

# Contents

<b>Agradecimientos</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Acronyms</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Sumari</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>Sumario</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>Abstract</b>	<b>xv</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Motivation . . . . .	1
1.2 Objectives . . . . .	2
1.3 Structure of the thesis . . . . .	4
<b>2 State of the art</b>	<b>7</b>
2.1 Introduction to Electrophysiology . . . . .	8
2.1.1 The Heart . . . . .	8
2.1.2 The Atrio-Ventricular Node . . . . .	10
2.1.3 The Dual AV Nodal Physiology . . . . .	12
2.1.4 Atrial Fibrillation . . . . .	13
2.1.5 Epidemiology . . . . .	15
2.1.6 Treatment of Atrial Fibrillation . . . . .	16
2.2 Analysis of the Ventricular Response during AF . . . . .	19
2.3 Mathematical Modeling of AV conduction time . . . . .	22
2.3.1 Models of the AV time . . . . .	23
2.3.2 Models of the RR interval series . . . . .	25
2.3.3 Models of AV node cells and anatomical structures . . . . .	25
<b>3 Poincaré Surface Profiles</b>	<b>27</b>
3.1 Introduction . . . . .	28
3.2 State of the Art . . . . .	29
3.2.1 RR Interval Histograms . . . . .	29

3.2.2	Poincaré Plots . . . . .	29
3.2.3	Histographic Poincaré plot . . . . .	30
3.2.4	Detection of Preferential AV Node Conduction . . . . .	30
3.3	Methods . . . . .	32
3.3.1	Poincaré Surface and Cluster Identification . . . . .	32
3.3.2	Poincaré Surface Profile . . . . .	33
3.3.3	Short Time Variations on the Ventricular Response . . . . .	34
3.3.4	Statistical Analysis . . . . .	34
3.4	Database and Preprocessing . . . . .	34
3.5	Results . . . . .	35
3.5.1	Poincaré Surface and Cluster Identification . . . . .	35
3.5.2	Poincaré Surface Profile. Comparison with Histograms . . . . .	35
3.5.3	Poincaré Surface Profile and Transition Clusters in Poincaré Surface . . . . .	38
3.5.4	Illustration of Short Time VR Variations vs Variation of Preferential Conduction . . . . .	39
3.5.5	Illustration of Drug Effects . . . . .	40
3.6	Discussion and Conclusion . . . . .	42
<b>4</b>	<b>Role of the Atrial Rate</b>	<b>47</b>
4.1	Introduction . . . . .	48
4.2	Materials and Methods . . . . .	48
4.2.1	Study Population and Holter ECG Acquisition . . . . .	48
4.2.2	Analysis of the Atrial Activity . . . . .	49
4.2.3	Analysis of the Ventricular Response . . . . .	50
4.2.4	Comparison between Atrial Cycle Length and Predominant RR Intervals . . . . .	50
4.2.5	Statistical Analysis . . . . .	51
4.3	Results . . . . .	51
4.3.1	Atrial Cycle Length and Predominant RR Intervals . . . . .	51
4.3.2	Autonomic Tone Effects . . . . .	53
4.3.3	Rate Control Effects . . . . .	54
4.4	Discussion . . . . .	55
4.4.1	Main Findings . . . . .	55
4.4.2	Ventricular Response during Atrial Fibrillation . . . . .	56
4.4.3	Atrioventricular Conduction Mechanisms . . . . .	57
4.4.4	Limitations . . . . .	58
4.5	Conclusions . . . . .	58
<b>5</b>	<b>Generation of Realistic AA Interval Series</b>	<b>59</b>
5.1	Introduction . . . . .	60
5.2	Methods . . . . .	61
5.2.1	Methodology for Generating Atrial to Atrial Interval Series . . . . .	61
5.2.2	Comparison with real AA interval series . . . . .	63

5.2.3	Role of Statistical Characteristics of the Atrial to Atrial Activity in the Ventricular Response during AF . . . . .	64
5.3	Results . . . . .	65
5.3.1	Accuracy of Pearson Type IV distribution . . . . .	65
5.3.2	Accuracy of Generated AA interval series . . . . .	66
5.3.3	Role of Statistical Characteristics of the AA series in the Ventricular Response during AF . . . . .	66
5.4	Discussion and Conclusion . . . . .	69
5.4.1	Main Findings . . . . .	69
5.4.2	Comparison with other studies . . . . .	69
5.4.3	Limitations . . . . .	71
5.4.4	Clinical Applications . . . . .	72
<b>6</b>	<b>Model of Dual Pathway AV Node</b>	<b>73</b>
6.1	Introduction . . . . .	74
6.2	Methods . . . . .	75
6.2.1	In-vitro Experiments . . . . .	75
6.2.2	Experimental Pacing Protocols . . . . .	75
6.2.3	Differentiation between Conduction Via "Slow" and "Fast" AV Node Pathways . . . . .	78
6.2.4	Mathematical Model of an AV Nodal Pathway . . . . .	78
6.2.5	Incorporation in the Model of "Concealed" Conduction . . . . .	79
6.2.6	Description of the Dual Pathway Structure . . . . .	80
6.2.7	Calculation of Model's Constants . . . . .	80
6.2.8	Validation of the Model . . . . .	83
6.3	Results . . . . .	83
6.3.1	Conduction Curve Fitting and Model Equation Constants . . . . .	83
6.3.2	Validation of the Model in Predicting Wenckebach Periodicity: Comparison with Rabbit AV Node . . . . .	84
6.3.3	Validation of the Model in Predicting Atrial Fibrillation: Comparison with Rabbit AV Node . . . . .	86
6.3.4	Model Predictions after Modifications of Dual Pathway Electrophysiology . . . . .	87
6.3.5	Selective AV Nodal Ablations and Wenckebach Periodicity . . . . .	87
6.3.6	Selective AV Nodal Ablations and Atrial Fibrillation . . . . .	89
6.3.7	Multimodal HH interval Histograms: Role of the Dual AV Nodal Physiology . . . . .	91
6.4	Discussion and Conclusion . . . . .	94
6.4.1	Major Findings . . . . .	94
6.4.2	Comparison with Previous AV Node Models . . . . .	95
6.4.3	Study Implications and Limitations . . . . .	96

<b>7</b>	<b>Discussion and conclusion</b>	<b>99</b>
7.1	Discussion . . . . .	99
7.1.1	Limitations . . . . .	102
7.2	Conclusion . . . . .	103
7.3	Guides for future work . . . . .	104
<b>8</b>	<b>Contributions</b>	<b>107</b>
8.1	Publications . . . . .	107
8.1.1	Main Contributions of This Thesis . . . . .	107
8.1.2	Contributions Related to This Thesis . . . . .	108
8.2	Framework of the Dissertation . . . . .	109
8.2.1	Research Projects . . . . .	110
8.2.2	International Research Stays . . . . .	111
8.2.3	Collaborations . . . . .	112