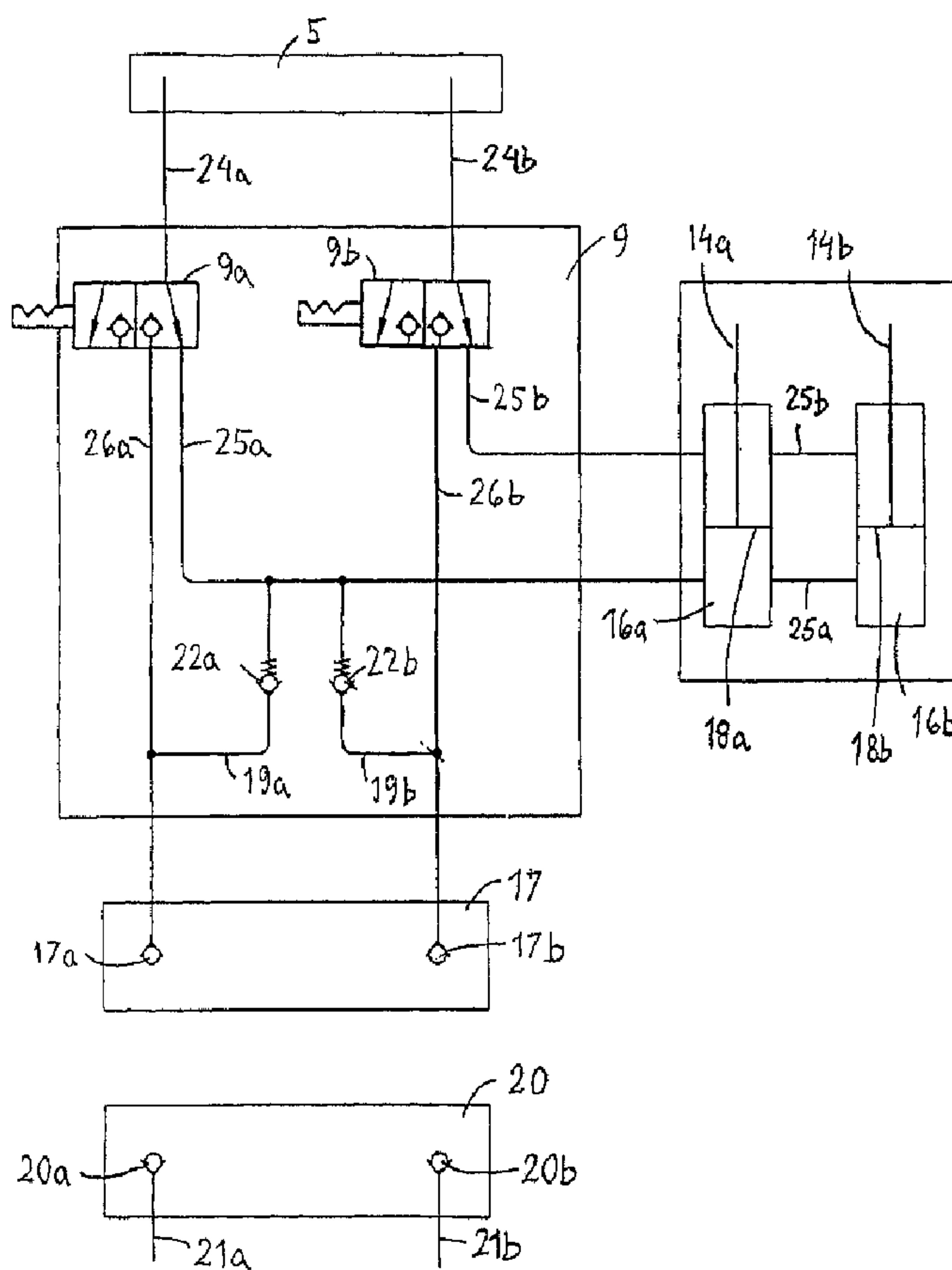




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(57) Abrégé/Abstract:

The invention relates to a tool holder for cranes. The tool holder comprises hydraulic cylinder means (16a, 16b) arranged to detachably be able to lock a tool to the tool holder. Furthermore, hydraulic coupling means (17a, 17b) is comprised arranged to be

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connected with hydraulic coupling means (20a, 20b) on the tool and hydraulic line means (24a, 24b). The object of the invention is, among other things, to reduce the number of requisite lines in the hydraulic line means. According to the invention, the tool holder comprises furthermore valve means (9) provided with switching means (10a, 10b) arranged to connect the hydraulic line means (24a, 24b) either to the hydraulic cylinder means (16a, 16b) or to the hydraulic coupling means (17a, 17b) of the tool holder. Thereby, the same hydraulic line means may be used for the locking function and the tool. The invention also relates to a crane provided with such a tool holder as well as use of the tool holder.

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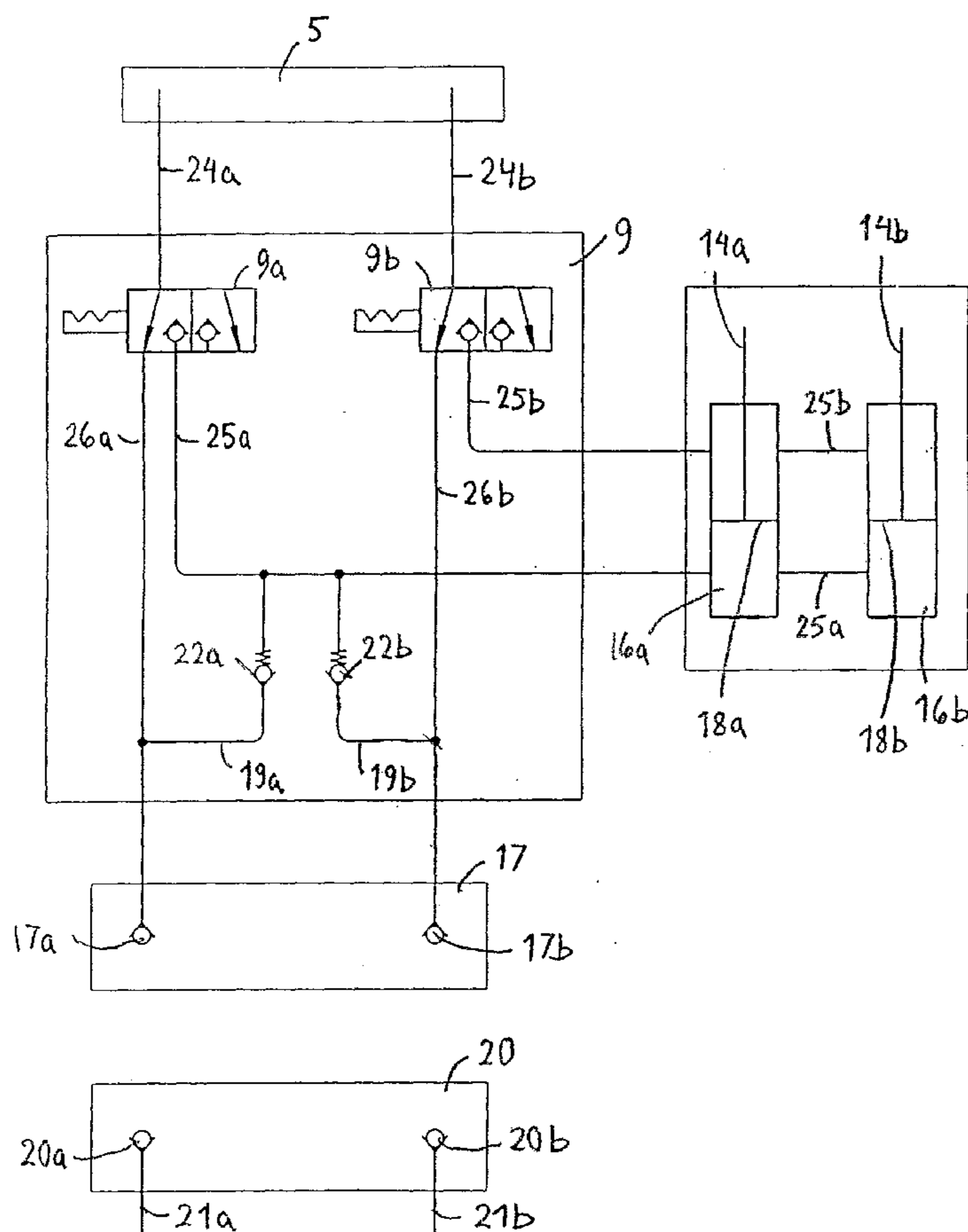
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(54) Title: TOOL HOLDER WITH HYDRAULIC COUPLING MEANS



(57) Abstract: The invention relates to a tool holder for cranes. The tool holder comprises hydraulic cylinder means (16a, 16b) arranged to detachably be able to lock a tool to the tool holder. Furthermore, hydraulic coupling means (17a, 17b) is comprised arranged to be connected with hydraulic coupling means (20a, 20b) on the tool and hydraulic line means (24a, 24b). The object of the invention is, among other things, to reduce the number of requisite lines in the hydraulic line means. According to the invention, the tool holder comprises furthermore valve means (9) provided with switching means (10a, 10b) arranged to connect the hydraulic line means (24a, 24b) either to the hydraulic cylinder means (16a, 16b) or to the hydraulic coupling means (17a, 17b) of the tool holder. Thereby, the same hydraulic line means may be used for the locking i 5 function and the tool. The invention also relates to a crane provided with such a tool holder as well as use of the tool holder.

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Tool holder with hydraulic coupling means.

Field of the Invention

The present invention relates, in a first aspect, to a tool holder for tools for
5 cranes, which tool holder comprises hydraulic cylinder means arranged to
detachably be able to lock a tool to the tool holder, hydraulic coupling means
arranged to be connected with hydraulic coupling member on tools and hydraulic
line means.

In a second aspect, the invention relates to a crane provided with the
10 invented tool holder and in a third aspect to use of the invented tool holder.

Background of the Invention

Tool holders of the corresponding type are used also at different types of
contractor's machinery such as excavators, wheel loaders, movers of material and
15 the like machine types. A complication at tool holders for cranes such as, e.g.,
lorry cranes is that the tools are pendulum suspended, the tool holder being pro-
vided with a hydraulic rotator. Such a one is required at timber grip, clamshell
bucket, pallet forks and other similar tools.

At conventional tool holders for cranes, hydraulic lines are run to the tool
20 holder for the hydraulic manoeuvre of the tool as well as for manoeuvre of the
locking mechanism of the tool holder. Since the locking mechanism consists of
one or more double-acting hydraulic cylinders, two hydraulic lines are normally run
for the locking function. With two or more hydraulic lines for manoeuvre of the tool,
it means that at least four hydraulic lines are run to the tool holder. This implies a
25 relatively complicated, and thereby expensive arrangement. On one hand because
the hydraulic lines have to be run up along the entire crane jib, which becomes
additionally cumbersome in connection with lorry cranes having a plurality of crane
jib projections. And on the other hand because the rotators that most cranes are
equipped with, normally only has one pair of swivel fairleads. For manoeuvre of
30 the locking mechanism, additionally two swivel fairleads are required. It means
that the rotator has to be provided with four coil ducts in the swivel, which implies a
complication and price increase.

Tool holders of the above-mentioned type are manufactured by OilQuick
AB at a system called OQ 60 and by Liebherr at a system called Topas™.

Furthermore, a tool holder is previously known manufactured by HEVO Parts AB, at which the hydraulic hose problems are handled in a different way. In that connection, a hydraulic cylinder is integrated in the tool holder, which also serves as tool cylinder. By utilizing the existing work hydraulics under the rotator in this way, no connection of hoses at operation with, e.g., clamshell bucket and pallet forks is
5 needed. At all other types of hydraulic tools, such as earth drill, vibrating tamper, etc., the hydraulic hoses, however, have to be connected as usual by hand. To interconnect hydraulic hoses by hand frequently involves problems, because of back-pressure in the lines as well as general oil mess. A disadvantage of said holder is that
10 only specially adapted tools can be used in connection with the holder. Also size and weight of the holder are experienced as a disadvantage. The holder has mechanical locking, which is made by the operator by hand on site. By this holder, the hydraulic hose problems are partly solved.

The object of the present invention is to provide a tool holder of the kind in
15 question, at which the disadvantages that are associated with previously known tool holders of the corresponding type are eliminated.

Summary of the Invention

According to the present invention, there is provided a tool holder for tools for
20 cranes. The tool holder includes hydraulic cylinder means adapted to detachably lock a tool to the tool holder, hydraulic coupling means of the tool holder arranged to be connected with hydraulic coupling means on the tool, and hydraulic line means. The tool holder also includes valve means provided with switching means and arranged to connect the hydraulic line means to either the hydraulic cylinder means or the hydraulic
25 coupling means of the tool holder. The hydraulic cylinder means comprises two double-acting cylinders arranged in parallel. The hydraulic coupling means comprises at least two coupling units and the hydraulic line means comprises at least two hydraulic lines. Each hydraulic coupling unit is connected to the valve means by a hydraulic coupling line and each hydraulic cylinder is connected to the valve means by
30 at least one hydraulic cylinder line. A connection line is arranged between each hydraulic coupling line and one of the hydraulic cylinder lines and a non-return valve is arranged in each connection line. The non-return valve is directed in such a way that it permits flow from a respective hydraulic coupling line to the hydraulic cylinder line but not in the opposite direction.

Thanks to the switchable valve means, the hydraulic lines to the tool holder may serve the double purpose of manoeuvring the locking mechanism as well as manoeuvring the tool. Thereby, the number of requisite hydraulic lines of the hydraulic line means is reduced, the number of lines may, for instance, be reduced from four to
 5 two. This decreases the extent of running hydraulic lines along the crane jib as well as the number of swivel fairleads, so that the construction becomes simpler, and thereby more inexpensive.

With a tool holder according to the invention, it is enabled to provide an optimal tool holder system for cranes, especially lorry cranes that comply with those
 10 requirements being appropriate to put on such a one, viz.:

- which couples mechanical and hydraulic tools hydraulically
- which automatically connects the tool hydraulics
- which does not require any additional installation need of locking hydraulics on neither crane jib nor crane tip
- 15 • which utilizes the tool hydraulic function also for manoeuvring of the locking mechanism of the holder. Mechanical or remote-controlled switching between these functions is okay
- which is easy to manoeuvre and safe
- which weighs minimally and requires minimal space (height and width)
- 20 • which is easy to park during transportation
- which makes it possible to use most mechanical and hydraulic tools on the market
- where the tool holder is mounted under a standard rotator

The cylinder means comprises two double-acting hydraulic cylinders. With two hydraulic cylinders the locking becomes simpler. Having more than two hydraulic
 25 cylinders is unnecessary and risks leading to an overdetermination of the locking position. By the fact that the hydraulic cylinders are double-acting, the locking and release function, respectively, is achieved in a smooth way.

The hydraulic coupling means comprises at least two coupling units and the hydraulic line means at least two hydraulic lines. This is an expedient embodiment
 30 since the manoeuvre of the tool in most cases requires more than one hydraulic line.

Each hydraulic coupling unit is connected to the valve means by a hydraulic coupling line and each hydraulic cylinder is connected to the valve means by at least one hydraulic cylinder line, a connection line being arranged between each hydraulic coupling line and one of the hydraulic cylinder lines where a non-return valve is

arranged in each connection line, which non-return valve is directed in such a way that it enables flow from the hydraulic coupling line to the hydraulic cylinder line but not in the opposite direction. By the by-pass function that is achieved by this embodiment, it is guaranteed that the pressure in the hydraulic cylinders in locking position is
5 maintained when the hydraulic lines after the locking operation have been switched to connection to the hydraulic coupling member of the tool. Thereby, it is guaranteed in a simple way that the tool is locked to the tool holder during operation.

According to an additional preferred embodiment, the switching member is arranged for manual switching of the connection of the valve means. This represents a
10 simple and safe switching that eliminates the need for running electric cables along the crane jib for manoeuvre of the valve means.

According to an additional preferred embodiment, the switching means is provided with remote-controlled driving means for switching the connection of the valve means. This embodiment may constitute a complement or alternative to the closest
15 above-described embodiment and eliminates the need for the operator to leave the operator seat thereof at switching the valve means.

The crane and the use according to the present invention have advantages of the corresponding type as has been given above for the invented tool holder and the preferred embodiments of the same.

20 The invention is explained closer by the subsequent detailed description of advantageous embodiment examples of the same while referring to the appended drawings.

Brief Description of the Drawings

25 Fig. 1 is a side view of a crane provided with a tool holder according to the invention.

Fig. 2 is perspective view from the side of a tool holder according to the invention in a non-locking position.

Fig. 3 is a perspective view as in fig. 2, but illustrating a locking position.

30 Fig. 4 is a perspective obliquely from below of the tool holder according to fig. 2 in a non-locking position.

Fig. 5 is a hydraulic scheme for the tool holder in figs. 2-4.

Fig. 6 is a corresponding hydraulic scheme illustrating another valve position.

Description of Preferred Embodiment Examples

Fig. 1 illustrates application of the invention at a lorry crane. From the crane jib 1, the tool holder 2 is swingingly suspended and a tool 3 is locked to the tool holder. Hydraulic lines, not shown, extend from a hydraulic source of power 5 on the lorry 4 along the crane jib 1 and further down to the tool holder 2. The hydraulic source of power is controlled from a manoeuvring unit 6 handled by an operator.

The tool 3 may be released from the tool holder and be replaced by another kind of tool. The invention is intended to enable such a tool change in an optimal way.

The tool holder is illustrated more in detail in figs. 2–4. In fig. 2, the tool holder is shown in neutral position. The tool holder 2 is at the top part thereof provided with a rotator 7, which may be rotated in relation to the main part 8 of the tool holder. The lower part of the tool holder constitutes the connection part 11 thereof and is formed to allow connection to a tool gate 3a of a tool, i.e., the part of the tool 3 which is adapted to be connected to the tool holder 2. The connection part 11 of the tool holder 2 has on one side thereof two U-shaped recesses 12, only one of which is visible in the figure. On the opposite side of the connection part 11, there are two L-shaped profiles 13a, 13b and two lock plungers 14a, 14b, which in fig. 2 are in a pushed-in position. The same may be pushed out in order to form a U-shaped profile together with the L-profiles.

On the tool gate 3a, there are two bars (not shown), which are located in order to co-operate with the recesses 12 and the L-profiles 13a, 13b, respectively. When a tool is to be connected to the tool holder, the same are positioned so that the U-shaped recesses engage one bar of the tool gate 3a. Next, the tool and the tool holder are turned in relation to each other around said bar until the second bar of the tool gate is situated in the L-profiles. In this position, hydraulic cylinders are activated, which project the lock plungers 14a, 14b so that the second bar becomes located in the U-profile then formed. In the same position, the tool is locked to the tool holder. Furthermore, the hydraulic coupling unit on the tool holder has been brought to connection with hydraulic coupling units on the tool. The sequence of operations described hitherto for the connection is the state of the art.

At the tool holder according to the invention, a valve plate 9 is mounted on the tool holder. The valve plate 9 can be manoeuvred by means of two levers 10,

10b. By means of these, the hydraulic lines which lead from the hydraulic source of power to the tool holder can be switched to connect either to the hydraulic cylinders that manoeuvre the locking or to the hydraulic coupling units that are connected with corresponding units on the tool. In the position shown in fig. 2, the hydraulic cylinders for the lock plungers are not activated. These are activated by turning each lever approx. 15° in towards each other.

Said position is illustrated in fig. 3. Accordingly, here the lock plungers 14a, 14b are projected .

In fig. 4, the tool holder is shown obliquely from below in neutral position, the lock plungers 14a, 14b being pushed in. Each lock plunger is attached to a H-shaped yoke 15. The yoke 15 is manoeuvred by two hydraulic cylinders 16a, 16b. At activation of these, the yoke 15 is displaced obliquely upwards towards the right in the figure, the lock plungers being displaced outwards to the locking position, shown in fig. 3. Furthermore, on the yoke 15 a coupling ramp 17 is mounted. The coupling ramp is provided with female coupling units connected to the hydraulic source of power via hydraulic lines (not shown). The female coupling units are arranged to be connected with male coupling units on the tool gate 3a. When locking of the tool is carried out by the fact that the lock plungers via the yoke 15 are displaced towards locking position, the coupling ramp 17 is simultaneously displaced up to a position when the coupling units thereof are connected with the corresponding coupling units on the tool units on the tool gate 3a.

The principle of the invention should most clearly be seen in the hydraulic schemes in figs. 5 and 6.

Fig. 5 illustrates the position when the hydraulics is connected in order to lock the tool. In the valve plate 9, two switching valves 9a, 9b are arranged. The input side of each valve is connected to a respective hydraulic line 24a, 24b from the hydraulic source of power 5. Each valve 9a, 9b may be switched to two different positions, for connection of the output side either to the hydraulic coupling units 17a, 17b or to the hydraulic cylinders 16a, 16b. In the shown position, the hydraulic lines 24a, 24b are connected to the hydraulic cylinders 16a, 16b. When the tool holder 2 and the tool have been positioned into the correct position as has previously been described, the hydraulic line 24a is pressurized so that, via the valve 9a and the hydraulic cylinder line 25a, the plungers 18a, 18b are displaced upwards in the figure and in that connection projecting the lock plungers 14a, 14b

to locking position, as well as bringing the coupling units 17a, 17b on the coupling ramp 17 to connection with the coupling units 20a, 20b on a coupling ramp arranged on the tool gate 3a, as has been described in connection with fig. 4.

When the locking phase is accomplished, the valves 9a, 9b are switched
5 to the position shown in fig. 6. The lock plungers are now in locking position and the coupling units 17a, 17b, 20, 20b of the coupling ramps 17, 20 connected. In that connection, the hydraulic lines 24a, 24b are connected to the hydraulics 21a, 21b of the tool via the valves 9a, 9b, the hydraulic coupling lines 26a, 26b and the coupling units 17a, 17b, 20a, 20b. Thereby, the tool is in an operative state.
10 Between each hydraulic coupling line 26a, 26b, a connection line 19a, 19b is arranged to the hydraulic cylinder line 25a that is pressurized at locking. In each connection line 19a, 19b, a non-return valve 22a, 22b is arranged. These are directed in such a way that flow is allowed from the respective hydraulic coupling line to said hydraulic cylinder line but not in the opposite direction. Thereby, it is
15 guaranteed that the pressure is maintained on pressure side of each hydraulic cylinder 16a, 16b during operation thanks to the fact that pressurized hydraulic oil from either of hydraulic coupling line 26a, 26b may be pressed into the hydraulic cylinder line 25a in the event that the pressure in the hydraulic cylinder tends to ebb. Hence, this by-pass function constitutes a locking protection.

20 When the tool is to be released from tool holder, for instance for exchange of tool, the valves are switched to the position shown in fig. 5 and the lock plungers are withdrawn by the fact that the second side of each hydraulic cylinder 16a, 16b (the upper one in the figure) is pressurized. Simultaneously, the coupling ramps 17, 20 are disconnected from each other.

25 The switching of the valves 9a, 9b is carried out by the levers 10a, 10b illustrated in figs. 2-4. A locking mechanism (not shown) is arranged for locking the levers when the valves 9a, 9b are in position for operation, i.e., as in fig. 6 and with a lever position that is shown in fig. 3.

30 As alternative to manual switching by means of the levers 10a, 10b, a battery-driven motor may be arranged in connection with the valve plate in order to displace positions of the valves. This is suitably operated by wireless remote control.

CLAIMS

1. Tool holder for tools for cranes, which tool holder comprises
- hydraulic cylinder means (16a, 16b) adapted to detachably lock a tool (3) to the
- 5 tool holder (2),
- hydraulic coupling means (17a, 17b) of the tool holder arranged to be connected with hydraulic coupling means (20a, 20b) on the tool, and
 - hydraulic line means (24a, 24b);
- 10 valve means (9) provided with switching means (10a, 10b), which valve means is arranged to connect the hydraulic line means (24a, 24b) to either the hydraulic cylinder means (16a, 16b) or the hydraulic coupling means (17a, 17b) of the tool holder (2);
- wherein the hydraulic cylinder means (16a, 16b) comprises two double-acting hydraulic cylinders (16a, 16b) arranged in parallel;
- wherein the hydraulic coupling means (17a, 17b) of the tool holder comprises at
- 15 least two hydraulic coupling units (17a, 17b) and the hydraulic line means (24a, 24b) comprises at least two hydraulic lines (24a, 24b); and,
- wherein each hydraulic coupling unit (17a, 17b) is connected to the valve means (9) by a hydraulic coupling line (26a, 26b), each hydraulic cylinder (16a, 16b) is connected to the valve means (9) by at least one hydraulic cylinder line (25a, 25b), a
- 20 connection line (19a, 19b) is arranged between each hydraulic coupling line (26a, 26b) and one of the hydraulic cylinder lines (25a), and a non-return valve (22a, 22b) is arranged in each connection line (19a, 19b), which non-return valve (22a, 22b) is directed in such a way that it permits flow from a respective hydraulic coupling line (26a, 26b) to the hydraulic cylinder line (25a) but not in the opposite direction.
- 25
2. Tool holder according to claim 1, wherein the switching means (10a, 10b) is arranged for manual switching of the connection of the valve means (9).
3. Tool holder according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the switching means is provided
- 30 with remote-controlled driving means for switching the connection of the valve means (9).

4. Crane provided with tool holder according to any one of claims 1-3.
5. Use of a tool holder according to any one of claims 1-3 for connecting a tool to
5 the tool holder.

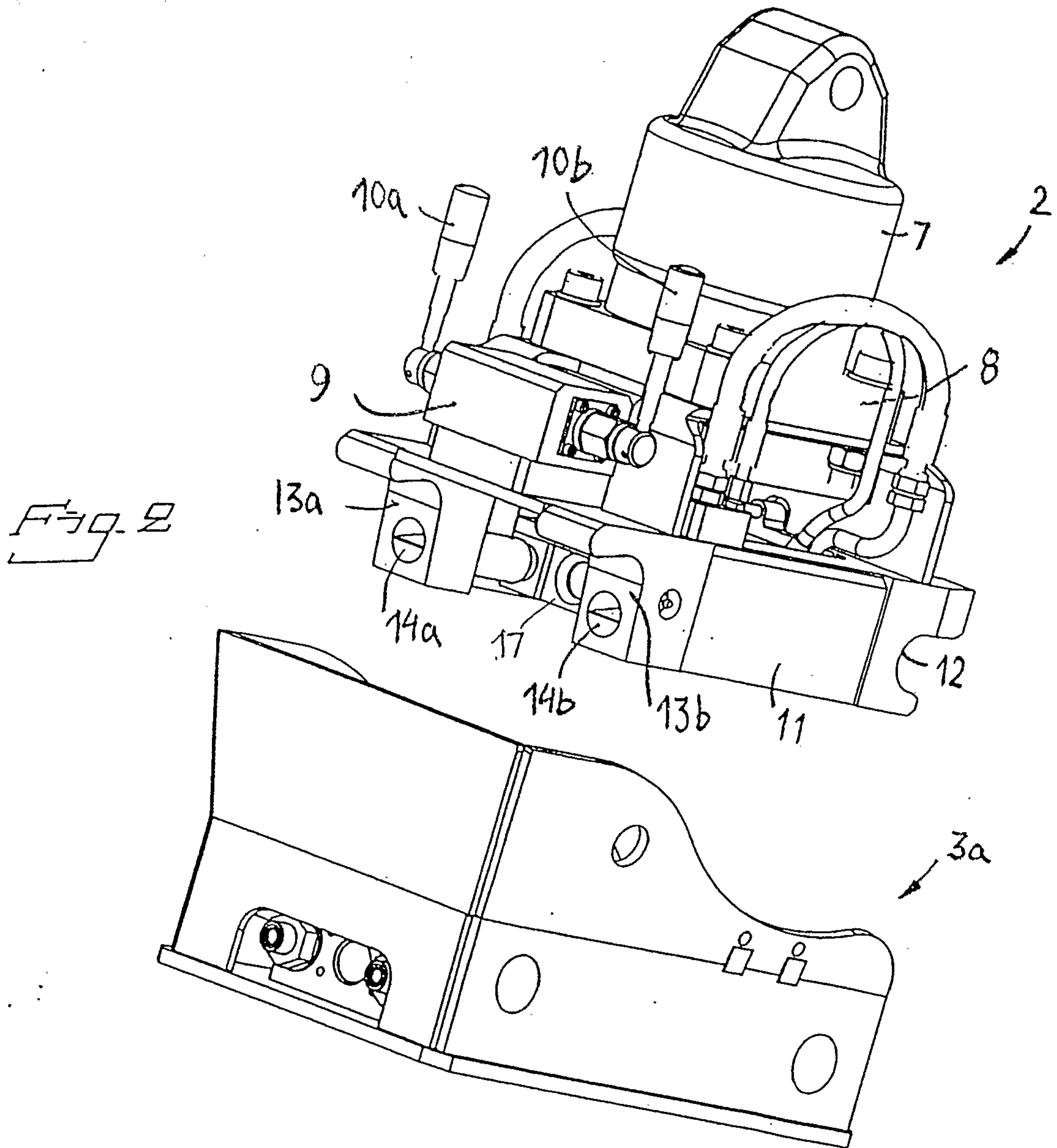
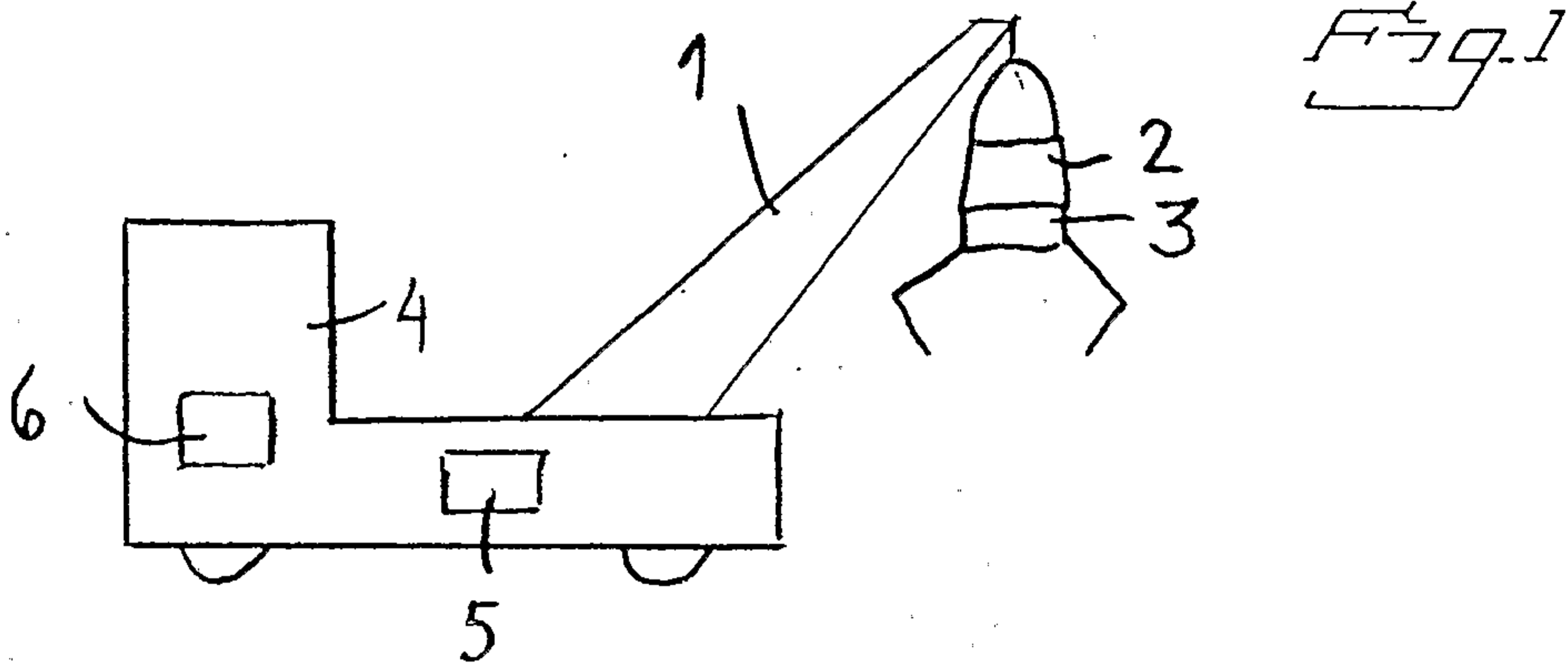


Fig. 3

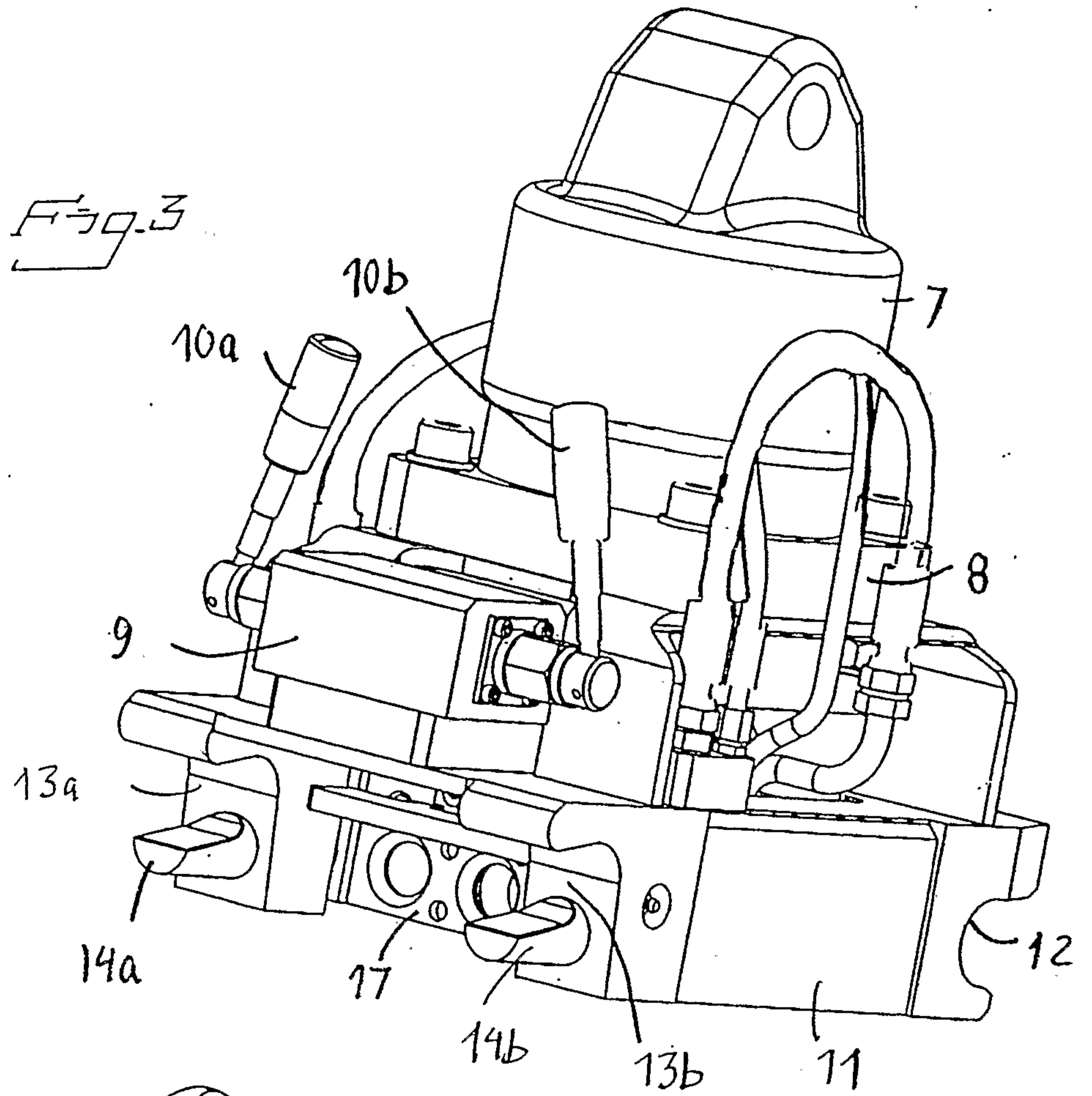
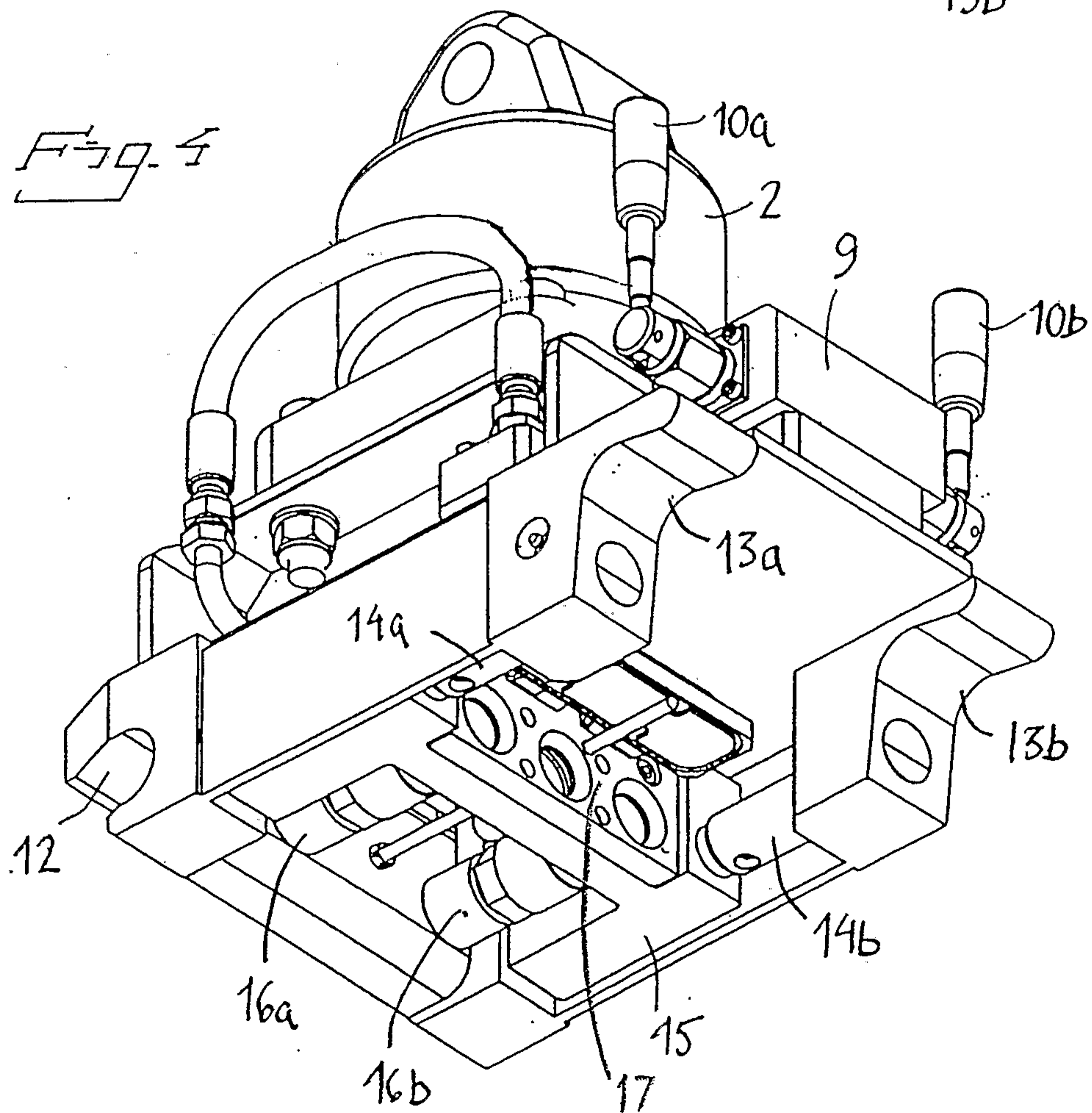


Fig. 4



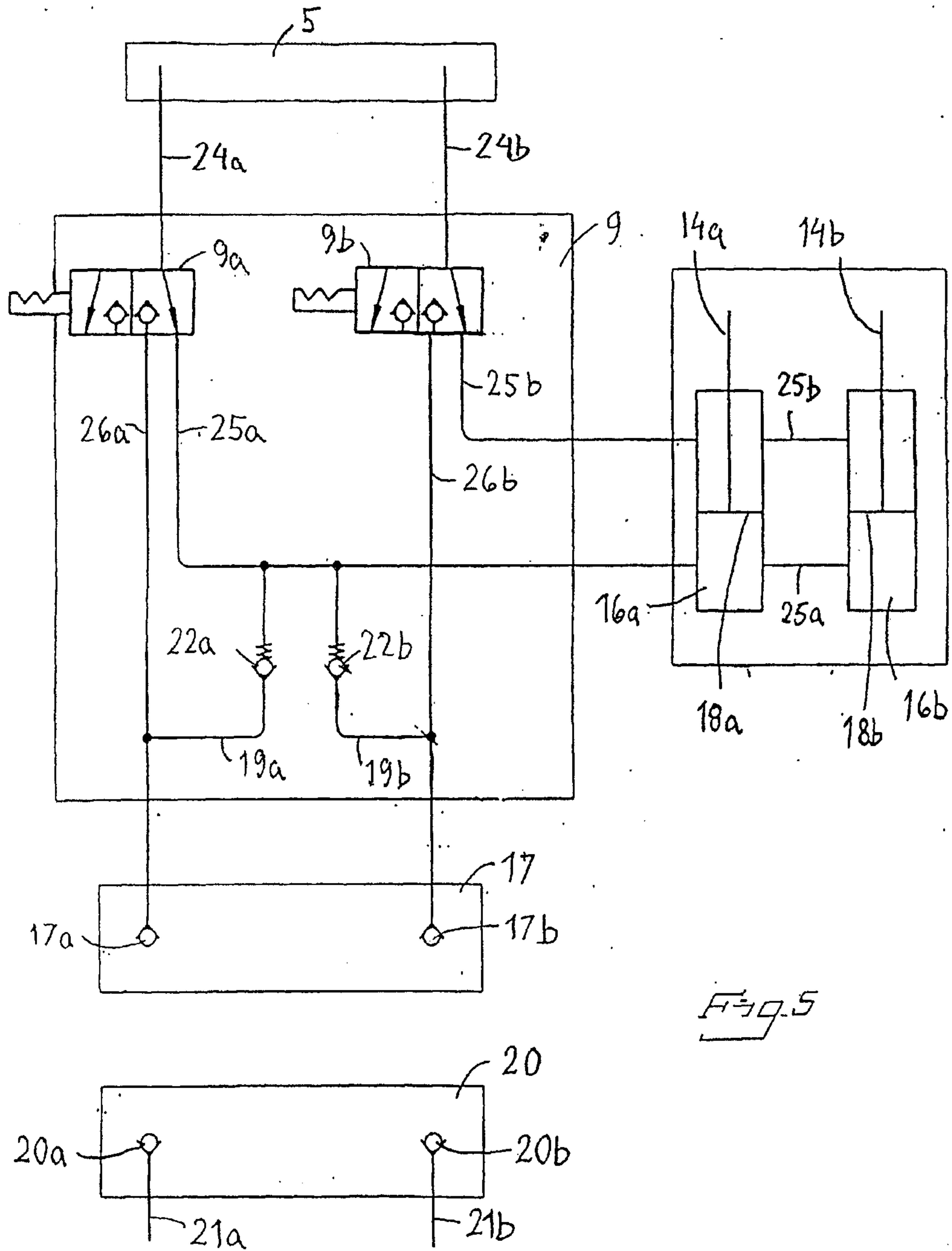


Fig. 5

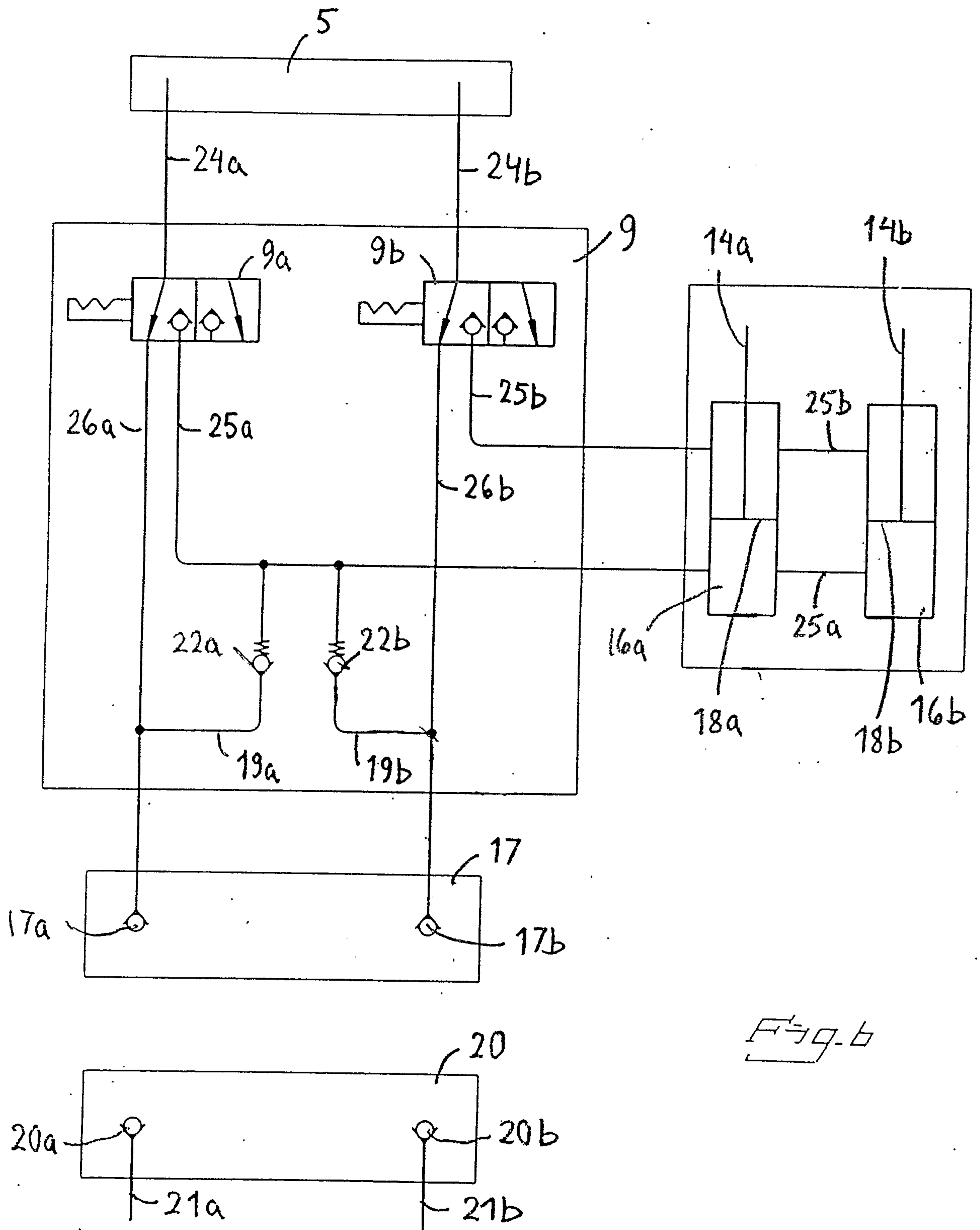


Fig. b

