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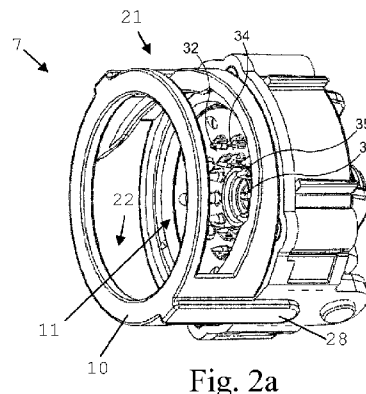
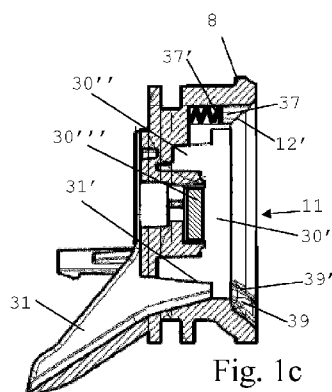
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(54) Title: CARTRIDGE REMOVAL SYSTEM



(57) Abstract: A device (1) for extracting an ingredient in a cartridge (9) by supplying an extraction liquid such as heated water into such cartridge, comprises: upstream and downstream cartridge enclosing parts (7, 8) relatively movable between an open position for inserting and/or removing such cartridge and a closed position for forming an extraction chamber (11) enclosing such cartridge during extraction; and a cartridge removal arrangement (36, 37) for assisting removal of such cartridge when the enclosing parts (7, 8) are brought from the closed to the open position. The upstream part (7) bears an upstream piercing arrangement (34) for opening an upstream portion of such cartridge. The downstream part (8) bears a downstream piercing arrangement (30), such as a piercing member, for opening a downstream portion of such cartridge. The cartridge removal arrangement comprises an upstream pusher (36) for pushing such cartridge away from the upstream piercing arrangement (34) and a downstream pusher (30) for pushing such cartridge away from the downstream piercing arrangement (30).

WO 2013/026844 A1

## CARTRIDGE REMOVAL SYSTEM

Field of the Invention

5 The present invention relates to a system including a cartridge and a cartridge extraction device that has an extraction chamber in which a cartridge can be inserted, extracted and from which it can be evacuated. The extraction device can be incorporated in a beverage preparation machine.

10 For the purpose of the present description, a "beverage" is meant to include any liquid food, such as tea, coffee, hot or cold chocolate, milk, soup, baby food, etc... Cartridges designate any enclosure for containing a pre-portioned ingredient that is soft or flexible, such as pods, and made of any material, recyclable or non  
15 recyclable, biodegradable or non-biodegradable, such as aluminium or plastic, in particular aluminium pods or aluminium capsules.

20 Background Art

One problem encountered with ingredient cartridge systems is the handling of that cartridge in an extraction device and the closing of the latter around the cartridge to perform the extraction process and then  
25 the proper evacuation of the cartridge from the extraction device. The cartridge usually has to be positioned by the user on a cartridge support or in a housing, then the device is closed manually or automatically around the cartridge.

30 It is important to correctly position the cartridge so that the device closes properly around the latter and to form a good seal to ensure good conditions of extraction. Bad positioning may damage the cartridge, and thus affect the conditions of extraction.

35 For the sealing of the device around the cartridge to permit proper extraction by passing a pressurized liquid through the cartridge without undesired leakage, the closing of the device around the cartridge must be carried out with a high level of precision. The closing  
40 distance of the mechanical closing arrangements of such

devices are usually manually adjusted during the manufacturing process of the device to achieve the required level of precision. The loading of the capsule must also be easy, without trial and error as to the correct position of the capsule in the device. The loading must also be as rapid as possible and not require excessive manipulations. WO 2005/004683 relates to a capsule brewing device comprising: a first part; a second part that can be moved relative to the first part; a housing for the capsule and defining, in a closed position of the movable part against the fixed part, an extraction position of the capsule along an axis in said housing; an insertion and positioning part comprising means for guiding the capsule arranged so as to insert the capsule by gravity and position said capsule in an intermediate position; a drink pouring system; and the second movable part is so arranged and constructed to move the capsule from the intermediate position into the extraction position when the device is closed. EP 1 721 553 discloses a brewing unit for coffee machines using capsules. The unit has a front part with a beverage outlet and a rear part with a hot water inlet. The front part and the rear part are mounted in-between a pair of facing shoulder guide members. The front part is movable in-between these guide members to be urged against the rear part so as to form with the rear part a brewing chamber for accommodating a capsule to be extracted, whereby an unoccupied volume is left in front of the front member between the guide members within the machine. EP 1 659 547 relates to a beverage machine for making infusions, in particular, espresso coffee. The machine includes an infusion chamber within a brewing unit that has a movable front part with a return spring and a beverage outlet duct that extends through the assembly's outer housing. The movable front part cooperates with a rear part that is movable within the housing and that can be pushed against the movable front part to compress the return spring whereby the outlet duct slides through the assembly's outer housing. The pod is passed through the external housing to the infusion chamber via a rigid pod feed channel and then the pod is transferred into the infusion chamber by an external bushing on the movable rear part of the brewing unit which is provided with a

cam-like path for moving the rear part. This arrangement involves several problems. The pod must be moved during the closure of the brewing chamber and this can cause blocking and it also makes the retaining means of the pod more complex. Moreover, opening and closing the brewing chamber involves simultaneously a linear displacement of the movable rear part within the housing, of the movable front part within the housing and of the outlet duct through the housing which increases the risk of hyper-guiding and jamming or improper alignment of the various parts that linearly move one relative to another. The fluid system comprises a moving assembly which makes the fluid system more complex to assemble. When upon extraction brewing unit is re-opened for removing the pod, pressurized water contained within the infusion chamber may project outside the housing. Furthermore, an unoccupied volume is left within the machine between the front member and the casing when the outlet duct is in its retracted position.

US 3,260,190 and WO 2005/072574 disclose a coffee machine having a removable drawer for positioning a coffee can therein. The drawer can be slid horizontally into the coffee machine and lifted towards a water injection arrangement. WO 2006/023309 discloses a coffee machine with a slidable drawer for the introduction of a coffee cartridge into the machine. The drawer is movable between an open and a closed position and has two cartridge half-shells that are pivotable against each other to form a brewing chamber when the drawer is in the closed position and pivotable apart when the drawer is slid out from the machine. US 6,966,251 discloses a coffee machine having a horizontally slidable drawer for positioning a capsule therein. When slid into the machine, the drawer can be moved upwards towards a fixed capsule cage for form a brewing chamber for a capsule. EP 1 566 126 discloses a coffee machine with a vertical brewing unit for accommodating coffee pods. The brewing unit has a fixed upper part and a movable lower part for holding a pod and that can be pulled up for closing the brewing unit and let down for inserting or removing a pod.

Further brewing units are disclosed in EP 0 730 425, EP 0 862 882, EP 1 219 217, EP 1 480 540, EP 1 635 680,

EP 1 669 011, EP 1 774 878, EP 1 776 026, EP 1 893 064,  
FR 2 424 010, US 3,260,190, US 4,760,774, US 5,531,152,  
US 6,904,840, US 7,131,369, US 2005/0106288, US  
2006/0102008, WO 2005/002405, WO 2005/016093, WO  
5 2006/005756, WO 2006/066626 and WO 2007/135136.

A problem is related to the optimal extraction of  
brewable ingredients supplied within a cartridge into the  
extraction device. On the one hand, there is a logistic  
and production need to maximize the filling of cartridges  
10 with ingredient so as to minimize the cartridge size /  
ingredient mass ratio, whereby packaging material and  
volume of the cartridge for storing and shipping can be  
minimized. A solution to this problem is compacting the  
brewable ingredient in the cartridge. On the other hand,  
15 to circulate an extraction fluid, e.g. heated water,  
through the cartridge, the brewable ingredient should not  
be compacted to such an extent as to form a more or less  
impervious mass. Of course, it is possible to increase  
the pressure of the circulating extraction fluid to an  
20 extent sufficient to overcome the barrier formed by the  
ingredient mass in the cartridge. However, this approach  
leads to a significant slow down of the extraction speed  
and beverage preparation due to the pressure drop through  
the ingredient mass. Moreover, significantly forcing the  
25 extraction fluid under high pressure through the brewable  
ingredient leads to extraction of undesirable solid  
compounds of the brewable ingredient which affect the  
taste of the beverage that becomes too strong and harsh.  
This latter phenomenon is known in the art as "over-  
30 extraction".

To avoid the problem relating to precise mechanical  
closing of the extraction device around an ingredient  
cartridge, it is known to provide a hydraulic closure  
system in which the heated water used for extracting an  
35 ingredient in a cartridge is also used to actuate a  
hydraulic closure mechanism. In this case, the closing  
distance does not require special adjustment since the  
hydraulic closing force urges the cartridge supports of  
the extraction device together around the cartridge. An  
40 example of such a system is for instance disclosed in WO  
2008/037642. Various systems have been developed along  
this idea, as for instance discussed in EP 1 219 217, EP

1 353 591, EP 1 480 540, EP 1 545 278, EP 1 776 026, EP 1  
912 542, WO 2005/115206, WO 2006/005736 and WO  
2011/042400.

5 Another problem is related to the proper removal of a  
cartridge from an extraction device upon use, in  
particular when the extraction device has piercing  
elements that open the envelope of the cartridge for  
circulating liquid into and through the cartridge.  
Cartridges tend to stick to the piercing elements. It has  
10 been proposed to incorporate a movable push member in the  
device to detach a capsule from an upstream piercing  
element, e.g. as disclosed in WO 2007/135135. However,  
the manner by which a cartridge is stuck is sometimes  
difficult to predict reliably so that such a movable push  
15 member is sometimes insufficient to release the cartridge  
so that it can be evacuated. The predictability is even  
more difficult when a cartridge is not evacuated  
immediately after extraction: in this case, residual  
beverage may dry about the cartridge in the device. This  
20 increases the random sticking of the cartridge in the  
device.

#### Summary of the Invention

25 It is therefore a preferred object of the present  
invention to alleviate at least some of the  
abovementioned problem, in particular to provide a system  
for reliable removal of a cartridge from an extraction  
device.

30 The invention relates to a device for extracting an  
ingredient in a cartridge by supplying a extraction  
liquid such as heated water into such cartridge. The  
device comprises: upstream and downstream cartridge  
enclosing parts relatively movable between an open  
position for inserting and/or removing such cartridge and  
35 a closed position for forming an extraction chamber  
enclosing such cartridge during extraction; and a  
cartridge removal arrangement for assisting removal of  
such cartridge when the enclosing parts are brought from  
the closed to the open position.

40 Typically, the cartridge can be inserted into the  
device from above under the effect of gravity. Evacuation

of the cartridge upon reopening of the enclosing parts may also be driven by gravity.

The upstream part bears an upstream piercing arrangement for opening an upstream portion of such cartridge. The downstream part bears a downstream piercing arrangement, such as a piercing member, for opening a downstream portion of such cartridge,

Typically, this device is comprised in a beverage preparation machine for receiving ingredient cartridges such as capsules and/or pods. For instance, the machine is a coffee, tea, chocolate or soup preparation machine. In particular, the machine is arranged for preparing within the extraction chamber a beverage by passing hot water or another liquid through a cartridge containing an ingredient of the beverage to be prepared, such as ground coffee or tea or chocolate or cacao or milk powder.

For example, the preparation machine comprises: a beverage preparation unit arranged to receive cartridges for use and evacuate cartridges upon use, e.g. an extraction device; a housing having an opening leading into an area to which cartridges are evacuated from the preparation unit; and a receptacle having a cavity forming a storage space for collecting cartridges evacuated to such an area into the receptacle to a level of fill. The receptacle is insertable into the area for collecting used cartridges and is removable from this area for emptying the collected cartridges. Examples of such machines are disclosed in WO 2009/074550 and in WO 2009/130099.

In accordance with the invention, the cartridge removal arrangement comprises an upstream pusher for pushing such cartridge away from the upstream piercing arrangement and a downstream pusher for pushing such cartridge away from the downstream piercing arrangement.

By providing a couple of pushers, pushing the cartridge from each piercing arrangement, e.g. working in opposition at reopening of the enclosing parts, the cartridge is separated from the enclosing parts from the locations where the cartridge is most likely to stick by residual beverage upon drying thereof. Indeed, it has been found that even when piercing arrangements are used

which do not significantly extend into the cartridge, e.g. to a penetration extent of the order of 1 mm or even less, the risk of a cartridge sticking is still noticeable when the cartridge is not removed shortly after extraction but is allowed to stay into the device while residual beverage dries. Moreover, the risk of cartridge sticking due to drying or dried residual beverage appears to be highest where the beverage escapes the cartridge during extraction, i.e. at the downstream piercing arrangement.

Another aspect of the invention relates to a system comprising a device as described above and a cartridge.

Yet other aspects of the invention relate to: the use of a cartridge for such a system; and a method of extracting a cartridge in such a system.

Further features and advantages of the invention will appear in the detailed description and in the claims and in the drawings.

#### Brief Description of the Drawings

The invention will now be described with reference to the schematic drawings, wherein:

- Figures 1a and 2a illustrate part of a prior art system having an extraction device and an ingredient cartridge that can be improved into a system in accordance with the invention; and
- Figures 1b, 1c, 1d, 2b and 2c show in detail portions of the device illustrated in Figs 1a and 2a which device further incorporates the improvements of an embodiment of a system in accordance with the invention.

#### Detailed description

The invention is now described with reference to the particular embodiment illustrated in Figs 1a to 2c.

These Figures illustrate different aspects of a system incorporating a brewing device 1 and a cartridge 9 for preparing beverages by circulating heated liquid, such as water, through an ingredient cartridge 9 in the form of a more or less soft or flexible pod, e.g. made of

a generally sealed and air-tight flexible envelope, such as plastic or aluminium envelope containing the more or less compacted beverage ingredient e.g. ground coffee, as for example commercialised by NESPRESSO™.

5 The particular embodiment of cartridge 9 illustrated in the Figures has the shape of a generally round tablet that has an envelope 9' with a peripheral part 9'' enclosing an ingredient cavity 9'''. The peripheral part 9'' has an extension that forms an annular sealing flange  
10 9'''' around the cartridge 9. Examples of such cartridges 9 are described in greater details in WO 2011/000723, WO 2011/000724 and WO 2011/000725.

Device 1 is configured for brewing the ingredient in cartridge 9 by supplying a brewing liquid such as heated  
15 water into the cartridge via a liquid supply arrangement 38. Device 1 has an upstream cartridge enclosing part 7 and a downstream cartridge enclosing part 8. Upstream and downstream enclosing parts 7,8 are relatively movable between an open position for inserting and/or removing  
20 cartridge 9 and a closed position for forming a brewing chamber 11 enclosing cartridge 9 during brewing.

A flavoured beverage, e.g. tea or coffee, is formed by mixing the liquid with the ingredient in the cartridge 9 and collecting the beverage at a beverage outlet 31 via  
25 a passage 31'.

In the particular embodiment illustrated in Figs 1a and 2a, the upstream part 7 has a holding member 10 for handling cartridge 9 when inserted and/or removed into device 1. Alternatively, holding member can be fixed to  
30 the downstream part 8 or be relatively movable relative to both parts 7,8.

Cartridge holding member 10 is provided in an open gap left in the open position of enclosing parts 7,8 to receive and hold cartridge in its descent when supplied  
35 into device 1 from above.

Holding member 10 has a general cylindrical or "ring" form. It comprises a first chamber or holding chamber 18 arranged to receive and hold cartridge 9 in a prepositioning place when brewing device 1 is in the open  
40 position. It also comprises a second chamber or ejection chamber 19 arranged to receive cartridge 9 when device 1

is closed and therefore enable the cartridge's removal as soon as device 1 is re-opened. Holding chamber 18 is delimited by coaxial holding surfaces 20 that hold the edge of the cartridge against gravity. The transversal cross-section of surfaces 20 are slightly larger than enclosing part 8 so as to enable part 8 to traverse relatively holding chamber 18. The portions of cylinder 20 are such that cartridge 9 can stand in a substantially upright or slightly inclined position.

In the upper region of chamber 18, an opening 21 is provided which is of sufficient width to enable cartridge 9 to be inserted in the chamber 18 by effect of gravity, as illustrated in Fig. 1a.

Ejection chamber 19 is placed adjacent holding chamber 18. It has a lower opening 22 substantially opposite the cartridge insertion opening 21 for cartridge 9 to fall freely by gravity when device 1 is re-opened after brewing.

The holding member 10 has a rear cylindrical portion and front cylindrical portion of diameters slightly larger than the external diameter of downstream part 8 in order for part 8 to slide in holding member 10 during closing.

The two chambers 18,19 of holding member 10 are separated by a cartridge retainer 25 oriented transversally to the sliding (closing) direction. Retainer 25 can be a ramp surface comprising a pair of arc-shaped ridges onto which edge 9'''' of cartridge 9 can be supported. The ramp surface can be slightly inclined relative to the enclosing plane. The portions of the ridges protrude inwards in the radial direction and are dimensioned to retain the edge of the cartridge on both sides of the cartridge. The size of the portions of ridges is given by the diameter of the enclosing member 8. For instance, it can be about 1-4 mm.

Holding member 10 is fixed on the lateral sides of upstream part 7 by a pair of rearwardly protruding arms 28. Therefore, holding member 10 is fixed or static relative to the upstream part 7 but mobile relative to downstream part 8 during the closure movement.

A detailed description of holding member 10 operating within the assembly formed by upstream part 7 and downstream part 8 to handle cartridge 9 is provided in WO 2007/135135 to which the reader may turn for implementing this aspect of device 1.

The actuation of upstream and downstream parts 7,8 between the open and closed positions is illustrated in detail in the above WO 2007/135135. A variation thereto that can be used for actuating device 1 is disclosed in WO 2011/042400.

Enclosing parts 7,8 can be mounted along a frame to be capable to reciprocate along a substantially longitudinal axis. For closure of the enclosing parts 7,8 about cartridge 9, the upstream and downstream parts 7,8 are forced to come closer to the to a position where they can form a fluid tight engagement together at peripheral matching surfaces while pinching edge 9'''' of cartridge 9 in-between in the closed position.

Normally, device 1 is integrated in a beverage preparation machine including a fluid circuit with a liquid injection arrangement.

Hence, extraction device 1 may be associated with a fluid circuit that has a liquid injection arrangement which includes: a source of liquid, such as cold water in particular stored in a reservoir, a pump for pumping liquid from reservoir via a conduit, a heater for heating the liquid and inlet 38 of brewing chamber 11 for supplying the heated liquid into chamber 11.

In chamber 11, the pressurised and heated liquid flows through cartridge 9 to form a beverage by extraction of the ingredient contained in cavity 9''' of cartridge 9, the beverage being collected and dispensed via outlet 31 associated with downstream part 8, for example into a user cup or mug located thereunder.

When device 1 is arranged to brew ingredients contained in sealed or partly sealed cartridges 9, device 1 may include cartridge openers 30,32. For example, upstream part 7 may include an upstream cartridge opener 32 and/or downstream part 8 may have a downstream cartridge opener 30.

As illustrated in Figs 1b, 1c and 1d, brewing chamber 11 has a confining expansion space 12 which is unoccupied by cartridge 9 when enclosing parts 7,8 are in the closed position enclosing cartridge 9; and occupied by cartridge 9 upon expansion thereof caused by exposure of the ingredient to the brewing liquid.

As illustrated in greater details in Figs 1c and 1d, expansion space 12 can be delimited by a groove or recess 12' adjacent to a peripheral portion 9'' of cartridge 9 when cartridge 9 is enclosed by upstream and downstream parts 7,8. Depending on the required expansion space, groove or recess 12' may be relatively shallow. The shape of expansion space 12 depends of course of the shape of cartridge 9 and the required expansion of cartridge 9 during brewing. Hence, the expansion space is not necessarily provided in the form of a recess or groove projecting out of the brewing chamber.

Prior to exposure of the ingredient in cavity 9''' to the brewing liquid, the peripheral portion 9'' is not located within expansion space 12 and follows dashed line 12'' indicated in Fig. 1d. In this case, the peripheral portion 9'' has the shape of a generally truncated cone. When the ingredient is exposed to the brewing liquid, the ingredient is wetted by the liquid and expands within cavity 9''', whereby peripheral portion 9'' is pushed into expansion space 12 and may be brought to expand towards or even match the shape of groove or recess 12'.

Expansion space 12 is a confining space. Hence, beverage formed in cartridge 9 is not intended to flow out of cartridge 9 through space 12. Normally, cartridge 9 will not be opened, e.g. cut or torn, at the level of expansion space 12.

Expansion space 12 serves to increase the available brewing space in cavity 9''' so as to inhibit undesirable over-extraction of ingredient by the brewing liquid due to excessive flow resistance through the ingredient caused by the expansion of the wetted ingredient, in particular when the brewing liquid is supplied in a pressurised form in the cavity 9''', e.g. by a pump that pressurises the liquid within the range of 3 to 25 bar typically 5 to 20 bar.

Typically, expansion space 12 has a volume that is in the range of 1 to 10% of the volume of brewing chamber 11 or of the volume of ingredient cavity 9''' of cartridge 9, in particular in the range of 1 to 5% such as 1.5 to 4%,  
5 when enclosing parts 7,8 are in the closed position for enclosing cartridge 9 prior to expansion of cartridge 9.

Upon expansion, cartridge 9 can occupy at least 50% of the expansion space (12), in particular at least 60% or 70% thereof. Typically, upon expansion, cartridge 9  
10 will occupy at least 80% of expansion space 12, in particular at least 90% thereof, such as at least 95% or 98% thereof. The occupation of expansion space 12 by cartridge 9 will depend on the flexibility of cartridge 9, the nature and degree of filling of the ingredient in  
15 cavity 9''' and the pressure of the flow of liquid in cartridge 9.

Expansion space 12 can be delimited on downstream part 8, e.g. as illustrated in the particular embodiment in the Figures. In a variation, the expansion space can  
20 be delimited on the upstream part or even on both parts.

Delimitation surface 12' of expansion space 12 can be slightly angled away from a facing surface 9'' of the cartridge 9 before expansion thereof, in particular  
25 angled away by an angle of no more than 10 deg., such as no more than 5 deg. Such a slight angle, i.e. the absence of sharp edges at this location, prevents tearing or cutting cartridge envelope 9' at or about delimitation surface 12' when cartridge 9 expands in chamber 11.

As illustrated in Figs 2b and 2c, upstream part 7  
30 typically has at least one liquid injector 32 for supplying liquid into the cartridge 9. When cartridge envelope 9' is sealed on the cartridge upstream side, such an injector 32 may have a piercer 34 for piercing an upstream portion of envelope 9' and a liquid injection  
35 conduit 38 for injecting liquid into cartridge 9 upon piercing thereof. Liquid injector 32 has in particular a plurality of injection piercers 34 and/or a plurality of injection conduits 38. In the illustrated embodiment, piercers 32 are in an annular and radial arrangement on  
40 injector 32. In particular, 20 piercers 34 are arranged in such a fashion in this embodiment.

Injection piercers 34 may have a generally tapered shape, in particular a generally cylindrical and/or conical, or prismatic and/or pyramidal shape, such as a tapered shape that that has a truncation surface 35  
5 delimiting a piercing edge 34'. Injection piercers 34 may be driven manually into cartridge 9.

Injection piercer 34 can delimit internally or partly internally thereof liquid injection conduit 38. In particular, at least one piercer 34 may delimit a pair of  
10 fluid conduits 38.

In a variation, such piercers can be separated from the liquid injection conduit. In such a case, the piercers are "mere" piercers for opening the cartridge and not "injection" piercers 34 for injecting liquid into  
15 the cartridge, the liquid being not injected into the cartridge through the piercers but adjacent thereto.

Piercer 34 can have a base with a laterally projecting reinforcing foot, such as a foot that deforms envelope 9' of cartridge 9 optionally without  
20 significantly tearing or cutting thereof. To reinforce piercer 34 and avoid failure by breaking, such a foot can be used. This offers the advantage not to affect the opening ability of cartridge 9 (opening edge and penetration angle of the piercer into the cartridge) and  
25 required effort therefor.

This foot can have a body 34'' that extends around an entire periphery of the base and/or a body 34''' projecting radially or diameterally or diagonally from the base.

30 As illustrated in Figs 2b and 2c, injector 32 has an anchorage arrangement 32' for anchoring injector 32 into upstream part 7, e.g. spaced apart and annularly arranged openings 32' to fix injector 32 with rivets and/or screws to part 7.

35 Injector 32 can be provided in a shallow recess of upstream part 7. Injector 32 is typically configured to inject water under pressure into cartridge 9 when device 1 is tightly closed. Injection 32 can comprise at least one water inlet and possibly piercers 34.

Furthermore, upstream part 7 typically includes an upstream cartridge pusher 36 for pushing cartridge 9 away from upstream part 7 at removal of cartridge 9. Hence, for an easy and reliable removal of cartridge 9, in particular from piercer(s) 34, pusher 36 can be movably arranged to push cartridge 9 away from injector 32 as enclosing parts 7,8 re-open. As a result, the cartridge is disengaged from the piercing elements 34 and falls down by gravity from chamber 11. A reciprocating motion of pusher 36 can be coordinated with the drive mechanism of enclosing parts 7,8. Such a pusher 36 and its incorporation into extraction device 1 is disclosed in greater details in WO 2007/135135.

An arrangement 30 for opening a downstream portion of cartridge 9 and/or for filtering the beverage can be provided. For instance, it can be formed of a plate comprising elements in relief to puncture the cartridge either during closure of the device or under the effect of the pressure building up inside the cartridge during the brewing operation.

An arrangement 30 for opening a downstream portion of cartridge 9 may have puncturing elements, e.g. pins, pyramids and/or cones, that have an extent in the puncturing direction of the cartridge of up to 2 mm, in particular in the range of 0.5 to 1.5 mm.

Especially when the downstream portion of cartridge envelope 9' is sealed, downstream part 8 can incorporate an opening arrangement 30. Such an arrangement may include one or more piercing elements, e.g. in the shape of cones, pyramids, pins or the like.

Arrangement 30 may be generally configured as a plate.

Arrangement 30 can be secured in an opening 30' of downstream part 8, e.g. centrally arranged in the middle of annular expansion space 12.

An arrangement 30 in the shape of a disc plate bearing cartridge openers is illustrated in Fig. 1a and schematically indicated in Fig. 1d. Cavity 30' for receiving arrangement 30 is shown in Figs 1b and 1c. A fastening opening 30'' for arrangement 30 is illustrated in Fig. 1c. For instance, a foot of arrangement 30 may be

force-fitted, clipped, screwed, glued or welded into opening 30''.

Downstream piercing arrangement 30 may be a delayed piercing arrangement, e.g. opening cartridge 9 by expansion thereof under pressure against arrangement 30 due to the pressurised liquid circulated into cartridge 9.

Downstream part 8 may have a cavity for receiving a cartridge sensors 30''', e.g. for identifying the presence and/or the type of a cartridge 9 inserted into device 1. Such cartridge sensor system can be of the type disclosed in WO 2011/000723, WO 2011/000724 and WO 2011/000725.

As illustrated in Figs 1b, 1c and 1d, downstream part 8 may comprise a downstream cartridge pusher 37 for assisting removal of cartridge 9 from piercing arrangement 30, in particular by pushing and deforming optionally without tearing or cutting cartridge 9. Cartridge pusher 37 may be biased into a pushing direction by a biasing spring 37'.

In the particular embodiment disclosed in Figs 1b to 1d, pusher 37 is arranged to push on peripheral part 9'' of ingredient cavity 9''' of cartridge 9. Hence, pusher 37 pushes the ingredient body of cartridge 9 and not merely on (possibly freely deformable) cartridge flange 9''''.

In particular, when device 1 has upstream cartridge piercer(s) 34 and downstream cartridge piercer 30, it is preferable to provide a cartridge pusher 36,37 associated with each of the upstream and downstream piercers 30,34. Hence, there is no risk of improper removal of cartridge 9 from device 1 at reopening of device 1.

Upstream pusher 36 and/or downstream pusher 37 may be provided in the shape of a piston, in particular a linearly movable piston.

Device 1, in particular the downstream part 8, may have at least one cartridge positioning element 39, in particular a pair of positioning elements, that guides cartridge 9 in a cartridge brewing alignment 3,3' between the upstream and downstream parts 7,8.

Hence, axis 3' of cartridge 9 is not merely brought to the proper height inbetween open upstream and downstream parts 7,8 but also laterally aligned thereinbetween. Axis 3' of cartridge 9 is brought to  
5 match axis 3 of extraction axis 3 of parts 7,8. Axis 3 may central extending through chamber 11. Axis 3' can centrally extend through cartridge 9, as illustrated in Fig. 1a.

Positioning element 39 is in particular located on a  
10 peripheral lower part 9'' of cartridge 9 when cartridge 9 is aligned between upstream and the downstream parts 7,8. Optionally, positioning element 39 may deform cartridge 9 in the closing direction when upstream and downstream parts 7,8 are relatively moved into the closed position.

15 Such a cartridge positioning element 39 prevents misalignment of cartridge 9 when the latter is merely held by holding member 10.

As illustrated in Figs 1b and 1c, positioning element 39 slightly projects from upstream or downstream parts  
20 7,8 whereby cartridge 9 is not held by positioning element 39 at opening or closure of device 1. Element 39 has an arched contact portion 39' so that arched envelope 9', in particular part 9'', of cartridge 9 is positioned by a single contact point or spot on element 39. Hence,  
25 by providing a couple of such contact elements 39 in combination with holder 10, the horizontal positioning of cartridge 9 and the alignment of cartridge 9 with extraction device 1 can be ensured.

As illustrated in the appended Figures, holder 10 and  
30 positioning element(s) 39 are not necessarily assembled to the same part of the upstream and downstream parts 7,8. They can be assembled to the same or to different parts. However, their functions are somewhat different: holder 10 holds cartridge 9 against the force of gravity and  
35 positioning element 39 adjusts the alignment of cartridge 9 with the upstream and downstream parts 7,8 for proper enclosure of cartridge 9 between these parts 7,8.

The invention also relates to the use of a cartridge 9 for a system 7,8,9 as described above, or a method of  
40 extracting a cartridge 9 in such a system.

## CLAIMS

1. A device (1) for extracting an ingredient in a cartridge (9) by supplying an extraction liquid such as heated water into such cartridge, comprising:
- 5
- upstream and downstream cartridge enclosing parts (7,8) relatively movable between an open position for inserting and/or removing such cartridge and a closed position for forming an extraction chamber (11) enclosing such cartridge during extraction; and
  - 10 - a cartridge removal arrangement (36,37) for assisting removal of such cartridge when the enclosing parts (7,8) are brought from the closed to the open position,
- the upstream part (7) bearing an upstream piercing arrangement (34) for opening an upstream portion of such cartridge, the downstream part (8) bearing a downstream piercing arrangement (30), such as a piercing member, for opening a downstream portion of such cartridge,
- 15
- characterised in that the cartridge removal arrangement comprises an upstream pusher (36) for pushing such cartridge away from the upstream piercing arrangement (34) and a downstream pusher (37) for pushing such cartridge away from the downstream piercing arrangement (30).
- 20
2. The device of claim 1, wherein the upstream and/or downstream cartridge pushers (37) is/are biased into a pushing direction, in particular by a biasing spring (37').
- 25
3. The device of claim 1 or 2, wherein the upstream and/or downstream cartridge pushers (36) is/are coordinated with a drive mechanism of the upstream and downstream parts (7,8).
- 30
4. The device of any preceding claim, wherein the upstream and/or downstream cartridge pushers (36,37) have a movement of pushing said cartridge (9) which movement is general parallel to a direction of opening and closing of the upstream and downstream parts (7,8).
- 35
5. The device of any preceding claim, wherein the upstream and/or downstream cartridge pushers (37) have a movement of pushing said cartridge from a peripheral part

(12) of the cartridge chamber (11), in particular to push said cartridge (9) on a peripheral part (9'') of an ingredient cavity (9''') of such cartridge.

5 6. The device of any preceding claim, wherein the upstream and/or downstream cartridge pushers (36) have a movement of pushing from a middle part of the cartridge chamber (11), in particular to push said cartridge (9) along a generally central axis of such cartridge.

10 7. The device of any preceding claim, wherein the upstream part (7) comprises at least one liquid injector (32) for supplying liquid into the cartridge (9), the liquid injector (32) bearing the upstream piercing arrangement in the form of one or more piercers (34) for piercing an upstream part of an envelope (9') of said  
15 cartridge (9) and one or more liquid injection conduit (38) for injecting liquid into said cartridge upon piercing thereof.

8. The device of claim 7, wherein said piercer (34) has at least one of:

- 20 - a generally cylindrical and/or conical, or prismatic and/or pyramidal shape, in particular a shape that that has a truncation surface (35) delimiting a piercing edge (34');  
- one or more delimitation surfaces for delimiting  
25 internally or partly internally of the piercer the liquid injection conduit (38), in particular a pair of conduits (38); and  
- a base with a projecting reinforcing foot, such as a foot that deforms optionally without significantly  
30 tearing or cutting the cartridge (9), in particular a foot having a body (34'') extending around an entire periphery of the base and/or a body (34''') projecting radially or diameterally or diagonally from the base.

9. The device of any preceding claim, which has:

- 35 - a cartridge holder (10) for receiving and holding such cartridge against gravity when inserted and descending under gravity between the enclosing parts in the open position prior to forming the extraction chamber (11), the holder being in particular fixed to or integral  
40 with the upstream part (7); and

- at least one cartridge positioning element (39), in particular a pair of positioning elements, that horizontally guides the cartridge (9) upon reception by the holder in a cartridge extraction alignment between the upstream and downstream parts (7,8), the positioning element being in particular fixed to or integral with the downstream part (8),

the positioning element (39) being in particular located on a peripheral lower part (9'') of the cartridge when the cartridge is aligned between the upstream and the downstream parts (7,8), optionally the positioning element (39) deforming the cartridge (9) in the closing direction when the upstream and downstream parts (7,8) are relatively moved into the closed position, said cartridge positioning element(s) being optionally comprised in the downstream part (8).

10. A system comprising a cartridge (9) and a device (1) as defined in any preceding claim.

11. The system of claim 10, wherein the upstream and/or downstream cartridge pushers (36,37) of the device (1) is/are arranged to push and deform said cartridge optionally without tearing or cutting thereof.

12. The system of claim 10 or 11, wherein the extraction chamber (11) has a confining expansion space (12), in particular a confining space delimited by the downstream part (8), which is:

- unoccupied by the cartridge (9) when the enclosing parts (7,8) are in the closed position enclosing the cartridge; and
- occupied by the cartridge upon expansion thereof caused by exposure of the ingredient to the brewing liquid.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein the expansion space (12) is delimited by a surface (12') that is slightly angled away from a facing surface (9') of the cartridge (9) before expansion thereof, in particular angled away by an angle of no more than 10 deg., such as no more than 5 deg.

14. The system of claim 12 or 13, wherein the expansion space (12) has a volume that is:

- in the range of 1 to 10% of the volume of the brewing chamber (11) or of the volume of an ingredient cavity (9''') of the cartridge (9), in particular in the range of 1 to 5% such as 1.5 to 4%, when the enclosing parts (7,8) are in the closed position for enclosing the cartridge prior to expansion of the cartridge; and/or
  - occupied by the cartridge (9) upon expansion at a rate of at least 50% of the expansion space (12), in particular at least 60% or 70% thereof, such as at least 80% of the expansion space (12), optionally at least 90% thereof, for instance at least 95% or 98% thereof.
15. Use of a cartridge (9) for a system as defined in any one of claims 10 to 14, or method of extracting a cartridge (9) in a system as defined in any one of claims 10 to 14.

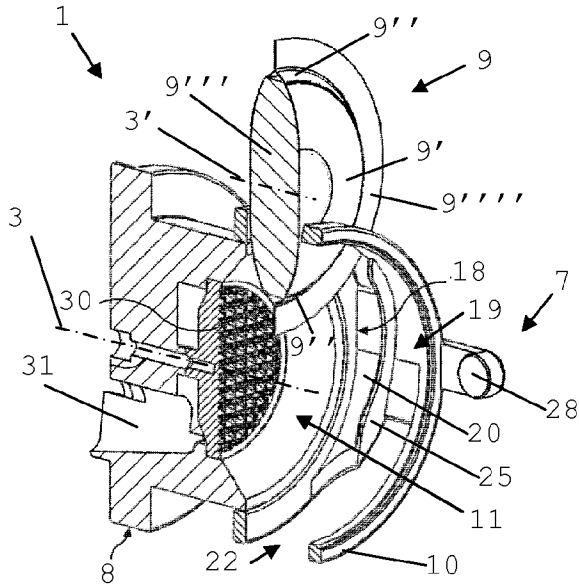


Fig. 1a

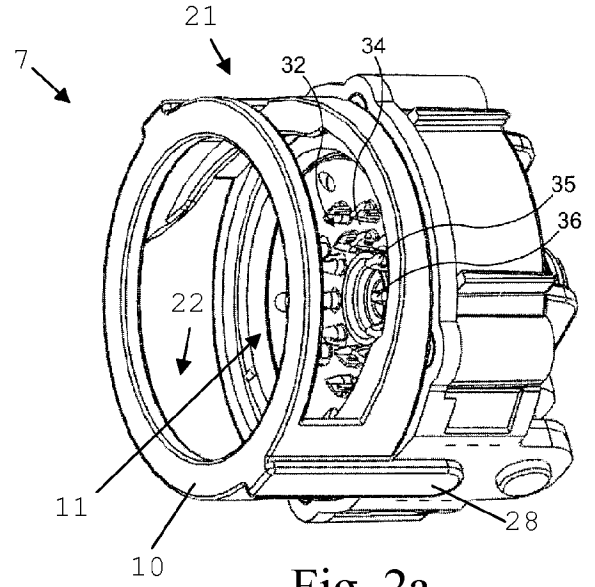


Fig. 2a

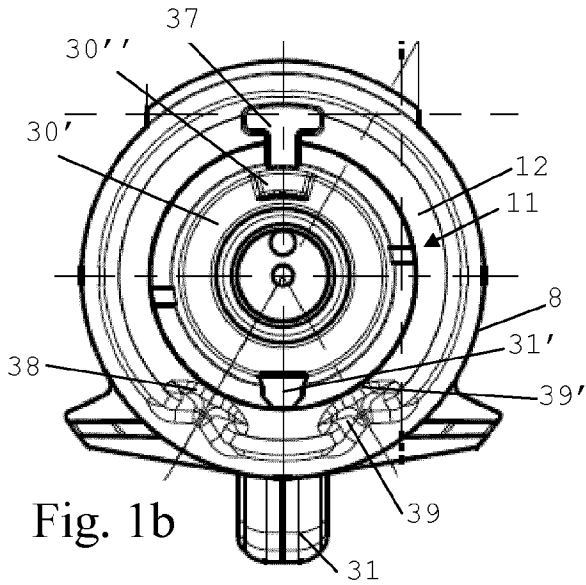


Fig. 1b

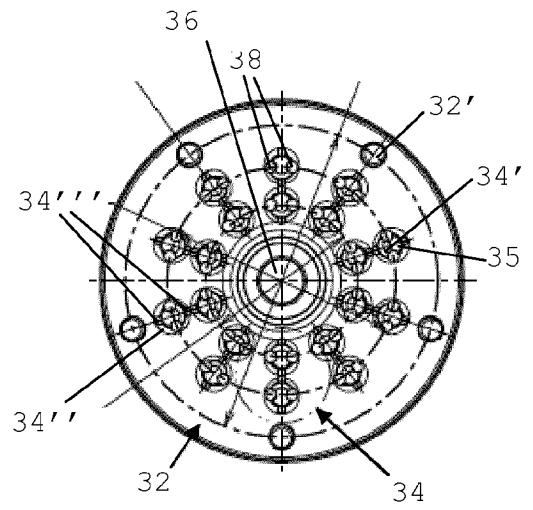


Fig. 2b

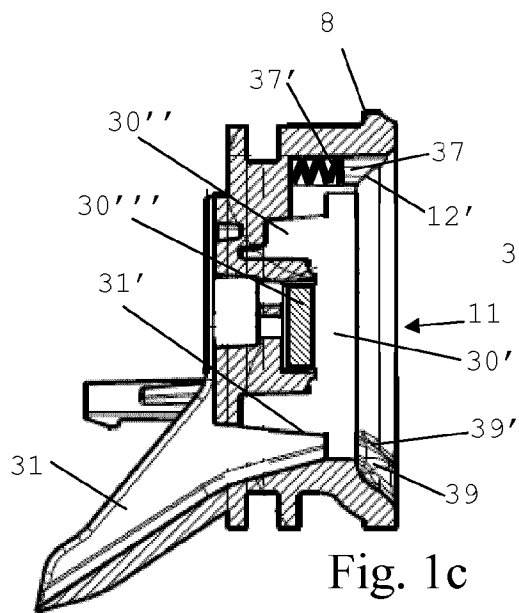


Fig. 1c

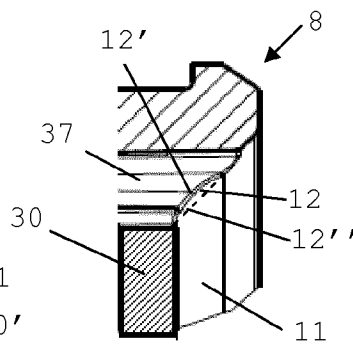


Fig. 1d

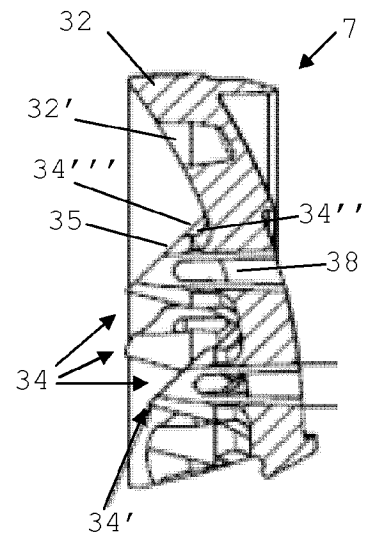


Fig. 2c

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No  
PCT/EP2012/066239

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER  
INV. A47J31/36  
ADD.  
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED  
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)  
A47J  
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)  
EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
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Y	abstract; figures 5,6 figure 8	9,11,12
A	----- WO 2004/049878 A1 (NECTA VENDING SOLUTIONS S P A [IT]; MAGNO ALESSANDRO [IT]) 17 June 2004 (2004-06-17) page 6, line 4 - line 10 abstract page 7, line 7 - line 10 page 5, line 28 - line 30 -----	1-15
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Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C.

See patent family annex.

\* Special categories of cited documents :

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- "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
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Date of the actual completion of the international search  4 December 2012	Date of mailing of the international search report  11/12/2012
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ European Patent Office, P.B. 5818 Patentlaan 2 NL - 2280 HV Rijswijk Tel. (+31-70) 340-2040, Fax: (+31-70) 340-3016	Authorized officer  Schnitzhofer, Markus

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International application No  
PCT/EP2012/066239

C(Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
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A	abstract figures 1,6,7 page 8, line 5 - line 9	1-8, 10-15
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