

1. Welcome to the István Györffy Great Cumanian Museum in Karcag. In its seven rooms you can see a valuable ethnographic collection in the Lowlands. Now you'll get to know the Cumans who were the ancestors of the inhabitants of this area. But who were these people with a kind of Turkish civilization? Please, look at the map and the illustrations. The Kiptsak and other tribes came from the east. The Cumanian Empire was found on the area of today's Moldavia. Because of the Mongolians, Khan Köteny and his people escaped to the west in the 13th century, and the Hungarian king Béla IV allowed them to settle down here.
2. Please look to the right first. Centuries ago there was a lot of water in this area. People had an excellent knowledge of the marshes. Here are their tools and objects made from reeds. On the other side you can see documents from the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. During the Turkish Empire the region depopulated, so there lived only 98 smallholders in Karcag, and 30 in Kunmadaras. But then many of them returned to their ancient land. In 1745 Queen Mária Teresa gave their privileges back to the Cumans on condition that they would pay for their redemption. You can see some documents about the Cumanian agricultural market-towns.
3. Now let's move over to the third room where we are introduced to shepherding. On the left wall you can see a so-called Cumanian mound. In the diorama you can find the shepherd's traditional dress. Their hut was made from reeds, where they kept their clothes, food and equipment. In the glass case on the left there are some typical decorative pieces of pastoral life, e.g. a whip, a saddle, razor holders, carved knives, and bells of various size and sound. In the other glass-case we can find tools for watching, marking and curing the animals. In the photos the best-known breeds of animals can be seen, e.g. the ancient grey cattle.
4. In the left corner of this room you can learn how to make use of milk in many ways. Milk products were important in everyday nutrition and were also sold at the market. Dairying means the processing of cows' and ewes' milk for which they had all kinds of mugs and jugs. Opposite us there is a small place where the lad kept and cared for his horse because it needed care even at night. The photos on the other side show where and how our peasants used to live to keep animals and cultivate the land. Farming began to spread and develop in the 19th century. Men worked there mostly in summer, but they never gave up their house in town.
5. Let's get to know more about agriculture in the next room. First peasants grew wheat for themselves and for the soldiers, mainly because it was difficult to carry it to far-away markets. Grain producing is the most typical part of the manifold farming process. We see on the right the chief operations involved in ploughing, sowing and harvesting, and the necessary equipment like ploughs, scythes and sickles. On the left-hand side of this room a field of wheat shocks can be seen. Horses were used to tread out the grains of wheat. The trodden out grain was fanned out with winnowing shovels, gathered into bushels and stored in granaries.
6. In the next room follow the events from the 1848 Revolution to the mid-20th century. Here are some documents and pictures illustrating the peasant-bourgeois development in this region. You can read about national markets and see farmers' accounts in hand-written books. Later there existed a vivid life of associations and clubs for the bourgeoisie. Industries (like milling and fur trade) processed agricultural raw materials. The Reformed Church was very important for local culture. Opposite these cases, the picturesque eastern corner symbolizes a new cultural relationship between the twin towns of the Kazakh Merki and Karcag.
7. At the door look at the glass-case containing archaeological specimens from the excavations near Karcag. Then turn left and in the end take a look at the museum's permanent exhibition commemorating ethnographer István Györffy, who the museum was named after. His ancestors moved to Great Cumania from the Partium. He went to school and worked in Karcag, Késmárk, Kolozsvár and Budapest. His object in life was to discover folk culture and make it be appreciated by everyone. He travelled a lot, studied the people's way of life, took a lot of photos, drew pictures, wrote books, collected typical objects, even furniture. Just admire the motifs of embroidery and carving. Enjoy Your stay with us. Thank You. Goodbye.