

Evidence that lanthanum ions stimulate calcium inflow to isolated hepatocytes

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LaCl_3 stimulated the initial rate of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange measured under steady-state conditions in isolated liver cells. $\text{Cu}^{2+} > \text{La}^{3+} = \text{Fe}^{3+} > \text{Fe}^{2+} = \text{Zn}^{2+} > \text{Ni}^{2+} > \text{Mn}^{2+}$ also stimulated $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange. Compartmental analysis of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -exchange curves obtained in the presence or absence of La^{3+} , and in the presence or absence of adrenaline, showed that the predominant effect of La^{3+} is to stimulate the inflow of Ca^{2+} to the cell from the medium. No evidence for an inhibition of Ca^{2+} outflow from the cell was obtained. In the presence of La^{3+} , adrenaline caused no further stimulation of Ca^{2+} inflow to the cell. In the absence of adrenaline, La^{3+} increased the uptake of Ca^{2+} (measured by atomic-absorption spectroscopy) by isolated hepatocytes incubated at 1°C . The proposal that La^{3+} stimulates Ca^{2+} inflow to the liver cell by inducing a conformational change in the Ca^{2+} -inflow transporter of the plasma membrane is briefly discussed.

The distribution of exchangeable Ca^{2+} in isolated hepatocytes has been studied in this laboratory by using $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -exchange techniques (Barritt & Parker, 1980; Barritt *et al.*, 1981). Two kinetically distinct compartments of exchangeable cellular Ca^{2+} were detected. These were identified as a slowly exchangeable compartment, which includes Ca^{2+} present in the mitochondria and endoplasmic reticulum (cf. Claret-Berthon *et al.*, 1977), and a rapidly exchangeable compartment, tentatively identified as exchangeable Ca^{2+} in the cytoplasm. Analysis of data obtained in the presence of adrenaline or phenylephrine showed that each of these agents stimulates both Ca^{2+} inflow to the cell from the extracellular medium (cf. Assimacopoulos-Jeannet *et al.*, 1977; Keppens *et al.*, 1977; Foden & Randle, 1978) and Ca^{2+} outflow from the mitochondria and (possibly) other intracellular organelles (Barritt *et al.*, 1981).

The aim of the present experiments was to use La^{3+} ions to investigate the transport of Ca^{2+} across the plasma membrane of liver cells and the nature of the effect of adrenaline on this process. It has been shown that La^{3+} ions displace Ca^{2+} bound to superficial sites on the plasma membranes of a large number of cells (reviewed by Weiss, 1974), inhibit the activity of the ($\text{Ca}^{2+} + \text{Mg}^{2+}$)-dependent ATPase enzymes in plasma-membrane preparations from erythrocytes (Schatzmann & Bürgin, 1978) and adipocytes (Pershad Singh & McDonald, 1980), and

at high concentrations inhibit Ca^{2+} outflow from cells catalysed by the $\text{Na}^+/\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange transporter (Katzung *et al.*, 1973; Baker, 1978). However, in the present investigation no evidence for an inhibition by La^{3+} of the outward movement of Ca^{2+} across the liver cell plasma membrane was obtained. Instead, the unexpected observation that La^{3+} stimulates the inflow of Ca^{2+} to the liver cell was made. This appears to be the first time that a stimulation by La^{3+} of Ca^{2+} inflow to any cell type has been documented. Moreover, the observation that $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange is also stimulated by Cu^{2+} , Ni^{2+} and Mn^{2+} as well as by La^{3+} may be of considerable importance in connection with the ability of these ions to mimic some of the actions of insulin on cells (Saggerson *et al.*, 1976; Schimmel, 1978). In the present paper, evidence indicating that La^{3+} stimulates Ca^{2+} inflow to the liver cell is presented, and the implications of this observation are briefly discussed.

Experimental

Chemicals

LaCl_3 was obtained from E. Merck, Darmstadt, Federal Republic of Germany. Analytical-grade CuCl_2 , ZnCl_2 , NiCl_2 , CoCl_2 , SrCl_2 , FeCl_3 , FeSO_4 and MnCl_2 were purchased from Ajax Chemicals, Auburn, N.S.W., Australia. All other reagents were

purchased from the sources described previously (Barritt *et al.*, 1981).

$^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange

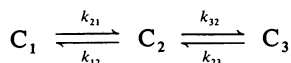
The isolation of parenchymal cells from the livers of fed rats, assessment of their integrity, including measurement of the amount of lactate dehydrogenase released from the cells, and the measurement of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange by isolated hepatocytes under steady-state conditions were performed as described previously (Barritt *et al.*, 1981). The incubation medium contained, in a final volume of 6.0 ml, 117 mM-NaCl, 4.7 mM-KCl, 1.2 mM- KH_2PO_4 , 1.2 mM- MgSO_4 , 24 mM- NaHCO_3 and 20 mM-Tes (2-[2-hydroxy-1,1-bis(hydroxymethyl)ethyl]amino)ethanesulphonic acid)/KOH, 1.3 mM- CaCl_2 , other additions as indicated, and hepatocytes [30 mg wet wt. (2×10^6 cells)/ml]. The final pH of the medium was 7.4. Before initiation of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange, the cells were preincubated in this incubation medium (in the presence of 1.3 mM- CaCl_2 , metal salts and/or adrenaline, when present) for 15 min before the addition of tracer quantities of $^{45}\text{CaCl}_2$ (0.3 MBq, 16 nmol of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ per 6 ml). The amount of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ associated with the cells was measured after centrifugation through LaCl_3 and silicone oil, as described previously (Barritt *et al.*, 1981).

LaCl_3 (2.3 mM) was included in the wash medium [150 mM-NaCl/7% (w/v) bovine serum albumin] to which the cells were briefly exposed before centrifugation through silicone oil in order to displace $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ from superficial binding sites (Assimacopoulos-Jeannet *et al.*, 1977; Barritt *et al.*, 1981). However, in other experiments in which $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange was measured (1.3 mM extracellular Ca^{2+}) at either 2°C or 37°C with La^{3+} present in the NaCl/bovine serum albumin wash medium, the amounts of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ associated with the cells at times between 0.5 and 4 min after the initiation of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange were found to be the same as those observed when La^{3+} was omitted from the wash medium (G. J. Barritt, unpublished work).

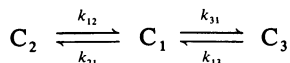
Fits of the exponential eqn. (1):

$$q_4 = q_{41} - q_{42} \cdot e^{-\lambda_2 t} - q_{43} e^{-\lambda_3 t} \quad (1)$$

where q_4 is the quantity of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ associated with the cells and q_{41} , q_{42} , q_{43} , λ_2 and λ_3 are constants, and the series



and parallel



configurations of a three-compartment closed system to the data were performed by using a non-linear

iterative curve-fitting procedure as described previously (Barritt *et al.*, 1981). Definitions of the symbols and kinetic parameters employed are as follows. C_1 represents exchangeable Ca^{2+} in the extracellular medium, and C_2 and C_3 the two compartments of exchangeable Ca^{2+} associated with

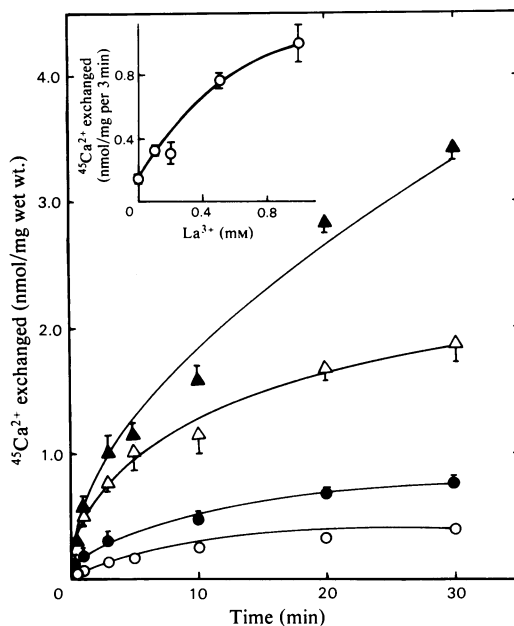


Fig. 1. Effects of increasing concentrations of La^{3+} on $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange by isolated hepatocytes

Hepatocytes were incubated in the presence of 1.3 mM-extracellular Ca^{2+} in the absence (○) or presence of (●) 0.2 mM-, (△) 0.5 mM- or (▲) 1.0 mM- LaCl_3 for 15 min before initiation of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange by the addition of tracer amounts of $^{45}\text{CaCl}_2$. The composition of the incubation medium and measurement of the amount of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ associated with the cells were as described in the Experimental section. The values are the means \pm s.e.m. for six (no LaCl_3) and four (0.2 mM- and 0.5 mM- LaCl_3) separate determinations for each time point, or the means of two separate determinations (1.0 mM- LaCl_3). The lines were drawn from a fit of the data by eye. The inset shows the quantity of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchanged at 3 min as a function of the La^{3+} concentration. The observed amount of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchanged at 3 min in the presence of 0.1 mM- La^{3+} is taken from the data of Fig. 2. The curve was drawn from a fit of the data to the Michaelis-Menten equation in which the values for the rate of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange in the absence of La^{3+} , the maximum rate of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange in the presence of saturating concentrations of La^{3+} , and K_m (the concentration of La^{3+} that gives half-maximal stimulation of the rate of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange) are 0.15 and 1.43 nmol/3 min per mg wet wt. and 0.7 mM, respectively.

the cell. Q_1 , Q_2 and Q_3 (nmol/mg wet wt.) represent the quantities of exchangeable Ca²⁺ in these three compartments respectively. The fractional transfer rate (rate constant) for the transfer of Ca²⁺ from compartment j to compartment i is represented by k_{ij} (min⁻¹) and the flux of Ca²⁺ between these compartments by R_{ij} (nmol/min per mg wet wt.).

Ca²⁺ uptake at 1°C

The composition of the incubation medium (12 ml final volume) was the same as that described above. Hepatocytes isolated as described previously (Barritt *et al.*, 1981), i.e. in the absence of added Ca²⁺, were equilibrated with the incubation medium in the absence of added Ca²⁺ and in the presence or absence of LaCl₃ for 3 min at 1°C. Ca²⁺ uptake was initiated by the addition of CaCl₂ (1.3 mM final concn.) at $t = 0$ min (cf. Hinnen *et al.*, 1979). At the times indicated in Fig. 3, samples (2.0 ml) of the incubation medium were removed, added to 11 ml of 150 mM-NaCl/7% (w/v) bovine serum albumin/2.3 mM-LaCl₃ (Assimacopoulos-Jeannet *et al.*, 1977) at 0°C, centrifuged at 500 g for 1 min, the supernatant was removed by aspiration, and the tubes were inverted and allowed to drain for 2 h. The amount of Ca²⁺ present in the cell pellet was determined by atomic-absorption spectroscopy as described previously (Barritt *et al.*, 1981). The amount of Ca²⁺ present in cells before exposure to 1.3 mM extracellular Ca²⁺ was also measured and subtracted from that observed after initiation of Ca²⁺ uptake, in order to determine the net amount of Ca²⁺ accumulated by the cells.

Results

Concentrations of LaCl₃ within the range 0.2–

1.0 mM stimulated ⁴⁵Ca²⁺ exchange in isolated liver cells (Fig. 1). Half-maximal stimulation was observed at 0.7 mM-La³⁺ (Fig. 1, inset). Cu²⁺, Fe³⁺, Fe²⁺, Zn²⁺, Ni²⁺ and Mn²⁺ also stimulated ⁴⁵Ca²⁺ exchange (Table 1). Moreover, 75 μM-Cu²⁺ gave a greater degree of stimulation than that observed in the presence of 250 μM-La³⁺ (Table 1).

In order to determine which cellular Ca²⁺-transport processes were affected by La³⁺, ⁴⁵Ca²⁺-exchange data for cells incubated with 1.3 mM extracellular Ca²⁺ in the presence or absence of 0.1 mM-La³⁺ were obtained and subjected to kinetic analysis. Similar experiments and analysis were also performed for cells treated with adrenaline. It was first established that incubation of the cells in the presence of 0.1 mM-La³⁺ for the duration of the ⁴⁵Ca²⁺-exchange experiments (60 min) caused no damage to the cells as assessed by light microscopy, the proportion of cells that excluded Trypan Blue, the intracellular ATP concentrations and the quantity of lactate dehydrogenase released during the incubation (results not shown).

La³⁺ increased both the initial rate and the plateau of the ⁴⁵Ca²⁺-exchange curve (Fig. 2). In the presence of 0.1 mM-La³⁺, adrenaline caused no additional stimulation of the initial rate of ⁴⁵Ca²⁺ exchange (Fig. 2). A fit of exponential equations to each of the four sets of data (Fig. 2) established that eqn. (1), which contains two exponential terms, is the simplest equation that is consistent with the data. This indicates that a minimum of two compartments of exchangeable Ca²⁺ are associated with the cells (Barritt *et al.*, 1981). Both the series and the parallel configurations of these cellular compartments of exchangeable Ca²⁺ (see the Experimental section) were found to be consistent with each set of

Table 1. Effects of various metal ions on ⁴⁵Ca²⁺ exchange by isolated hepatocytes measured under steady-state conditions

The composition of the incubation medium and measurement of the quantity of ⁴⁵Ca²⁺ exchanged at 3 min were as described in the legend of Fig. 1. The metal ions were added as the chloride salt, with one exception, FeSO₄. The values are the means ± s.e.m. for the numbers of separate determinations indicated in parentheses. Degrees of significance were determined by using Student's *t* test for unpaired samples: N.S., not significant ($P > 0.05$).

Metal ion	Concn. (μM)	⁴⁵ Ca ²⁺ exchanged at 3 min (nmol/mg wet wt. of cells)	Significance
None		0.16 ± 0.01 (16)	—
La ³⁺	250	0.59 ± 0.04 (12)	$P < 0.001$
Cu ²⁺	25	0.21 ± 0.02 (2)	N.S.
	50	0.38 ± 0.02 (4)	$P < 0.02$
	75	1.08 ± 0.05 (2)	$P < 0.001$
	100	2.69 ± 0.39 (4)	$P < 0.001$
Fe ³⁺	250	0.54 ± 0.02 (6)	$P < 0.001$
Fe ²⁺	250	0.32 ± 0.02 (4)	$P < 0.001$
Zn ²⁺	250	0.31 ± 0.01 (6)	$P < 0.001$
Ni ²⁺	250	0.21 ± 0.01 (6)	$P < 0.001$
Mn ²⁺	250	0.21 ± 0.01 (4)	$P < 0.001$
Co ²⁺	250	0.18 ± 0.01 (4)	N.S.
Sr ²⁺	250	0.15 ± 0.01 (2)	N.S.

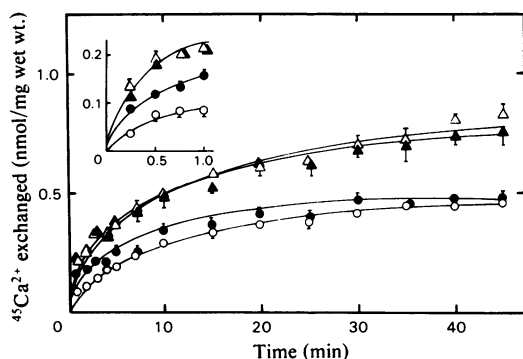


Fig. 2. Effect of 0.1 mM- La^{3+} on $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ -exchange curves obtained under steady-state conditions in the presence or absence of adrenaline

Isolated hepatocytes were incubated for 15 min in the presence of 1.3 mM- CaCl_2 and in the presence (●, ▲) or absence (○, △) of 0.1 μM -adrenaline and in the presence (△, ▲) or absence (○, ●) of 0.1 mM- LaCl_3 before initiation of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchange. The composition of the incubation medium and measurement of the amounts of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ associated with the cells were as described in the Experimental section. Each point is the mean \pm S.E.M. for 7–12 separate determinations. The inset shows the quantities of $^{45}\text{Ca}^{2+}$ exchanged during the first 1 min of the exchange curve. The lines were drawn by using the values of the constants (Table 2) obtained for a fit of the series configuration of three compartments of exchangeable Ca^{2+} to the data. Similar lines of best fit were obtained for a fit of the parallel configuration to the data.

data (Fig. 2, Table 2). The numerical values obtained for a fit of the series configuration are shown in Table 2. The fractional standard deviations of the constants obtained for a fit of the parallel configuration to the data were similar in magnitude to those for the series configuration (results not shown).

Consideration of the results obtained for a fit of the series configuration to the data of Fig. 2 shows that La^{3+} caused an increase in the size of both compartments of exchangeable Ca^{2+} (Table 2). This was associated with an increase of almost 300% in the flux (R_{21}) between the small compartment and the medium. The flux between the large compartment and the small compartment (R_{32}) was only slightly increased. In the presence of La^{3+} , the fractional transfer rate, k_{21} , for the transfer of Ca^{2+} from the medium to the small compartment was increased by about 250%. By comparison, changes in the other fractional transfer rates were much smaller (<70% of the control value). In the presence of La^{3+} , adrenaline caused no additional increase in the flux R_{21} or fractional transfer rate k_{21} . Similar conclusions about the observed changes in kinetic parameters are reached when the results obtained for a fit of the parallel configuration to the data of Fig. 2 are considered (results not shown).

La^{3+} stimulated both the initial rate and extent of Ca^{2+} uptake at 1°C by cells which had previously been maintained in a medium nominally free of Ca^{2+} (Fig. 3). The initial rate of Ca^{2+} uptake was increased by about 3.6- and 6-fold in the presence of

Table 2. Effect of La^{3+} on the kinetic parameters obtained for a fit of the series configuration of three compartments of exchangeable Ca^{2+} in the absence and presence of adrenaline

The series configuration (see the Experimental section) was fitted to the data of Fig. 2 (7–12 separate determinations at each time point), obtained at 1.3 mM extracellular Ca^{2+} , as described in the Experimental section. The values \pm S.D. of each parameter are shown. The quantity of exchangeable Ca^{2+} in compartment 1 (Q_1), the medium, was 42 nmol/mg wet wt. The fractional transfer rate (rate constant) for the transfer of Ca^{2+} from compartment j ($j = 1, 2, \text{ or } 3$) to compartment i ($i = 1, 2, \text{ or } 3$) is represented by k_{ij} (min^{-1}), and the flux of Ca^{2+} between these compartments by R_{ij} (nmol/min per mg wet wt.). The degrees of significance for comparison of the value under test with the control (no La^{3+} or adrenaline), assessed by the t test described by Boxenbaum *et al.* (1974), were: * $P < 0.05$; ** $P < 0.001$.

	No adrenaline		Adrenaline present	
	No La^{3+}	La^{3+} present	No La^{3+}	La^{3+} present
Fluxes (nmol/min per mg)				
R_{21}	0.25 ± 0.10	$0.89 \pm 0.25^*$	$0.58 \pm 0.12^*$	0.57 ± 0.07
R_{32}	0.03 ± 0.01	0.04 ± 0.01	0.03 ± 0.004	0.03 ± 0.01
Fractional transfer rates (min^{-1})				
k_{21}	$0.59 \pm 0.23 (\times 10^{-2})$	$2.1 \pm 0.6 (\times 10^{-2})^*$	$1.4 \pm 0.3 (\times 10^{-2})^*$	$1.4 \pm 0.2 (\times 10^{-2})$
k_{12}	3.0 ± 1.8	4.3 ± 1.6	4.2 ± 1.2	2.3 ± 0.4
k_{23}	$8.3 \pm 1.3 (\times 10^{-2})$	$6.4 \pm 1.2 (\times 10^{-2})$	$7.8 \pm 1.3 (\times 10^{-2})$	$5.9 \pm 1.7 (\times 10^{-2})$
k_{32}	0.40 ± 0.14	0.20 ± 0.05	0.21 ± 0.05	0.13 ± 0.04
Compartment sizes (nmol/mg)				
Q_2	0.08 ± 0.02	$0.20 \pm 0.02^{**}$	$0.14 \pm 0.02^*$	0.25 ± 0.02
Q_3	0.39 ± 0.02	$0.65 \pm 0.04^{**}$	0.36 ± 0.02	0.56 ± 0.06
Weighted sums of squares [(nmol/mg) 2]				
	1.63×10^{-3}	2.94×10^{-3}	7.74×10^{-3}	3.31×10^{-3}

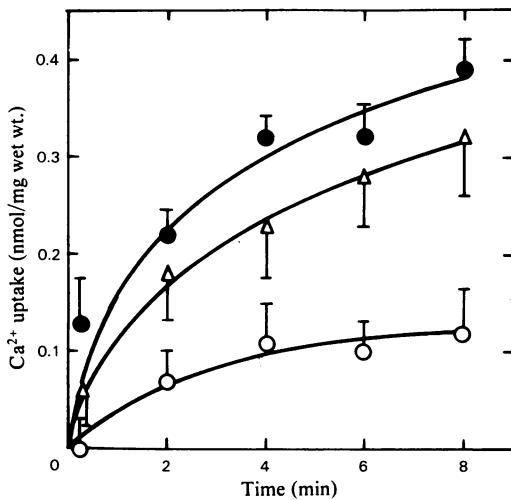


Fig. 3. Effect of La³⁺ on the uptake of Ca²⁺ by isolated hepatocytes measured at 1°C and 1.3 mM extracellular Ca²⁺

The composition of the incubation medium and measurement (by atomic-absorption spectroscopy) of the amounts of Ca²⁺ taken up by the cells in the absence of LaCl₃ (○) and in the presence of (△) 0.1 μM- and (●) 0.2 mM-LaCl₃ were as described in the Experimental section. Each point represents the mean ± S.E.M. of the values from three to six separate experiments.

0.1 mM- and 0.2 mM-La³⁺ respectively. When experiments were conducted in the presence of antimycin A (5 μg/ml) and oligomycin (10 μg/ml), the amounts of Ca²⁺ taken up in the presence and absence of 0.1 mM-La³⁺ were similar to those shown in Fig. 3 (results not shown), indicating that the uptake of Ca²⁺ by mitochondria is not the rate-limiting step in the entry of Ca²⁺ to the cells (cf. Hinnen *et al.*, 1979).

Discussion

Two kinetically distinct compartments of exchangeable Ca²⁺ associated with the liver cell were observed in both the presence and absence of 0.1 mM-La³⁺. Furthermore, the quantity of Ca²⁺ in the small compartment was increased in the presence of 0.1 mM-La³⁺. Since La³⁺ has been shown to displace rapidly exchangeable Ca²⁺ from superficial binding sites on a number of cells (Weiss, 1974; Hellman, 1978; Langer *et al.*, 1979), including liver cells (Claret-Berthon *et al.*, 1977), these observations provide further evidence which is consistent with the conclusion (Barritt *et al.*, 1981) that both kinetically distinct compartments of exchangeable Ca²⁺ associated with isolated hepatocytes are located within the cell.

The results of the ⁴⁵Ca²⁺-exchange experiments, together with the effects of La³⁺ on Ca²⁺ uptake at 1°C, are consistent with the proposal that concentrations of La³⁺ within the range 0.1–0.2 mM increase the catalytic activity of the putative transporter of Ca²⁺ inflow across the plasma membrane. The presence of 0.1 mM-La³⁺ in the extracellular medium did not inhibit the flux of Ca²⁺ across the boundary of the large cellular compartment of exchangeable Ca²⁺, which includes exchangeable Ca²⁺ in the mitochondria (Barritt *et al.*, 1981). Since low concentrations of La³⁺ (about 0.1 μM) have previously been shown to inhibit Ca²⁺ inflow to isolated mitochondria (Reed & Bygrave, 1974), it is concluded that, under the conditions employed in the present experiments, no significant quantities of La³⁺ enter the liver cell cytoplasm (cf. Weiss, 1974; Szász *et al.*, 1978; Flatt *et al.*, 1980). This may explain why no inhibition of Ca²⁺ outflow was observed, although the activity of the (Ca²⁺ + Mg²⁺)-dependent ATPase in plasma-membrane vesicles prepared from some other cells is inhibited by low concentrations of La³⁺ (Schatzmann & Bürgin, 1978; Pershadsingh & McDonald, 1980). In contrast with the effects of La³⁺, the possibility that stimulation of the initial rate of ⁴⁵Ca²⁺ exchange by Cu²⁺, Fe³⁺, Fe²⁺, Zn²⁺, Ni²⁺ or Mn²⁺ involves entry of the cation to the cell cannot be excluded.

Although the ability of La³⁺ to inhibit many Ca²⁺-transport systems has been clearly documented (reviewed by Weiss, 1974), there have been few reports of a stimulation of Ca²⁺ transport by this cation. Hinnen *et al.* (1979) have shown that La³⁺ and Tb³⁺ increase the rate of Ca²⁺ uptake by Ehrlich ascites-tumour cells. La³⁺ may stimulate Ca²⁺ inflow across the plasma membrane by inducing a conformational change in the Ca²⁺ inflow carrier through its combination with this transport protein or with phospholipids of the plasma membrane (cf. the ability of La³⁺ to stimulate some Ca²⁺-dependent processes; reviewed by Weiss, 1974).

The present results are consistent with the proposal (Barritt *et al.*, 1981) that one of the actions of adrenaline is to stimulate the inflow of Ca²⁺ from the extracellular medium to the cytoplasm. Thus the changes induced by 0.1 mM-La³⁺ in the flux of Ca²⁺ between the medium and the small compartment of cellular exchangeable Ca²⁺, the fractional transfer rate *k*₂₁, and the quantity of exchangeable Ca²⁺ present in the small compartment were found to be similar to those observed in the presence of adrenaline. However, in contrast with adrenaline, La³⁺ does not cause a release of Ca²⁺ from intracellular stores, and hence the plateau of the exchange curve is increased in the presence of La³⁺.

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