

# Blockade of cardiac sarcoplasmic reticulum K<sup>+</sup> channel by Ca<sup>2+</sup>: two-binding-site model of blockade

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**ABSTRACT** Potassium countercurrent through the SR K<sup>+</sup> channel plays an important role in Ca<sup>2+</sup> release from the SR. To see if Ca<sup>2+</sup> regulates the channel, we incorporated canine cardiac SR K<sup>+</sup> channel into lipid bilayers. Calcium ions present in either the SR lumenal (*trans*) or cytoplasmic (*cis*) side blocked the cardiac SR K<sup>+</sup> channel in a voltage-dependent manner. When Ca<sup>2+</sup> was present on both sides, however, the block appeared to be voltage independent. A two-binding site model of blockade by an impermeant divalent cation (Ca<sup>2+</sup>) can explain this apparent contradiction. Estimates of SR Ca<sup>2+</sup> concentration suggest that under physiological conditions the cardiac SR K<sup>+</sup> channel is partially blocked by Ca<sup>2+</sup> ions present in the lumen of the SR. The reduction in lumenal [Ca<sup>2+</sup>] during Ca<sup>2+</sup> release could increase K<sup>+</sup> conductance.

## INTRODUCTION

Muscle contraction is initiated by the rapid release of Ca<sup>2+</sup> through the sarcoplasmic reticulum Ca<sup>2+</sup> release channel (1, 2). The Ca<sup>2+</sup> release channels of both skeletal and cardiac SR have been intensively investigated (3–5). If the SR membrane were permeable only to Ca<sup>2+</sup>, its membrane potential would very rapidly approach the Ca<sup>2+</sup> equilibrium potential, and Ca<sup>2+</sup> release would dramatically decrease (6, 7). Some countermovement of other ions could minimize the potential change and help compensate for the large Ca<sup>2+</sup> flux. Studies of skeletal and cardiac SR membrane permeability demonstrated that mammalian skeletal and cardiac SR vesicles contain ion-conducting pathways allowing for K<sup>+</sup>, Na<sup>+</sup>, H<sup>+</sup> and Cl<sup>-</sup> flux (8, 9). There is compelling evidence to indicate that K<sup>+</sup> flux in skeletal SR vesicles occurs via the SR K<sup>+</sup> channel (8, 10–12) and represents an important countercurrent for Ca<sup>2+</sup> release (13). The SR K<sup>+</sup> channels from cardiac and skeletal muscle share many properties, although there are appreciable differences in gating and conduction (14,15). The dramatic change in calcium concentrations in the cardiac SR lumen and cytoplasm during muscle contraction (16, 17) may affect the conductance of the cardiac SR K<sup>+</sup> channel. Knowledge of these effects would advance our understanding of the physiologic role of Ca<sup>2+</sup> in the SR and cytoplasm.

## METHODS

Cardiac SR vesicles were prepared from canine ventricular tissue as described previously (15, 18). The vesicles were used immediately or stored at -80°C. Phospholipid bilayers were formed with phosphati-

dylethanolamine (PE; Avanti Polar Lipids, Incorporated, Birmingham, AL) in decane (20 mg/ml) across a 0.3-mm hole separating a 50 or 150 mM K-acetate, 10 mM histidine, pH 7.2 solution. Vesicles were added to the *cis* chamber. We incorporated the SR K<sup>+</sup> channel into the lipid bilayer and then perfused the chambers with the desired solutions. We held the *trans* chamber at virtual ground and monitored current across the bilayer via a high input impedance electrometer configured in the current-to-voltage mode. The current signal was digitized and stored on VCR tape for further analysis, low pass filtered at 100 Hz (8-pole Bessel), displayed on an oscilloscope, and recorded on a chart recorder as described previously (15, 18). We used macroscopic Ca<sup>2+</sup> ion-selective electrodes (TIPCA; World Precision Instruments, Incorporated, New Haven, CT) to measure Ca<sup>2+</sup> activity in a parallel series of experiments. All Ca<sup>2+</sup> measurements are expressed as activities.

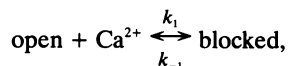
## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We incorporated cardiac SR K<sup>+</sup> channels into planar lipid bilayers and observed that over 90% of the channels were oriented in the same direction as reported for the skeletal muscle SR K<sup>+</sup> channel (12, 19). Miller et al. (12) proposed that the side of the channel facing the *cis* chamber corresponds to the cytoplasmic side of the channel. This was confirmed by the similarities in the open probability-voltage relationship between patch clamp studies of lobster remotor muscle SR K<sup>+</sup> channel (20) and the reconstituted SR K<sup>+</sup> channel (12, 14, 18, 21).

In the absence of Ca<sup>2+</sup>, the conductance of the fully open state was  $131 \pm 5.1$  ps at 50 mM KAc ( $n = 12$ ) and  $153.8 \pm 6.2$  pS at 150 mM KAc ( $n = 10$ ). When Ca<sup>2+</sup> was added symmetrically to the bathing solutions (*cis* and *trans* chambers) between 0.1–30 mM Ca<sup>2+</sup>, the K<sup>+</sup> current of the fully open state (O<sub>2</sub>) and the main substate (O<sub>1</sub>) underwent a Ca<sup>2+</sup> concentration-depen-

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dent reduction without detectable flickering (Fig. 1A). However, a detailed analysis of the effects of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  was performed only on the fully open state current. We describe the reduction of the  $\text{K}^+$  current by a simple blockade scheme,



where  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  is impermeant, and once it binds to the channel,  $\text{K}^+$  cannot pass through. The blocking and unblocking rates  $k_1$  and  $k_{-1}$  appear to be rapid relative to

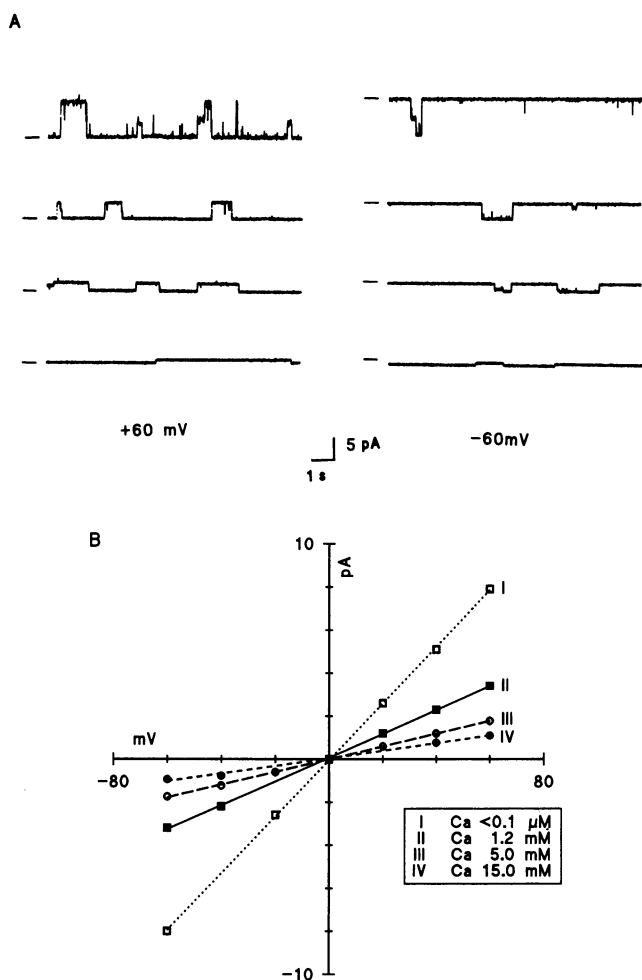


FIGURE 1  $\text{K}^+$  current blockade by symmetric  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ . (A) Single-channel current recordings from canine cardiac SR  $\text{K}^+$  channel incorporated into a planar lipid bilayer. Single-channel currents, shown as upward ( $V > 0$ ) or downward ( $V < 0$ ) deflections, were recorded in symmetric 50 mM KAc, 10 mM histidine, pH 7.1 with  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  activity  $< 0.1 \mu\text{M}$  (top trace),  $[\text{Ca}^{2+}] = 1.2 \text{ mM}$  (second trace),  $[\text{Ca}^{2+}] = 5 \text{ mM}$  (third trace) and  $[\text{Ca}^{2+}] = 30 \text{ mM}$  (bottom trace) in both *cis* and *trans* chambers. (B) I-V relationship for the fully open state ( $\text{O}_2$ ) at different  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  activities in a neutral bilayer (PE only). Similar results were seen in four other experiments.

the recorder's bandwidth, so the current amplitude is a weighted average of the open and blocked state currents. In symmetrical 50 mM  $\text{K}^+$  solution with  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  activity from 0 to 15 mM, the current-voltage relationship was nearly linear from  $-60 \text{ mV}$  to  $+60 \text{ mV}$  (Fig. 1B)).

When  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  was added to only one side of the channel, we saw a pronounced voltage-dependent current reduction. Current-voltage relationships at several different *cis* (A) and *trans* (B)  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  activities for a typical experiment are illustrated in Fig. 2A and B. We used neutral lipid (PE) to form the bilayers to minimize possible screening effects of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ions. Reduction of the  $\text{K}^+$  current was concentration dependent, regardless of the side to which  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  was added, although  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  block from the *trans* side was slightly more effective. To determine whether  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  could contribute to the current,  $\text{K}^+$  was replaced in one of the chambers by 50 or 90 mM  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ . No  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  current was observed in four experiments either from *cis* to *trans* (*cis* side perfusion, Fig. 3) or from *trans* to *cis* (*trans* side perfusion, data not shown). Furthermore, the reversal potential did not shift when we increased  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  activity to high levels, in the absence of Tris, on one side of the membrane (in 15 experiments), also indicating that the channel does not conduct  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ . The apparent reversal potential under biionic conditions suggested a permeability ratio of a  $P_{\text{K}}/P_{\text{Ca}} > 100$ , which is consistent with the findings of a recent patch clamp study of the skeletal SR  $\text{K}^+$  channel (22).

Because  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  can block the channel from either side without passing through it, the simplest interpretation is that there are two independent binding sites within the channel that are accessible to  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ . We propose a revision of Woodhull's model (23, 24), with two binding sites separated by a high central barrier that prevents  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  permeation. Further,  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  can bind only to the site on the side where it entered the channel (Fig. 3A, inset). Once  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  binds to a site, the channel is blocked. With  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  present in one side, we can describe the blockade by the following equations:

$$\frac{\gamma}{\gamma_0} = \left[ 1 + \frac{[\text{Ca}^{2+}]_c}{K(0)_c} e^{z\delta_c FV/RT} \right]^{-1}, \text{ for } \textit{cis} \text{ Ca}^{2+}, \quad (1)$$

$$\frac{\gamma}{\gamma_0} = \left[ 1 + \frac{[\text{Ca}^{2+}]_t}{K(0)_t} e^{z\delta_t FV/RT} \right]^{-1}, \text{ for } \textit{trans} \text{ Ca}^{2+}, \quad (2)$$

where  $\gamma$  and  $\gamma_0$  are conductances in the presence and absence of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ ;  $[\text{Ca}^{2+}]_c$  and  $[\text{Ca}^{2+}]_t$  are  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  activity in *cis* and *trans* chambers;  $K(0)_c$  and  $K(0)_t$  are the apparent zero-voltage dissociation constants of  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$ ;  $\delta_c$  and  $\delta_t$  are the fractional electrical distances of the *cis* and *trans* binding sites;  $z$  is the valence of the blocker;  $V$  is the holding potential; and  $F$ ,  $R$ , and  $T$  have their usual meanings. As shown in Fig. 4A and B, the consistently

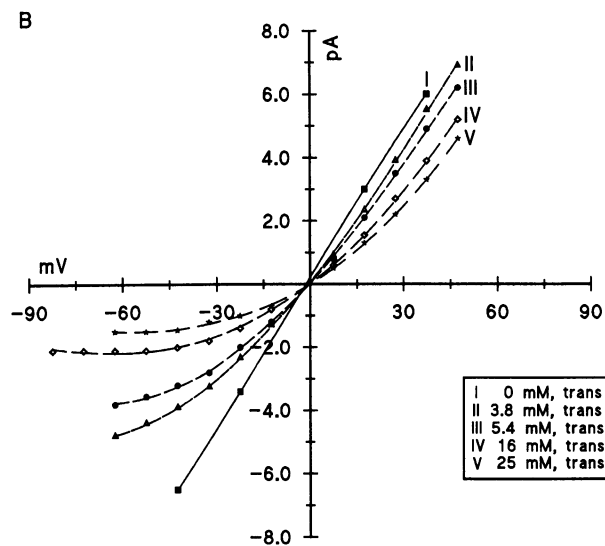
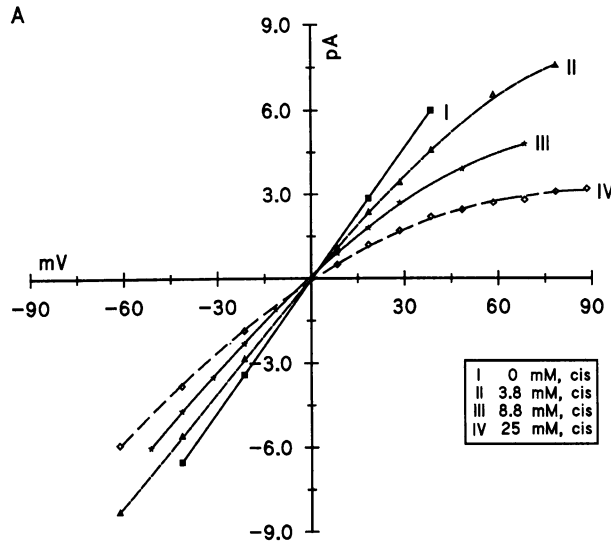


FIGURE 2  $K^+$  current blockade by asymmetric  $Ca^{2+}$ . (A and B) I-V relationships for the fully open state at different  $Ca^{2+}$  ion activities. A smooth curve with cubic spline fit to the data points has no attached significance.  $K^+$  current is blocked by  $Ca^{2+}$  present on either *cis* (A) or *trans* (B) side of the bilayer. Experimental conditions in the two experiments were symmetric 150 mM KAc, 1.2 mM  $Mg^{2+}$ , 10 mM histidine, pH 7.2 solution with neutral bilayer (PE only). Similar results were obtained in four other experiments.

linear relationship between  $\ln(\gamma_o/\gamma - 1)$  and the holding potential strongly support the mechanism of blockade as described by Eqs. 1 and 2. In 150 mM  $K^+$  solution, for *cis* block  $K(0)_c = 21 \pm 2.3$  mM, and  $\delta_c = 0.18 \pm 0.01$  ( $n = 5$ ); for *trans* block  $K(0)_t = 15.2 \pm 2.0$  mM and  $\delta_t = -0.24 \pm 0.02$  ( $n = 6$ ). The different values of  $\delta_c$  and  $\delta_t$  indicate that our data cannot be accounted for by a model with only one binding site.  $Ca^{2+}$  binding is

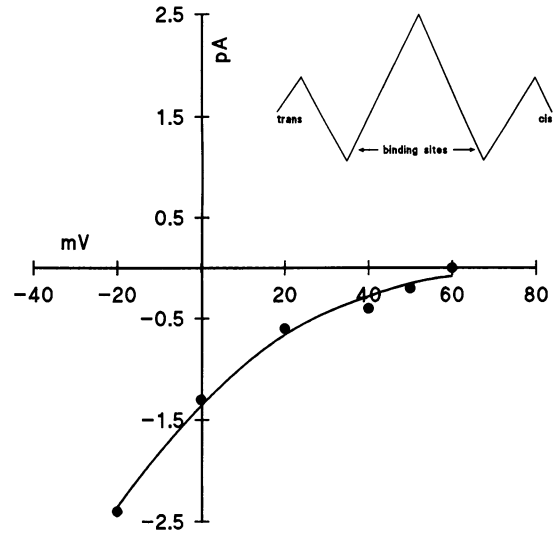


FIGURE 3 Impermeability of  $Ca^{2+}$ . After SR  $K^+$  channel was incorporated into the bilayer at 150 mM KAc bathing solution, the *cis* chamber was perfused by 90 mM  $CaCl_2$ , 250 mM HEPES/Tris, pH 7.2 solution. A typical experiment illustrates that no current fluctuation could be resolved for  $V > 60$  mV. A free energy profile of the cardiac SR  $K^+$  channel for  $Ca^{2+}$  is shown in the inset.

competitive with  $K^+$  (at 100 mM  $[K^+]$ ,  $K(0)_c = 14$  mM and  $K(0)_t = 10$  mM). On the other hand,  $\delta_c$  and  $\delta_t$  are independent of  $K^+$  and  $Ca^{2+}$  concentration (data not shown), suggesting that the configuration of the channel protein remains stable with varying  $K^+$  and  $Ca^{2+}$  concentration.

When  $Ca^{2+}$  is present on both sides of the bilayer, it can bind to either site. Hence,  $K^+$  conductance will be proportional to the probability that neither of the two sites are occupied by  $Ca^{2+}$ , given by the product of the probabilities of *cis* and *trans* sites being unoccupied. According to our model, the probabilities that the *cis* and *trans* sites being unoccupied will be proportional to  $\{1 + [Ca^{2+}]_c/K(0)_c \exp(-z\delta_c FV/RT)\}^{-1}$  and  $\{1 + [Ca^{2+}]_t/K(0)_t \exp(-z\delta_t FV/RT)\}^{-1}$ , respectively. Thus,  $K^+$  conductance reduces to:

$$\frac{\gamma}{\gamma_o} = \left\{ 1 + \frac{[Ca^{2+}]_c}{K(0)_c} e^{z\delta_c FV/RT} + \frac{[Ca^{2+}]_t}{K(0)_t} e^{z\delta_t FV/RT} + \frac{[Ca^{2+}]_c [Ca^{2+}]_t}{K(0)_c K(0)_t} e^{z(\delta_c + \delta_t) FV/RT} \right\}^{-1} \quad (3)$$

The curves shown in Fig. 4 C were generated according to Eq. 3 with  $K(0)_c$ ,  $K(0)_t$ ,  $\delta_c$ , and  $\delta_t$  obtained from experiments in which  $Ca^{2+}$  was added to only one side. A simple calculation using Eq. 3 indicates that  $\gamma$  will be nearly independent of holding potential over a large voltage range (Fig. 4 D). As the driving force increases, the nonlinear current-voltage relation becomes detect-

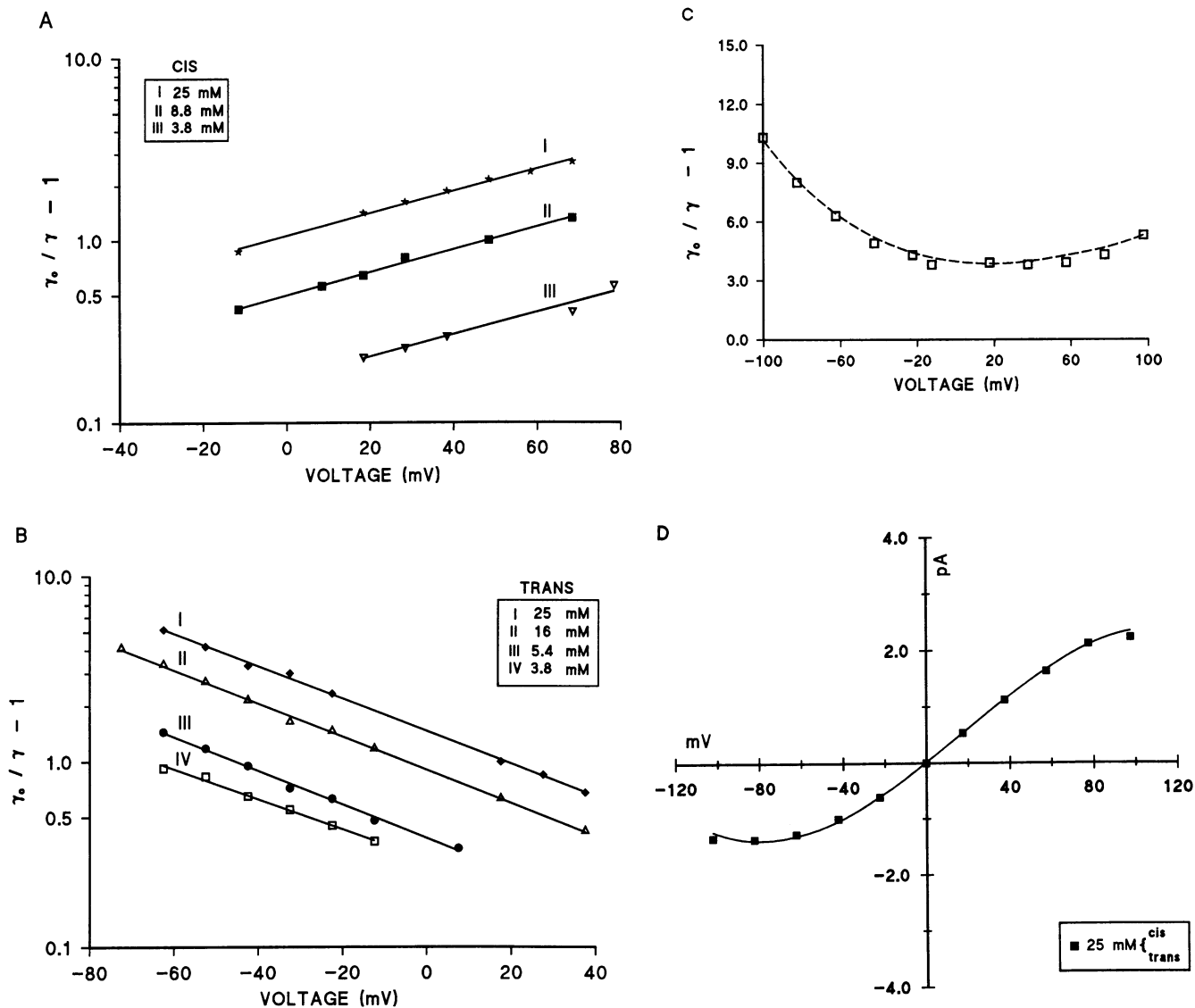


FIGURE 4 Two-binding-site model of blockade. (A and B) Voltage dependence of asymmetric  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  block. Chord conductances were determined from the experiments shown in Fig. 2. Linear regression lines were fit to the data points obtained at different *cis* (A) and *trans* (B)  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  activities in 150 mM KAc, 1.2 mM  $\text{Mg}^{2+}$ , 10 mM histidine, pH 7.2 solution with neutral bilayer (PE only). Mean values of  $K(0)_e = 21$  mM,  $\delta_c = 0.18$ ,  $K(0)_i = 15$  mM,  $\delta_i = -0.23$  were computed from data derived at different calcium levels. (C) Voltage dependence of symmetric  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  block. Experimental data for symmetric 150 mM KAc, 1.2 mM  $\text{Mg}^{2+}$ , 10 mM histidine, 25 mM symmetrical  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  activity, pH 7.2 solution with neutral bilayer. The curve superimposed on the data points is the theoretical prediction according to Eq. 3 for the following values,  $K(0)_e = 23$  mM,  $K(0)_i = 17$  mM,  $\delta_c = 0.17$ , and  $\delta_i = -0.22$ . (D) Current-voltage relationships are shown for the experiments under the same conditions as C. Theoretical curve superimposed on the data points used the values of the parameters indicated in the description of C.

able (Fig. 4D). The voltage range over which the conductance decrease is voltage-independent will depend on the  $\text{K}^+$  and  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  concentrations.

Although the cardiac and skeletal muscle SR  $\text{K}^+$  channels are functionally similar, important differences have been noted. For example,  $\text{Cs}^+$  and bis-quaternary ammonium block both the skeletal (11–12, 25–28) and cardiac (14, 15) SR  $\text{K}^+$  channels. While the affinities of

blockers from the *cis* or *trans* sides of the cardiac SR  $\text{K}^+$  channel are similar, the affinities of blockers from the two sides of the skeletal muscle SR  $\text{K}^+$  channel differ by several orders of magnitude. Similarly,  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  blocked the skeletal SR  $\text{K}^+$  channel from the *cis* side only (10). Further, the fractional electrical distance of the  $\text{Cs}^+$  binding site from the *cis* side is  $\sim 0.20$  for the cardiac SR  $\text{K}^+$  channel (15) and  $\sim 0.38$  for the skeletal muscle SR

K<sup>+</sup> channel (26). Models of decamethonium block in skeletal SR K<sup>+</sup> channel assume a single binding site (12, 28), whereas the fractional electrical distances estimated for *cis* and *trans* block of decamethonium in the cardiac SR K<sup>+</sup> channel indicate that two binding sites exist (14). Determination of the exact location of the binding sites within the pore is complicated by the uncertainty of the configuration of the compound, which led to the consideration of another possible binding site (14). Calcium blockade is easier to analyze as it is a point-charge particle, and our data indicate that there are two Ca<sup>2+</sup> binding sites in the cardiac SR K<sup>+</sup> channel.

Recent data indicate that in the appropriate K<sup>+</sup> concentration range the cardiac SR K<sup>+</sup> channel behaves as a multi-ion pore (15). However, Hill et al. calculated that the probability of two K<sup>+</sup> ions occupying the channel simultaneously is less than ~0.01 in the K<sup>+</sup> concentration range we used (15). We have found that Ca<sup>2+</sup> block is voltage dependent, that the fractional electrical distance (<1) is independent of K<sup>+</sup> and Ca<sup>2+</sup> concentration in the range we studied, and that Ca<sup>2+</sup> block is competitive with K<sup>+</sup> concentration. These results are consistent with the channel behaving as a single-ion channel, and, thus, in the K<sup>+</sup> and Ca<sup>2+</sup> concentration ranges studied, our model represents a reasonable approximation of the permeation process. Several impermeant channel blockers appear to bind to two sites in the cardiac (14) and skeletal (29) SR K<sup>+</sup> channels and, as a result, our model may be useful in probing the structure of these and other channels with two binding sites.

Current estimates of resting Ca<sup>2+</sup> concentration in the SR lumen under physiological conditions range between 0.5 and 5.0 mM (6, 30, 31). Accordingly, at rest the cardiac SR K<sup>+</sup> channel could be partially blocked by Ca<sup>2+</sup> ions present in the lumen of the SR (corresponding to the *trans* side for the reconstituted channel). Electron probe microanalysis studies indicate that cardiac SR Ca<sup>2+</sup> is decreased by 42% at peak contraction relative to control (17). This fall in SR [Ca<sup>2+</sup>] could reduce Ca<sup>2+</sup> block of the channel and could increase K<sup>+</sup> conductance. Because Ca<sup>2+</sup> blockade of the skeletal SR K<sup>+</sup> channel occurs only from the *cis* side (10), the change in SR [Ca<sup>2+</sup>] during Ca<sup>2+</sup> release could not affect its conductance. Since cytoplasmic (*cis*) free Ca<sup>2+</sup> concentration only increases from nanomolar to micromolar range during contraction, this change in cytosolic Ca<sup>2+</sup> has little effect on conductance for either the cardiac or the skeletal SR K<sup>+</sup> channel.

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