Living together with nature - Farming on the river flats in the valley of the Tisza

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Summary/Abstract: In the past one thousand years that the Hungarians have been living here we find complex examples of use of the land in the Carpathian Basin, as a large region forming a uniform geographical, ecological and economic system. The Great Plain played a decisive role and, within this, the valley of the Tisza where we find the harmonious co-existence of land and man, water and man along the river, in the periodically inundated areas. In research into farming on the river flats, ethnological studies adopting a new approach brought new results in recent decades. Four levels or zones of farming can be distinguished along the Tisza: the river level, the river flats, the flood-free areas and the sandy hills following the line of the river. Ever since the Árpádian period economic activity has been carried out in the areas known as fok, the system of channels connecting the river and the low-lying river flats. The wet farming on the river flats and the dry farming on the flood-free areas are mutually complementary forms of land use. The big river regulation projects carried out in the 19th century transformed the landscape and brought substantial changes in the methods and possibilities of farming.