

AN EARLY 18TH CENTURY SCIENTIFIC NETWORK BETWEEN ENGLAND AND TRANSYLVANIA – MINERALS, FOSSILS, AND BOOKS OF SÁMUEL KÖLESÉRI, JR.

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Fourteen copperplates in the first palaeobotany handbook, the *Herbarium Diluvianum* (1723) of the Swiss medical doctor Johann Jacob Scheuchzer, bear dedications to his most prestigious friends (Fig. 1). They range from the Archbishop of Canterbury and Isaac Newton to learned men residing in the Low Countries, France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Hungary, and Turkey. Five of the dedicatees and the author himself were extremely successful members of the medical profession. Their correspondence, published books, mineral and fossil specimens, and catalogues of their personal libraries and collections have been studied in order to map a network of scientific exchange in Early Modern Europe. Three medical doctors: the Englishman John Woodward of London, the Swiss Johann Jacob Scheuchzer of Zürich, and the Hungarian Samuel Köleséri of Transylvania shared interests in collecting and preserving minerals and fossils, and in using them to support their scientific ideas. They regularly supplied each other with newly found specimens, communicating about their characters and origins. Each of them published monographic works in their respective fields of interest, using mineral and fossil specimens received from their partners in the scientists' network to provide substantial evidence for the Flood, a novel and progressive idea of the age.

Sámuel Köleséri, Jr., (1663–1732) owned the largest private library in Hungary and Transylvania. Additionally, he collected minerals and fossils, of which almost nothing remained. His scientific correspondence and specimens preserved in the surviving collections of John Woodward, a British medical doctor, and Johann Jakob Scheuchzer, a Swiss medicus and in their catalogues, and remarks in the travelogue of Edmund Chishull preserves sufficient information to outline the contents of his mineral and fossil collection, the way of collecting, and the use of the specimens.

Reference

KÁZMÉR, M. (1998): Journal of the History of Collections, 10: 159–168.

http://kazmer.web.elte.hu/pubs/Kazmer_1998_Woodwardian_Coll_JHisColl.pdf



Fig. 1. A plate from Scheuchzer's *Herbarium Diluvianum* (1728) depicting a fossil *Isis* coral, a Tertiary leaf imprint and a block with manganese dendrite incrustation. Dedication of the plate is to *Ill. D. Samueli Köleseri de Keres-er. Secretario Guberniali Caesareo-Regio Principatus Transylvaniae*. [To the respected Samuel Köleséri of Keres-er, secretary of the imperial-royal government of the Transylvanian Principality].