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Chapter 7
Warehouse Societies
Catherine Virlouvet¹

When we are trying to imagine what the world of the warehouse was like in the last few centuries of the Republic and the first three of the Empire, we have to consider a particular type of storehouse and economic context at a time when commercial exchanges in the ports in which goods were stocked and redistributed reached their apogee. This is a time when ports were centres of constant activity in which goods were stored and redistributed and commercial exchange was at its height.

Most buildings used for storage in these major sea, sea-river and river ports were large complexes, built on several floors and with a footprint covering several thousand, if not several tens of thousands of square metres. Most of these buildings took the form of rows of adjacent rooms, sometimes grouped around internal courtyards. This does not mean that goods were not also stored in buildings which were not subdivided internally, taking the form of a vast hangar, nor does it mean that buildings with central courtyards could not be found in sites which – as far as we know – did not have a port. The Hergla warehouse in Tunisia, with an area of 4100m², is an example of this (Ghalia, Villedieu, Virlouvet 2011) (Fig. 7.1). However, the link between major ports and buildings in which the form of adjoining rooms was very common, evidence of which comes from both archaeological and written sources from ports such as Ostia (Fig. 7.2) and Rome, as well as Pozzuoli and Vienne, to the south of Lyons. I have recently put forward the idea that this architectural form predominated in a period of relative peace inside the Empire.² A strong state created conditions favourable to the development of a richer and more varied trade network, in which the state itself participated, conditions which also allowed private trade to develop. Subdividing buildings in this way gave the building's owners – both public (Roman state, cities) and private – greater flexibility in how they used the buildings, subletting predefined spaces, with the whole enterprise supervised by *praepositi*, who could be slaves or paid employees. Dividing the space up in this way also without doubt helped with the organisation of labour within the warehouse, although we do not yet have a complete picture of how this happened in practice. Most warehouses, in addition to their function of storing goods, also served as wholesale and retail outlets. Almost everyone involved in the commercial life of a port had links with the

¹ This paper was translated from the original French by James Minney

² Virlouvet, 2018

warehouses. Therefore, people with very different legal and social statuses came into contact with each other in a professional context, and it is their professional, hierarchical and social relationships and their interdependence which I would like to outline here.

In the sources on which my study is based, I will not distinguish between warehouses in which goods were stored and those in which valuable objects were kept – a function akin to modern safety deposit boxes. Although it is probable that some buildings specialised more in one type of activity than the other I think that many warehouses would have been multifunctional. For this reason, the regulations governing the *horrea Caesaris* list the various spaces which could be rented within the site – everything from spaces within cabinets to whole rooms.³ It seems likely that both bulky goods and valuables would have been stored in the same building.

1. *Horrea*: Microcosm of Port Society

At the top are the owners of the warehouse buildings who often had little day to day involvement in warehouse societies. The programme “Entrepôts et lieux de stockage du monde gréco-romain antique”, [Warehouses and storage sites in the Graeco-Roman world] which I, along with Véronique Chankowski and Xavier Lafon, directed from 2009 to 2012, with the support of the *Agence Nationale de Recherche*, allowed us to refine the idea we had that all of the large port warehouses were imperial constructions and property. It is true that sites such as vast so-called *Magazzini di Traiano* (Warehouses of Trajan) or the *Grandi Magazzini di Settimio Severo* (Large Warehouses of Septimius Severus), to cite but two examples, may well have been built as the result of an Imperial initiative because the port, *Portus*, was itself the result of vast works carried out at the behest of the emperors. However, in Rome and in Pozzuoli we have written sources which prove that other large warehouse complexes (the *horrea Lolliana* and *Sulpiciana*, as well as the future *horrea Galbana* and *Agrippiana* in Rome and the *horrea Barbatiana* and *Bassiana* in Pozzuoli) were built at the behest of members of the élite. It is also true that they subsequently passed into imperial or municipal hands after being sold, or through inheritance or confiscation. However, there are still accounts of warehouses being built by private individuals well into the second century AD.⁴ Most of these warehouse owners were members of the élite and these warehouses were

³ *CIL* VI, 33747 l. 5: *horrea, compendiar(ia) armaria et loca...*

⁴ *CIL* VI, 33806: warehouses of Q. Tineus Sacerdos Clemens, consul in 158 AD; *CIL* VI, 37795, warehouses of M. Ummidius Quadratus, consul in AD 167.

only one aspect (albeit a lucrative one if Cicero is to be believed)⁵ of their propertied wealth. As a result, this category only comes into the scope of a study about warehouse society insofar as it touches on the question of the relationship between owners and warehouse operators, a question which – due to a lack of evidence – is every bit as difficult to shed light upon as that of the élite’s involvement in business world more generally. Did members of the élite whose properties included warehouses take a close interest in the running of these warehouses? This is a question which cannot be answered and for which there is, in any case, unlikely to be just one answer.

However, warehouse owners were sometimes members of different social classes and in these cases, it is possible to speculate on their involvement in the day to day running of the warehouses. In Ostia, set into the beautiful two-coloured brick façade of the *horrea Epagathiana et Epaphroditiana*, with its Corinthian columns and pediment, there is an inscription above the entrance which tells us who the owners of this warehouse were to which they gave their names. The inscription only bears their *cognomina* – Epagathus and Epaphroditus - names of Greek origin belonging to individuals who were probably freed slaves, or descendants of freed slaves, who both owned and ran the *horrea*, and who were sufficiently well known by those who frequented the warehouse to only need to put their *cognomina* above the warehouse’s entrance. Andreau (2018) (in a forthcoming publication) has recently put forward the hypothesis that the distinction between *negotiatores* and *mercatores* was that the former could either own or run the warehouses. Amongst other sources, he bases his theory on a bilingual funerary monument found near Lyons and dating from the late second century or early third century AD: Thaemus Iulianus Sati filius (Thaemus, son of Saad / Sati), Decurion from Canatha in Syria who is described as being a *negotiator* in Lyons and in the province of Aquitaine in the Latin version of the inscription. The Greek version, as Greek has no equivalent term for *negotiator*, explains that he owns an *emporion*, full of goods which have been bought in order to be sold.⁶ The word *emporion* is used to describe a commercial establishment in which goods are also sold, as is the case here. As I have already mentioned, it is not uncommon to find a variety of commercial activities taking place in many warehouses. It is therefore possible that owning warehouses could count among a *negotiator*’s business interests. At least that is how Dubouloz (2008, 283) has interpreted a rescript issued by Antoninus that is reported in the Digest, and which stated that, if a warehouse had been broken into, it was possible to question the slaves charged with

⁵ Cicero, *De finibus* II, 84.

⁶ *CIL* XIII, 2448; *ILS* 7529 l. 8-9: *es prasin echôn emporion agorasmôn / meston ek Akouitanie...*

guarding the warehouse even if the emperor himself had a share in the warehouse (*in illius ipsius imperatoris portio est*).⁷ However, the *portio imperatoris* might not necessarily mean that the emperor owned a share in the premises. We do indeed know that large warehouses like this, whoever the owner or owners may be, were intended to be rented by *portio*. The public authorities – the State, cities – sometimes needed to rent spaces in warehouses belonging private individuals and vice versa. It is therefore possible that the expression simply means that the imperial authorities were one of the various parties renting space in a warehouse.

2. Warehouse Operators

Most of the large warehouses were not run directly by their owner but were entrusted to one of the slaves of the *familia* or were managed by an individual from outside the *familia*, according to the *locatio-conductio* system of which there is a lot of evidence in the Roman world for both private and public contracts (Aubert 2003; France 2008).

How was this administrator or manager designated in Latin? Did his designation change according to how the warehouse operated? One might expect the term *vilicus* – a term frequently used in Latin for the supervisor of a rural estate, for example – to be used where the warehouse operation was overseen by a *praepositus* slave. Where the warehouse operated via a *locatio-conductio* contract, the manager is called the *conductor* and the owner is the *locator*. In practice, we see the term *horrearius* used quite clearly to designate the manager of a warehouse, the principal *conductor* of store houses which were often divided into separate units which were then sublet.⁸ We see this term used by lawyers during the Early Imperial period⁹ as well as in epigraphic accounts – I refer in particular to the rental regulations of the *horrea Caesaris* in Rome.¹⁰ In cases such as this the manager became the *locator* for the *conductores* who rented units within the warehouse (rooms, spaces on the colonnade, cabinets, etc.). The term *conductor* was also used to mean the person responsible for running

⁷ Digest 1.15.3.2 (Paul, *Liber singularis de officio Praefecti Vigilum*).

⁸ We know that a certain Concordius who is called the *co[loniae] horrearius* (*CIL IX*, 1545) was without doubt the manager of warehouses in the city of Beneventum.

⁹ Cf. Digest, 9.3.5.3 (Ulpian 23, *ad edictum*); Digest 10.4.5 pr (Ulpian, 24, *ad edictum*, translating Celsus): *cum horreario agendum*; Digest, 19.2.60.9 (Labeo, 5. *Posteriorum a Iavoleno epitomatorum*)

¹⁰ This is known from an inscription found near the Porta Salaria *CIL VI*, 33747; *ILS* 5914. There is no evidence that it was illegal for *conductores* to sublet units in an *horreum* belonging to the Emperor. Part of the *lex locationis* of such a *horreum* has survived and it has been possible to reconstitute the relevant part of the text (*CIL VI*, 33747, l. 8-9).

the whole warehouse complex, as long as it was perfectly clear from the context that this was how the term was being used. Thus, the inscription *CIL VI, 9471*¹¹ without doubt commemorates a gift made by a freed imperial slave who was responsible for managing the *horrea Seiana* in Rome, at a time when they were still owned privately by the *familia*. When the term *conductor* is potentially ambiguous because the text refers to rental arrangements for units within the warehouse and therefore where there were individuals who were *conductores* subordinate to the principal *conductor* (e.g. in the regulations of the *horrea Caesaris*), Latin sources seem to prefer the term *horrearius*.

However, the term *horrearius* was also used in a more general sense to designate people involved in warehousing but not necessarily linked to warehouses for public use. Several funerary inscriptions are dedicated to slaves described as *horrearii*¹², individuals working in warehouses who were responsible for the management of the personal stocks belonging to important Roman élite families. The very fact that the deceased's entourage mentioned that he was an *horrearius* shows that this must have been an important responsibility. However, as far as inscriptions are concerned, it is not always easy to differentiate between this type of function and that of someone with overall responsibility for running a warehouse complex. Thus, the term *horrearius* as used by the wife of the freed imperial slave Primus in his epitaph has sometimes been linked to the use of the term in the regulations of the *horrea Caesaris* because the two stones were discovered close to each other, near to the section of the *via Salaria* which crosses the Pincian Hill.¹³ If the *horrearius* of the *horrea Caesaris* could be a slave then that would mean that this warehouse complex was not being operated under a *locatio-conductio* contract, as was suggested above, and that, as far as these warehouses were concerned, the term *horrearius* was not used instead of *conductor* but, first and foremost, that the term designated the person who had overall responsibility for the running of the complex, whether that person was a slave *praepositus* or someone recruited under contract. However, a passage in the Digest mentions the case of a free man, *negotiator marmorum conductor* of the *horrea Caesaris*.¹⁴ If this man was the manager of the whole warehouse complex rather than someone who was renting a few storerooms within it to store his marble, then Primus cannot have been in charge of running the *horrea Caesaris*, which, in turn, must have been managed on a contract basis rather than by a *praepositus* slave. On the other hand, it is entirely possible

¹¹ *Caius Iulius/Hermes/conductor/horreorum/Seianorum/lustri terti/s(ua) p(ecunia) d(onum) d(edit)*.

¹² Cf. *CIL VI*, 6.588; 6.682; 6.4239-4240; 6.6292-6295; 6.8682; 6.9108; 6.9460; 6.9464-9469 (although the person is a freed slave); *AE* 1994.372; *AE* 1997.1749; *AE* 2000.219; *AE* 2003.300.

¹³ *CIL VI*, 33746.

¹⁴ *Digest* 20.4.21.1 (*lib. XXVII digg.*), Scaevola. Regarding the *horrea Caesaris*, see Coarelli 1996b: 39.

that the operating model of the *horrea Caesaris* changed during the course of their history (France 2008: 486, n.12; Andreau, 2018).

Furthermore, it is not entirely clear that the various documents are referring to the same warehouse complex. *Horrea Caesaris* could actually be a generic term, at least in the section of the Digest to which Jean Andreau refers, and could designate any warehouse which was imperial property, rather than a specific one. This situation is made even more complex by the problems surrounding the identification of the *horrea Caesaris* themselves. It has often been the case that links have been made between the *horrea Caesaris* and the *horrea Galbana*. Indeed, the case of the *negotiator marmorum* is one of the arguments put forward for seeing links between these two places, because archaeological excavations on the supposed site of the *horrea Galbana* at the end of the nineteenth century¹⁵ revealed evidence of the working of marble on the site and we know of another *negotiator marmorum*, this time “*de Galbes*”¹⁶ through his epitaph.

However, epigraphic evidence from the *horrea Galbana* suggests the complex was managed by designated slaves, at least under the Flavian Emperors and the early Antonine Emperors. At the end of the first century a *vilicus* was in charge of the warehouses. An inscription, possibly dating from the reign of Galba, bears a dedication to the *Bona Dea Galbilla* made in the name of a slave called Zmaragdus, who called himself the *vilicus* of the *horrea Galbana* and must mean of the whole complex as the inscription mentions the three courtyards of the building.¹⁷ Other inscriptions dating from the reign of Hadrian mention *horrearii* in the *horrea Galbana*,¹⁸ all of whom were imperial slaves or former imperial slaves. In both cases, the inscriptions state that they were *horrearii* for only part of the complex (for example the second courtyard in the case of Maior, Diadumenus and T.Flavius Crescens).¹⁹ We are clearly not dealing with the *horrearius-conductor* model mentioned in the regulations of the *horrea Caesaris*. As far as the *horrea Galbana* are concerned, given the scale of the complex, there must have been a hierarchical organisation with the offices of responsibility shared between several people, overseen by a *vilicus* (see France 2008, 491, in

¹⁵ At least if one accepts Gatti’s identification of the site (1934). For alternative identifications, see Rodríguez Almeida: 1978-70 and Coarelli 1983: 350 and 1996a: 40-2. I have attempted to show that Gatti’s hypothesis remains the most likely (Virilouvet 2006).

¹⁶ *CIL* VI, 33886.

¹⁷ *CIL* VI, 30855.

¹⁸ *CIL* VI, 30901; *ILS* 1622, dated precisely as AD 128. *CIL* VI, 682 dating from the reign of Hadrian and which concerns the same imperial slaves as the previous inscription. Finally, *CIL* VI, 588, not dated, which also concerns an imperial slave.

¹⁹ *CIL* VI, 30901.

this context). In any case, it is clear that the *horrearii* of the *horrea Galbana* must have been considered superior to the rest of the employees of the complex, as can, for example, be seen by the dedication to the Hercules of the *domus Augusti*:²⁰ it was made thanks to the contributions made by three *horrearii* who are mentioned by name, whereas the *operarii* who contributed are not mentioned by name at all and are merely listed together under their job title. The two slaves, Saturninus and Successus, also *horrearii*, who made an offering to the *Genius* of the *horrea* in AD 73 may have been in an analogous situation but we do not know which warehouse they had responsibility for.²¹ France also mentions two *orrearioi* from the port of Myra (Andriakè) in Lycia:²² Herakléôn, probably an imperial slave who dedicated a relief given as an offering to Serapis and Isis; Aurelius Metrodorus, a freed imperial slave, is described as being an *orrearios* in the inscription on his sarcophagus (France 2008: 493, n. 46-7). The fact that these *orrearioi* were part of the imperial *familia* and that the warehouse in Myra was imperial property suggests that these *orrearioi* must have performed similar functions and had similar responsibilities to those of the *horrea Galbana*. They worked under the *vilicus* to assist him with the overall management of the warehouse complex.

I shall endeavour to conclude this discussion of the complex question of the management of large port warehouse complexes by placing it in its social context, my principal concern in undertaking this study. Whether they were slaves or paid employees, those in charge of large warehouses were, as we shall see, very much managers running a business. The title *horrearius* which is sometimes used to describe those fulfilling this function seems to have been reserved for paid employees rather than slaves. The word was also used for both free men and slaves who were responsible for a part of a large warehouse complex or for the storage facilities belonging to an important family. What is clear is that it was not used as a generic term to designate any employee of a warehouse complex or other storage facility. The *horrearius* was always someone who had supervisory responsibilities. Even if he was not in overall charge of the warehouse complex, he was, at the very least, in charge of a team dealing with one part of the complex's activities. There are a number of accounts which shed light on what their functions were as well as those of the people with whom they were doing business.

²⁰ CIL VI, 30901 *Herculi domus Augusti sacrum ex/ collatione horriariorum chortis II, Maioris/ et Diadumedi C. n. ser. et T. Flauii Crescentis et/ operari Galbeses ; curante Hermete C. Mundic./Helpisti ser. Dedicatum k. Iunis/ M. Iunio Mettio Q. Pomponio Materno cos.*

²¹ CIL VI, 235; ILS 3663: *pro salute/dominorum/Genio horreorum/Saturninus et/Successus/horreari/donum dederunt/Caesare Vespasiano VI/Tito Caesare imp. IIII/cos.*

²² See Cavalier 2007: 51-65; also Cavalier et al. 2018.

The professions of the warehouse

Two documents show in practical terms some of the tasks which warehouse managers had to undertake and from this point of view complete the *leges horreorum*. These documents are two rental contracts for units within the Pozzuoli warehouse complex which were conserved in the Sulpicii family archives discovered in the 1950s near Pompeii.²³ Camodeca quite rightly describes the managers as *horreari* of the *horrea Bassiana publica Puteolanorum*, which belonged to the city of Pozzuoli, as well as those responsible for the *horrea Barbatiana*, which belonged to Domitia Lepida the widow of L. Valerius Messala Barbatus, Consul in 12 BC, as *horrearii* even though the term does not actually appear in these contracts (Camodeca 1999, 121-6).

Those *horrearii* who had overall managerial responsibility for a warehouse dealt with the rental agreements for the various storage units within it, ensuring that they were renewed and that rent was collected. They were responsible for ensuring goods were kept safe and thus also for the *custodia*. They also provided other services as requested by their tenants; for example, the person renting storeroom 26 in the *horrea Barbatiana* in Pozzuoli asked the manager of the warehouse to measure the quantities of foodstuffs he had in his storeroom (*TPSulp* 46). They were also responsible for the accuracy of the registers which showed goods entering and leaving the warehouse. In order to do all of this they needed to work with a large number of people, some of whom would have been directly responsible to the warehouse manager or overseer, others not. This latter category would have included people whose professional activity was linked to the warehouse but who had no connection with its internal hierarchy, for example people subletting units within the complex to third parties who themselves had their own staff.

The case of the *mensores* is useful to illustrate this point. There was a permanent need for precise figures regarding the quantities of goods stored in warehouses - before they were put into the storerooms, when they were taken out and sometimes while they were actually in storage. This was the basis of the relationship between the managers of the storage facilities and the public and private customers who rented units in these facilities to store their goods. In the case of the big warehouse complexes and for certain foodstuffs which were essential for feeding the population – cereals, for example – this must also have been done at the behest

²³ Camodeca 1999; *TPSulp* 45 and 46.

of the political authorities who needed to know the state of essential available reserves at any given time.

People working in a variety of professions had to collaborate to produce this data. The measuring itself was carried out by the *mensores*. As a result, the *corpus mensorum frumentariorum Ostiensium* in Ostia were a powerful corporation. They are mentioned in many inscriptions²⁴ as well as featuring in the famous mosaic from their *schola* which shows them at work.²⁵ There is also evidence of a *corpus* of *mensores* in Portus.²⁶

However, in the rental agreement for storeroom 26 in the *horrea Barbatiana* in Pozzuoli, the warehouse manager, Publius Annius Seleucus, at the request of the tenant, Gaius Sulpicius Faustus, had the quantity of wheat stored in the storeroom he was renting measured. The latter's reasons for doing this are easy to understand: the grain had been given as security for a loan that he had made to a third party and he wanted to make sure that the borrower had really provided the amount of grain he said he had. According to the document, Annius Seleucus carried out the measuring *cum servis suis*.²⁷ Does the fact that the measuring was carried out by the manager's slaves mean that there were no organised professional measurers in Pozzuoli at this time (first half of the first century AD)? Or does it mean that professional measurers were only used if goods were taken in or out of the warehouse, which does not seem to be the case here as the document seems to suggest that the wheat was already stored in storeroom 26 when Faustus took it as security. Did the slave measurers from the *horrea Barbatiana* have any contact with the free, professional measurers who worked outside warehouse, always assuming there were any in Pozzuoli at this time ?

The case of the measurers is a question one is perfectly justified in asking when trying to establish a clear picture of the workforce which could be considered as having been attached to a specific warehouse. This is inextricably linked to how one considers these warehouses may have operated and how open to the outside world – for example, the port – they were. It has frequently been noted that, architecturally, these buildings were enclosed on themselves, having few entrances which were themselves quite narrow, so as to avoid theft and to prevent goods 'disappearing' in dubious circumstances. Were these precautions

²⁴ This is not the place to reopen the debate as to whether there was one of several *scholae* in this town (Tran 2006: 242 and seq.) Principal epigraphic sources mentioning the *corpus mensorum frumentariorum Ostiensium* include: *CIL* XIV, 154 (*corpus mensorum frumentariorum adiutorum et acceptorum Ostiensium*); 289 (*corpus mensorum frumentariorum nauticariorum*), 172, 309, 364, 438, 4620 (dedication to the patron of the *corpus*, Aufidius Fortis from the *mercatores frumentarii*) etc.

²⁵ Becatti 1961 pl. CLXXXVII n. 87

²⁶ *CIL* VI, 1759.

²⁷ *TPSulp* 46, l. 10

intended to restrict, as far as possible, external access to the building? In which case are we to presume that foodstuffs became the warehouse's responsibility as soon as they entered the building, thus requiring personnel dedicated to this task employed directly by the warehouse and under the warehouse manager's authority? There is almost certainly not just one answer to this question and almost certainly varied according to the situation. As I have already mentioned, it is possible that some warehouses had storerooms which had a commercial function and were not just used for storage. Warehouses such as these at least must have been more open to the outside world. And where units were being sublet, there would have undoubtedly been a more diverse workforce in the warehouses.

Measuring and counting foodstuffs in a large warehouse would also have required a large number of office staff, book keepers,²⁸ scribes and archivists: contracts needed to be managed, ledgers needed to be kept up to date. We have no way of knowing whether a warehouse's administrators would have been capable of handling this latter task. We know that two slaves from the manager's *familia* drew up the rental agreements for units in the warehouses in Pozzuoli for their master. But what about the two people who were responsible for keeping the unloading ledgers for a ship carrying amphorae who are depicted in the famous Portus bas-relief?²⁹ Who were they working for? Did they work for the *Praefectus annonae*? Or for private traders who owned the cargo? Or for the manager of the warehouses in which these amphorae were going to be stored and which serves as the background to the bas-relief?³⁰

One of the warehouse's other essential functions was guarding the goods that were stored there. I have already mentioned, above, the extent to which even the design of the buildings themselves was intended to reduce the risk of goods being stolen. It was for this same reason that the Romans continually measured and counted the stored goods. It is difficult to estimate how big a problem theft was in the warehouses but all the evidence – art,

²⁸ France 2008: 503, notes the possible presence of a *contrascriptor* (person responsible for checking calculations), a freed imperial slave, in the warehouses in Hippo Regius (Annaba). Cf. *AE* 1924, 36, based on Albertini's initial interpretation. However, Albertini revised his interpretation (1928-1929: 157-8) and concluded that this person was in fact the *contrascriptor* for the *portorium* and not for the *horrea*. It is perfectly reasonable to expect there to be a *contrascriptor* in a port like Hippo Regius. This interpretation is confirmed by X. Dupuis (2000: 279).

²⁹ Marble bas-relief from Portus, part of the Torlonia Museum collection, cast in the *Museo della Civiltà Romana*. Cf. Visconti 1884: no. 428.

³⁰ It is hardly possible to reply to all of these questions. One of the results of the research programme on warehouses that was undertaken with the support of the ANR (see above pp. 000) has been to demonstrate that one ought not separate those commodities destined for the annona from those used in commercial exchanges during this period. The question of knowing whether a warehouse was in the service of the annona or not does not fundamentally affect the study of the world of warehouses in the early Empire.

warehouse regulations, legal texts³¹ – suggests that the Romans were always at great pains to prevent it.

It is beyond the scope of this paper to look at security arrangements and obligations. The regulations of the *horrea Caesaris*, discussed above, include a clause covering *custodia*, which has been the subject of much debate because that part of the text has been badly damaged and can be interpreted in several ways regarding the limits of the *horrearius*'s responsibilities for the security of the goods stored in the warehouse he was managing.³² This paper will instead be looking at the people who were responsible for security in the warehouse complexes and had the practical responsibility for keeping the goods safe.

First of all, they were responsible for checking goods entering and leaving the warehouse. Archaeologists have concluded that the small rooms which one sometimes finds near to the entrance of warehouse complexes must have been reserved for a guard. However, this might not necessarily have always been the case: it was long thought that there was a secondary entrance to the *Grandi Horrea* in Ostia, on the via dei Molini, next to which what was thought to be a guard's room had been identified. However, when a team of researchers from Aix-Marseilles and members of the EFR began a new study of the site in 2006-7, they discovered that neither the entrance nor the guard's room had existed on that spot in Roman times.³³ On the other hand, one should not suppose that the absence of a guard's room meant that there was no security check for those entering or exiting the complex. Security checks could easily have been carried out by a guard stationed at the entrance to the building without there having been a purpose-built room for him.

Guards also doubtless patrolled inside the building.³⁴ The very big port warehouses doubtless employed more than one guard, though they probably did not have the same status within the warehouse's hierarchy. The term *custos* may have meant different things in different contexts, as may be suggested in the *Pro Flacco* when Cicero seeks to undermine a witness testifying against his client by emphasising his low status, stating that he was a *custos* in the *frumentum publicum*, a function which would have been exercised by only one of the *tenuissimi* of the city.³⁵ Cicero does not mention specific *horrea* here, but state wheat stocks

³¹ Reference to warehouse security in the Digest 19.2.55 (Paul); in the *horrea Caesaris*, CIL VI, 33747; ILS 5914

³² For bibliographical references, see France 2008

³³ Rickman 1971: 44, fig. 10; Bukowiecki *et al.* ii 2008 : 211-6.

³⁴ Not just to making sure people were not attempting to break in but also to check for fire, etc.

³⁵ *Pro Flacco* 45: can one trust a man '*cui nullus honos in sua civitate habitus est umquam, res autem quae tenuissimis committebatur huic una in uita commissa sola est? Custos R. Aufidio praetore in frumento publico est positus*'. Cicero said this in defence of his friend L. Flaccus in 59 BC. L. Flaccus had been

must have been brought together and stored in a warehouse. This individual, however lowly his function, was not the person who actually patrolled the warehouse himself to make sure that the wheat collected through the tithe was safely under lock and key, but rather the person responsible in a more general sense for ensuring that the wheat was safely stored. Nicolet believed him to be the manager of Temnos's warehouse where the Romans stored the wheat which was collected as tax.³⁶ In this case the term *custos* is a way of designating the responsibility for foodstuffs, probably for collecting them, storing them and sending them where they needed to go. The *custos* is not directly part of the world of the warehouse such as it is being discussed here. There are very few documents which mention *custodes horreorum* but those which do, suggest they were far less important. Some we know through epigraphy: a probable slave from Rome,³⁷ an imperial slave who was a guard in a warehouse belonging to an Empress in Utica in Africa Proconsularis; an imperial slave who was *custos horreorum* in Maxula (Radès), also in Africa Proconsularis.³⁸ These men may have been part of the staff of the *horrea* mentioned and have come under the authority of the manager of the *horrea*. This seems likely in the second case mentioned as he is an imperial slave working in a complex which belonged to an Empress. However, there is also indirect evidence that there were guards who worked for the subtenants in warehouses, for example in the regulations of the *horrea Caesaris*:³⁹ the last clause in these regulations which has survived, relieves the *horrearius* of his obligations if the *conductor* has not assigned a *custos* to guard his goods (1.12: *et custodi non adsignaver. horrearius sine culpa erit*). These guards were probably most often the slaves of the people who were renting storage units. This is the situation which Paul describes in his book about the *Praefectura vigilum urbi*, referring to the Digest, in the passage mentioned above regarding the Emperor being amongst the owners or tenants of a warehouse: the lawyer basically states that theft was commonplace in storage facilities where people kept their most precious possessions, before adding:

Propraetor when Cicero was Consul and had helped expose the second Catilinarian Conspiracy. He was accused of the misappropriation of public funds during his time as Propraetor in the province of Asia in 62 BC. Cicero was endeavouring to discredit all of the witnesses brought by the prosecution. Temnos made the unsubstantiated claim that he had been forced to pay a sum of money to Flaccus. Heraclides, the town's principal witness, was a dishonest man who had already been found guilty of misappropriation whilst performing his duties as *custos*.

³⁶ Nicolet 1980: 276-82

³⁷ Only his name, Eutyches, is mentioned in what is otherwise a fragmentary inscription.

³⁸ *CIL* VI, 9470; VIII, 13190; *AE* 1937, 73

³⁹ *CIL* VI, 33747

*et custodes plerumque puniuntur et ita divus Antoninus Erucio Claro rescripsit. Ait enim posse eum horreis effractis quaestionem habere de servis custodibus, licet in illis ipsius imperatoris portio est*⁴⁰

‘Guards often need to be punished, as is indicated by a rescript issued by the divine Antoninus to Erucius Clarus. He states that, in cases where a warehouse has been broken into, Erucius Clarus may question the slave guards even though part of the complex belongs to the Emperor himself’

The presence of goods belonging to the imperial authorities sometimes meant that the warehouse enjoyed a higher level of security. This is why Claudius Galenus, before going to Campania in AD 192 left his medical instruments, books and other valuable objects in the warehouses on the Via Sacra in Rome (often identified as the *horrea Piperataria* or *Vespasiani*) because they were well protected against fire and well-guarded because they housed the imperial archives.⁴¹

The *custodes*, although low in status, were vital figures within warehouse complexes. It is their low status – they seem to have been mostly slaves – which doubtless explains the dearth of epigraphic evidence which we have for them. The generic term *operarii* which one finds in the corpus of inscriptions of the *horrea Galbana* must have covered a range of activities, possibly including guarding the complex.

A very interesting recent study by Elena Martelli⁴² established a typological catalogue of terracotta statuettes representing *saccarii*, those porters of the ancient world who carried goods in a sack over their shoulder (Fig. 7.3). The vast majority of these statuettes come from Ostia-Portus but a few examples have also been found in Rome, Tarquinia, Pozzuoli and Egnazia. In her introduction to the catalogue, Martelli also puts forward the hypothesis that these dockers of the ancient world played an important role in the warehouses of the port of Ostia where they were responsible for the security of the storerooms and the manual handling of the goods. But her hypothesis is only based on the fact that, to date, no inscriptions which mention *horrearii* have been found in Ostia. I do not find this kind of argument particularly persuasive. It is true that there are no *horrearii* in the Ostia corpus, nor any *custodes* either, for that matter, but as I have already mentioned, epigraphic evidence for *custodes* is very rare.

⁴⁰ Digest 1.15.3.2.

⁴¹ Claudius Galenus *Peri Alupias* 8-9

⁴² Martelli, 2013. For a review of this work, see Virlovet 2015

Although *horrearii* are more frequently mentioned in inscriptions, this is still far from common⁴³ and they tend to refer to people who, although they may have played an important role in the warehouse, hardly ever seem to have been managers who had overall responsibility for the entire complex.

However, that does not mean that I believe that there were no links between the *saccarii* and the warehouses. Porters as a whole – I am using the term *saccarius* in its broadest sense of anyone whose job it was to carry loads and thus include under this heading the *amphorarii* and *phalangarii*, etc., because this was probably the term which the public authorities and professionals used⁴⁴ – were very much part of the warehouse system and need to be taken into consideration when trying to understand how Roman warehouses operated. The occupation of the *saccarii* is nowhere near as highly ranked as that of the measurers in the hierarchy of professions – a hierarchy of which we have a limited understanding through documents in which these occupations are mentioned. Although they often feature in the iconography depicting occupations, they are mostly background characters in scenes depicting the work of the measurers as for example in the mosaic in the *aula* of the *mensores* mentioned above, or of ships' captains as in the fresco of the Isis Giminiana for example.⁴⁵ We know of associations of *saccarii* not only in Ostia-Portus,⁴⁶ but also in many other ports, such as Pompeii, Dyrrachium, Spalatum, Perinthus, Smyrna, etc; however, the documentation indicates an occupation which did not have the same social footprint as other occupations in the port. Martelli was undoubtedly right to seek to show this profession in a more positive light as the modern view has tended to be overly negative, stressing its low status. However, there are nevertheless limits to this more positive revaluation. One of the merits of Martelli's work is that she emphasises that under the general heading of *saccarii* are grouped activities involving the transport of merchandise by means of manual labour. However, the people who

⁴³ I do not claim to have carried exhaustive research but have only come across thirty or so inscriptions mentioning *horrearii* across the whole Empire, of which twenty are in Rome.

⁴⁴ Cf. Freu 2009 in this context

⁴⁵ Cf. Rome, Musei Vaticani, inv. 79638. This fresco showing a ship being loaded, dating from the first half of the third century AD, comes from the necropolis of the via Laurentina, depicts the measurer and the *magister navium*, the only people whose names feature on the painting.

⁴⁶ I do not intend here to enter into the debate as to whether there was one or several associations of *saccarii* in the ports of Rome. There is an inscription which could suggest that there were several, specialist *collegia*. The inscription in question is *CIL* XIV, 4285 (*ILS* 6178), found near Portus in the Campo Saline marshes, and which is dedicated to the *genius* of the *saccariorum salariorum totius urbis campi salinarum Romanarum*, by one of their number *Restitutianus Cornelianus ab aerario et arkarius* (the association's treasurer and cashier), with his daughter, for the salvation of the imperial family under the joint reign of Septimius Severus and Caracalla (AD 197-211). However, other, later documents suggest that this was not the case (*Codex Theodosianus* XIV, 22; dedication to the *Praefectus Urbanus* *CIL* VI, 1741).

are referred to as *saccarii* were not all themselves involved in manual labour. Some were entrepreneurs who employed those that actually did the carrying, but who did not do any themselves, or for whom their main activity was not that of carrying. The fact that associations existed suggests that labour was organised around entrepreneurs and team leaders who may sometimes have helped with the physical side of the business, rather like how today the bosses in road haulage firms sometimes drive lorries alongside their employees. However, for those who were working as mere dockers, whether they were employed on a day to day or more regular basis, work conditions were probably far harder. The anthropological study of the skeletons in the Castel Malnome necropolis, in the hinterland of Ostia-Portus gives a real insight into the realities of their lives. The bodies were mostly those of men, more than half of whom had died before the age of 40 and whose skeletons showed signs of deformities and whose teeth were in poor condition, providing evidence of both the hard, physical labour they had performed and the poverty in which they lived.⁴⁷

However, for this profession, as for the measurers, we are dealing with the point at which the port interfaced with the warehouses and one can justify asking what *saccarii* actually did inside the warehouses. I have already mentioned that the warehouses – the very big ones at least – had their own staff, as can be seen in the rental agreements for units within the *horrea* in Pozzuoli and the small collection of inscriptions made by the staff of the *horrea Galbana*, which constitutes the richest source of evidence we have about the staff of the warehouses. I have mentioned that some of the *horrearii* are mentioned by name as the authors of dedications and also that *operarii* are mentioned, albeit under the anonymity of their job title. It is reasonable to suppose that, amongst the *operarii* who worked in the *horrea Galbana*, there must have been a good number who were responsible for manually transporting goods, in much the same way as the *saccarii* did,⁴⁸ since some of the goods stored in the large warehouses would have been moved from place to place inside the complex. We have already seen that the *horrearius* of the *horrea Barbatiana* in Pozzuoli and his staff undertook the measuring of the wheat stored in one of the rented storage units. In order to do this, he employed slave measurers, as well as manual handlers who must have put grain into the sacks (assuming that it was stored loose, as was usually the case), transported it to where it was measured and then carried it back to where it was stored. Admittedly, goods were not always stored loose but could remain in a container of some description for the

⁴⁷ Cf. Amicucci *et al.* 2013.

⁴⁸ It must be more than just chance that Cicero in his *Brutus* (257: *operarii (...) aut baiuli*) links the *operarii* to the *baiuli*, *baiuli* being another term for *saccarii*.

whole time that they were in the warehouse, in particular if they were only there for a short time. Rickman supposed that cereals were typically stored in sacks in the grain stores of Ostia while they were waiting to be sent on to Rome. However, recent studies concerning the storage facilities in Ostia and Portus show that cereals were most likely to have been stored loose. Furthermore, this corresponds to what agronomists advised regarding storage of cereals: if wheat cannot be stored in a closed environment in underground silos, the best way to limit losses through fermentation or insect and rodent activity is to store it loose in carefully cleaned storerooms and turn it over regularly. This advice seems to have been followed in the large warehouse complexes in which cereals, amongst other goods, were stored,⁴⁹ as is suggested by the specially designed storeroom entrances which prevented piles of grain from sliding out into the access corridors, presence of underfloor spaces allowing air to circulate, frequent, nearby water points (warehouses often had a water tank), remains of burnt grains, even if there was no trace of their having been a fire in the warehouse.⁵⁰ The sacks thus needed to be emptied, the grain regularly aerated and then put back into sacks when it was about to leave the warehouse. Porters and cleaners would have been needed to do all of this and it is possible that the same staff would have been responsible for both moving the stocks and doing the cleaning. In any case, we can say with certainty that the men carrying out these tasks in the *horrea Galbana* were known as *operarii* (*CIL* VI, 30901) and the generic term *Calbienses* (*CIL* VI, 710) doubtless includes *operarii*, unless it refers to members of the association of the *horrea*; I shall return to this point later.⁵¹

If we can then presume that at least the biggest warehouse complexes had their own staff to deal with the manual handling of goods and the cleaning of the facility, one wonders where their responsibilities started and where those of the *saccarii*, the dockers in the port, ended, in particular as the association of the *saccarii* had been granted the monopoly for the transportation by human beings of goods arriving in Portus in AD 364.⁵² At what point did it become the warehouse staff's responsibility? Did the *saccarii* working in the docks take the cargo right up to the precise place where it was to be stored? Or did the staff of the *horrea* take over responsibility for it before that – for example at the place where we imagined a guard being stationed at the warehouse entrance, noting goods in and goods out in a register?

⁴⁹ See in particular, the recent studies carried out by combined French and Italian teams in the *Grandi horrea* in Ostia and in the so-called '*Magazzini di Traiano* at Portus, discussed in an annual report in the *Chronique* section of the MEFRA (2006 and 2007 for Ostia; 2010 to 2014 for Portus).

⁵⁰ See, for example, discoveries made in 2013 by a combined Italian / Dutch team at the *Porticus Aemilia* in Rome.

⁵¹ Not that the means that the *operarii* would have been excluded from the association.

⁵² *CTheod.* 14.22 *De saccariis Portus Romae*.

There was unlikely have been just one answer to this question and it would have depended on how work was organised in a given warehouse and how that warehouse operated with regard to the port. So, in the so called ‘Warehouses of Trajan’ at Portus, ships were moored as close as possible to the warehouses, so one can easily imagine that the *saccarii* from the port would have entered the warehouse premises. However, if one attempts to reconstruct how goods would have circulated within this immense complex, one is confronted by the fact that its access corridors were not always wide enough as to allow two-way traffic. One might therefore suppose that some sort of relay system was used, with several porters each only carrying the load for a given part of its journey to the place where it was to be stored.⁵³ It could be that the goods passed under the responsibility of the warehouse employees at the first relay point.

It can thus be seen that the operation of a warehouse required a substantial workforce, a workforce employed by the manager of the complex as well as sometimes by the people renting units within the complex, who were, for example, as we have seen, sometimes responsible for the *custodia* of their goods. The register of workers for the *horrea Galbana* includes both free men and slaves who were not members of the imperial *familia* but who seem to have been working in the warehouses. The dedication to the Hercules of the *domus Augusti* mentioned above, (*CIL* VI, 30901) was made by a slave, Hermes, whose master does not appear to be linked to the *familia* of the Emperor but who was undoubtedly working in the *horrea Galbana* for his master, side by side with imperial slaves and freed imperial slaves. Furthermore, this dedication attests to the social links which formed in the workplaces which were the storage complexes. It is these links which I would like to focus on to conclude this paper about the world of the port warehouses.

3. Warehouse Complexes and their Social Networks

As we have seen, workers from outside the warehouses but who were an integral part of port society, such as measurers and dockers, had close working relationships with the storage facilities. They were not, however, part of the warehouse society. Their community existed outside of this specific work environment: in Ostia, for example, the *schola* of the *mensores*, adjoined the warehouses (which are quite unusual) but was quite distinct from it. I have tried to show, above, how difficult it is to know the extent to which they were active actually inside

⁵³ Cf. Bukowiecki, Zugmeyer, Panzneri 2012 and 2013.

the closed world of the *horrea*, a world controlled by the warehouse manager and conditioned by the latter's relationship with the people renting units within the complex.

We have some epigraphic and archaeological evidence which sheds some light on the warehouse workers in the strictest sense – guards, measurers, porters, cleaners, administrative staff – who came under the authority of the manager of the complex, tenants or possible co-owners,⁵⁴ and the relationship between them and their workplace, as well as their relationship with each other. I shall make some brief comments on this question which has already been addressed in recent studies.⁵⁵

The associations of workers which we know through epigraphic evidence are principally religious communities. There is nothing surprising about this: as Tran emphasizes in his contribution to this volume (Chapter 4), the life of the professional *collegia* – both in ports and elsewhere – was organized around religious rituals and festivals.⁵⁶ In the *horrea Galbana*, we have several sources which indicate the existence of a *sodalitium* to which the employees belonged. The principal sources are:

-The dedication made by the *horrearii* and *operarii Galbenses* to the Hercules of the *domus Augusti* in AD 128 mentions amongst their number a *curator* who was without doubt responsible for having the work done and so may indicate that this was done at the behest of an association.⁵⁷

-The dedication to the *numen* of the *domus Augustana* and to Hercules *salutaris* which dates from AD 159 is unambiguous. It was made at the same time as the *sacellum* which housed it at the behest of the *quinquennalis* of the *sodalitium*, A. Cornelius Aphrodisius, whose name does not suggest any link with the imperial *familia* who managed the complex. However, to be the *quinquennalis* of the association, this person must have had a professional relationship with the *horrea*; either he worked there for one of the (sub)tenants or he was himself renting storage space within the complex.⁵⁸

-Another, undated, inscription mentions a *magister* of the *horrea Galbana* who made a gift of an altar to the *numen* of the imperial *familia*, to the *genius loci* and to Fortune.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ If one interprets the rescript issued by Antoninus Pius discussed by Paul in the book about the *officium* of the *Praefectus vigilum urbi* (Digest 1.15.X). See above.

⁵⁵ Tran 2008; Van Haepelen 2010.

⁵⁶ See Tran (Chapter 4)

⁵⁷ *CIL* VI, 30901

⁵⁸ *CIL* VI, 338

⁵⁹ *CIL* VI, 236

-The dedication of the statue of the *genius loci* placed in the shrine dug into the courtyard of the *horrea Agrippiana* was the gift of three *immunes*, who, given their title, must have been acting in the name of an association. The statue was a gift to the *negotiantes* in the complex, which suggests that the *immunes* were from an association of merchants who worked there.⁶⁰ This evidence may also give additional weight to Andreau's argument that there was a strong professional relationship between *negotiatores* and warehouses. It is worth remembering that the *horrea Agrippiana* situated on the edge of the forum, right in the centre of Rome, clearly came under the category of 'mixed' warehouses, with shops on the ground floor and the upper floors reserved for storage.

Some of the evidence for the places of religious practice of warehouse employees come from archaeological research thanks to which small shrines have been found inside the warehouse complexes, for example in the central courtyard of the *horrea Agrippiana*,⁶¹ as well as one in the *horrea* of Hortensius in Ostia⁶² and one in Hergla (Tunisia) which was recently discovered during an excavation directed by F. Villedieu.⁶³

In this context, divinities which were connected to the work which was being carried out and the place where the work was happening were worshipped:

-The *genius loci* associated with other divinities, as we have seen

-Divinities linked to the imperial *familia* in warehouses belonging to the Emperor: the *numen domus aug.* (CIL VI, 338); the Hercules of the *domus aug.* (CIL VI, 30901). The connection between the *collegia* and the cult of the House of Augustus was not anyway limited only to those associations which had a direct link to the emperor, as is the case of the *horrea Galbana*. All the professional *collegia* were implicated in the celebration of the imperial family.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ AE 1915, 97; L. Wickert, 1925

⁶¹ Cf. Astolfi, Guidobaldi & Pronti 1978: 54: a room measuring 13.5 m², dated to the reign of Domitian with wall paintings, floor mosaic representing the Ocean from the first half of second century AD, and with a statue of the *Genius loci*, the inscribed base of which has been found.

⁶² See Rickman 1971: 68.

⁶³ Ghalia, Villedieu, 2018. The head of a divinity, which must have been part of a sculpture of a group, was discovered during the 2013 excavation in a room which was smaller than the various store rooms, in the south-east corner of the complex. Researchers have identified this as a representation of Liber Pater and bearing in mind that a head of Ceres was found during the first dig at the site in the 1960s, one might suppose that the triad Ceres, Liber Pater and Libera, the protector of harvests, was venerated here.

⁶⁴ See Rohde (Chapter 5) in this volume.

-Divinities protecting the site such as the Bona Dea Galbilla (*CIL* VI, 30855) or protecting the activities taking place there, such as Silvanus, who is mentioned three times in the epigraphic evidence of the *horrea Galbana*, and the triad Ceres, Liber, Libera in the *horrea* in Hergla (fig 7.4).

These collective acts of religious practice, centred on the place itself or on divinities linked to the work which took place there, clearly indicate how important the workplace was in the social relationships of the people who worked there.

However, some employees worshipped other divinities outside of the warehouse, as is shown by a Flavian era inscription found in Trastevere,⁶⁵ a dedication to Sol made by a couple of freed imperial slaves and their son who describe themselves as *Calbienses* of the third courtyard. Whether or not these *Calbienses* were members of the association of workers of the *horrea Galbana*, there is doubtless a difference in their religious practice here and the dedications discussed, above. Their veneration of Sol may, for example, be linked to where they come from. Thus, in the case of the inscription from Trastevere, the dedicants Ti. Claudius Felix, Claudia Helpis and their son Ti. Claudius Alypus, may have formed part of a *collegium* that brought together members originating the same region of the empire that was particularly connected to the cult of Sol.⁶⁶

When discussing social networks, one comes across the same dichotomy as when one endeavours to differentiate between people whose work brought them into contact with several warehouses, from those who were linked to a specific warehouse: the warehouse staff were doing jobs which were undertaken by professionals outside of the warehouse. Thinking back to the example of the slaves instructed by the *horrearius* of the *horrea Barbatiana* in Pozzuoli to measure the grain in storeroom 26, did they consider themselves to be first and foremost measurers or as *operarii* of the *horrea Barbatiana*? Were the employees of a specific warehouse complex tempted to belong to a guild linked to their profession, rather than to their place of work? Indeed, were they allowed to? If Martelli is correct in interpreting the little terracotta statuettes depicting porters found in Ostia as representations of the *genius* of the association of *saccarii*, did these representations have any significance for porters working in warehouses? These questions once again bring us back to how work would have been organised inside the large warehouse complexes, in which employees may have

⁶⁵ *CIL* VI, 710

⁶⁶ See Steuernagel (Chapter 3) in this volume, for example, on how the Tyrians of Pozzuoli organized themselves around cults from their home city.

carried out a number of different tasks and had a number of different responsibilities, in contrast to the specialisation which was common outside in the towns. As far as tasks which did not require any particular technical skills are concerned, is there any reason to think that staff could have fulfilled a number of functions – manual handling, measuring, security, cleaning – as the situation and their manager required ?

So, we can see that warehouses were spaces where people from all different social groups and many contrasting port occupations came into contact with each other. Although it is necessary – though not always easy – to distinguish between the world inside the warehouse, the workers connected to the place and the numerous people who went there as part of their professional activity without being connected to any one specific complex, what one must remember above all is that these warehouses were veritable microcosms of port societies, which is hardly surprising, given how important they were to Roman trade and commerce.

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Figures

Fig. 7. 1. General view of the *Horrea Caelia* (Hergla-Tunisie) (Ghalia, Villedieu 2018, fig. 1, p. 210 : cliché 3879)

Fig. 7.2. The *Grandi Horrea* at Ostia (Italy), showing the arrangement of the storerooms around the central courtyard (Bukowiecki and Rousse. 2007 : fig. 38)

Fig. 7.3. Statuette of a *saccarius* interpreted as representing the *genius* of the *collegium* (Martelli 2013 : pp.61 and fig.28 a, inv. 3542)

Fig. 7.4. Head identified as representing Bacchus/Liber, found in 2012 in the *sacellum* of the *Horrea Caelia* (Ghalia, Villedieu 2018, fig. 11, p. 223 : cliché 3928)