

## Electron Coupled Proton Transport Mediated by $[\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4(\text{SC}_6\text{H}_4\text{-}p\text{-}n\text{-C}_8\text{H}_{17})_4]^{2-}$ in Liquid Membrane

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Electrochemical reduction of  $[\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4(\text{SC}_6\text{H}_4\text{-}p\text{-}n\text{-C}_8\text{H}_{17})_4]^{2-}$  ( $[4\text{-Fe}]^{2-}$ ) dissolved in a  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase of the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{H}_2\text{O}$  two phase system is followed by protonation to give  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}\text{-H}^+$  when the pH of the  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  phase is lower than 7.0, and protonated and deprotonated  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}$  exist as an equilibrium mixture in the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase. On the other hand, no protonation takes place upon the reduction of  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{2-}$  in the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase contacting with the  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  phase with the pH higher than 7.0. The electron transport conducted in a liquid membrane composed of the  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  ( $W_1$ ),  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ , and  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  ( $W_2$ ) phases containing sodium dithionite as an electron donor,  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[4\text{-Fe}]$  as a mediator, and disodium anthraquinone-1,5-disulfonate ( $\text{Na}_2\text{AQS}$ ) as an electron acceptor, respectively, revealed that protonated  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}\text{-H}^+$  mediates electron coupled proton transport in the liquid membrane, while the deprotonated cluster has no ability of electron transport in the same system.

Electron transport across a cell membrane plays key roles not only in various biological redox reactions but also in ATP synthesis in mitochondria or chloroplasts. Model studies for the electron transport have, therefore, widely been conducted by using bilayer lipid membranes<sup>1–5)</sup> or liquid membranes.<sup>6–9)</sup> Electron transport in biological membranes takes place according to an electrochemical proton gradient, where electrons and protons are transported from the high proton concentration side to the low proton concentration side across a biomembrane.<sup>10–14)</sup> A pH dependence of the redox potential of an oxidation-reduction component in a biomembrane provides evidence for a proton participation in the redox reaction. Mitochondrial cytochromes which show the shift of  $-60$  mV/pH for their half-reduction potentials have, therefore, been considered to take part in electron coupled-proton transport.<sup>15–17)</sup> The intermediary which plays in such a role at negative potentials more than the redox reactions of cytochromes, however, has not been elucidated so far.

Iron-sulfur proteins widely distributed in plants, bacteria, and mammals are considered solely to function as electron transfer catalysts in various biological redox reactions such as nitrate reduction,  $\text{CO}_2$ - and  $\text{N}_2$ -fixation,  $\text{H}_2$ -evolution, and so on.<sup>18)</sup> In accordance with this, the redox potentials of most Fe-S proteins show a relatively small shift (0 to  $-24$  mV/pH) with the change of pH,<sup>19–21)</sup> while that of the mitochondrial Fe-S Center N-2 shows a slope of  $-60$  mV/pH,<sup>22,23)</sup> implying a stoichiometric one electron and one proton participation in the redox reaction. Mitochondrial Fe-S Center N-2, therefore, has been proposed to function not only as electron but also as proton carriers in biomembranes.<sup>22)</sup>

The interactions between synthetic  $\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4$  clusters and protons have also been studied; the  $\text{pK}_a$  values determined spectrophotometrically<sup>24,25)</sup> and electrochemically<sup>26–30)</sup> fall in the range 3.9 to 9.0. We have, recently, elucidated that reduction-linked proton binding to  $[\text{Fe}_4\text{X}_4(\text{YC}_{12}\text{H}_{25})_4]^{3-}$  (X, Y=S and Se) takes place

at the sulfur or selenium atom of the  $\text{Fe}_4\text{X}_4$  core rather than that of terminal alkanethiolate and -selenolate ligands on the basis of their  $\text{pK}_a$  values in aqueous Triton X-100 micellar solutions.<sup>31)</sup> The ability of proton binding to the  $\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4$  cluster solubilized in hydrophobic spheres in aqueous micellar solutions suggests that the synthetic  $\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4$  cluster can be used as a mediator of the electron coupled proton transport in a liquid membrane. In fact,  $[\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4(\text{SPh})_4]^{3-}$  prepared by reduction of  $[\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4(\text{SPh})_4]^{2-}$  with  $\text{Cr}^{\text{II}}$  in a toluene/water two phase system is protonated and releases the proton upon reoxidation with methylviologen.<sup>32)</sup> This paper describes electron coupled proton transport from aqueous sodium dithionite ( $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_4$ ) to disodium anthraquinone-1,5-disulfonate solutions across a  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase containing  $[\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4(\text{SC}_6\text{H}_4\text{-}p\text{-}n\text{-C}_8\text{H}_{17})_4]^{2-}$ .

### Experimental

**General.** All manipulations were carried out under an  $\text{N}_2$  atmosphere. The iron-sulfur cluster  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4(\text{SC}_6\text{H}_4\text{-}p\text{-}n\text{-C}_8\text{H}_{17})_4]$  ( $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[4\text{-Fe}]$ ) was prepared according to the literature.<sup>28)</sup>

**Physical Measurements.** Cyclic voltammograms were obtained by the use of a Hokuto Denko potentialstat HB-401, a Hokuto Denko function generator HB-107, and a Yokogawa Electric X-Y recorder 3077. The electrolysis cell was equipped with a nozzle for bubbling  $\text{N}_2$ . The concentrations of  $\text{Na}^+$  in aqueous solutions were determined by the use of a Nippon Jarrell-Ash atomic absorption spectrophotometer AA-8500.

**Cyclic Voltammetry of  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{2-}$  in an  $\text{H}_2\text{O}/\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  Two Phase System.** An aqueous  $\text{H}_3\text{PO}_4\text{-NaOH}$  buffer (0.1 mol  $\text{dm}^{-3}$ ) solution (pH 9.4 or 6.5, 20  $\text{cm}^3$ ) containing  $n\text{-Bu}_4\text{NBr}$  (0.6 g, 1.8 mmol) was poured in a  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  solution (20  $\text{cm}^3$ ) containing  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[4\text{-Fe}]$  (20 mg, 12  $\mu\text{mol}$ ) and  $n\text{-Bu}_4\text{NBr}$  (0.6 g, 1.8 mmol), and the mixture was stirred by bubbling  $\text{N}_2$  for several minutes. Then, the cell was allowed to stand until the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  and  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  phases were separated completely. The proton concentration in the  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  phase was adjusted by addition of a small amount of either aqueous NaOH or  $\text{H}_3\text{PO}_4$  solution to the  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  phase, followed by

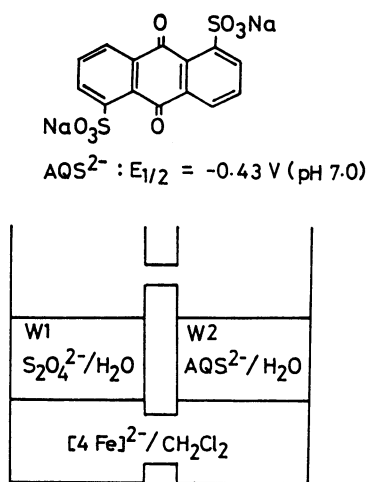


Fig. 1. A liquid membrane cell.

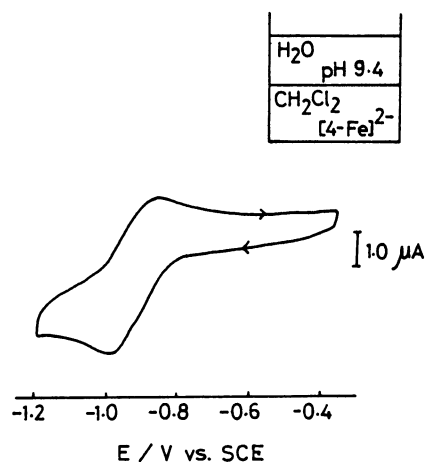
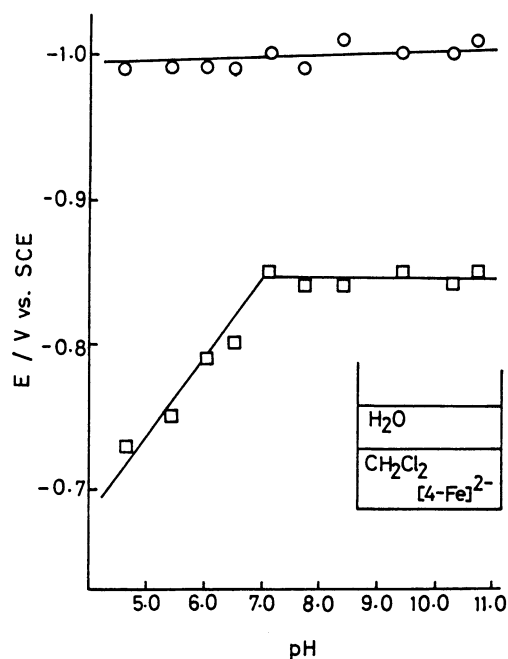
stirring the mixture by the same method. The pH of the  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  phase was measured with a Toa Electronics pH meter HM-7B. The cyclic voltammogram of  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[\text{4-Fe}]$  solubilized in the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase was obtained by using a Yanaco glassy carbon disk electrode GC-2P, a Pt auxiliary electrode, and a luggin capillary of a reference electrode (SCE), all of which were immersed into the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase.

**Electron Coupled Proton Transport across a Liquid Membrane.** The electron coupled proton transport across a liquid membrane, mediated with  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[\text{4-Fe}]$  was conducted by using a liquid membrane cell (16 mm inner diameter) (Fig. 1). After the cell was thoroughly flushed with  $\text{N}_2$  to remove air, a  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  solution (20  $\text{cm}^3$ ) of  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[\text{4-Fe}]$  (2.5–20 mg, 1.5–12  $\mu\text{mol}$ ) was charged into the cell with syringe techniques through a septum cap attached to the top of the cell. Then, aqueous  $\text{H}_3\text{PO}_4\text{-NaOH}$  buffer solutions (0.1  $\text{mol dm}^{-3}$ , 5  $\text{cm}^3$ ) of  $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_4$  (0.108 g, 0.62 mmol) and of disodium anthraquinone-1,5-disulfonate ( $\text{Na}_2\text{AQS}$ ) (4.9–25 mg, 0.12–0.61 mmol) were introduced into the cell as an electron donor ( $W_1$  phase) and an electron acceptor ( $W_2$  phase), respectively, and the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  layer was stirred magnetically at 20  $^\circ\text{C}$  for 16 h in the dark owing to instability of  $\text{Na}_2\text{AQS}$  toward light. Electron transport from the  $W_1$  to the  $W_2$  phases through the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase was monitored by the change of an absorption band centered around 450 nm due to the reduced species of  $\text{AQS}^{2-}$  formed in the  $W_2$  phase, and the electrons transported from the  $W_1$  phase to the  $W_2$  phase were determined from the absorbance at 450 nm. In the present study, the 450 nm band has been assigned to a two-electron reduction product of  $\text{AQS}^{2-}$ , though several reduced species of  $\text{AQS}^{2-}$  exist as an equilibrium mixture in aqueous solutions.<sup>33)</sup> The apparent amount of the reduced species of  $\text{AQS}^{2-}$  was calculated from the absorbance at 450 nm upon dissolving a given amount of  $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_4$  (as a two electron donor) in aqueous  $\text{Na}_2\text{AQS}$  solutions with the same concentration as the  $W_2$  phase at various pH.

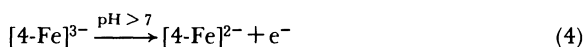
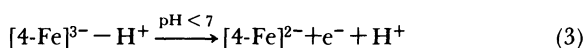
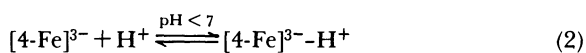
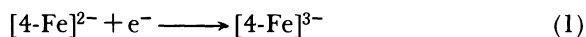
## Results and Discussion

**The Redox Behavior of  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4(\text{SC}_6\text{H}_4\text{-}p\text{-}n\text{-C}_8\text{H}_{17})_4]$  in an  $\text{H}_2\text{O}/\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  Two Phase System.** As reported previously, redox potentials of the  $[\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4(\text{SC}_6\text{H}_4\text{-}p\text{-}n\text{-C}_8\text{H}_{17})_4]^{2-/3-}$  ( $[\text{4-Fe}]^{2-/3-}$ ) couple in aque-

ous micellar<sup>27,28,30)</sup> and lecithin vesicle solutions<sup>29)</sup> are largely influenced by proton concentrations owing to the redox-linked protonation of the cluster. Thus, the redox behavior of the same cluster dissolved in the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase of a  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{H}_2\text{O}$  two phase system was examined with the intention of applying to an electron coupled proton transfer catalyst in a liquid membrane. The cyclic voltammogram of  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[\text{4-Fe}]$  in a  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{H}_2\text{O}$  (pH 9.40) two phase system shows a pair of cathodic and anodic waves due to the  $[\text{4-Fe}]^{2-/3-}$  redox couple at  $-0.99$  and  $-0.85$  V vs. SCE, respectively, at the sweep rate 10  $\text{mV s}^{-1}$  (Fig. 2). The cathodic and anodic peak potentials are moved in dif-

Fig. 2. Cyclic voltammogram of  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4(\text{SC}_6\text{H}_4\text{-}p\text{-}n\text{-C}_8\text{H}_{17})_4]$  solubilized in the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  layer (0.60  $\text{mmol dm}^{-3}$ ) in the  $\text{H}_2\text{O}/\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  two phase system;  $dE/dt=10 \text{ mV s}^{-1}$ .Fig. 3. Plots of the cathodic (O) and anodic peak potentials (□) of the  $[\text{4-Fe}]^{2-/3-}$  redox couple in the  $\text{H}_2\text{O}/\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  system vs. pH of the  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  phase.

ferent fashions from each other upon change of the proton concentration in the H<sub>2</sub>O phase (Fig. 3); the cathodic peak potential is almost independent of pH of the H<sub>2</sub>O phase in the pH range 4.6 to 11.0 (circles in Fig. 3), suggesting that no proton transport is involved in the reduction of [4-Fe]<sup>2-</sup> in the H<sub>2</sub>O-saturated CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> phase. On the other hand, the anodic peak potential of the redox couple varies with a slope -55 mV/pH in the pH range 4.6 to 7.0, while it is independent of pH in the range higher than 7.0 (squares in Fig. 3). Such characteristic pH dependences of the cathodic and anodic peak potentials of the [4-Fe]<sup>2-/3-</sup> couple in the H<sub>2</sub>O-saturated CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> layer may be explained by assuming Eqs. 1–4. The cluster in the



CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> phase undergoes one-electron reduction to afford [4-Fe]<sup>3-</sup> (Eq. 1), followed by protonation, probably at the sulfur atom of the Fe<sub>4</sub>S<sub>4</sub> core<sup>31)</sup> in the CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> phase when pH of the H<sub>2</sub>O phase is lower than 7, where protonated and deprotonated clusters exist as an equilibrium mixture (Eq. 2). Upon subsequent oxidation, the protonated cluster [4-Fe]<sup>3-</sup>-H<sup>+</sup> may release the proton owing to decreasing electron density of the Fe<sub>4</sub>S<sub>4</sub> core (Eq. 3). On the other hand, the cluster may be subject to the redox reaction without undergoing protonation (Eqs. 1 and 4) in the pH range of the H<sub>2</sub>O phase higher than 7.0, explaining the anodic peak potential being almost invariant in that pH range (squares in Fig. 3). The pK<sub>a</sub> value 7.0 of [4-Fe]<sup>3-</sup>-H<sup>+</sup> obtained from the turning point of the anodic peak potential<sup>34)</sup> (Fig. 3) is smaller than that in aqueous micellar solutions (pK<sub>a</sub> 9.0).<sup>27,28)</sup> This result may partly be due to low proton concentrations in the H<sub>2</sub>O-saturated CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> phase compared with those in hydrophobic spheres in micells.

**Electron Coupled Proton Transport across a Liquid Membrane Mediated with (n-Bu<sub>4</sub>N)<sub>2</sub>[4-Fe].** A proton binding to [4-Fe]<sup>3-</sup> in the CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/H<sub>2</sub>O two phase system suggests that the present cluster has an ability of the electron coupled proton transport. Thus, the electron transport mediated with the cluster was conducted by using a liquid membrane (Fig. 1); aqueous buffer solutions (H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>-NaOH) of sodium dithionite (W<sub>1</sub> phase) and of disodium anthraquinone-1,5-disulfonate (Na<sub>2</sub>AQS) (W<sub>2</sub> phase) were used as an electron donor and an electron acceptor, respectively, on the CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> phase containing (n-Bu<sub>4</sub>N)<sub>2</sub>[4-Fe]. The pH values of the W<sub>1</sub> (pH<sub>1</sub>) and W<sub>2</sub> (pH<sub>2</sub>) phases were adjusted at 6.2 and 10.7, respectively. Electron transport conducted by stirring the CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> phase results in

the occurrence of a strong absorption band centered around 450 nm due to the reduced species of AQS<sup>2-</sup> in the electronic spectrum of the W<sub>2</sub> phase (a solid line in Fig. 4). On the other hand, no absorption band appears around 450 nm in the absence of (n-Bu<sub>4</sub>N)<sub>2</sub>[4-Fe] in the CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> phase under otherwise the same conditions (a broken line in Fig. 4). Thus, the iron-sulfur cluster in the CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> phase mediates electron coupled H<sup>+</sup> or Na<sup>+</sup> transport from the W<sub>1</sub> to the W<sub>2</sub> phases, since no other counter cation is involved in this system. In view of the fact that protonation to [4-Fe]<sup>3-</sup> takes place only in the pH region lower than 7.0 of the H<sub>2</sub>O phase in the CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub>/H<sub>2</sub>O two phase system, the electron coupled proton transport mediated

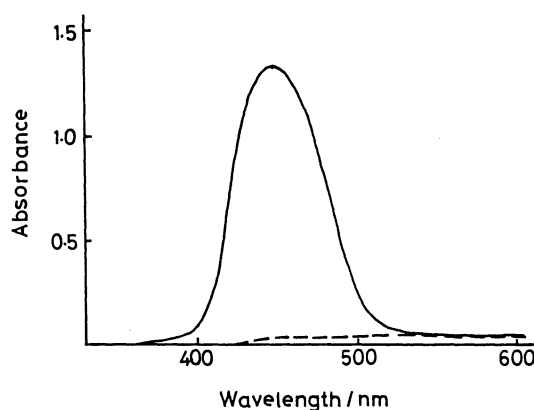


Fig. 4. Electronic absorption spectra of the reduced species of AQS<sup>2-</sup> formed in the W<sub>2</sub> phase in the absence (----) and the presence of (n-Bu<sub>4</sub>N)<sub>2</sub>[4-Fe] (10 μmol) (—) in the CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (20 cm<sup>3</sup>) phase after electron transport for 16 h; the concentrations of both Na<sub>2</sub>S<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub> in the W<sub>1</sub> (H<sub>2</sub>O, 5 cm<sup>3</sup>; pH 6.2) and Na<sub>2</sub>AQS in the W<sub>2</sub> (H<sub>2</sub>O, 5 cm<sup>3</sup>; pH 10.7) phases are 1.2×10<sup>-1</sup> mol dm<sup>-3</sup>.

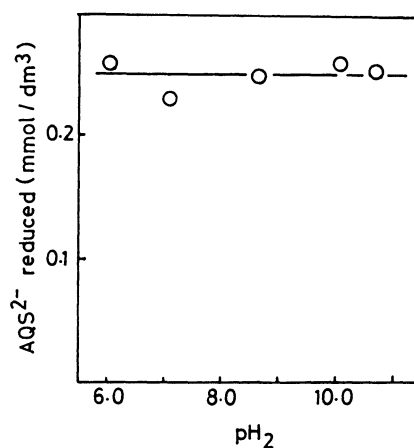
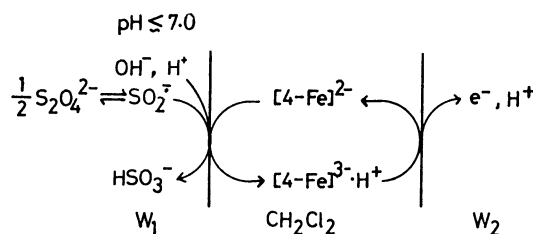


Fig. 5. Amounts of the reduced species of AQS<sup>2-</sup> formed in the electron transport mediated with [4-Fe]<sup>2-</sup> at various pH of the W<sub>2</sub> phase for 16 h; the concentrations of Na<sub>2</sub>S<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub> in the W<sub>1</sub> (H<sub>2</sub>O, 5 cm<sup>3</sup>; pH 6.2), (n-Bu<sub>4</sub>N)<sub>2</sub>[4-Fe] in the CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> (20 cm<sup>3</sup>), and Na<sub>2</sub>AQS in the W<sub>2</sub> (H<sub>2</sub>O, 5 cm<sup>3</sup>) phases are 1.2×10<sup>-1</sup>, 1.5×10<sup>-4</sup>, and 1.2×10<sup>-1</sup> mol dm<sup>-3</sup>, respectively.

with  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}$  across the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase may largely be influenced by proton concentrations of the  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  phase.

The amounts of the reduced species of  $\text{AQS}^{2-}$  formed in the  $W_2$  phase is essentially constant irrespective of pH of this phase (pH) as far as pH of the  $W_1$  phase (pH<sub>1</sub>) is kept to be lower than 7; Fig. 5 is an example at pH<sub>1</sub> 6.2. Thus, pH of the  $W_2$  phase (pH<sub>2</sub>) little influences the electron transfer from the reduced species of the cluster to  $\text{AQS}^{2-}$  at the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/W_2$  interface. On the other hand, pH<sub>1</sub> largely influences on the formation of the reduced species of  $\text{AQS}^{2-}$  in the  $W_2$  phase with pH<sub>2</sub> 10.7; the amount of the reduced species of  $\text{AQS}^{2-}$  is rapidly decreased with increasing the pH value of the  $W_1$  phase (Fig. 6). The agreement of the turning point (pH<sub>1</sub> 7.0) in Fig. 6 with the  $\text{pK}_a$  value of  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}\text{-H}^+$  obtained from the plot of the anodic peak potential of the cluster vs. pH in the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/\text{H}_2\text{O}$  two phase system (Fig. 3) suggests that  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}\text{-H}^+$  rather than deprotonated cluster  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}$  mediates the electron transport from the  $W_1$  phase to the  $W_2$  phase. As an electron carrier,  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}\text{-H}$  and  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}$  may exhibit a fairly different behavior from each other, since the former may have an ability of the electron coupled proton transport, while the latter mediates electron coupled  $\text{Na}^+$  transport. The active species,  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}\text{-H}^+$  or  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}$ , which mediates the electron transport from the  $W_1$  to  $W_2$  phases may, therefore, be assigned by determining the amount of  $\text{Na}^+$  transported into the  $W_2$  phase accompanied by the electron transport. The electron transport conducted by using  $\text{NaOH-H}_3\text{PO}_4$  and  $\text{KOH-H}_3\text{PO}_4$  buffer solutions in the  $W_1$  and the  $W_2$  phases, respectively, also produced



Scheme 1.

the same amounts of the reduced species of  $\text{AQS}^{2-}$  in the  $W_2$  phase as those in Fig. 6.<sup>35)</sup> In addition, no appreciable change of the amount of  $\text{Na}^+$  in the  $W_2$  phase (resulting from  $\text{Na}_2\text{AQS}$ ) was observed between before and after the electron transport. It may, therefore, be concluded that no appreciable  $\text{Na}^+$  transport from the  $W_1$  phase to the  $W_2$  phase takes place in the present study. Thus  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}\text{-H}^+$  functions as an electron carrier in the liquid membrane. The maximum electrons transported in the present study was 2.0 on the basis of the amount of  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[4\text{-Fe}]$  in the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase for 16 h.<sup>36)</sup> Such a low value may be resulted from an endothermic electron transfer from  $\text{S}_2\text{O}_4^{2-}$  ( $E = -0.90$  V vs. SCE in  $\text{H}_2\text{O}$  at pH 9.0)<sup>37)</sup> to  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{2-}$  ( $E_{\text{red}} = -0.99$  V in  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$ ) at the  $W_1/\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  interface.

**Electron Pathway in the Liquid Membrane.** A most possible electron pathway for the present electron coupled proton transport mediated with  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[4\text{-Fe}]$  is depicted in Scheme 1; a partial dissociation  $\text{S}_2\text{O}_4^{2-} \rightleftharpoons 2\text{SO}_2^{\bullet-}$  in the  $W_1$  phase generates the active reductant  $\text{SO}_2^{\bullet-}$ <sup>37)</sup> which may reduce  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{2-}$  at the  $W_1/\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  interface to afford  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}$  and  $\text{SO}_2$ . The former undergoes a protonation probably at sulfur of the  $\text{Fe}_4\text{S}_4$  core<sup>31)</sup> in the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase when pH<sub>1</sub> is lower than 7.0, and the latter reacts with  $\text{OH}^-$  to afford  $\text{HSO}_3^-$  in the  $W_1$  phase. The protonated  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}\text{-H}^+$  thus formed in the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase is oxidized by  $\text{AQS}^{2-}$  at the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2/W_2$  interface with liberating the proton into the  $W_2$  phase. The resulting oxidized cluster  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{2-}$  moves back to the  $W_1/\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  interface, regenerating  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}\text{-H}^+$ . When pH<sub>1</sub> is higher than 7.0, however, the reduction of  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{2-}$  hardly takes place at the  $W_1/\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  interface unless a strong hydrophilic  $\text{Na}^+$  in the  $W_1$  phase migrates into the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  phase to cancel the extra negative charge of  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{3-}$ . Thus, protons are much more superior to  $\text{Na}^+$  as a counter ion of the electron transport in the liquid membrane system. The mechanism proposed in Scheme 1<sup>38)</sup> reasonably explains the vectorial electron flow from a high proton concentration side to a low proton concentration side in biomembrane, since the reverse electron transport is effectively suppressed so long as the  $\text{pK}_a$  value of the cluster is smaller than the pH value of the low proton concentration side. The present study strongly suggests that some of iron-sulfur proteins participate in the transport of protons as well as electrons in biomembrane.

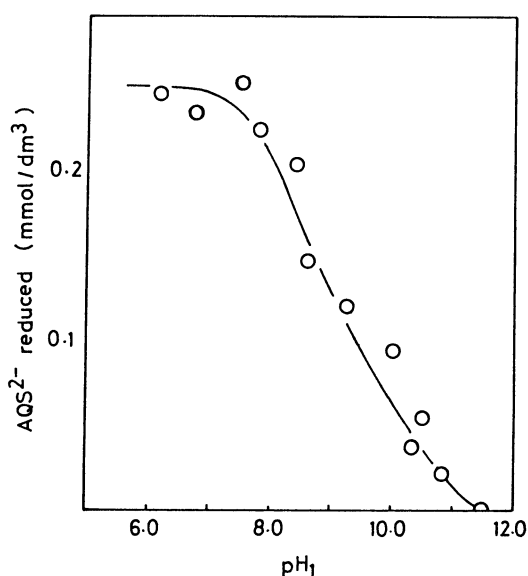


Fig. 6. The amount of the reduced species of  $\text{AQS}^{2-}$  formed in the electron transport mediated with  $[4\text{-Fe}]^{2-}$  at various pH<sub>1</sub> ( $W_1$  phase) for 16 h; the concentrations of  $\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_4$  in the  $W_1$  ( $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ,  $5\text{ cm}^3$ ),  $(n\text{-Bu}_4\text{N})_2[4\text{-Fe}]$  in the  $\text{CH}_2\text{Cl}_2$  ( $20\text{ cm}^3$ ), and  $\text{Na}_2\text{AQS}$  in the  $W_2$  ( $\text{H}_2\text{O}$ ,  $5\text{ cm}^3$ ; pH 10.7) phases are  $1.2 \times 10^{-1}$ ,  $1.5 \times 10^{-4}$ , and  $1.2 \times 10^{-1}\text{ mol dm}^{-3}$ , respectively.

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- 33) Hydroquinone (QH<sub>2</sub>) dissociates into QH<sup>-</sup>, Q<sup>2-</sup>, and H<sup>+</sup> in aqueous neutral and alkaline solutions, where Q<sup>2-</sup> and QH<sup>-</sup> may be oxidized by quinone (Q), if it exists, to produce QH· and Q<sup>-</sup>. Thus, those six species exist as an equilibrium mixture in solutions.
- 34) The turning point of pH 7.0 in the plot of pH vs. anodic peak potentials has not been changed in the range of sweep rates 10 to 200 mV s<sup>-1</sup>.
- 35) The electron transport was conducted at pH<sub>1</sub> 6.20 (NaOH-H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>) and pH<sub>2</sub> 10.7 (KOH-H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>), and at pH<sub>1</sub> 10.7 (NaOH-H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>) and pH<sub>2</sub> 10.7 (KOH-H<sub>3</sub>PO<sub>4</sub>).
- 36) The concentrations of Na<sub>2</sub>S<sub>2</sub>O<sub>4</sub> in the W<sub>1</sub> phase (pH 6.5), (n-Bu<sub>4</sub>N)<sub>2</sub>[4-Fe] in the CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> phase, and Na<sub>2</sub>AQS in the W<sub>2</sub> phase (pH 10.5) were 1.2×10<sup>-1</sup>, 7.2×10<sup>-5</sup>, and 1.0×10<sup>-1</sup> mol dm<sup>-3</sup>, respectively.
- 37) S. G. Mayhew, *Eur. J. Biochem.*, **85**, 535 (1978).
- 38) The determination of the ratio of e<sup>-</sup>/H<sup>+</sup> transported in the present study has been unsuccessful, since a part of SO<sub>2</sub> formed at the W<sub>1</sub>/CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> interface migrates into the W<sub>2</sub> phase through the CH<sub>2</sub>Cl<sub>2</sub> phase and reacts with OH<sup>-</sup> to afford of a weak acid HSO<sub>3</sub><sup>-</sup> (pK<sub>a</sub>=7.18) in the W<sub>2</sub> phase, resulting in a difficulty in determination of the amount of H<sup>+</sup> transported owing to significant pH<sub>2</sub> change when the solutions are not buffered.