Tumuli in the Danubian plane – from Funerary Landscape to Roman Military Strategy

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The environment

Flat Danubian plane crossed by various waters
Zimnicea

Major Passing point over the Danube
The most southern part of Romania – shortest way from south – to north
Massive ponds and swamps area bordering the high river terrace
A main road developed parallel with the Danube
ZIMNICEA

- Mound
- Main grave without mound
- Settlement

C10M70
C2M10
ZIMNICEA-C1M1

Al. Alexandrescu 1980

Armor
Weapons
Local and imported ceramic
Dress items
Chronology: second half 4th century BC

Stone rectangular chamber with entrance
ZIMNICEA

C12M1-double grave

Individual 1

Individual 2
FANTANELE
Mateescu, Babes, 1968
ZIMNICEA
ZIMNICEA-FANTANELE
PERETU
Where are the limes Watch - towers?

Interpreting the anomalies observed during aerial survey: flattened tumuli or Roman watch towers?
Limes is Crossing valleys
Tumuli follow prehistoric ridge routes along high terraces
The Roman Model

Prehistoric mound reused by Romans

Dyke

Roman dyke

tumulus

Roman fort

M. Băneasa

250 m
Prehistoric mound reused by Romans

Magnetic signature of a Roman tower which form the air looks like a flattened mound
Conclusions

- Not all the anomalies observed from the air that look like flattened mounds are tumuli, they can be remains of Roman watch towers.

- Iron Age tumuli are low and simple in stratigraphy, they tend to gather in necropolises but because of their simple structure and intense agricultural activities remain difficult to be noticed in the landscape. There are no isolated Iron Age tumular graves; they were probably grouped in cemeteries and linked to settlements.

- Large-scale tumuli in the Danubian plane are not so numerous.

- In the places where prehistoric roads intersected the dyke, the larger tumuli were reused by Romans in order to enhance the view range and defense of the dyke.

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http://www.limes-transalutanus.ro/