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Cassava Processing:
Safety and Protein Fortification

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and Nutrition
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Doctoral Thesis
Cassava Processing:
Safety and Protein Fortification

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Abstract

Cassava (*Manihot esculenta* Crantz) is an important and cheap source of carbohydrate in tropical regions, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Cassava as a human food is a good source of energy as it has a comparable high energy density of about 610 kJ/100 g fresh root. The crop has growth advantages and production can take place in soil where other crops such as maize, sorghum and sweet potatoes cannot grow. In the region, cassava is used mainly by the farmers themselves as a subsistence crop because the fresh cassava roots have a short shelf-life (1 to 2 days) after harvest. Consequently, the manufacture of cassava-based industrial products may be of interest as a potential way of boosting the economic value of the crop.

Producing a valuable, nutritional and safe food from cassava involves certain challenges. Cassava has a poor protein content (1% fresh root weight) and contains cyanogenic glucosides that may cause intoxication. This thesis reports on work aimed at overcoming these negative aspects of cassava. The report begins by describing how cassava can be detoxified through processing. Secondly, we propose a new method to facilitate the control of residual toxic compounds in cassava products, and finally we describe a methodology for protein fortification of cassava products while preserving consumer-perceived textural properties.

The cyanogens in cassava are hydrolyzed into volatile free cyanide by allowing contact between the cyanogenic substances localized in the vacuoles of the cells with hydrolyzing enzymes in the cell walls. This can be achieved by damaging the cells mechanically or by fermentation. Studies carried out in Nampula, Mozambique showed that heap fermentation of cassava roots may reduce toxic compounds by up to 96%. Another process used for the removal of toxic compound in cassava roots is shredding of roots, which is also an efficient detoxification method (98% reduction).

Assessment of toxic compounds in cassava products is of crucial importance but most existing methodologies have been shown to depend either on analytical equipment or on laborious and slow procedures. In this study, a simple cyanide detection sensor synthesized from Vitamin B12 is proposed. The new reagent detected the cyanide in seconds and has the advantages of being simple and not toxic.
If the economic value of cassava is to be increased, industrial production of cassava-based products is essential. In this study we chose to process cassava into the traditional product known as rale (a dry, pre-gelatinized and granulated product). Protein was added to this product to improve its nutritional value. Addition of protein to shredded cassava roots before roasting resulted in hard agglomerates, a feature that is undesirable for the product. Pre-treatment of protein suspension such as heating and reducing the pH changes the microstructure in such a way that a protein-fortified product could be obtained without properties that the consumer perceives as negative.
Popular summary

Cassava roots are quite rich in starch, like potatoes. It is produced mainly in tropical regions of the world, but as food crop it is of particular importance in Sub-Saharan Africa. Cassava has advantages as a crop; production can take place in low fertile soil, the yield is high, it is resistant to pests and survives droughts. However, cassava has also some disadvantages; fresh cassava roots deteriorate rapidly (2 day) after harvest, some type of cassava contains toxic substances and has poor protein content. If cassava is eaten without adequate pre-treatment, people may get intoxicated. In Africa cassava is used mainly by the farmers themselves as a subsistence crop. The farmers know the properties of their type of cassava and they commonly prefer to produce the cassava with high toxicity because it is more resistant to pests and wild animals cannot eat it. Usually cassava with toxic substances is bitter.

It is of interest to develop the agro-based economy in the rural areas to improve the people living conditions. Cassava-based industrial food products have a potential of boosting the local economy. For industrialization of cassava, it is necessary to know all the stages of cassava treatment for removal of toxic substances. Also it is important to have simple methods to control these substances. Due to low protein content in cassava it is also important to add protein from other crop to cassava products.

This thesis describes a possible development of the cassava processing in Mozambique, Africa. Several processes to remove toxic substances from cassava are described, including boiling, heap fermentation, extraction, sun drying and grating followed by roasting. All methods using grating appear to be most effective.

The methods of analysing toxic substances in cassava are complex and expensive, particularly in countries like Mozambique where technology is still developing. Thus, in this work we developed a method that would facilitate the analyses. The method is based on a reagent produced from vitamin B₁₂. The method can be used in all type of cassava products.

Another aspect of this thesis was to add soy protein to cassava product as a way to increase its nutritional value. The designed way by adding soy flour rich in protein to grated roots prior to roasting. The product obtained at first
place was hard and un-pleasant. It was found that this malfunction was due to a special starch in protein microstructure. Then the soy protein was treated in such way that this microstructure was avoided and replaced by a protein in starch structure and a softer and more attractive roasted cassava product was obtained.

Det är intressant att utveckla en landsbygdsindustri för förädling av kassava till livsmedel för avsalu eftersom lokalt företagande kan stärka ekonomin för fattiga människor på landsbygden. För att industrialisera tillverkning av livsmedel som bygger på kassava behöver man känna till effektiva metoder för avgiftning och man behöver kunna kontrollera effektiviteten av avgiftningen. Det är också bra om man kan tillverka livsmedel där kassavan kombineras med proteinrika livsmedelsingredienser.


När man tillsätter protein till kassava erhåller man en produkt med betydligt bättre näringsvärde. Receptet vi undersökte var ett kassava gryn som erhölls genom rostning av riven kassava. I receptet med hög proteinhalt tillsattes...
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List of Publications

This thesis is based on the following papers, which will be referred to in the text by their Roman numerals.


III. L. Tivana, J. Da Cruz Francisco, F. Zelder, B. Bergenståhl, P. Dejmek. Straightforward rapid spectrophotometric quantification of total cyanogenic glycoside in fresh and processed cassava products. Manuscript


V. L. D. Tivana, P. Dejmek, B. Bergenståhl. Effect of pH and soy flour heat treatment on texture and color of fortified roasted sheared cassava (*Manihot esculenta* Crantz) roots. Submitted to the *Starch/Stärk Journal*
The author’s contribution to the papers

I. Lucas Tivana designed the study, performed the fieldwork, designed the laboratory experiment with co-workers, evaluated the results and wrote the paper.

II. Lucas Tivana designed the study, performed the fieldwork then, with co-workers, evaluated the results and wrote most of the paper.

III. Lucas Tivana designed the study with co-workers, performed the experimental part, evaluated the results and wrote most of the paper.

IV. Lucas Tivana designed the study with co-workers, performed the experimental part and wrote most of the paper.

V. Lucas Tivana designed the study with co-workers, performed the experimental part, evaluated the results and wrote most of the paper.
1. Introduction

Cassava (*Manihot esculenta* Crantz) is a staple food in most tropical regions, and is grown over a range of climates and altitudes and on a wide variety of soils. Cassava is tolerant to drought; it is productive in poor soil where other staple crops cannot grow without intensive inputs (Bradbury and Holloway, 1988; Leihner, 2002). In Africa, the continent with the largest cassava production (53% of world production of 230 million tonnes in 2010; FAO, 2012), about 93% of the production is used as food (Nweke *et al*., 2002). The crop is an important source of carbohydrate for humans and animals, having higher energy density (610kJ/100g fresh weight) than other root crops, such as sweet potatoes (460 kJ/100g) and taro (490 kJ/100g) (Bradbury and Holloway, 1988). However, cassava has certain drawbacks: its tissues contain toxic cyanogenic compounds, it has a very low protein content (1-2% dw) and a very short shelf-life in fresh form of 1-3 days (Booth *et al*., 1974, Rickard, 1985; Westby, 2002). Regarding the toxic compounds, there are several plants that contain cyanogenic glycosides, for instance *Rosaceae* (including almonds, apples, cherries etc) and in some *Graminaceae* (sorghum), however cassava and sorghum are the most important staple foods that contain cyanogenic glycosides in eatable parts. It is believed that cyanogens protect the plant from attacks by some worms, arthropods and mammals, which is the main reason why the majority of farmers in Southern Africa prefer to grow the variety with high level of cyanogens, known, as bitter varieties (Bellotti and Riis, 1994, Vetter, 2000; Chiwona-Karltn and Mkumbira, 2000). The presence of cyanogenic glycosides in cassava tissues is related to illnesses that occur in populations where cassava is the staple food. These illnesses include tropical ataxic neuropathy, epidemic spastic paraparesis, also known as *konzo* (Rosling, 1986; Rosling, 1988; Nzwalo and Cliff, 2011), endemic goitre and cretinism (Delange *et al*., 1994). These problems have been reported in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nigeria and Mozambique (Bonmarin *et al*., 2002; Ernesto *et al*., 2002; Nhassico *et al*., 2008, Mlingi *et al*., 2011; Ciglenecki *et al*., 2011). Such illnesses occur when there are prolonged cyanide exposures associated with food shortage, social instability, under-nourishment and deficiency in some essential nutrients such as sulphur amino acids and iodine (Delange *et al*., 1994; Teles, 1995; Nzwalo and Cliff, 2011). The cassava roots need to be processed if these
negative aspects are to be overcome, and experienced cassava producers are aware of different ways and methods of processing cassava (Nyirenda et al., 2011). Scaling up of cassava processing into a food industry in Africa is still in its infancy, and investors are more interested in using cassava for bioethanol production (Haggblade et al., 2012). One of the aims of this project is to contribute to the work on developing cassava processing to an industrial scale in Africa and particularly in Mozambique. The project first describes some methods of cassava processing applied in Mozambique for detoxifying cassava roots, then reports on development of a method for rapid detection of cyanide, and finally develops a method of protein fortification in a well-known local cassava product.

1.1 Objectives:

To understand the mechanism of cassava root detoxification in local traditional processing of cassava roots as applied in Mozambique. The process of heap fermentation was monitored and simulated in laboratory scale (Paper I).

To evaluate the level of cyanogenic potential (CNp) in roasted shredded cassava roots, known locally as rale and similar to the product named garri in other parts of the world, using samples collected in Inhambane Province, Mozambique (Paper II).

To evaluate and develop a new method for determinations of cyanogenic potential in cassava and cassava products using a recently proposed cyanide sensor (Paper III).

To understand the microstructure formation and physical properties of rale agglomerate (Paper IV).

To identify and understand the effect of soy protein fortification on texture properties of rale (Paper V).
2. Production and importance of cassava

2.1 Ecology of cassava plant

Cassava is a tropical crop, a perennial shrub of the *Euphorbiaceae* family, distributed between latitudes 30° N and 30° S (Costa and Silva, 1992; Alves 2002). The ideal growth temperature range is 24 to 30°C (IITA, 1990) but it can tolerate temperatures ranging from 16 to 38°C. Cassava can grow in the semi-arid tropics with an annual rainfall less than 800 mm, but the ideal rainfall is 1000 to 1500 mm per year (Alves, 2002). Cassava can grow in low-nutrient soils where cereals and other crops do not grow. It grows well in sandy to light soils where the storage roots can develop easily. Cassava can tolerate soils with low pH (Islam *et al*., 1980). Soils with a superficial hard layer or with many stones are not suitable for cassava growth.

2.2 Production and utilization of cassava

The estimate total world cassava production in 2010 was 230 million tonnes according to FAO (2012), which is an increase of 25% since 2000. Table 1 summarises the most important cassava producing countries. In 2010, Nigeria produced 37 million tonnes, making it the world’s largest producer. In Africa, Mozambique was fifth in cassava production in 2010 with 5.7 million tonnes, after Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola and Ghana (FAO, 2012). The average world cassava yield in 2010 was estimated at 12.4 tonnes per ha. African countries present the lowest yields and Asian countries present the highest yields. Maximum yield was reported to be 34 tonnes per hectare in India (FAO, 2012). Data of cassava production per capita show how cassava is important in Africa. In 2010, Angola led the production per capita with 726 kg/person followed by Ghana with 563 kg/person, sufficient quantities to completely satisfy the need for food carbohydrate in the population of those countries.

According to Nweke *et al.* (2002), cassava plays five important roles in African development: famine-reserve crop, rural staple food, cash crop for both rural and urban households and, to a minor extent, raw material for feed and chemical industries. In South America, it is used mainly for animal feed (about one-third) followed by human consumption then starch production. In Asia, consumption of fresh roots and exportation to the European Union for use in animal feed are important, but its use for biofuel production is increasing (Almeida, 1995; Westby, 2002; Jansson *et al*., 2009). According to FAO statistics for 2010, cassava is the primary crop
produced in Mozambique, contributing more than 40% of the total food energy requirement (FAO, 2012).

**Table 1.** The major cassava producing countries in 2010 (data from FAO, 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Countries</th>
<th>Root production (x1000 tonnes)</th>
<th>Yield (tonnes/ha)</th>
<th>Production per capita (kg fresh weight)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fresh roots</td>
<td>dry weight*</td>
<td>Fresh roots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nigeria</td>
<td>37 500</td>
<td>13 100</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>24 500</td>
<td>8 600</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>23 900</td>
<td>8 400</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thailand</td>
<td>22 000</td>
<td>7 700</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. R. Congo</td>
<td>15 000</td>
<td>5 300</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>13 800</td>
<td>4 800</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghana</td>
<td>13 500</td>
<td>4 700</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>8 500</td>
<td>3 000</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>8 000</td>
<td>3 000</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>5 700</td>
<td>2 000</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>5 300</td>
<td>1 900</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>4 700</td>
<td>1 600</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanzania</td>
<td>4 400</td>
<td>1 500</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodia</td>
<td>4 200</td>
<td>1 500</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>4 000</td>
<td>1 400</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Estimated dry matter in fresh cassava roots was 35%
3. Chemical and nutritional composition of cassava

Cassava roots and cassava leaves are used for human consumption and animal feed (Buitrago 1990, Dahniya, 1994). The edible part of the root comprises about 85% of the total weight of the root (Alves, 2002). The general chemical composition of cassava roots and leaves is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Chemical composition of cassava roots and leaves (Buitrago, 1990; IITA, 1990)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient</th>
<th>Storage root</th>
<th></th>
<th>Leaves</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fresh weight basis (%)</td>
<td>Dry weight basis (%)</td>
<td>Fresh weight basis (%)</td>
<td>Dry weight basis (%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dry matter</td>
<td>35.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>28.00</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starch</td>
<td>30.21</td>
<td>85.10</td>
<td>16.23</td>
<td>39.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crude protein</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>6.80</td>
<td>24.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>1.30</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>6.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crude fibre</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>3.10</td>
<td>5.80</td>
<td>20.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ash</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1.70</td>
<td>6.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phosphorus</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cassava roots are rich in digestible carbohydrates, mainly starch. Cassava starch granules are mainly composed of two polysaccharides, amylose (20%) and amylopectin (80%) (Sandoval, 2008). Cassava starch is simple to extract from the roots, is a pure white in colour and is free from other components than other root and tuber crops (Moorthy, 2002). There is a large variation in sucrose content between cassava genotypes. In certain sweet varieties, sucrose constitutes up to 17% of total carbohydrates (Hendershot, 1972) but, generally, cassava roots have less than 1% free
sugars (Bradbury & Holloway, 1988). Cassava roots are low in protein and fat.

A comparison of the protein composition of cassava roots and other foods is shown in Table 3. Cassava root has less than the recommended minimum limit of almost all essential amino acids, except tryptophan. Cassava roots should be eaten along with other crops rich in essential amino acids to supplement the deficiency, such as vegetables, cereals, fish and meat. Cassava leaves are much richer in protein than the roots, although the leaf contains a lower proportion of methionine than the root protein (Eggum, 1970). The levels of all other essential amino acids in leaf protein exceed the FAO’s recommended reference patterns (Eggum, 1970; Okigbo, 1980; FAO, 1990). Cassava leaves are also consumed in many African countries (Achidi et al., 2005), but the cassava plant does not have leaves during the dry season and at low temperature (lower than 15°C) due to dormancy.

Table 3. Amino acids and protein content in cassava and other foods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amino acid</th>
<th>Cassava roots*</th>
<th>Potato*</th>
<th>Soyabean† (seeds)</th>
<th>cowpea*</th>
<th>FAO Reference patterns*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lysine</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>6.83</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threonine (Tyrosine+phenylalanine)</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valine</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>5.10</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tryptophan</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isoleucine (Methionine+cysteine)</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>3.82</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leucine</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total EAA</td>
<td>24.94</td>
<td>36.30</td>
<td>39.94</td>
<td>37.65</td>
<td>36.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total protein (% dw)</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EAA- essential amino acids
* Modification from FAO, 1990
† (Endres, 2001)
4. Cyanogenic glycosides in cassava and implications for human health

The major constraint in cassava roots as human food is the presence of toxic cyanogenic glycoside compounds in the tissues. Cassava tissues also contain the enzyme linamarase, which can hydrolyse cyanogenic glycoside but the enzyme is not located in the same cell compartments as the cyanogenic glycosides (Bruijn, 1971; Nweke, 1994; Teles, 1995). Cyanogenic glycosides are located inside vacuoles and the enzyme linamarase in the cell wall as shown in Figure 1 (Conn, 1994).

Disruption of cassava tissues initiates the hydrolysis of cyanogenic glycosides. Cyanogenic glycoside are leached from vacuole and come into contact with linamarase, a β-glucosidase, to produce acetone cyanohydrin from linamarin and 2-butanone cyanohydrin from lotaustralin (Conn, 1994). These cyanohydrins are unstable and decompose spontaneously to the corresponding ketones and hydrogen cyanide (HCN) at pH values above 5 and temperatures above 30°C. Cyanohydrin degradation (Figure 2) can also be catalysed by α-hydroxynitrile lyase, located in apoplastic space (White et al., 1994).

![Figure 1. Location of cyanogenic glycoside and the enzyme linamarase in the cell plant, adapted from Conn (1994)]
In all the tissues, with the exception of the seeds, cassava contains 4 to 5 cyanogenic glycosides (McMahon et al., 1995). The main ones are linamarin and lotaustralin in a ratio 97:7 (Teles, 1995). The concentrations of cyanogens vary in different varieties, between tissues in the same plant and even between compartments of the same tissue (Barrios and Bressani, 1967; Bruijn, 1971; Nambisan and Sundaresan, 1994; Wheatley and Chuzel, 1993, Burns et al., 2012) (Table 4). According to Bruijn (1971), cyanogen concentration in cassava roots, in the longitudinal direction, increases from insertion point on the plant to the root terminal and in the transverse direction, cyanogenic glycosides levels decrease from the external area to centre of the root. The knowledge of the distribution of cyanogenic glycosides in cassava roots is important for the sampling of roots.

![Diagram of linamarase and α-hydroxynitrile lyase](image)

**Figure 2.** Hydrolysis of linamarin, in 1) is β-glucosidase (linamarase)(pH=5.5), in 2) is α-hydroxynitrile lyase (pH≥5, Temp. ≥30). Adapted from Conn (1994)
Table 4. Total cyanogenic glycosides (CNp) in different tissues of the cassava plant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plant tissues</th>
<th>CNp (mg HCN/kg DW)</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roots parenchyma (pulp)</td>
<td>30-1200</td>
<td>Barrios and Bressani (1967)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-1300</td>
<td>Wheatley and Cruzel (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>160-700</td>
<td>Burns et al. (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>81-500</td>
<td>Nambisan and Sundaresan (1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roots cortex (peel)</td>
<td>50-770</td>
<td>Barrios and Bressani (1967)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>60-550</td>
<td>Wheatley and Cruzel (1993)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>800-1600</td>
<td>Burns et al. (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1800-1900</td>
<td>Nambisan and Sundaresan (1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaves</td>
<td>10-940</td>
<td>Barrios and Bressani (1967)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>400-800</td>
<td>Burns et al. (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1700-1900</td>
<td>Nambisan and Sundaresan (1994)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DW: dry weight

Cassava varieties are often described as being bitter or sweet by reference to the taste of fresh roots and this partly correlates with cyanogen concentrations (Chiwona-Karltn et al., 2004). Bitter varieties are associated with high concentrations of cyanogenic glycosides (> 100 mg/kg fresh weight) (Sundaresan et al., 1987; Nambisan and Sundaresan, 1994; Chiwona-Karltn et al., 2004). Sweet varieties have a high concentration of free sugars but it does not always follow that they have low concentrations of cyanogenic glycoside (Borges and Fukuda, 1989; King and Bradbury, 1995). However, bitter taste and high level of cyanogens can also be related to environmental stress conditions, such as drought, low soil fertility and pest attack (Bruijn, 1971).

The liberated HCN through the hydrolysis of cyanogenic glycosides is toxic. The HCN blocks the reduction of oxygen in the respiratory pathway (Nelson and Cox, 2008). The acute oral lethal dose of hydrogen cyanide (HCN) is 3 mg/kg body weight (Borges and Fukuda, 1989). The FAO/WHO (1991) recommended limit value for the safety of consumption
of cassava products is 10 mg HCN/kg and the acceptable limit in Indonesia is 40 mg HCN/kg (Damardjati et al., 1993). The acceptable intake can be compared with the lethal dose. Here it seems like the acceptable intake at meal is about 3 to 10% of the lethal dose assuming that a person with 50 kg of body weight would ingest 300g of cassava in one meal. Cases of fatal and acute intoxication related to cassava consumption have been reported. In 1887, the crew of Stanley’s remarkable expedition through central Africa (today the Democratic Republic of Congo), suffered from acute and fatal poisonings when they consumed bitter cassava roots without the extensive soaking as normally applied by local inhabitants (Manning, 1985). In Nampula-Mozambique, Ceara-Brasil and Nigeria, acute toxic effects after consumption of cassava meals have been reported (Mozambique Ministry of Health, 1984; Akintonwa et al., 1994; Teles, 1995).

Most common illness related to cassava consumption is due to prolong exposure to comparable low concentrations of cyanogens in ingested cassava products (Rosling, 1988; Nzwalo and Cliff, 2011. Residual cassava cyanogens, when ingested, are hydrolysed in the human digestive system. It is assumed that intestinal microbes hydrolyse the cyanogens (Teles, 1995). The HCN in the human body is metabolised to thiocyanate (McMahnon and Birnbaum, 1990). Figure 3 shows a scheme of the metabolism of cyanide to thiocyanate in the human body. The conversion of HCN to thiocyanate is catalysed by rhodanese and 3-mercaptopyruvate sulphur transferase (Westley, 1981; Vazques et al., 1987). These enzymes require sulphur, which is supplied from sulphur amino acids. The thiocyanate (SCN) is eliminated from the human body through urine and saliva (Figure 3). Deficiency in essential sulphur amino acids may enhance the risks in illnesses such as tropical ataxic neuropathy, epidemic spastic paraparesis, also known as konzo (Rosling, 1986; Rosling, 1988; Casadei et al., 1990; Nzwalo and Cliff, 2011).

Excessive levels of SCN may under a long term exposure lead to reduced iodine uptake, which in an iodine-deficient region may contribute to endemic goitre and cretinism (Bradbury and Holloway, 1988; Delange et al., 1994).

The cyanogenic glycoside levels can be reduced to acceptable levels that would not impose hazard to the consumer when the cassava roots are adequately processed. Also the diet pattern influences the risks. When cassava is eaten with other foods balancing the nutritional value by being rich in sulphuric amino acids, there is only a limited risk of intoxication.
Figure 3 Metabolism of cyanide to thiocyanate in the human body (from Rosling, 1994)
5. Cassava processing

Cassava roots are used for human food and animal feed in a large number of different products. Various processing methods are used to produce different food products, depending on locally available processing resources, local customs and preferences, and the most common are summarized in Table 5. Cassava processing improves palatability, increases shelf-life, facilitates transport and, most importantly, detoxifies cassava roots by removing cyanogens (Nweke, 1994; Westby, 2002; Nyirenda et al., 2011).

5.1 Boiling of the roots

Boiling is used in the processing of cassava roots in almost all countries where cassava is used as food. The cell structure during heating remains more or less intact until the cell membranes are destroyed around 60-70 °C. Then there is a small window until the enzyme is deactivated, between 60 and 80 °C. Thus, the enzymatic detoxification using boiling is limited. Thereby the main elimination way is extraction. The efficiency of cyanogen removal due to extraction is proportional to the ratio of cassava to water (Nambisan and Sundaresan, 1985). As consequences of this inefficiency boiling alone can only be used for sweet varieties (< 100 mg HCNeq/kg fresh weight) (Alves, 2002; Nyirenda et al., 2011). Boiled roots are usually eaten directly, fried or stewed with some spice to improve the taste.

5.2 Sun drying

Sun-dried products are the most common types of processed cassava products in Africa (Westby, 2002). The process involves peeling the cassava roots, chipping (or grating) and spreading on dried grass or on the roof of the houses for sun drying. The efficiency of removal of cyanogenic glycosides in this process depends somehow on the rate of moisture loss. Fast drying results in lower cyanogen removal, while slower rates of drying result in a higher reduction. More important is the degree of disruption of cellular tissues of the cassava roots. The disruption of the tissue and the cells is creating contact between cyanogenic glycosides and hydrolytic enzymes (Nambisan & Sundaresan, 1985; Essers et al., 1996). Processes
that promote high disruption of cassava roots such as grating and crushing before sun drying remove much of the cyanogenic glycoside (Cardoso et al., 2005). Dried roots are then milled to make a sticky porridge known as karakata in Mozambique.

Table 5. Most important cassava processing methods for food

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Processing method</th>
<th>Countries of use</th>
<th>Estimate CNp removal (%)</th>
<th>Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boiling of fresh roots</td>
<td>All country that use cassava as food</td>
<td>25-65</td>
<td>Nambisan &amp; Sundaresan (1985)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cardoso et al. (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun drying after chipping</td>
<td>Mostly African country</td>
<td>65-75</td>
<td>Cardoso et al. (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mlingi and Bainbridge (1994)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soaking in water (fermentation)/sun drying</td>
<td>Malawi, Tanzania, Zambia, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo</td>
<td>97-98</td>
<td>Nyirenda et al. (2011)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cardoso et al. (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heap fermentation/sun drying</td>
<td>Uganda, Tanzania, Mozambique</td>
<td>83-95</td>
<td>Essers et al. (1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Zvauya et al. (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grating/fermentation/roasting</td>
<td>West African countries, Mozambique</td>
<td>97-98</td>
<td>Cardoso et al. (2005)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Westby and Choo, (1994)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.3 Soaking of roots in water/Sun drying

Peeled cassava roots are soaked in water for 3-5 days, followed by sun drying. The process is reported to be the best for cyanogen removal (Westby, 2002; Cardoso et al., 2005). Nyirenda et al. (2011) reported that in Zambia, pre-sundried roots are also soaked in water for 3 to 14 days.
This type of fermentation is mostly used in areas where there is a sufficient supply of water, such as near a river or lake, and is common in countries such as Nigeria, Democratic Republic of Congo, Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi (Westby, 2002; Nyirenda et al., 2011). In soaked roots, microbial growth is essential because it disrupts the cellular tissues of roots, which has the combined effect of allowing cyanogenic glycosides to come in contact with linamarase (Westby and Choo, 1994). The fermentation of soaked roots to produce fufu is dominated by lactic acid bacteria with a decrease of pH during the fermentation (Westby and Twiddy, 1992).

5.4 Heap fermentation/Sun drying

Heap fermentation of cassava root products is common in Tanzania (Ndunguru et al., 1999), Uganda and Mozambique (Essers et al., 1995a). The process involves peeling of cassava roots, sun drying for 1 to 3 days, heaping and covering, fermentation, scraping off the mould mycelia, crushing into crumbs, sun drying, pounding and sieving into flour. Essers et al. (1995a) observed that the heap fermentation was dominated by mould mycelium growth of Neurospora sitophila, Geotrichum candidum and Rhizopus oryzae. Essers et al. (1995a) observed that the growth of moulds softens the roots by enzymatic degradation of cell wall of cassava tissues (Essers et al., 1995b). The degrading of tissue structures in the cassava roots enables contact between cyanogenic glycosides and linamarase. Heap fermentation of cassava roots followed by sun drying is capable of reducing the cyanogen levels up to 95% (Essers et al., 1995a).

5.5 Grating/fermentation/roasting

A combined process of grating (shredding) and fermentation of cassava roots is important in the processing of roots for many West African products, including roasted granules (garri), steamed granules (lattieke) from Côte d’Ivoire and some of the fermented pastes (agbelina and placali from Ghana and Côte d’Ivoire respectively) (Westby and Choo, 1994, Westby, 2002; Obilie et al., 2004). Shredded roots are also roasted in the south of Mozambique to produce rale (Francisco et al., 1992). The shredded cassava roots are allowed to ferment in sacks for 1-7 days, which encourages lactic acid fermentation. The pH after 3 days decreases from 6 to 4. The fermentation is dominated by lactic acid bacteria (Westby and Twiddy, 1992). Grating is important for the disruption of cellular tissues of
cassava roots. The process allows the reduction of roots to particle size of between 0.1 to 1 mm. The reduction of cassava tissues maximizes the hydrolysis of cyanogenic glycosides as they come in contact with linamarase. Lactic acid bacteria play only a limited role in cyanogen reduction (Westby and Choo, 1994). Lactic acid fermented products are reported to have significant remninant concentrations of cyanohydrin because pH decreases during fermentation and cyanohydrin is stable at low pH (Vasconcelos et al., 1990) (Figure 2).
6. Methods for the analysis of cyanogenic glycosides

The determination of total cyanogenic glycosides (cyanogenic potential) (CNp) in cassava products is of crucial importance. The development of new cassava varieties, new methods of cassava processing and new applications of cassava in food need the monitoring of cyanogenic potential. Cyanogenic potential (CNp) is defined as the concentration of cyanogenic glycosides and their break down products (cyanohydrins and hydrogen cyanide).

Many different methods have been developed to determine cyanogens in cassava. All methods of analysis of cyanogens in cassava involve mainly three steps: extraction of cyanogens from cassava, hydrolysis to cyanide and analysis of cyanide (Borges et al., 1993; Bradbury et al., 1994). Some of the most commonly used methods are described in Paper III. Unfortunately, until today all existing methodologies have been shown to be dependent either on analytical equipment and expensive reagents (Cook, 1978; O’Brien et al., 1991; Essers et al., 1993), or being laborious (Bradbury et al., 1991) and slow procedures (Saka et al., 1997; Bradbury et al., 1999).
Table 6. Common methods to measure the cyanogenic potential of cassava.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Advantages/disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Microdiffusion method (Saka et al., 1998)</td>
<td>550 mm, with extraction (γ = 500°) exchanger sheet, TN. Cyanide is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted.</td>
<td>Reaction enzyme is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted. Picric acid is toxic and explosive if not handled properly. Slow detection of cyanide. Complex and expensive sensor. Pyridine is toxic compound. The use of endogenous enzyme limit the method to fresh tissue. The steam distillation takes long time and is laborious. Risk of loss distillation takes long time, distillation takes long time. The stream leaves the steam. Cyanide is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picrate kits (Bradbury et al., 1999)</td>
<td>0.1M of H₃PO₄, filtration/centrifugation. Small amount of sample is used (no extraction).</td>
<td>Reaction enzyme is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted. Picric acid is toxic and explosive if not handled properly. Slow detection of cyanide. Complex and expensive sensor. Pyridine is toxic compound. The use of endogenous enzyme limit the method to fresh tissue. The steam distillation takes long time and is laborious. Risk of loss distillation takes long time, distillation takes long time. The stream leaves the steam. Cyanide is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acid hydrolysis (Bradbury et al., 1991)</td>
<td>0.1M of H₃PO₄, filtration/centrifugation. Addition of ethanol (25%) in gelatinized samples.</td>
<td>Reaction enzyme is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted. Picric acid is toxic and explosive if not handled properly. Slow detection of cyanide. Complex and expensive sensor. Pyridine is toxic compound. The use of endogenous enzyme limit the method to fresh tissue. The steam distillation takes long time and is laborious. Risk of loss distillation takes long time, distillation takes long time. The stream leaves the steam. Cyanide is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enzymatic assay (Essers et al., 1993)</td>
<td>0.1M of H₃PO₄, filtration/centrifugation. Enzymatic assay by Cooke (1978).</td>
<td>Hydrolysis of cyanogenic glycoside by Cooke (1978). Cyanide is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted. Picric acid is toxic and explosive if not handled properly. Slow detection of cyanide. Complex and expensive sensor. Pyridine is toxic compound. The use of endogenous enzyme limit the method to fresh tissue. The steam distillation takes long time and is laborious. Risk of loss distillation takes long time, distillation takes long time. The stream leaves the steam. Cyanide is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enzymatic assay (O'Brien et al., 1991)</td>
<td>0.1M of H₃PO₄, filtration/centrifugation.</td>
<td>Reaction enzyme is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted. Picric acid is toxic and explosive if not handled properly. Slow detection of cyanide. Complex and expensive sensor. Pyridine is toxic compound. The use of endogenous enzyme limit the method to fresh tissue. The steam distillation takes long time and is laborious. Risk of loss distillation takes long time, distillation takes long time. The stream leaves the steam. Cyanide is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Enzymatic assay by Cooke (1978)</td>
<td>0.1M of H₃PO₄, filtration/centrifugation.</td>
<td>Reaction enzyme is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted. Picric acid is toxic and explosive if not handled properly. Slow detection of cyanide. Complex and expensive sensor. Pyridine is toxic compound. The use of endogenous enzyme limit the method to fresh tissue. The steam distillation takes long time and is laborious. Risk of loss distillation takes long time, distillation takes long time. The stream leaves the steam. Cyanide is released in the exchanger, adsorbed in the exchanger, then eluted.</td>
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</table>
7. General discussion of the value of this work

7.1 Study of heap fermentation in Mozambique (Paper I)

Heap fermentation of cassava roots was investigated in Uganda by Essers et al., (1995a). They observed that heap fermentation may be an efficient route for detoxification of cassava roots. Then Zvauya et al., (2002) showed that the results may vary. According to Essers et al., (1995a) observations, mould is important for the enzymatic degradation of cell walls of the cassava roots and thereby enabling the hydrolysis of cyanogenic glycosides. They also reported that the pH during the heap fermentation was between 5.5 and 6.3, which is optimum for linamarase activity (Nok and Ikediobi, 1990). The high pH at the end of heap fermentation enhances the breakdown of cyanohydrin into volatile HCN, resulting in about 96% CNp removal. However, in Mozambique, Zvauya et al. (2002) reported that about 24% of 71 samples of cassava flour produced from roots that were heap fermented had values above 40 mg HCNeq/kg. Some samples had unacceptable values of about 140 mg HCNeq/kg and, in one of the locations, average values were 59±48 mg HCNeq/kg in heap-fermented samples.

In an attempt to understand the process of heap fermentation in Mozambique, the author of this report monitored the process carried out by three farmers located in Nacarao district, Nampula Province, Mozambique (Paper I). CNp values were determined in flour made from dried cassava roots with different time periods of heap fermentation. The average CNp concentration in cassava flour that was not heap fermented was about 160 mg HCNeq/kg while for flour from roots that were heap fermented for 72 hours was 23 mg HCN/kg. Both flours were prepared from fresh cassava roots with initial average CNp content of about 260 mg HCNeq/kg fresh weight. The CNp figures presented in Paper I are calculated on a fresh weight basis. During the drying process, about 60% of water evaporated, so the estimated CNp retention after a combination of heap fermentation and sun drying was about 4%, which is similar to results reported by Essers et al. (1995a).

Observation of the heap fermentation of batches showed that the fermentation is dominated by moulds. Mould growth starts on the surface
of root pulp that has been sliced or damaged. Two moulds were successfully isolated and identified (Figure 4). The isolated moulds were then used in the laboratory, where their spores were harvested and inoculated in cassava roots that were sliced differently, as shown in Figure 5.

![Image of moulds](image)

**Figure 4.** Isolated moulds in heap fermentation batches in rural farmhouses. *Rhizopus stolonifer* (a) and *Neurospora sitophila* (b). Scale bar corresponds to 2 cm

Results from inoculated roots confirm the observation from heap fermentation batches that the moulds grow better in the damaged cassava root pulp than on the surface of the root pulp. Mycelia of moulds can be observed in Figure 5, where the sliced roots show more mould mycelia on the cross-sectional surface of root pulp (internal part of the pulp) than in the external surface of the roots (where the peel was removed). Root pulp that was sliced longitudinally promoted rapid growth of mould mycelia due to the exposure of larger cross-sectional surface than root sliced only in transversal section. It is important to note that slicing the roots longitudinally before heap fermentation increases the level of CNp removal by heap fermentation. The reported high CNp values of cassava flour of heap fermented flour collected in Mozambique may result in weak growth of moulds in heaps due to the use of large cassava roots that were not sliced...
properly. The heap fermentation batches that were monitored and gave the 96% removal of CNp may not be representative of the method usually applied by the majority of farmers. The poor practice is especially common when the product is aimed for the market.

**Figure 5.** Cassava roots inoculated with *Rhizopus stolonifer* (a) and *Neurospora sitophila* (b). Upper roots (not sliced longitudinally), lower roots (sliced longitudinally). Scale bar corresponds to 2 cm.
7.2 Determination of cyanogenic potential of rale, a roasted shredded cassava root, in Inhambane Province, Mozambique (Paper II)

Roasted shredded cassava root, rale, is an important food product in the South part of Mozambique. Assessment of cyanogenic potential (CNp) in roasted shredded cassava root (rale) in Mozambique is limited, possibly because the product is produced in the southern part of Mozambique where no cases of illness relating to cassava consumption have been reported. This study presents CNp results for some rale samples collected from homes and local markets in three districts of Inhambane Province, Mozambique, namely Inhambane, Inharrime and Maxixe.

The production of rale in Mozambique comprises of grating of peeled roots (Figure 6a) followed by pressing the mass to remove the excess water (fermentation may occur) for 1 to 5 days (Figure 6b) and roasting of the shredded roots (Figure 6c). Shredding of the roots plays a very important role in disruption of cellular tissue of cassava roots and thereby reducing the CNp content (Westby and Choo, 1994). The process is faster than that of heap fermentation and most of the producers that commercialise their product combine pressing and fermentation in one day. From 56 rale samples collected, the CNp contents obtained were in the range 20 to 110 mg HCN/kg with an average of 41±16 HCN mg/kg. Figure 7 shows the distribution of CNp results for all samples. The results are higher than the average figures for CNp of 25±5 mg/kg in 30 samples in similar products in Port Harcourt, Nigeria reported by Adindu et al. (2003). Although the average figures for CNp in rale samples collected in Mozambique were higher than those of heap-fermented samples (34±33 mg/kg) reported by Zvauya et al. (2002), the process of grating and roasting results in faster detoxification than the heap fermentation process and it can be carried out hygienically without risk of contamination by pathogens such as fungus that can produce mycotoxins. Rale production processes in Mozambique differ from those of garri in West African countries in that the grated mass is not subjected to a long period of fermentation, sometimes not at all. The recent development of small-scale equipment such as an improved motorised press has shortened the process of rale production to less than a day. The disintegration of cellular tissue has strong impact than the fermentation. Westby and Choo (1994) stated that 95% of initial linamarin is hydrolysed within 3 hours after grating. Furthermore, the results showed that the concentration of residual cyanogens is highly dependent on the cassava varieties. CNp figures for rale from sweet varieties were about half
of those from bitter varieties. Some processors have produced rale from a mixture of sweet and bitter varieties, resulting in intermediate values.

**Figure 6.** Some steps of rale production. Shredding of the cassava roots (a), pressing of cassava root mass (b) and roasting of the shredded mass (c).

**Figure 7.** Distribution of the cyanogenic potential of all garri samples from Inhambane Province, Mozambique (Paper II).
7.3 Straightforward rapid spectrophotometric quantification of total cyanogenic glycoside in fresh and processed cassava products (Paper III)

Paper III described the development of procedures for rapid detection of cyanide by modifying the enzymatic method described by Essers et al. (1993). The modification is focused on the extraction procedure and the use of a new sensor for cyanide detection, but the hydrolysis process of cyanogens is similar to the traditional method for processed cassava products.

Recently Zelder (2008) developed a Co (III) -based (aquacyanocobyrinic acid) chemosensor (a derivate of vitamin B$_{12}$) that allows the detection of endogenous cyanide in plants and it was successfully evaluated in fresh cassava roots (Männel-Croisé et al., 2009). The aquacyanocobyrinic acid chemosensor (ACCA) is rapid (seconds) and selective to cyanide, with a colour change from orange (ACCA) to violet (dicyano-cobyrinic acid (DCCA) (Figure 8)

The (ACCA) sensor seems to be advantageous compared to other colorimetric reagents since it reacts with cyanide within seconds and detection does not interfere with common anions and biological material as demonstrated by Zelder (2008) and Männel-Croisé et al. (2009). Furthermore, the chemicals are non-toxic and the system is easy to handle (Zelder, 2008). In Paper III, we describe how the ACCA can be used in different cassava samples as a substitute for the complex sensor of Essers et al. (1993) but with easy and simple extraction procedures such as squeezing out the juice of cassava pulp into water.
Figure 8. Coordination mechanism of aquacyanocobynic acid to dicyano-cobyrinic acid adapted from Zelder (2008). Spectrum from experiment carried out in this study (modified from Paper III).

For samples such as fresh roots, where the endogen enzyme is active, the squeezing process means that the whole procedure takes only 20 minutes, and the reagents used are cheap buffers such as 0.1M of glycine (pH 9.5) and the ACCA sensor. For processed cassava roots such as rale or dried cassava flour, an external enzyme is required and can be easily obtained from the latex of cassava leaves (Haque & Bradbury, 1999; Nambisan, 1999) that is suspended in water with no need for further purification. A small sample of cassava flour is dispersed in water with an enzyme, hand shaken and then incubated for 5 minutes at a temperature 30 °C. Any appropriate aliquot can be used with a colour sensor. The only drawback is that the method still requires a spectrophotometer. The results of the ACCA sensor using samples extracted in either phosphoric acid (O.1M) or water had a strong correlation with results obtained from the phosphoric acid-extracted samples using the method of Essers et al. (1993).
7.4 Characterisation of the agglomeration of roasted shredded cassava (*Manihot esculenta* crantz) roots (Paper IV)

Another aim of this thesis was to formulate a nutritious product based on cassava roots using a well-known traditional form of cassava processing. This involved studying the physical properties in the microstructure of shredded and roasted cassava roots. The fermentation and its role for the detoxification as part of the processing of cassava roots into garri has been studied previously (Westby and Twiddy, 1992, Westby and Choo, 1994). However, the mechanism that drives the formation of *rale* agglomerates and the physical behaviour of *rale* agglomerate when reconstituted in water is little known. The understanding of these features may be important if the product needs to be fortified with other nutrients such as protein or in the design of processes for commercial production of *rale*. Samples of *rale* processed as described in Paper IV were used in the study.

The roasting of shredded cassava roots results in a pre-gelatinized product with properties such as significant swelling capacity, softness and without disintegration of the agglomeration neither when reconstituted in cold (room temperature) or hot water (90°C). These properties can be considered important for consumer appreciation, so it is important to preserve them if *rale* of greater nutritious quality is developed. The parameter used for the determination of these features was the texture. Along with taste, texture is a sensory property of largest importance in food and plays important role in the acceptability of a new product by specific groups of the population (Nishinari, 2004).

The measurement of texture of *rale* agglomerates was not an easy task using available texture probes, since the *rale* is made up of coarse particles. A type of specially designed extrusion cell to be used in the Stable Micro System Texture Analyser (SMS TAXTA2i) was designed as shown in Figure 9a. The force of extrusion was considered as a measure of the agglomerate strength of the *rale*. The measurement was carried out after the *rale* agglomerates had been dispersed and allowed to swell in distilled water at room temperature. The method was verified by suspending the *rale* in absolute alcohol and measuring the texture. As shown in Figure 9b, *rale* suspended in water could pass the net probe, while the *rale* that was
suspended in alcohol did not swell and resulted in a hard coarse substance that could not pass through the probe net.

![Figure 9](image1.png)

**Figure 9.** Apparatus system (a) for the determination of extrusion force (b) of swollen rale samples.

The results for texture of rale agglomerates were compared with the results of shredded flour that had been sun dried (without pregelatinization of starch). Rale agglomerates suspended in water at a temperature range of 30 to 90 °C swelled and the agglomerates could be extruded through probe net. The softness of rale was temperature dependent (Figure 10i). Non-gelatinized shredded flour could only be extruded when dispersed at temperature above 70 °C (Figure 10ii). When both sample dispersions were heated at 90 °C, rale agglomerate remain coarse while non gelatinized flour was almost solubilised. Since the starch comprises amylose and amylopectin, which both are leaches out during the roasting process, the remaining question was which molecule that was responsible for binding the starch granulates and rendering them resistance against disintegration even when dispersed in hot water (90°C). A modelling experiment using agglomerated glass beads as a model of the rale and using either amylose
or amylopectin as a binder. The results showed that the amylose agglomerated glass beads resisted the disintegration while the amylopectin agglomerated glass beads did not provide stable agglomerates when they were re-suspended in hot water. Consequently, the model experiment suggests that in the *rale*, amylose was the component responsible for binding and stabilizing the *rale* starch agglomerates when dispersed in hot water.

![Figure 10](image)

**Figure 10.** Texture analysis. i) extrusion force curves of *rale* swollen in water, ii) comparison of maximum force in extrusion of *rale* (R) and non-pre-gelatinized shredded flour (NR). Adapted from **Paper IV**
7.5 Effect of pH and soy flour heat treatment on texture and colour of fortified roasted sheared cassava (*Manihot esculenta* Crantz) roots (Paper V)

Fortification of *rale* with protein may enhance the nutritious quality of the product by changing the starch protein ratio since cassava roots are very poor in protein (about 1% fresh weight). However, this may also affect the physical properties, so in this thesis the influence of protein fortification on *rale* was studied. The reason for using *rale* is that the product has advantages over other products, e.g. the processing procedure is relatively more hygienic and detoxifies the cassava; the roasting process of the shredded mass allows fast drying of material and at the same time the material is pre-gelatinized, making the product ready to eat. Another advantage of the process is the long shelf-life of *rale* (Falade and Akingbala, 2010); if it is hygienically stored, *rale* can be preserved for more than a year without dramatic change in its sensory properties (Ikenebomeh, 2005). Focusing on protein fortification of *rale* the study described in Paper V was carried out. The source of protein used to fortify *rale* was soybean flour.

Protein is usually added to food to improve the texture rather than to provide nutritional fortification, but in recent years, protein or certain amino acids are added to food, particularly cereals, in order to enhance nutritional value. Soya beans (*Glycine max*) are recognised as the main source of protein for food fortification as it is highly available, relatively cheap and that the production is sustainable (Hoogenkamp, 2005; Subbulakshmi and Udipi, 2006). Soybean protein has slightly less digestibility compared to animal proteins (Sugano, 2005). The proteins are mostly globulins, the storage proteins, and are divided into two proteins: glycinin, also called 11S, and β-conglycinin also known as 7S (Sugano, 2005). Glycinin comprises about 60 to 70% of the globulin protein (Kinsella, 1979, Sugano, 2005). Glycinin is more nutritionally valuable than β-conglycinin because it has more methionine and cysteine (Sugano, 2005). Soybean protein has a higher nutritional value than cassava root protein, so it can be used as protein fortification in cassava products. Several studies have reported on protein fortification of cassava products using soy flour, e.g. cassava flour (Muoki et al. 2012) and garri (Sanni and Sobamiwa, 1994; Osho, 2003; Ugwu and Odo, 2008). Muoki *et al.*, 2012 reported that a complementary porridge made through extrusion of a
mixture of cassava flour and soy flour had acceptable sensory properties. Others studies, based in sensory evaluation by panels, show that the acceptability of garri fortified with soy flour is not statistically different from that of commercial garri (Osho, 2003; Ugwu and Odo, 2008). However, the effect on microstructure and texture by soy protein fortification in *rale* has not yet been studied. It is known that the addition of soybean protein in common starch food affect the rheological properties of the food and a weakening of the starch gel as a consequence of presence of proteins has been observed (Ribotta, et al., 2007).

Sun-dried shredded cassava root flour (CF) was used to simulate *rale* fortified with soy protein. The preparation of CF is described in Paper IV. Three types of soy flour were used: toasted soy flour (TSF), isolate soy protein (ISP) and defatted soy flour (DSF). First the soy flour was dispersed in water using a planetary mixture, and then CF was added to the soy dispersion until agglomerate was formed that was then roasted in a pan. The ratio of soy flour to CF was adjusted so that the final mixture contained about 15% protein, bearing in mind that cassava contains only 1% protein. The main parameter measured to characterize the protein-fortified *rale* was texture, by measurement of the extrusion force as described in Paper IV.

The main finding was that adding protein to *rale* resulted in a harder *rale* agglomerate, as shown in Figure 11a. Light microscopy observation of *rale* stained for protein with Coomassie Brilliant Blue, showed that the *rale* fortified with soy flour without any pre-treatment appeared to be surrounded by protein at the natural pH (pH 6.5). However pre-treatment of soy flour dispersion to promote maximal aggregation of protein reducing the solubility of protein, such as pre-boiling of soy flour at pH 4.5 resulted in *rale* with a similar texture to that of a commercial product, as shown in Figure 11b. The microscopy observation shows that the protein patches appeared to be surrounded by starch. These results support the finds by Quiroga and Bergenståhl (2008) that in the mixture of amylopectin and protein may switch from protein in amylopectin to amylopectin in protein depending on the mixing ratios and solubility. Figure 10c illustrates models of the *rale* system based on light microscopic observations, demonstrating a matrix of hard *rale* where starch granules are surrounded by non-granular starch leached from granules with more continuous protein domains and soft *rale* where continuous non-granular starch leached from starch granules with isolated dense protein domains.
Regarding to colour, there was a slight difference between the colour of the CF and the *rale* as a result of the Maillard reactions that occur during roasting. The brown colour of fortified *rale* was more pronounced with soy flour fortification, but the colour seemed to be more affected by the colour of the soy flour than by reactions during roasting.

**Figure 11.** Effect of soy flour addition on the extrusion force of swollen *rale* in water at 30°C. a) Soy flour dispersion at pH 6.5, b) soy flour dispersion at pH 4.5, boiled. Commercial *rale* (—), TSF-*rale* (--), ISP-*rale* (-----), DSF-*rale* (-----). C) Proposed system model for hard *rale* (starch in protein) and soft *rale* (protein in starch). Adapted from Paper V
8. Conclusions

A conclusion from the observations of heap fermentation of cassava roots in Mozambique is that the moulds responsible for breaking down the cassava cellular tissues, allowing the cyanogenic glycosides in the vacuoles to be hydrolysed by the enzymes in the cell walls. Inoculation of cassava roots with isolated moulds resulted in faster softening of longitudinally-sliced cassava roots compared to the roots only cut transversally. The longitudinally slicing increase the surface of the cross-section of the roots, which promote the growth of moulds. The degree of softness depends on the type of mould strain; in this study, Rhizopus stolonifer softened the cassava roots more than Neurospora sitophila, so further research is necessary under controlled fermentation conditions, which can be easily adopted at rural household level.

Assessment of the cyanogenic potential of rale produced in Mozambique, shows that the levels are higher than those recommended by FAO/WHO. The level of cyanogen in rale is significantly influenced by cassava variety. Further studies aiming to improve the removal of cyanogenic glycoside during rale production in Mozambique is highly recommended. The method of detecting cyanide by spectrophotometer, using aquacyanocobyrinic acid as a sensor, is simple. It can be used for water-extracted samples for immediate analyses as well as for phosphoric acid-extracted samples if the samples need to be stored. The cyanide measurement can also be carried out using a drop of juice squeezed from cassava pulp or small amount of cassava flour in water, without need for centrifugation. The usual enzymatic activity of the cassava leaf latex extract is sufficient to perform the assay on processed cassava.

A study of the physical characterization of rale could conclude that the product may be described as pre-gelatinized and agglomerated cassava flour with 95% of starch gelatinized. Roasting is needed to agglomerate the structure. Rale has a rapid swelling and the structure remains stable, avoiding complete disintegration in water at high temperature. The softness of swollen rale is temperature dependent. In the rale, amyllopectin contributes to the swelling of starch. Leaching of amylose, followed by retrogradation, leads to limited swelling of rale and the formation of agglomerates stable up to 90°C. Comparisons with model experiment using
glass beads coated with amylose and amylpectin indicated that retrograded amylose is necessary for formation of agglomerates stable in hot water. The textural properties of starch are important for consumer appreciation of the product. The rapid softening as well as the non-disintegration of agglomerates particles during swelling is usually appreciated by the *rale* consumers, thus we can expect that these features need to be preserved when *rale* is reformulated in order to improve its nutritional value.

Cassava roots can be fortified by adding soy flour during the processing of cassava into *rale*. However, our results shows that the fortification with soy protein led to changes in colour and texture of the swollen *rale* agglomerates. The protein tends to interact with the cassava starch in different ways, depending on the source and pre-processing, which had different effects on the hardness of the swollen *rale* agglomerates. Conditions expected to cause maximal aggregation of the protein, either during soy flour processing or in pre-treatment before roasting, such as boiling at pH 4.5, had the least detrimental effect on *rale* texture. All kinds of fortification had discernible effects on the colour of *rale*, converting it towards darker, brownish hues. Based on these results, we believe that soy protein fortification of *rale* can be achieved with minimal effects on texture by a suitable choice of pre-treatment of the raw soy material, but the choice of raw material should be guided by consumer preferences regarding colour of the finished product.
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