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**PHARMATRANS. ALL THINGS APOTHECARY IN
SIXTEENTH–TWENTIETH-CENTURY TRANSYLVANIA.
THE HISTORY OF PHARMACY COLLECTION
IN CLUJ-NAPOCA/2022***

ANA-MARIA GRUIA**

The second year of the PHARMATRANS research project implemented through the National Museum of Transylvanian History has mainly focused on the **research for and the completion of the exhaustive catalogue** of the History of Pharmacy Collection in Cluj, the main objective of the research team. First, we have photographed (with the continued pro bono cooperation of Ph.D. Alexandru Rădulescu) and processed (inventoried and included in the collection) most of the previously unknown artifacts identified when the collection was relocated from the Hintz House to the temporary storage rooms of the National Museum of Transylvanian History, plus several donations received in 2021–2022 and recent archaeological finds. Thus, the collection has been **enriched with 1,030 artifacts** (manuscripts, books, pharmaceutical containers, ephemera, druggist containers, a lot of more than 600 pharmaceutical financial and accounting documents from the Engel pharmacy in Iași etc.) (Fig. 1). Due to the existence of several lots of very similar items, the objects were recorded under 111 inventory numbers (IF 2413–2524). Though the newly added items have already surpassed our initial estimation and have considerably enriched the collection, there are still more unprocessed artifacts (such as a large lot of accounting documents from the Hintz pharmacy and about 200 unidentified contemporary containers, of lesser historical value). Due to independent factors, such as the insufficient personnel and time, we have decided to exclude such goods from the scope of the present project. The catalogue will likely be completed by a subsequent volume, published by the museum after the completion of the project. We also envisage a new wave of public interest and donations after the reopening of the exhibition in the Hintz House in 2023, that will lead to the addition of new objects. The team has also decided that the lot of documents pertaining to the history of the collection (notes and correspondence of prof. Valeriu Bologa, the founder of the museum, documents pertaining to the previous museographers, blueprints of the museum), recently rediscovered and processed scientifically, will be subsequently included in the sub-collection ‘The History of the National Museum of Transylvanian History’ by curator Ph.D. Ovidiu Muntean.

Ph.D. Mária Pakucs has completed the inspection, processing, partial transcription and translation of the **manuscripts** in the collection. She has travelled from Bucharest to Cluj in order to inspect both the manuscripts and the artifacts with paleographic writing. Some

* This work was supported by a grant of the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research, CNCS – UEFISCDI, project number PN-III-P4-ID-PCE-2020–1562, within PNCDI III.

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of these items required special inspection under UV light for better visibility, especially the inscriptions on pharmaceutical ledger covers and the drawers of the eighteenth-century medicine chest (Fig. 2).

The sub-collection of **books** in the collection has been exhaustively researched by Ph.D. Ioana Gruia-Savu. She has completed the files of all the books, including their ownership marks and handwritten notations (sometimes in collaboration with Mária Pakucs), with special interest in two particular items: a book printed in 1596, owned by Giovanni Battista Gussetti (that she will publish in 2023) and a nineteenth-century Romanian manuscript book (in this volume).

The six-volume catalogue is almost complete, with all item entries written by team members (to be refined and corrected in the beginning of 2023, with the continuing pro bono support of Ioana Gruia-Savu and Mária Pakucs) and the introductions to the separate volumes sketched. The structure of the first volume of the catalogue has been set, with a series of introductory studies written by project team members and collaborators and a lot of specialized contributions from both team members and external specialists, providing historical case studies relevant for the research of the collection. Some of the studies were delivered in Romanian and translated in English, while a few invitations have not been answered.

Introductory studies

- Ana-Maria Gruia, *Introduction*
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Historical case studies

- Ana-Maria Gruia, *The pharmacies of Cluj*
- Robert Offner, *Tobias Mauksch, the privileged pharmacist of Cluj/Kolozsvár/Klausenburg*
- Melinda Mitu, *Dr. Hintz György József I (1840–1890)*
- Melinda Mihály, Zsolt Kovács, *The history of the Hintz House in the light of the recent research and restoration works*
- Ágnes Alföldy-Găzdac, *The coins recently discovered in the basement of the Hintz House*
- Oana Habor, *Pharmaceutical education in Cluj (1919–1934)*

For the history of the pharmacy and of the collection, Ph.D. Ana-Maria Gruia has conducted several informal interviews with Ph.D. Eva Crişan, the first museographer in charge of the collection under the management of the History Museum in Cluj, Dr. Gábor Hintz, who has initiated the recovery of the Hintz pharmacy from the Romanian state,

and Dr. Georg Hintz, the current owner of the house. Georg Hintz has also revealed that the family had preserved the original documents from the 1949 nationalization of the pharmacy. Copies of this previously unknown and very valuable historical source have been made available for study and will be detailed in Ana-Maria Gruia's study regarding the pharmacies from Cluj, in the introductory catalogue volume mentioned above.¹

The second type of activities performed in 2022 was aimed at continuing the **analysis of materials and surfaces**, mainly of the components of the eighteenth-century medicine chest. Ph.D. Andrea Beatrix Magó, employee of the National Museum of Transylvanian History, has completed the **micro photographic investigation** of nine complex artifacts. She has performed microscopic analyses under transmitted, reflected, and polarized light on several textile, paper, thread, and *materia medica* samples from the medicine chest, discovering that the paper employed as cover for the containers was handmade out of vegetal fibers (rags were recycled, shredded and made into a paste, leaving colored microfibrils in the structure of the paper). The investigations have also revealed the structure of the thread used for securing the paper covers (made of twisted fibers) (Fig. 3). They have also confirmed that the content of some of the bottles matches the inscriptions. The investigations were performed using an OLYMPUS CX33 microscope and a polarizing NIKON-OPTIPHOT2-POL microscope (working condition with one Nicol and cross Nicol). The analysis of the paper components of the Baroque medicine chest included the identification of paper pH and the quantity of glue employed. Some samples were basic and other acidic, but this may be explained by the interaction of the paper covers with the medical preparations and the specific preservation conditions. Andrea Beatrix Magó has also checked the type of paper glue employed, through a test that reveals the excessive, normal, weak or absent quantity of glue in the paper based on the absorption of a micro water drop during a set interval. The absorption times differed considerably, pointing again to the possible change of paper covers due to the interaction with the contents or the possible use of different types of paper when the covers were replaced (the change in content required the change of cover, with a new inscription).

The series of planned investigations continued with a number of non-invasive XRF (**X-ray fluorescence**) tests performed with a portable EDXRF spectrometer Elva X Prospector3 MAX with energy dispersive SDD detector in collaboration with SC Union SRL Cluj-Napoca still under the coordination of Andrea Beatrix Magó (Fig. 4). The tests have led to the identification of the metal alloys used for several components of the eighteenth-century apothecary chest. We have thus discovered that the key and rivets of the chest are made of an alloy rich in iron, the other metal components are made of copper and tin, while the screw caps of the glass containers are made of lead (toxic, but soft and easy to process).

The type of parchment and/or velum on some of the pharmacist diplomas and old books has been determined with the aid of Ph.D. Lucreția Miu, from the National Research and Development Institute for Textiles and Leather in Bucharest. This was a chance, but

¹ Oral history thus becomes one of the numerous tools employed in the completion of the research project. We thank all those who have participated and kindly provided information regarding the Hintz family and pharmacy and the pharmacy museum.

very useful collaboration, mediated by Ioana Cova, as the project team and museum staff currently lack a specialist in parchment and leather.

During 2022 team members have also selected and extracted the samples (Fig. 5) that will be analyzed by several institutions. Thus, 14 samples were sent for **chromatographic and mass spectrometric analyses** at the Department of Chemistry and Industrial Chemistry of the University in Pisa. The team led by Prof. Maria Perla Colombini has created a database of biomolecular markers through the analysis of reference materials, replicas of old formulations, and artificial ageing of both reference materials and replicas, and can thus provide some of the interpretation of the results. A set of 14 samples from the same containers have been collected and sent for **liquid chromatographic-mass spectrometry analyses** to the Department of Pharmacognosy and Herbal Medicines of the Wrocław Medical University. The latter analyses will be performed free of charge, based on an ad-hoc scientific cooperation with a Polish research project that we have discovered while taking part in the *International Congress for the History of Pharmacy* in Milan.² The results of all these analyses will be fully processed and interpreted during 2023. In the collection, analysis, and interpretation of the samples we have benefited from the cooperation of Ph.D. Márta Guttmann, chemist and expert conservator, lecturer at the University of Sibiu and Ph.D. Andrea Beatrix Magó, employee of the National Museum of Transylvanian History. Other five samples will be collected and sent for **SEM-EDX** investigations of inorganic materials (glass, metal) and *materia medica* to the National Institute of Research and Development for Isotopic and Molecular Technologies in Cluj-Napoca, in collaboration with the Faculty of Chemistry, in 2023.

Another objective was to **clean, consolidate, and restore the artifacts** that require such specialized interventions. 264 selected artifacts, made of paper, parchment, glass and ceramic, have been processed and documented by Ioana Cova and her colleagues from the conservation and restoration department that she coordinates (Cornelia Rotariu, Tudor Tomescu and Radu Cordoş). The pharmaceutical collection is generally in a good state of preservation, and except for a few cases of actual restoration (broken containers), the interventions focused on the cleaning and consolidation of the patrimony goods. Ioana Cova has performed most of the interventions herself, consisting of cleaning and straightening manuscript books, recipes, pharmaceutical diplomas on paper and parchment, and twentieth-century financial records of pharmacies (Fig. 6).

Visiting pharmacy museums and collections and networking with peers and specialists abroad was another objective that has been reached in 2022. In September 2022, Ana-Maria Gruia has visited the history of pharmacy collection of the *Museo Nazionale della Scienza e della Tecnologia Leonardo da Vinci* in Milan, with a special guided tour kindly provided by Mrs. Simona Casonato and her colleagues. Most of the artifacts in this collection were obtained from the antiquities market, thus their original contexts of use remain unknown, but the small display is very beautiful and evocative. In 2016 all items were conserved or restored. During the same month, Ana Maria Gruia has also visited the History Museum of the *Ospedale Maggiore*, with a collection of pharmaceutical and medical items from the hospital of Milan founded in the fifteenth century, including an

² Focusing on reconstructions of historical theriac recipes. Coordinator Ph.D. Jakub Węglorz, supported by the Polish National Science Centre [funding number: 2017/26/E/HS3/00452].

impressive archive (Fig. 7), and the *Civico Museo di Storia Naturale*. The latter contains a new exhibition of minerals (some of which were also used in the making of medicines), as well as the old but scientifically very interesting display of fossils and natural specimens that were also in the attention of pharmacists throughout history. During the history of pharmacy congress in Milan detailed below, Ana-Maria Gruia has met several international specialists in the history of medicine, some of which will allow for the development of future collaborations (with the association of pharmacy museums from the German-speaking areas and the team of the research project in Poland mentioned above).

Team members have put much effort into the elaboration of several **research papers**, more than initially estimated. One of the articles has been completed in 2021 but was printed in the very end of the year: Ana-Maria Gruia, *Engel Pharmacy 'La Coróna,' near the gate of the royal court, Jassy*, *SUBB Historia*, 66/2 (2021), 45–76 (doi:10.24193/subbhist.2021.2.03). Another article has been published in the present volume: Ioana Gruiță-Savu, *'Handbook for Medicine by Iosif Țiucra, a Teacher.' A nineteenth-century Manuscript in the History of Pharmacy Collection (MNIT)*. Two more articles are partially written, prepared for *ActaMN*, 60/II (2023): Mária Pakucs, *'They Steal It from the Sultan's Pharmacy.' Transylvanian Imports of Drugs and Chemicals from the Ottoman Empire in the Early Modern Period* and Ioana Gruiță-Savu, *'Libro di me.' Gio Batta Gussetti*. The most significant article, to be submitted in 2023 to an ISI periodical to be subsequently selected, will be the collective work of most of the project team members and collaborators, focusing on the eighteenth-century medicine chest and integrating the results and interpretations of all the investigations and chemical analyses performed so far. It is currently in the stage of preliminary sketch.

Team members have also performed research for three conference presentations. Ana-Maria Gruia has delivered the presentation entitled *Pharmatrans – a Transylvanian exploratory research project* at the 45th *International Congress for the History of Pharmacy* organized in Milan by the International Society for the History of Pharmacy, in 7–10 September 2022. At the invitation of the Polish colleagues encountered in Milan, she has also delivered online the presentation entitled *Museum Reconstructions of Pharmacy Interiors* during the scientific workshop entitled *Historical reconstruction as a research tool*, organized by the Institute of History, of the Wrocław University, in 10–11 December 2022. Ioana Cova has delivered the presentation *Aspecte privind conservarea Colecției de Istorie a Farmaciei din Cluj* [On the conservation of the History of Pharmacy Collection in Cluj] during the works of the *Bucovina – File de Istorie Symposium* (the XXIVth edn.), in the conservation and restoration panel. The symposium was organized by The National Museum of Bucovina in Suceava, in partnership with 'Ștefan cel Mare' University, the Faculty of History and Geography, in 24–25 November 2022.

The final objective was to promote the project, its activities, and its results. On several occasions, especially during the congress in Milan, we have distributed visit cards (Fig. 8) promoting the project and its website, that we have constantly updated. The website, available at <https://pharmatrans.mnit.ro> in both Romanian and English, is affiliated to the official website of the National Museum of Transylvanian History in Cluj-Napoca and includes the annual scientific reports. Upon completion, the full catalogue will be available on this website in a free download format. By the end of 2022 we have created 44 blog posts

(Romanian and English), grouped according to three categories: study visits, research, and conservation and restoration (Fig. 9). Between January and December 2022 the website has had more than 4,738 visits (partial data in Fig. 10). The data show an almost double number of visits as compared to 2021 and a constant interest in the project, with almost even monthly visits. The project is also presented on the official website of the National Museum of Transylvanian History, at <https://www.mnit.ro/pharmatrans/>.

On social media platforms we have posted more than 20 times (marked with hash tags such as #pharmatrans #mnit #uefiscdi and #cnsc). All were first posted on the Facebook page of the History of Pharmacy Collection (<https://www.facebook.com/colectiefarmacluj>), shared on the fan page of the collection (<https://www.facebook.com/MuzeulFarmaciei>) and in several Facebook groups (from Romania: museographers, conservators, inhabitants of Cluj, history students, pharmacists; and an international group of pharmacy historians). Partial reports have also been published in the *Newsletter* of The National Museum of Transylvanian History, also widely distributed online: January–July 2021,³ July–December 2021,⁴ January–June 2022,⁵ and a material was also delivered for the July–December 2022 issue.⁶ The promotion of the project has been completed through more than 30 posts on the personal profiles of team members on academic and social media platforms.

Throughout the second year of the project, the activities have been coordinated by project leader Ana-Maria Gruia and the audit will be performed by an external specialist. Team members and collaborators have frequently met in person, mainly those from Cluj-Napoca, but occasionally also with Mária Pakucs from Bucharest. We have also maintained our regular meetings and communication online (emails, zoom meetings, by phone). Ana-Maria Gruia has completed the scientific report and has been responsible for all management activities.

³ Available at <https://www.mnit.ro/wp-content/uploads/Newsletter-IAN-IUN-2021-6.pdf>.

⁴ Available at https://www.mnit.ro/wp-content/uploads/Newsletter-iul-dec-2021-5-2.pdf?fbclid=IwAR1w5iOB4wcLsyhjnjsdTbiG1G2inTw6kMcFBPRL9_BQp36h8mmOIZrHLOM.

⁵ Available at <https://www.mnit.ro/wp-content/uploads/Newsletter-iul-dec-2021-1.pdf>.

⁶ Available at <https://www.mnit.ro/wp-content/uploads/Newsletter-iul-dec-2022-2.pdf>.



Fig. 1. Lot of cut-out metal plaques for the stencil marking of pharmaceutical containers, rediscovered in the old collections (Colecția MNIT, no. IF 2451, image from the MNIT Archive).



Fig. 2. Identification of faded writing on the drawers of the Baroque medicine chest under UV light (Colecția MNIT, no. IF 1903, image from the MNIT Archive).

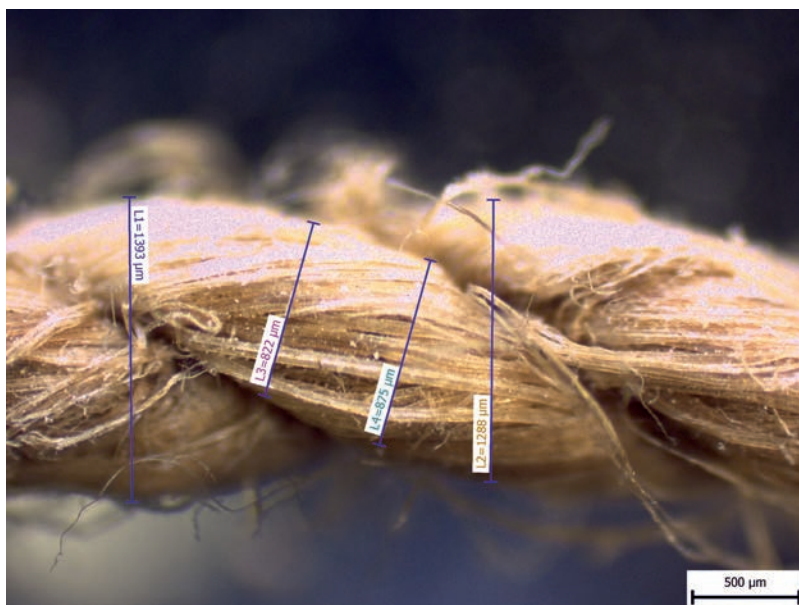


Fig. 3. Microphotograph of the structure of the thread used for securing the paper cover of a pharmaceutical container (Colecția MNIT, no. IF 1911, image from the MNIT Archive).



Fig. 4. XRF (X-ray fluorescence) test showing the composition of the glass of an apothecary container (Colecția MNIT, no. IF 1948, image from the MNIT Archive).



Fig. 5. a-b. *Materia medica* sample collection (image from the MNIT Archive).

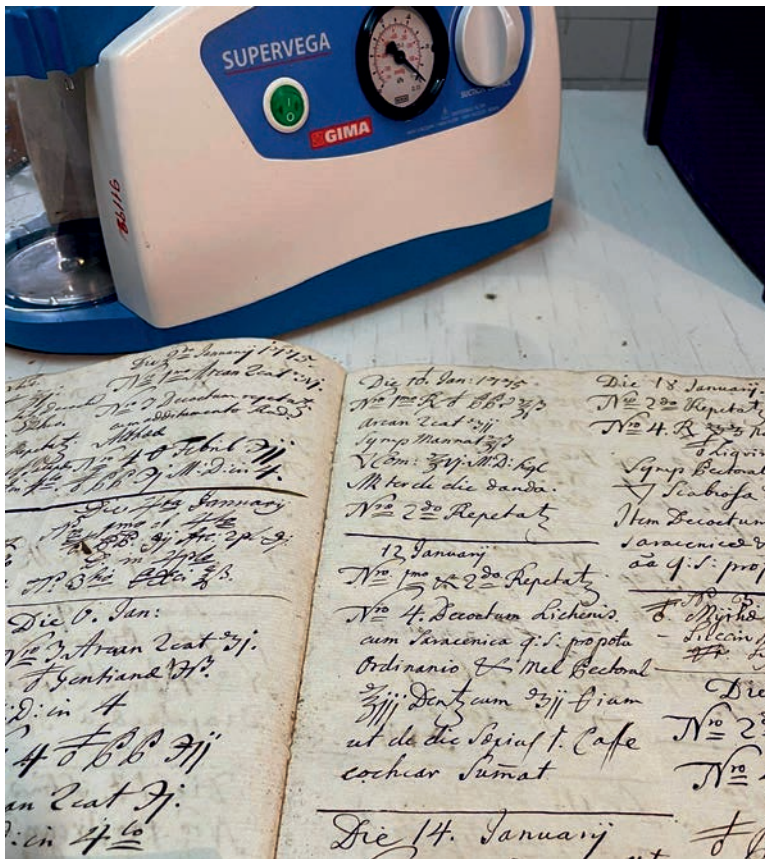


Fig. 6. Cleaning an eighteenth-century manuscript ledger (image from the MNIT Archive).



Fig. 7. Archive of the Ca' Grande in Milan, preserving the administrative documents of the Ospedale Maggiore (photo by Ana-Maria Gruia).



Fig. 8. Business cards distributed in Milan.



MATERIA MEDICA SAMPLES

FEBRUARY 24, 2022

During the first part of this year we will collect samples from some of the substances preserved in our collection (the so-called *materia medica*) for chemical analyses. The simple substances will be sent to Institutul de Cercetare si Instrumentare Analitica in Cluj-Napoca, while the complex pharmaceutical preparations, especially the 18th-century ones, will be researched by the Department of Chemistry and Industrial Chemistry of the University in Pisa. Part of this department, a team led by Prof. Maria Perla Colombini as specialized in such research through a national project entitled *Colors and tones in Antiquity*, from the chemical study to the knowledge of technologies in cosmetics, paintings and medicine (2007) that involved analytical studies of pharmaceutical preparations from historical collections (17th-19th centuries). The most important advantage of this team's experience is its expertise in performing and interpreting the results of such chromatographic and mass spectrometric analyses. The team led by Prof. Maria Perla Colombini has created a database of biomolecular markers through the analysis of reference materials, replicas of old formulations, and artificial ageing of both reference materials and replicas. Chromatography is a technique for the separation of a mixture into its components, while mass spectrometry allows for the measurement of the relative molecular mass of chemical compounds and the chemical identity or structure.

USES AND REUSES

MARCH 16, 2022

The close analysis of the apothecary containers of the collection from Cluj reveals numerous cases of reuse. Some of the jars have been repainted, with new inscriptions on top of old ones. Occasionally, the name of the new content was rendered on the opposite side, as the jars in question preserve two different signatures. In the most interesting cases, the history of the artifacts is fully documented: from the production place (manufacturer marks on the bottom), to the users (one or more pharmacies with personalized labels, handwritten notations of quantities and expiry dates made by pharmacists), collectors (the old inventory numbers of the Transylvanian Museum) and the current holder (the inventory numbers of the National Museum of Transylvanian History).

AN 18TH-CENTURY MEDICINE CHEST

FEBRUARY 11, 2022

The advanced research of our project focuses on a spectacular 18th-century medicine chest, preserved in the collection. The object is special through its age, state of preservation, association with an owner (countess Theresia Kemeny) and a pharmacist from Simleu who provided the medicine, the preservation of the original content (glass containers, packages with *materia medica* and a previously unpublished manuscript), the combination of materials (wood, metal, glass, paper, rope, ink), and especially the preservation of most of the medicines that we shall analyze and compare to the era's pharmaceutical preparations. We have started by researching the history of the artifact and its inscriptions and preparing for the collection of samples for specialized analyses at a laboratory in Pisa (Italy).





Fig. 9. Blog page of the dedicated website, affiliated to the website of the National Museum of Transylvanian History: <https://www.mnit.ro/pharmatrans/>.

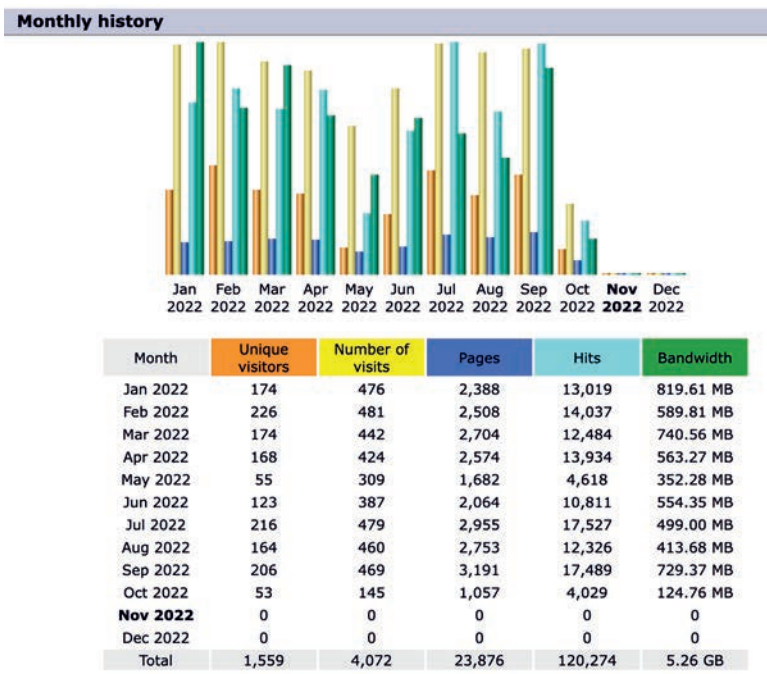


Fig. 10. Website visits (<https://www.mnit.ro/pharmatrans/>, data as of the end of October 2022).