hectares in area, and the terrain is relatively flat, with a slight slope. Grooved grinding stones and rough ceramic fragments were found to be distributed widely over the entire field. (2) Village 14 is on the right bank of the Dak Sin River. In this area, the investigation team discovered artifacts scattered on several local fields, such as two rough ceramic fragments discovered on the surface of Mr. Dang Van Bao's two-hectare field. Many prehistoric pottery fragments were discovered in Mr. Bui Van Phai's field² at coordinates 11°49'13.7" N, 107°27'47.9" E. The field is about 1.9 hectares in size and gradually slopes toward the bank of the Dak Sin stream (Lê & Vũ, 2013, pp. 60–71).

² This area is now flooded by the Dak Sin hydroelectric reservoir.

In the same year, 2013, lecturers and students of the Dalat University Department of History investigated and dug two excavation pits with a total area of 4 m² at the Suoi Ba site, Nhan Co Commune (Lê, 2014a; Trần et al., 2014). In addition to the Suoi Ba site, they discovered stone tool manufacturing sites at Suoi Bon in Nhan Dao Commune, Dak R'lap District, during this fieldwork. The artifacts obtained are mainly flakes, pottery, raw stones, a piece of rough pottery, a grooved grinding stone, and a trapezoidal ax (Lê & Phan, 2014).³ This cluster of sites is distributed over four locations at Suoi Bon. The raw material is almost entirely opal; the products created are most likely stone tools discovered at the Suoi Ba site and other areas in Dak R'lap District. The Suoi Ba site continued to be studied in 2017 by the Dak Nong Provincial Museum in coordination with the Institute of Social Sciences of the Central Highlands and the Department of History of Dalat University. Four excavation pits with a total area of 10 m² were dug (Vũ, 2017; Vũ et al., 2019). In general, the characteristics, dates, and cultural relationships of this cluster of archaeological sites are quite fully identified: they are cultural remains of prehistoric communities dating back to 3,500–2,000 BP (Nguyen et al., 2022).

In early 2022, the local government constructed a road connecting the inter-commune road to the area of households along the boundary of Dak Sin and Nghia Thang communes. When bulldozers peeled off the topsoil to flatten the road core, several archaeological artifacts were revealed, such as grinding stones, axes, chisels, and many pieces of prehistoric pottery. These artifacts were collected by a local man, Mr. Vi Van Bao, and reported to officials of Nghia Thang and Dak Sin communes. Cultural officials of Dak Sin Commune reported this information to the Culture Department of Dak R'lap District. Shortly afterward, the Dak Nong Provincial Museum urgently sent officials to verify the information and persuade Mr. Vi Van Bao to donate the stone collection. At the same time, they conducted a field investigation and confirmed that this was an archaeological site. In addition to the artifacts previously brought to the provincial museum, Mr. Vi Van Bao handed over to the officer in charge of Dak Sin Commune a group of stone objects similar to the collection brought to the museum earlier (Bảo tàng tỉnh Đắk Nông, 2023).

In March 2023, the Institute of Archaeology joined the Dak Nong Provincial Museum to investigate and verify the discoveries of sites at Village 12 in Dak Sin Commune and the village of Bu Dop in Nghia Thang Commune. The working group evaluated the historical-cultural value and research potential of these two locations. It is proposed that the Dak Nong Provincial Museum soon form a plan of action to explore, excavate, research in depth, and protect the archaeological sites.

2.2. Exploration results at the Village 12 and Bu Dop sites in 2023

Excavation Pit 1: Code 23.TH12.TS1. The coordinates are 11°56'12" N, 107°31'3" E. A pit with an area of 2 m² (1 × 2 m) was excavated on a rubber plantation,

³ The investigation team discovered a trapezoidal ax at a local farmhouse of the same type as the artifact obtained at the Suoi Ba site. The origin of this object is yet to be identified.

parallel to the road next to the farmland of Mr. Nguyen Van Ha in Village 12, Dak Sin Commune, Dak R'lap District.

Excavation Pit 2: Code 23.BD.TS2. The coordinates are 11°56'12" N, 107°31'3" E. A pit with an area of 3 m² (1 × 3 m) was excavated on the border of an avocado hill, parallel to the road next to the rubber plantation of Mr. Vo Van Nam in Bu Dop village, Nghia Thang Commune, Dak R'lap District.

The two pits were excavated in the north–south direction (10° to east), 7 m apart. The surface slopes in south–north and west–east directions. The stratigraphy of both pits is similar, with reddish-brown, cohesive, and easily deformable basaltic soil. The number of uneven particles increases with depth. The stratigraphy includes three layers:

- The surface layer has been leveled or excavated and is no longer intact. This layer contains a few shards of prehistoric pottery and small pieces of grinding stones.
- The cultural layer has an uneven surface and an average thickness of 50 cm. (The thickness varies between 40 and 60 cm.) The soil in this layer is homogeneous, flexible, and reddish brown. It contains stone artifacts and ceramic fragments.
- The lowermost soil, directly below the cultural layer, is mixed with much laterite gravel. The gravel particles are poorly sorted and loosely compacted.

The artifacts obtained are (1) 85 stone tools and implements, 32 raw stones, and 78 flakes. Most tools collected from the excavation pits have wear marks on the cutting edge used for chopping, cutting, and digging. Various tools were crafted on-site. The manufacturing techniques included flaking, fluting, grinding, and sawing. The stone tools are mainly made of shale. The grinding stones are made from coarse- to fine-grained sandstone. (2) Ceramics were recovered in large numbers and are fragments of household items (6,300 pieces). The density of ceramic fragments per square meter is far higher than that at other archaeological sites in the Central Highlands (315 pieces/m²).

Through investigation, fieldwork, and excavation documents, the author believes that this is a residence site. At the same time, stone tool-making activities took place, forming a “residence-manufacturer” site with a solid residential element. This is a common phenomenon among prehistoric inhabitants from the Late Neolithic to the Early Metal period in the Central Highlands (Lê, 2015, 2018a, 2018b, 2019).⁴ The fieldwork indicates that the Village 12 and Bu Dop sites have a high density of artifacts and a thick, intact cultural layer. Based on the type of artifacts and stratigraphy, the researchers estimated that these two sites date from the Late Neolithic to the Early Metal period (about 3,500–3,000 BP) (Bảo tàng tỉnh Đắk Nông, 2023). The relationship between the various archaeological sites and the prehistoric process requires further investigation, exploration,

⁴ Nguyễn (2009a, 2009b); Lê (2011, 2018b, 2019).

and excavation over a large area. The wide-scale research potential of Hamlet 12 and Bu Dop is perfectly feasible. However, the risk of sites being damaged due to the agricultural activities of local people is not small. Therefore, it is an urgent issue for local authorities and cultural departments⁵ in Dak Nong to have solutions and provide timely legal corridors to protect archaeological sites.

2.3. Characteristics of sites and artifacts in Dak R'lap District

2.3.1. Site characteristics and distribution

The distribution area of archaeological sites in Dak R'lap District is mainly land with favorable hydrological conditions. These are mounds of land and low mountains surrounded by streams of the upper Dong Nai River. The distribution is uneven and scattered across different areas and terrains. However, in general, these different types of terrain and geomorphology are very suitable for long-term residence and convenient for tool making, hunting or catching, gathering, and organizing agricultural activities. Usually, the areas where archaeological sites are discovered have abundant natural stone sources appropriate for crafting tools. These sites tend to form in clusters. Local river and stream pebbles are the main materials for the tool-making process. The following are some outstanding features:

- *Residence sites*: The distribution range of this type is often wide. The residential development process and stone tool-making activities were not likely to take place in the same area. Prehistoric inhabitants moved from place to place, between mounds/hills, and in open spaces. This factor reduced the speed of cultural layer accumulation and caused unevenness in the cultural layer thickness at different locations.⁶ In general, the Late Neolithic sites in Dak R'lap are related to other known Late Neolithic sites in the Central Highlands, of which the cultural layer is often thin, and residential activities did not last long in one location (Nguyễn et al., 2016). Very few traces of charcoal or fire are found because the residence sites have a thin cultural layer. The explored and excavated sites show no traces of shelters⁷ or animal/plant remains. The feature identifying this as a residential area is the cultural layer with darker, reddish-brown, loose soil. In the cultural layer, stone implements, tools (grinding stones, flakes, and anvils), tool-shaped objects, and a few raw stones were found, but the most notable are ceramic fragments.

- *Manufacturers*: This type of site is known in Dak R'lap as a group of workshops at Suoi Bon in Nhan Dao Commune (Lê & Phan, 2014). This type of site is distributed on the slopes of mounds or hills, next to sources of water and pebbles. Prehistoric inhabitants took advantage of streams as a place to live, craft tools, hunt, and gather for their daily needs. The artifacts collected are mainly flakes, culetts, stone cores or raw stones, grinding stones, and prehistoric ceramics (Lê & Phan, 2014). Most of the stone

⁵ Especially the role of the Museum and the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Dak Nong.

⁶ Because the dwellings of the prehistoric communities were not long-term residences.

⁷ The fact that the shelters were not found, or are unlikely to be found, is due to the very limited area of exploration and excavation.

artifacts at Suoi Bon are opal, which ancient residents may have excavated at a nearby quarry. Traces of habitation at Suoi Bon are very faint, manufacturing was firmly specialized, and at least two stages existed in the process of making stone tools.⁸

- *Residence-manufacturer sites*: The results of exploration and excavation of the Nghia Trang, Suoi Ba, Village 12, and Bu Dop sites in the Dak R'lap area indicate that they have a cultural layer thickness of 0.5–0.9 m. In the cultural layer or Mr. Nguyen The Vinh's collection of artifacts, there are very few flakes, raw stones, and tool-shaped objects. Most objects are grinding stones, materials to make grinding stones, full-body grinding axes, or cleavers (Bảo tàng tỉnh Đắk Nông, 2023; Lê, 2014a; Nguyễn & Lê, 2008; Nguyen et al., 2022;). The surveys of the Suoi Ba site in 2013 and 2017 indicate flaking and grinding of tool blades, as some flakes still have scars on one side (Trần et al., 2014; Vũ et al., 2019). This suggests that the tools went through the percussion flaking process at one location (where raw materials were supplied or exchanged) and were then brought back to the place of residence for further crafting until the finishing stage, which was grinding and polishing. This is a Level 3 manufacturing process⁹ according to the archaeological classification of sites (Lê, 2015; Lê, 2018a; Nguyễn & Lê, 2008).

- *Burial relics*: Burial relics were discovered at Suoi Ba (Nhan Co Commune) in Dak R'lap District. These consist of pots or ceramic jars containing stone tools and pebbles with grinding marks. These pebbles are most likely pottery tools of the prehistoric residents in Suoi Ba (Nguyen et al., 2022).

2.3.2. Characteristics of the artifacts

- Outstanding characteristics of the stone tools:

- *Material*: Prehistoric residents in the Dak R'lap area used mainly quartzite, phthalite, and basalt pebbles to make stone tools. These materials are available on-site, easing the process of exploiting materials and crafting stone tools, such as axes, hammers, hoes, and chisels. Prehistoric residents preferred sharp, solid quartzite for chopping, cutting, or scraping. This is the difference between the prehistoric residents of Dak R'lap and their contemporaries in Dak Nong Province, who mainly used basalt, andesite, rhyolite, and trachyte. In addition to quartzite, basalt, and phthalite, prehistoric residents in Dak R'lap used minerals such as silicon, quartz, and opal to craft implements and sandstone, shale, silicon, and quartzite to make tools (grinding stones, anvils, flakes, and blades). The choice of materials reflects adaptation to the natural conditions of prehistoric communities in the Dak R'lap area. The extensive use of raw materials indicates that prehistoric residents knew how to select stone based on its features for each type of tool or implement to achieve the best efficiency in crafting and working.

⁸ *Level 1* - Raw material exploitation and classification. *Level 2* - The tools are retouched and shipped to adjacent communities or exchanged within the community.

⁹ *Level 3* - Retouching, grinding, and polishing.

- *Types of tools and implements:* The various artifacts obtained at Dak R'lap include cleavers, full-body grinding trapezoidal axes (Buon Triet culture), trapezoidal axes, quadrangular axes, triangular axes, shouldered axes, flake tools, grinding stones, pebbles, and flakes. However, the most outstanding feature of the stone tool assemblage in Dak R'lap is the group of trapezoidal axes without noticeable grinding marks crafted from quartzite pebbles. This type of trapezoidal ax has two thin, slightly rounded edges. The body is long and thick in the middle, forming the shape of a buffalo spine from the handle to the tip. The blade edge is curved, and the outside is covered with a thick layer of blue-gray to white-gray patina. This type of tool differs from contemporary tools discovered at other archaeological sites in Dak Nong Province, such as Nghia Trang, Doi Cho (Dak R'lap District), Dak Ton (Dak Song District), and sites in Krong No. Trapezoidal cleavers with two edges that are squared and sharpened are the second typical type. They are full-body grinding axes. The handle is not much smaller than the blade. The edge of the blade is slightly curved and crafted mainly from basalt and a small amount of opal.

- *Crafting technique:* Prehistoric residents in Dak R'lap reached peak manufacturing techniques, proficiently using the techniques of percussion flaking, fluting, pressure flaking, grinding, and polishing. The presence of a group of stone tool-making tools (flakes, anvils, and grinding stones of all kinds), stone cores, raw stones, and especially the diversity of flakes (all sizes) and knapped pieces indicates that the stone tool-making process of prehistoric residents in Dak R'lap was quite complete.

- Characteristics of ceramics:

- *Ceramic types:* The ceramics discovered at archaeological sites in Dak R'lap are mainly household items, such as bowls, pots, vases, and jars. Many ceramic pieces retain traces of burn marks from cooking. Ceramic burial jars are not common in the southern Central Highlands. However, burial jars were discovered at Suoi Ba in 2010, along with many burial items, including stone tools and small pebbles (Bảo tàng tỉnh Đắk Nông, 2010). In 2017, on the intervillage road next to Suoi Ba, remnants of another burial jar were discovered, and prehistoric ceramic fragments and a quadrangular ax were found (Nguyen et al., 2022, pp. 97–122; Vũ, 2017). This type of burial has also been discovered at sites in Buon Triet (Lak District), Dha Prong (city of Buon Ma Thuat), and Buon Rau (Krong Pak District, Dak Lak Province) (Trần, 2002; Trần et al., 1994; Trần & Nguyễn, 2008).

Many ceramic fragments were obtained in the investigation of Village 12 and Bu Dop. Body pieces account for 75%. The remainder are pieces of jar mouths and bases. The total number of ceramic fragments collected in the excavation pit is over 6,000. The ceramic has an average thickness of 0.5–0.8 cm and is black due to the high percentage of plant residue. The two sides are smooth. The inner and outer mouths are usually black or dark gray with a leaden sheen. The ceramic pieces are mainly from household items, such as pots, vases, jars, bowls, and rice bowls. Ceramics related to the religious beliefs of prehistoric residents are also found at these locations, such as an item called “*Bat Bong*,” which is a bowl with a high base painted in lead. Many ceramic pieces are large. Those with a mouth diameter of about 40 cm are ceramic burial jars.

- *Crafting techniques*: The ceramic items discovered and researched in Dak R'lap are rough with slightly thick walls. Ceramic coats are brown, reddish-brown, and dark gray. There are two types of ceramic core: coarse mixed with much sand and white speckled scales. This type of ceramic is usually solid and requires a high firing rate. The core of the second type is dark gray, rough, and contains clay mixed with much plant material. This type of ceramic is usually softer, and the ceramic coating peels off easily. Decorative patterns on the ceramics are mainly brushed patterns, rope marks, rice straw holes, checkered engravings, and seashell edges. The ceramic products were made using a turntable combined with hand molding.

2.4. Archaeological sites in Dak R'lap in a broader context

More than 30 prehistoric archaeological sites in Dak R'lap District dating from the Late Neolithic to the Early Metal period have been discovered and researched. Excavation pits were dug at more than 10 locations, including Suoi Ba of Nhan Co Commune, Village 12 of Dak Sin Commune, Bu Dop village of Nghia Thang Commune, the surroundings of Kien Duc, and the Nghia Trang site in Kien Duc. The author agrees that in addition to the general features of Buon Triet culture, the characteristics of the sites and artifacts in Dak R'lap District show cultural interference and the transition between the southern Central Highlands and the Southeast in prehistoric times (Lê, 2016; Nguyễn, 2002, 2007; Nguyen et al., 2022).

A group of trapezoidal full-body grinding axes with long bodies, two neat edges, and some flake scars reflects the cultural connection between Dak R'lap and the southern Central Highlands, especially southern Dak Lak (Nguyen et al., 2022). The correlation between sites in Dak R'lap and the northern Central Highlands is not significant, but in some locations in Dak R'lap, four buffalo teeth-shaped cleavers made from shale stone were found. This type of artifact is typical of the Lung Leng and Bien Ho cultures. Indeed, in the development process, they were present in the southern Central Highlands. Other documents record similarities between the northern and southern Central Highlands by mentioning “hoe agriculture” and rice farming activities in the Central Highlands (Lê, 2014b, 2015; Nguyễn, 2007). The features of the stone hoe in the northern and southern Central Highlands are not the same, indicating that the tool-making techniques of the residents of these two regions differed. Moreover, it reflects the adaptability of the prehistoric inhabitants of the Central Highlands to many different types of terrain and ecology – the unity in diversity.

Another notable correlation lies in the group of full-body grinding quadrilateral axes and cleavers. They are mainly crafted from basalt, and their surfaces are covered with a thick layer of gray and white patina. The tool tip is small with two sharp edges, and the blade is wide and sharp. This type of tool is often obtained at archaeological sites of the Buon Triet and Dong Nai cultures along the border of Binh Phuoc Province or Lam Dong Province (Nguyen et al., 2022; Trần et al., 2014). Dak R'lap ceramics share many similarities with ceramics discovered at archaeological sites of the Dak Nong and Dong Nai cultures during the development period.

3. CONCLUSION

Archaeological sites in Dak Nong date from the Late Neolithic to the Early Metal period and are mainly distributed upstream of the Dong Nai River, such as Dak N' rung, Dak Nong, Dak But So, Dak R'lap, and Dak R'tih. Due to their adjacent geographical locations, wide contact areas, and natural interactions within the Dong Nai river system, prehistoric residents of the southern Central Highlands provinces and the Southeast region developed cultural relationships. In Dak R'lap District, prehistoric inhabitants lived on low mounds and hills, along rivers and streams, and along low-lying lakes and swamps. They practiced hunting and gathering and were likely to know primitive agriculture.

The prehistoric residents of Dak R'lap were proficient in stone-tool crafting techniques. Stone artifacts, especially chopping and cutting tools, are classified into two types: trapezoidal axes and long flat oval axes typical of the Dak R'lap region. Axes and cleavers crafted from basalt are another type, reflecting the close cultural connection between residents of Dak R'lap and those from the Dong Nai River and the Buon Triet culture on the Dak Nong plateau.

The Dak R'lap area in prehistoric times was a cultural intersection between the southern Central Highlands and the Southern region, partly due to the geographical location of the Dak R'lap archaeological sites. The sites are along rivers and streams that are the upstream water sources for the Dong Nai River. The author believes that archaeological sites in Dak R'lap play an essential role in studying the spatial extent of Buon Triet culture in the Central Highlands and the Dong Nai culture in the South in primitive times. Therefore, researching archaeological sites in Dak R'lap and Dak Nong provinces has scientific meaning and practical value.

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