

1 **Two accessory proteins govern MmpL3 mycolic acid transport in mycobacteria**

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32 **Abstract**

33

34 Mycolic acids are the signature lipid of mycobacteria and constitute an important
35 physical component of the cell wall, a target of mycobacterial specific antibiotics, and a
36 mediator of *M. tuberculosis* pathogenesis. Mycolic acids are synthesized in the
37 cytoplasm and are thought to be transported to the cell wall as a trehalose ester by the
38 MmpL3 transporter, an antibiotic target for *M. tuberculosis*. However, the mechanism by
39 which mycolate synthesis is coupled to transport, and the full MmpL3 transport
40 machinery, is unknown. Here we identify two new components of the MmpL3 transport
41 machinery in mycobacteria. The protein encoded by *MSMEG_0736/Rv0383c* is
42 essential for growth of *M. smegmatis* and *M. tuberculosis*, is anchored to the
43 cytoplasmic membrane, physically interacts with and colocalizes with MmpL3 in growing
44 cells, and is required for trehalose monomycolate transport to the cell wall. In light of
45 these findings we propose Msmeg_0736/Rv0383c be named “TMM transport factor A”,
46 TtfA. The protein encoded by *MSMEG_5308* also interacts with the MmpL3 complex,
47 but is nonessential for growth or TMM transport. However, *MSMEG_5308* accumulates
48 with inhibition of MmpL3 mediated TMM transport and stabilizes the MmpL3/TtfA
49 complex, indicating that it stabilizes the transport system during stress. These studies
50 identify two new components of the mycobacterial mycolate transport machinery, an
51 emerging antibiotic target in *M. tuberculosis*.

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54 **Introduction**

55 Mycobacteria have a complex cell wall, which is crucial for maintaining cell integrity,
56 protects against environmental stress, provides a barrier against access of potentially
57 harmful molecules into the cell, and plays a critical role in mycobacterial pathogenesis.
58 The cell wall of mycobacteria is comprised of the common bacterial cell wall
59 glycopolymer, peptidoglycan, external to the cytoplasmic membrane, as well as an
60 additional covalently attached glycopolymer layer comprised of arabinogalactan.
61 Arabinogalactan bridges peptidoglycan and mycolic acids, the signature long chain lipid
62 of mycobacteria. Arabinogalactan esterified mycolates constitute the inner leaflet of the
63 outer membrane bilayer, with the outer leaflet being comprised of hydrophobically
64 associated complex lipids including trehalose dimycolate, sulfolipids, lipomannan and
65 lipoarabinomannan. This outer membrane increases both the complexity of the cell wall
66 structure and its hydrophobicity. The enzymatic steps of the arabinogalactan and
67 mycolate precursor biosynthesis have been well described and are the targets of
68 several antimycobacterials, including isoniazid and ethambutol [1-3].

69 Mycolic acid synthesis begins with FASI system that produces C16-C18 and
70 C24-C26 fatty acids. The FASII system then extends these products to produce the long
71 meromycolate chains that are the substrates for the polyketide synthetase, Pks13.
72 Pks13 catalyzes the final condensation step to produce α -alkyl β -ketoacids (C60-C90)
73 which are then acetylated and transferred to the 6 position of trehalose [4,5]. Mono- α -
74 alkyl β -ketoacyl trehalose is then reduced by CmrA to trehalose monomycolate (TMM)
75 presumably in the inner leaflet of the cytoplasmic membrane [6,7]. TMM can then be
76 modified by non-essential mycolic acid methyltransferases to produce cyclopropane

77 rings and methyl branches, and in the case of *M. tuberculosis* these modifications alter
78 host-mycolic acid responses [8-14].

79 After synthesis, TMM must be transported across the cytoplasmic membrane to
80 reach the cell wall; this step is known to require the MmpL3 transporter [7,15-17]. The
81 MmpLs [**M**ycobacterial **m**embrane **p**rotein, **L**arge) are multi-substrate transporters of the
82 Resistance-Nodulation-Division (RND) class that usually act as homotrimers and are
83 exporters of molecules from the outer leaflet of the plasma membrane, to, or through
84 the outer membrane. In *Mtb* they include lipid and fatty acid transporters of virulence-
85 associated lipids across the cell envelope. Transport is driven by downhill movement of
86 H⁺ in response to the electrochemical H⁺ gradient ($\Delta\tilde{\mu}_{H^+}$) across the plasma membrane.
87 MmpL3 is the only MmpL protein that is essential *in vitro*, though mutations in several
88 other MmpLs severely compromise virulence in infection models [7,15-18]. Mutational
89 analyses and ‘transposon-site-hybridization’ (TraSH) revealed MmpL3 is essential for
90 *Mtb* viability *in vitro* [19] and *in vivo* [20], and several inhibitors of MmpL3 are already in
91 clinical development, among them are a set of diamine-indole-carboxamides [21-23]
92 including Novartis NITD-304, and the pyrrole BM212 [24].

93 Genetic, pharmacologic, and biochemical studies strongly indicate that the MmpL3
94 transporter is the TMM flippase. MmpL3 has been shown to have flippase activity in
95 spheroplast assays [25] and genetic depletion leads to growth arrest and loss of TMM
96 transport [26,27]. Recent crystal structures of MmpL3 suggest potential mechanisms of
97 TMM transport [28]. However, the full mechanisms linking TMM biosynthesis to MmpL3
98 transport, and the full set of cofactors used by MmpL3 to transport TMM, are unknown.

99 MmpLs share close homology with other bacterial RND proteins, typified by the
100 acridine resistance complex (AcrB) transporter that is involved in the efflux of
101 hydrophobic small molecules from or through the periplasm of *E. coli*. Like AcrB, the
102 MmpLs are thought to be localized to the inner membrane [29]. However AcrB does not
103 act alone: it additionally forms the core of a comprehensive secretion system that
104 traverses both the inner and outer membrane of the cell envelope in Gram negative
105 bacteria, allowing the AcrB substrates to bypass the periplasm [30]. To form this
106 membrane spanning system, AcrB interacts with a periplasmic coupling protein called
107 AcrA (or more generally, the Membrane Fusion Protein (MPF)), which in turn links to an
108 outer membrane channel called TolC (or more generally, the Outer Membrane Protein
109 (OMP)) [31-33] The mechanism of bacterial RND transporters is thought to be highly
110 conserved and involves the engagement of the Proton Motive Force ($\Delta\tilde{\mu}_{H^+}$) to drive
111 drugs, ions and other small molecules from the periplasm across the outer membrane
112 through the MPF, thus preventing the entrance of toxic substances into the bacterial
113 cytoplasm[34-36]. We thus have hypothesized that MmpL3 acts in concert with other
114 mycobacterial proteins, but no MmpL3 associated proteins have been identified. Here
115 we describe two previously unknown cofactors for MmpL3, one of which is required for
116 TMM transport, and one of which is stress inducible and stabilizes the MmpL3 complex.

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121 **Results**

122 **MmpL3 is stably associated with two proteins of unknown function, MSMEG_0736**
123 **and MSMEG_5308**

124 In order to discover stable binding interactions with MsMmpL3 *in situ*, we devised
125 a native, stringent, affinity purification. MsMmpL3 was fused to a flexible linker
126 connecting the C-terminus of MmpL3 to monomeric superfolder GFP (msfGFP) at the
127 native chromosomal locus of MmpL3. As *mmpL3* is an essential gene, the normal
128 growth rate of this strain suggests that fusion did not disrupt the essential function of the
129 protein. Cell membranes were collected and solubilized with the mild detergent n-
130 Dodecyl β -D-maltoside (DDM). Anti-GFP nanobodies covalently linked to a magnetic
131 bead were incubated with detergent-solubilized membranes and then extensively
132 washed with 0.2% DDM containing buffer. Co-purifying proteins were identified via
133 shotgun mass spectrometry (Fig 1). One of the most abundantly co-purifying proteins
134 was a protein of unknown function, MSMEG_0736 (Table 1 and Table S1A,B). In
135 contrast, pulldown of MmpL10, another MmpL transporter, did not copurify
136 MSmeg_0736 or any proteins in common with MmpL3 (Table S1A,B). To validate this
137 interaction, we created a strain in which a msfGFP was fused to MSMEG_0736. When
138 MSMEG_0736-msfGFP was purified from detergent solubilized membranes under the
139 same conditions, the most abundantly copurified protein was MsMmpL3 (Table 1 and
140 Table S1A,B). In a control experiment using MSMEG_0410 (MmpL10) fused to msfGFP
141 as a bait, neither MSMEG_0736, MSMEG_0250 or MSMEG_5308 were co-purified
142 (Table 1 and Table S1A,B). In a biological replicate of the MSmeg_0736 pulldown, we
143 confirmed the identity of the prominent band at approximately 100 kDa as MmpL3 (Fig

144 1B, Table S2). As MSMEG_0736 interacts with MmpL3, and evidence we will present in
145 this paper shows MSMEG_0736 is required for TMM transport, we propose
146 MSMEG_0736 be named “TMM transport factor A”, TtfA.

147 Analysis of MsTtfA and MsMmpL3 copurifying proteins identified by anti-GFP
148 nanobody purification showed a third complex member found in both pulldowns, the
149 protein encoded by *MSMEG_5308*. This seven bladed beta-propeller protein has a
150 homolog in *M. tuberculosis*, Rv1057, that has been shown to be non-essential, although
151 Mtb lacking Rv1057 fails to properly secrete ESAT-6 and replicated poorly in
152 macrophages [37]. The Rv1057 gene has been shown to be under control of two two-
153 component systems involved in sensing cell stress, MprAB and TcrRS, as well as the
154 envelope stress responsive sigma factor SigE [38-40]. Rv1057 was also reported to be
155 the most transcriptionally induced gene in response to MmpL3 depletion [41],
156 suggesting a connection to MmpL3 function.

157 **TtfA is essential for growth of *M. smegmatis* and *M. tuberculosis in vitro***

158 The *M. tuberculosis* H37Rv homolog of TtfA is Rv0383c. *rv0383c* was predicted
159 to be an essential gene in H37Rv based on transposon mutagenesis [19,42], but its
160 essentiality in *M. smegmatis* and *M. tuberculosis* is unknown and its molecular function
161 obscure. With no predicted protein domains or homologs of known function,
162 confirmation of its essentiality in both organisms was the first step to analyze its
163 function. To test the essentiality of *ttfA* in *M. smegmatis*, we generated a merodiploid
164 strain in which a second copy of *ttfA* was integrated in the chromosome. We then
165 deleted the endogenous coding sequence, so that the only a single copy of *ttfA*
166 remained at the *attB* site. We then attempted to remove the second copy of *ttfA*

167 from *attB* by marker exchange with either a vector or a plasmid encoding TtfA and
168 conferring kanamycin resistance, pAJF792 [43]. Only transformation with the plasmid
169 encoding TtfA yielded transformants that were kanamycin resistant and streptomycin
170 sensitive. Similar results were obtained with a plasmid encoding TtfA from *M.*
171 *tuberculosis* (Fig 2A). This inability to remove *ttfA* from *attB* in our $\Delta ttfA$ strain suggested
172 that *ttfA* was required for growth of *M. smegmatis* (Fig 2A). To further assess the
173 essential role of MsTtfA, we generated CRISPR interference (CRISPRi) strain that
174 allows anhydrotetracycline (ATc) inducible knockdown [44]. Growth inhibition by gene
175 knockdown was visualized by spotting 10-fold serial dilutions on plates with and without
176 ATc, MsTtfA depletion led to an ATc dependent growth defect not seen in the non-
177 targeting control (Fig 2A). Gene knockdown of *ttfA* in *M. smegmatis* also led to
178 cessation of growth in liquid media between 9 and 12 hours post induction with ATc (Fig
179 2B). To test whether TtfA was essential in *M. tuberculosis*, we attempted to knockout
180 the gene using a temperature sensitive phage and were unsuccessful, suggesting
181 essentiality. We then generated three *ttfA* targeting CRISPRi strains with independent
182 guide RNAs. Gene knockdown of *ttfA* in *M. tuberculosis* with all three guide RNAs all led
183 to cessation of growth in liquid media after three days after induction with ATc,
184 indicating that TtfA is essential for *M. tuberculosis* growth *in vitro* (Fig 2C).

185 To examine the morphologic changes that accompany growth arrest during loss
186 of MsTtfA, we depleted the protein using CRISPRi and tracked morphological changes
187 using a MalF(1,2)-mCitrine expression strain that uniformly labels the cell membrane.
188 Time-lapse microscopy indicated that growth arrest without MsTtfA was characterized
189 by shorter, misshapen cells (Fig 2D, Movies S1, S2). Quantitation of cell length

190 revealed that MsTtfA depleted cells were significantly shorter ($2.88 \pm 0.89 \mu\text{m}$) as
191 compared to control cells ($6.00 \pm 2.03 \mu\text{m}$) (Fig 2E). The short cell phenotype suggested
192 that MsTtfA might be required for cell elongation. These data indicate that TtfA is
193 essential for mycobacterial viability and that the function of this gene is conserved
194 between fast and slow growing mycobacteria.

195 **MSMEG_0736 localizes to poles and septa**

196 The predicted protein encoded by MsTtfA contains a predicted N-terminal
197 transmembrane domain from amino acids 2-24, indicating that it is either a
198 transmembrane or secreted protein. To determine the localization and topology of
199 MsTtfA, we assessed the *in vivo* functionality of mCitrine fused at the N or C-terminus.
200 Marker exchange with a plasmid encoding MsTtfA-mCitrine yielded kanamycin
201 resistant, streptomycin sensitive transformants in similar numbers to pAJF792, encoding
202 the wildtype gene, indicating the C-terminal fusion is functional. In contrast, the plasmid
203 encoding an N-terminal mCitrine fusion did not yield kanamycin resistant, streptomycin
204 sensitive transformants, indicating that this fusion failed to complement for essential
205 function.

206 We next localized MsTtfA using live cell fluorescence microscopy. The C-terminal
207 mCitrine fusion protein produced fluorescent signal at the cell poles and septa (Fig 3A,
208 and Movie S3). It has been previously reported that mCitrine does not fluoresce when
209 localized in the periplasm, suggesting that the C-terminal domain of MsTtfA is localized
210 in the cytoplasmic side of the membrane [45]. We then generated an MsTtfA C-terminal
211 fusion to msfGFP by recombination such that the fused copy was expressed from its
212 endogenous locus and was the only copy, guaranteeing functionality. The resulting

213 MsTtfA-msfGFP strain demonstrated fluorescent signal exclusively at cell poles and
214 septa (Movie S4). Fractionation of cell free supernatants showed no detectable MsTtfA-
215 msfGFP in the supernatant (Fig 3B), suggesting that the protein is not secreted.
216 Fractionation of the cell lysate showed that MsTtfA-msfGFP localized in the Triton-X100
217 soluble fraction, similar to a membrane protein control FtsY, but not the soluble fraction
218 marked by cytosolic RNAP β , supporting that MsTtfA is membrane anchored, is not
219 secreted, and has a cytoplasmic C-terminus.

220 **The essential portion of TtfA is conserved among mycolate producers**

221 To further delineate the functional domains of the protein, we examined the
222 conservation of the protein sequence across homologs. BLAST searches identified
223 homologous predicted proteins among mycolate producing organisms (Fig S1).
224 Alignments of these homologs suggested that amino acids 1 through approximately 205
225 were well conserved, with poor conservation in the C-terminal 73 amino acids (Fig S1).
226 The C-terminal 73 amino acids are also predicted to be disordered [46]. This lack of
227 conservation at the C-terminus was also apparent in the alignment with the MtbTtfA,
228 which we demonstrate above is functional in *M. smegmatis* (Fig 2A). To assess the
229 functional contribution of these conserved regions, we generated MsTtfA truncations
230 fused at the C-terminus to msfGFP and assessed the ability of these truncations to
231 complement the essential function by marker exchange. Only the plasmid encoding
232 amino acids 1-205 yielded kanamycin resistant, streptomycin sensitive transformants,
233 indicating that amino acids 1-205 were essential (Fig S2A).

234 After confirming that all of these truncations accumulate as stable proteins at
235 their predicted sizes when expressed in wild type *M. smegmatis* (Fig S2A), we localized

236 each truncation by fluorescence microscopy. MsTtfA(1-205aa)-msfGFP localized to
237 poles and septa in a pattern similar to the full-length protein (Fig S2B), indicating that
238 the poorly conserved C-terminus is not required for essential function or proper
239 localization. However, truncations shorter than 205AA, which did not complement
240 essential function, also failed to localize to poles and septa, indicating that the first
241 205AA of the protein, including the N terminal transmembrane domain, are required for
242 proper localization and that this localization is tightly linked to its essential function.

243 **The N-terminus of TtfA is required for interaction with MmpL3**

244 To determine the regions of MsTtfA required for interaction with MmpL3, we
245 immunopurified MsTtfA truncations fused to msfGFP when coexpressed with MmpL3-
246 mCherry. MsTtfA-msfGFP was purified from DDM detergent solubilized lysates with
247 GFPTrap resin. Unfused msfGFP did not coprecipitate MmpL3-mCherry, whereas full-
248 length MsTtfA-msfGFP copurified with MmpL3-mCherry (Fig 4A). All truncations were
249 visible at comparable levels in DDM solubilized lysates at their predicted sizes (Fig 4B).
250 However, only MsTtfA(1-205aa)-msfGFP copurified with MmpL3-mCherry, quantitatively
251 similar to full-length MsTtfA-msfGFP (Fig 4B). However, loss of any segment of MsTtfA
252 within the first 205AA abolished interaction with MmpL3. These results demonstrate an
253 exact correlation between the ability of MsTtfA to interact with MmpL3 and the essential
254 function of this protein, suggesting that the essentiality of TtfA may be due to a role as
255 an MmpL3 cofactor.

256 **The MmpL3 and MSMEG_0736 complex and its localization is independent of**
257 **TMM biosynthesis**

258 To examine whether the TtfA-MmpL3 interaction requires TMM synthesis, the substrate
259 of the MmpL3 flippase, we depleted Pks13, the TMM synthetase in *M. smegmatis*
260 [47,48]. Depletion of Pks13 in the MmpL3-mCherry/TtfA-msfGFP caused growth arrest
261 after 6 hours of induction, indicative of depleting essential Pks13 (Fig S3) However,
262 Pks13 depletion did not affect levels of either TtfA-msfGFP or MmpL3-mCherry in DDM
263 solubilized lysates (data not shown), nor did depletion of Pks13 have any effect on the
264 TtfA-msfGFP-MmpL3-mCherry complex (Fig 4C). These results indicate that active
265 TMM biosynthesis is not required for TtfA-MmpL3 complex formation.

266 MmpL3-GFP has been previously reported to localize to cell poles and septa
267 [49], a finding we confirm with our MmpL3-msfGFP strain, which localizes the MmpL3
268 protein to poles and septa (Movie S5). This pattern is very similar to the pattern
269 observed with TtfA-msfGFP (Movie S4). To colocalize MmpL3 and TtfA we again
270 utilized strains co-expressing mCherry and msfGFP fusions to TtfA and MmpL3. By
271 fluorescence microscopy, MmpL3 and TtfA strongly co-localized to cell poles and septa
272 (Fig 5A) and were indistinguishable in their localization patterns. Depletion of Pks13 via
273 CRISPRi led to cessation of growth between 6 and 9 hours, but did not affect
274 localization of TtfA-msfGFP or MmpL3-msfGFP, again indicating that TMM synthesis
275 was not required for localization of either protein to the poles or septa (Fig 5B). Taken
276 together, these results strongly indicate that MmpL3 and TtfA form a complex *in vivo* at
277 the site of cell growth.

278 **TtfA is required for MmpL3 TMM transport in *M. smegmatis* and *M. tuberculosis***

279 We next assessed whether TtfA is functionally required for TMM flipping. Loss of
280 MmpL3 function via genetic or pharmacologic inhibition results in TMM accumulation
281 and TDM depletion due to the inability of TMM to flip across the cytoplasmic membrane
282 where Antigen85 enzymes process TMM to TDM and arabinogalactan attached mycolic
283 acids [25-27]. To assess the functional role of TtfA in TMM flipping, we utilized CRISPRi
284 strains that depleted TtfA or MmpL3, and a non-targeting control in *M. smegmatis*. 6
285 hours after knockdown of gene expression, we labeled mycolic acids with ¹⁴C-acetate
286 and assessed TMM/TDM levels in cell wall organic extracts. Depletion of MmpL3 had
287 the reported effect of ¹⁴C-TMM accumulation and ¹⁴C-TDM depletion (Fig 6A),
288 attributable to MmpL3 dysfunction. Depletion of TtfA has a quantitatively similar effect
289 on TMM transport as depletion of MmpL3, as shown by the TDM/TMM ratio in depleted
290 cultures as compared to replete cultures (Fig 6A,B). As a control for essential protein
291 depletion, we depleted the essential DnaK chaperone [43] and found no effect on ¹⁴C-
292 TMM/¹⁴C-TDM, indicating that cell arrest by depletion of any essential protein does not
293 alter TMM and TDM levels (Fig S4).

294 We saw similar results in *M. tuberculosis* depleted of TtfA or MmpL3. Either TtfA
295 or MmpL3 depletion impaired TMM transport, with the resulting accumulation of TMM
296 and loss of TDM (Fig 6C,D). These results indicate that loss of the MmpL3 interacting
297 protein TtfA impairs MmpL3 dependent TMM transport in both *M. smegmatis* and *M.*
298 *tuberculosis*, strongly indicating that TtfA is an essential cofactor in MmpL3 function.

299

300 **An additional complex member is responsive to MmpL3 and TtfA depletion and**
301 **inhibition of flippase activity**

302 MSMEG_5308 was also found to co-purify with both MsTtfA and MmpL3 (Fig 1
303 and Table 1). To further investigate this MmpL3 complex member, we generated a C-
304 terminal msfGFP fusion to MSMEG_5308 at the chromosomal locus. We then depleted
305 either MmpL3 or TtfA in the MSMEG_5308-msfGFP strain. Either MmpL3 or TtfA
306 depletion, but not non-targeting control, led to accumulation of MSMEG_5308 protein
307 (Fig 7A). In contrast, CRISPRi depletion of Pks13 led to cessation of cell growth after 6
308 hours of induction, but did not induce MSMEG_5308 accumulation (Fig 7A).

309 We further examined the response of MSMEG_5308 to inhibitors of the
310 TMM/TDM pathway, including early mycolate biosynthesis (isoniazid (INH)), and
311 inhibitors targeting late steps in TMM/TDM transport (SQ109, BM212, and AU1235).
312 Resistance mutations to SQ109, BM212, and AU1235 arise in MmpL3, however only
313 BM212 and AU1235 have been shown to directly inhibit MmpL3 flippase activity and all
314 three inhibitors may have effects outside of MmpL3 flippase activity [24-26,50]. Both
315 SQ109 and AU1235 caused MSMEG_5308-msfGFP accumulation at 1.5 and 3 hours,
316 but INH or BM212 (at 5 and 10 μ M) had no effect (Fig 7B and data not shown). The lack
317 of accumulation of MSMEG_5308 with INH treatment or Pks13 depletion suggests that
318 MSMEG_5308 does not accumulate in response to loss of TMM or TDM biosynthesis,
319 but rather inhibition of their transport.

320 **MSMEG_5308-msfGFP localizes to cell poles and septa and stabilizes**

321 **MmpL3/TtfA interaction**

322 The identification of MSMEG_5308 as an MmpL3/TtfA interacting protein suggested
323 that MSMEG_5308 may co-localize with the MmpL3 complex. Indeed, MSMEG_5308-
324 msfGFP localized to cell poles and septa in a pattern similar to both TtfA-msfGFP and
325 MmpL3-msfGFP by live cell fluorescence microscopy (Fig 8A). To examine the role of
326 MSMEG_5308, we targeted *MSMEG_5308* using CRISPRi and verified efficient
327 knockdown using a MSMEG_5308-msfGFP strain (Fig S5). Depletion of MSMEG_5308
328 had no impact growth or cell morphology, confirming MSMEG_5308 was not essential
329 in *M. smegmatis* (data not shown).

330 To assess the effect of MSMEG_5308 on MmpL3/TtfA complexes, we isolated
331 TtfA-msfGFP using anti-GFP nanobodies and probed for MmpL3-mCherry in the
332 presence and absence of MSMEG_5308. In DDM solubilized lysates, TtfA copurified
333 with MmpL3-mCherry in MSMEG_5308 depleted lysates similarly to control cells (Fig
334 8B). However, in Triton X-100 solubilized lysates, although the MmpL3-TtfA complex
335 was intact when MSMEG_5308 was present, TtfA-msfGFP did not coprecipitate
336 MmpL3-mCherry in the absence of MSMEG_5308 (Fig 8B). These results indicate that
337 MSMEG_5308 is a nonessential member of the MmpL3 complex that is induced by
338 stress and stabilizes the MmpL3-TtfA protein complex.

339

340 **Discussion**

341 We have identified two new components of the essential machinery of mycolic acid
342 transport and cell growth in mycobacteria. The MmpL3 transporter was previously

343 known to transport trehalose monomycolate, but its cofactors were unknown. The
344 MmpL3 machinery contains the essential protein TtfA, which we show is required for
345 TMM flipping across the cytoplasmic membrane. A third complex member,
346 MSMEG_5308, while not required for TMM transport, appears to stabilize the MmpL3
347 complex and is upregulated in response to MmpL3 dysfunction. All three of these
348 proteins localize to cell poles and septa, which are the sites of cell elongation and the
349 previously reported localization sites of early mycolic acid synthetic machinery such as
350 MabA and InhA [49].

351 TtfA, a protein with no predicted domains of known function, is an essential
352 component of the mycolic acid transport machinery. We have defined the essential
353 portions of TtfA, amino acids 1-205 that includes the N-terminal transmembrane domain
354 but not the poorly conserved disordered C-terminus. Using coprecipitation techniques,
355 we see that truncations that disrupt localization and interaction with MmpL3 fail to
356 support the essential TMM transport function of MmpL3. Our model for the molecular
357 function of TtfA in TMM transport is that the protein links the mycolate biosynthetic
358 machinery to the MmpL3 transporter, possibly by binding directly to TMM. MmpL3 is
359 distinct from several other MmpL proteins in that disruption of the transporter does not
360 inhibit synthesis of the transported lipid. For several MmpL proteins, transport and
361 synthesis are linked. For example, deletion of the sulfolipid transporter MmpL8
362 abolishes sulfolipid synthesis, rather than simply inhibiting its transport [16,51].
363 Similarly, MmpL7 is physically and functionally coupled to PDIM biosynthesis [52].
364 However, the lack of such coupling in the MmpL3 system may suggest that a coupling

365 protein is required to chaperone the transported glycolipid to the transporter, a function
366 we hypothesize for TtfA.

367 Alternatively, it is possible that that TtfA is a scaffolding protein that nucleates
368 additional essential MmpL3 complex members yet to be elucidated. TtfA has been
369 previously shown to interact with the non-essential vesiculogenesis regulator VirR in *M.*
370 *tuberculosis*, that we also find in our purifications of MsTtfA [53].

371 The second protein we identify in the MmpL3 complex, MSMEG_5308, is a seven
372 bladed propeller protein. This protein structural motif has been previously described to
373 aid in protein-protein interactions though members are functionally diverse [54-56]. In
374 *Mtb*, the MSMEG_5308 homolog, Rv1057, is responsive to a variety of membrane
375 stresses as well as MmpL3 depletion. Our data indicates that the function of
376 MSMEG_5308 is to stabilize the MmpL3/TtfA complex. We hypothesize that
377 MSMEG_5308 is upregulated during times of membrane stress in order to stabilize
378 MmpL3 complexes and preserve TMM transport and cell wall biosynthesis in conditions
379 that may dissociate the MmpL3 complex.

380 MmpL3 mediated TMM transport has emerged as an attractive drug target after
381 several high throughput screens identified whole cell active inhibitors that appear to
382 target this transporter. Our identification of two previously unidentified cofactors for
383 MmpL3 will empower future studies to investigate these proteins as drug targets and
384 their potential roles in cellular response and resistance to MmpL3 targeting small
385 molecules. Additionally, future biochemical and structural studies will examine the
386 biochemical and structural organization of this essential mycolic acid transport complex.

387 **Methods**

388 **Bacterial and DNA manipulations**

389 Standard procedures were used to manipulate recombinant DNA and to transform *E.*
390 *coli*. *M. smegmatis* strains were derivatives of *mc²155* [60]. *M. tuberculosis* strains are
391 derivatives of Erdman. Gene deletions were made by homologous recombination and
392 double negative selection [61]. All strains used in this study are listed in Table S2.
393 Plasmids including relevant features, and primers are listed in Table S3 and S4. *M.*
394 *smegmatis* and *M. tuberculosis* was transformed by electroporation (2500V, 2.5 μ F,
395 1000 Ω). All *M. smegmatis* strains were cultured in LB with 0.5% glycerol, 0.5% dextrose
396 (LBsmeg) or 7H9 media. *M. tuberculosis* was growth in 7H9_{OADC}. 0.05% Tween₈₀ was
397 added to all liquid media. Antibiotic concentrations used for selection of *M. smegmatis*
398 and *M. tuberculosis* strains were as follows: kanamycin 20 μ g/ml, hygromycin 50 μ g/ml,
399 streptomycin 20 μ g/ml. For CRISPRi knockdowns anhydrotetracycline (ATc) was used at
400 50ng/ml (*smegmatis*) or 100ng/ml (*Mtb*).

401 **Immunoblotting**

402 For protein and epitope tag detection, GFP (Rockland Immunochemicals, Rabbit Anti-
403 GFP polyclonal antibody, 1mg/ml, 1:20,000), mCherry (Rockland Immunochemicals,
404 Rabbit Anti-RFP polyclonal antibody, 1mg/ml, 1:20,000), and RNAP- β (Neoclone,
405 8RB13 Mouse Anti-*E. coli* RNAP β monoclonal, 1:20,000), Ag85 (BEI Resources, Rabbit
406 polyclonal antibody, 1:20000).

407 **Microscopy**

408 All images were acquired using a Zeiss Axio Observer Z1 microscope equipped with
409 Definite focus, Stage top incubator (Insert P Lab-Tek S1, TempModule S1), Colibri.2

410 and Illuminator HXP 120 C light sources, a Hamamatsu ORCA-Flash4.0 CMOS Camera
411 and a Plan-Apochromat 100x/1.4 oil DIC objective. Zeiss Zen software was used for
412 acquisition and image export. The following filter sets and light sources were used for
413 imaging: GFP (38 HE, Colibri2.0 470 LED), mCherry (64 HE, Colibri2.0 590 LED). YFP
414 (46 HE, Colibri2.0 505 LED) and FM 4-64 (20, HXP 120 C). For cell staining 100µl of
415 culture was used. A final concentration of 1µg/ml FM 4-64 (Invitrogen) was added. Cells
416 were pelleted by centrifugation at 5000g for 1 minute and resuspended in 50µl of media.
417 For single time point live cell imaging, 7µl of culture was spotted onto a No. 1.5
418 coverslip and pressed to a slide. For time-lapse microscopy, cells were added to a 1.5%
419 Low melting point agarose LBsmeg pad. For pad preparation, LBsmeg agarose was
420 heated to 65°C and poured into a 17x28mm geneframe (Thermoscientific, AB-0578)
421 adhered to a 25x75mm glass slide. A second slide was pressed down on top and the
422 set-up was allowed to cool at room temperature for 10 minutes. The top slide was
423 removed and the pad was cut and removed so that a 3-4mm strip remained near the
424 center. 2-3µl of *M. smegmatis* culture was added to the pad and a No. 1.5 24x40mm
425 coverglass was sealed to the geneframe. Slides were incubated in stage top incubator
426 at 37°C. For timelaspse microscopy cells were incubated in CellAsic ONIX microfluidic
427 system (plates for bacterial cell culture, B04A) at a flow (psi) of 2.0 and heated at 37°C.
428 Cells were equilibrated in plates at 37°C for 3 hours prior to the start of imaging. Cell
429 length were quantitated using Zeiss Zen software.

430

431 **¹⁴C-Acetic Acid labeling and TLC**

432 *M. smegmatis* and *M. tuberculosis* cultures were grown and depleted for the following
433 times: *M. smegmatis* CRISPRi 6 hours in ATc-50ng/ml, *M. smegmatis* Tet-DnaK 16
434 hours without ATc, and *M. tuberculosis* CRISPRi 26 hours in ATc-100ng/ml. For TMM
435 and TDM labeling 1ml of culture was removed and labeled for 1 hour with 1ul for *M.*
436 *smegmatis* or 16 hours with 2ul for *M. tuberculosis* using [1-¹⁴C]-Acetic Acid, Sodium
437 Salt (Perkin Elmer, NEC084H001MC, 1 mCi/mL). For INH controls, 20ug/ml INH was
438 added 5 minutes prior to label addition. After incubation cells were harvested by
439 centrifugation at 10,000g for 5 minutes and supernatant was removed. The pellet was
440 resuspended in 500ul chloroform:methanol (2:1) and incubated at 37C for 2 hours. Cells
441 and debris was pelleted at 10,000g for 5 minutes and the supernatant was removed.
442 10ul of chloroform:methanol extraction was spotted on HPTLC plates and run 3 times in
443 chloroform:methanol:water (90:10:1), then allowed to air dry and imaged using a
444 Phosphor storage cassette and Typhoon Trio (pixel size 200 microns at best sensitivity).
445 ImageJ64 was used to quantitate the radioactive signal.

446

447 **Protein expression and purification**

448 Endogenous MSMEG_0736 and MSMEG_0250 were purified from *MSMEG mc²155*
449 expressing native MSMEG_0736 and MSMEG_0250 with a C-terminal msfGFP-tag.
450 *MSMEG* strains were grown in 7H9 with 0.05% (v/v) Tween₈₀. Harvested cells were
451 washed three times with PBS and frozen before lysis with a cryogenic grinder (SPEX
452 SamplePrep). The powder was resuspended in 50 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl,
453 protease inhibitor cocktail (Sigma-Aldrich) and 0.6-0.7 units/ml Benzonase
454 endonuclease and the solution was incubated for 30 min. Solutions were centrifuged at

455 15,000 g for 30 min, followed by centrifugation at 98,000 g - 99,594 g (depending on
456 amount of material) for 1 h to isolate the membranes. Membranes were solubilized for 1
457 h at 4°C in 50 mM Tris-HCl pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl and 1% DDM using a 1:10 (w/w) ratio
458 of detergent to membranes. MSMEG_0410 was solubilized using a 1:6.77 (w/w) ratio of
459 detergent to membranes. The solutions were centrifuged for 30 min at 99,526 g -
460 103,530 g. Solubilized membranes were incubated with GFP-Trap_MA beads
461 (Chromotek) for 1 h at 4°C. The beads were washed three times with 50 mM Tris-HCl
462 pH 7.5, 150 mM NaCl and 0.2% DDM. Proteins were eluted from the beads by the
463 addition of 0.2 M glycine pH 2.5 and the eluate was neutralized with 1 M Tris base pH
464 10.4. The elution was repeated a second time.

465

466 **Mass spectrometry**

467 The two GFP-Trap_MA elutions were pooled and proteins were precipitated with
468 trichloroacetic acid. The pellets were resuspended in 0.1% Rapigest in 50 mM
469 ammonium bicarbonate. Samples were prepared for mass spectrometry analysis as
470 previously described [57]. Samples were denatured and reduced in a buffer containing
471 2M urea and 2 mM DTT. Free cysteines were alkylated by addition of 2 mM
472 iodoacetamide. The reduced and alkylated samples were then digested with trypsin
473 overnight at 37C. Digested samples were desalted using UltraMicroSpin C18 columns
474 (Nest Group) and then evaporated to dryness. Samples were resuspended in 0.1%
475 formic acid for mass spectrometry analysis.

476 Samples were analyzed on a Thermo Scientific Orbitrap Fusion mass
477 spectrometry system equipped with an Easy nLC 1200 ultra-high pressure liquid

478 chromatography system interfaced via a nanoelectrospray source. Samples were
479 injected onto a C18 reverse phase capillary column (75 μ m inner diameter x 25 cm
480 length, packed with 1.9 μ m C18 particles). Peptides were then separated by an organic
481 gradient from 5% to 30% ACN in 0.1% formic acid over 180 minutes at a flow rate of
482 300 nl/min. The MS continuously collected spectra in a data-dependent fashion over the
483 entire gradient.

484 Raw mass spectrometry data were analyzed using the MaxQuant software package
485 (version 1.3.0.5) [58]. Data were matched to the *Mycobacterium smegmatis* UniProt
486 reference proteome database. Variable modifications were allowed for methionine
487 oxidation, and protein N-terminus acetylation. A fixed modification was indicated for
488 cysteine carbamidomethylation. Full trypsin specificity was required. The first search
489 was performed with a mass accuracy of +/- 20 parts per million and the main search
490 was performed with a mass accuracy of +/- 6 parts per million. A maximum of 5
491 modifications were allowed per peptide. A maximum of 2 missed cleavages were
492 allowed. The maximum charge allowed was 7+. Individual peptide mass tolerances
493 were allowed. For MS/MS matching, a mass tolerance of 0.5 Da was allowed and the
494 top 6 peaks per 100 Da were analyzed. MS/MS matching was allowed for higher charge
495 states, water and ammonia loss events. Data were searched against a concatenated
496 database containing all sequences in both forward and reverse directions with reverse
497 hits indicating the false discovery rate of identifications. The data were filtered to obtain
498 a peptide, protein, and site-level false discovery rate of 0.01. The minimum peptide
499 length was 7 amino acids.

500 Protein identification from a single SDS-PAGE band was performed by the Taplin

501 Mass Spectrometry Facility at Harvard Medical School. The gel band corresponding to
502 the molecular weight of MmpL3 was excised from the gel and subjected to in-gel trypsin
503 digestion. Excised gel bands were cut into approximately 1 mm³ pieces. Gel pieces
504 were then subjected to a modified in-gel trypsin digestion procedure [59]. Gel pieces
505 were washed and dehydrated with acetonitrile for 10 min. followed by removal of
506 acetonitrile. Pieces were then completely dried in a speed-vac. Rehydration of the gel
507 pieces was with 50 mM ammonium bicarbonate solution containing 12.5 ng/μl modified
508 sequencing-grade trypsin (Promega, Madison, WI) at 4°C. After 45 min., the excess
509 trypsin solution was removed and replaced with 50 mM ammonium bicarbonate solution
510 to just cover the gel pieces. Samples were then placed in a 37°C room overnight.
511 Peptides were later extracted by removing the ammonium bicarbonate solution,
512 followed by one wash with a solution containing 50% acetonitrile and 1% formic acid.
513 The extracts were then dried in a speed-vac (~1 hr). The samples were then stored at
514 4°C until analysis.
515 On the day of analysis the samples were reconstituted in 5 - 10 μl of HPLC solvent A
516 (2.5% acetonitrile, 0.1% formic acid). A nano-scale reverse-phase HPLC capillary
517 column was created by packing 2.6 μm C18 spherical silica beads into a fused silica
518 capillary (100 μm inner diameter x ~30 cm length) with a flame-drawn tip [60]. After
519 equilibrating the column each sample was loaded via a Famos auto sampler (LC
520 Packings, San Francisco CA) onto the column. A gradient was formed and peptides
521 were eluted with increasing concentrations of solvent B (97.5% acetonitrile, 0.1% formic
522 acid).

523 As peptides eluted they were subjected to electrospray ionization and then entered into
524 an LTQ Orbitrap Velos Pro ion-trap mass spectrometer (Thermo Fisher Scientific,
525 Waltham, MA). Peptides were detected, isolated, and fragmented to produce a tandem
526 mass spectrum of specific fragment ions for each peptide. Peptide sequences (and
527 hence protein identity) were determined by matching protein databases with the
528 acquired fragmentation pattern by the software program, Sequest (Thermo Fisher
529 Scientific, Waltham, MA) [61]. All databases include a reversed version of all the
530 sequences and the data was filtered to between a one and two percent peptide false
531 discovery rate.

532 **GFPTrap pulldowns of MsTtfA Truncations and MsTtfA-msfGFP with CRISPRi**
533 **depletion**

534 10ml of LBsmeg culture of MsTfA-msfGFP truncations and MmpL3-mCherry co-
535 expression strains were grown to OD₆₀₀ 0.5 overnight at 37C. 50ml of LBsmeg of TtfA-
536 msfGFP truncations and MmpL3-mCherry co-expression strains with CRISPRi targeting
537 constructs were grown to OD₆₀₀ 0.5. For non-targeting and MSMEG_5308 depletion
538 strains were grown with ATc-50ng/ml for 24 hours and Pks13 depletion strains were
539 grown with ATc for 6 hours. Cultures were cooled on ice and cells were harvested by
540 centrifugation (3700g, 10 min, 4°C). Pellets were washed once with 1ml of PBS. Pellets
541 were resuspended in 500ul PBS with 1x HALT protease (Thermo Scientific) and lysed
542 via bead beating (Biospec, Mini-beadbeater-16) 2 times for 1 min with 5 min on ice
543 between. Beads, unbroken cells, and debris were pelleted at 5000g for 10 min at 4°C.
544 Supernatant was collected and an additional 500ul of PBS containing either 1% DDM or
545 1% Triton X-100 was added and incubated at 4°C for 1 hour with rocking. Insoluble

546 material was then pelleted at 21130g for 1 hour at 4°C and the supernatant (~1ml) was
547 collected and added to 20ul pre-washed GFPTrap magnetic agarose beads (Bulldog
548 Bio) and incubated for 2 hours at 4°C with rocking. After incubation beads were
549 collected with a magnet and washed 3 times with 1mL PBS and 0.1% DDM or Triton X-
550 100. Elution was done using SDS sample buffer and heating 60°C for 15 min.

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724

725

726 **Table 1**

727 MSMEG_0736 and MSMEG_0250 protein-protein interactions. Shown is the number of
728 unique peptides detected in the GFP-Trap eluates using MSMEG_0736-msfGFP or
729 MSMEG_0250-msfGFP as bait. Only the three proteins with the highest peptides are
730 shown.

731

732

Bait	ProtID	Name	Num unique³ peptides
MSMEG_0736	A0QP27	MSMEG_0250	35
	A0QQF4	MSMEG_0736	22
	A0R316	MSMEG_5308	14
MSMEG_0250 (MmpL3)	A0QP27	MSMEG_0250	57
	A0QQF4	MSMEG_0736	11
	A0R316	MSMEG_5308	15

734

735 **Figure Legends**

736 **Figure 1. MmpL3 and MSMEG_0736 form a complex**

737 **A.** Silver stained SDS PAGE gel of elutions from GFP-Trap columns loaded with lysates
738 from *M. smegmatis* expressing MSMEG_0736-msfGFP or MmpL3-msfGFP
739 (MSmeg_0250). See Table 1 for protein identifications.

740 **B.** Silver stained SDS PAGE gel of the first elution from a GFP-Trap column loaded with
741 a lysate from *M. smegmatis* expressing MSMEG_0736-msfGFP. The band
742 corresponding to the molecular weight of MmpL3, indicated with an asterisk, was
743 excised and subjected for mass spectrometry analysis and identified as MmpL3 (see
744 methods and Table S2).

745

746 **Figure 2. MsTtfA /Mtb TtfA are required for mycobacterial growth and cell**

747 **elongation.** (A) (Left) *M. smegmatis* strains carrying deletion in chromosomal *ttfA* and a
748 copy of *ttfA* at the *attB* phage integration site were subjected to marker exchange
749 with *attB* integrating vectors. $\Delta ttfA$ *attB::ttfA* *strep* (MGM6414) transformed with
750 pMV306kan (vector), pAJF792 (encoding MsTtfA) or pAJF793 (Mtb TtfA) are shown on
751 Kanamycin agar. (Right) 10-fold dilutions of *M. smegmatis* carrying ATc inducible
752 CRISPRi non-targeting control (NT, MGM6418) or *ttfA* (MGM6419) on agar media with
753 and without ATc. (B) Growth curve of non-targeting (MGM6418, blue) and *ttfA* targeting
754 (MGM6419, red) CRISPRi *M. smegmatis* strains grown in uninduced (solid, closed
755 circles) and ATc induced (dashed, empty circles) conditions. (C) Growth curve of non-
756 targeting (MGM6715, blue) or three distinct Mtb *ttfA* targeting CRISPRi *M. tuberculosis*
757 strains (MGM6675, red; MGM6677, green; MGM6679, purple) grown in uninduced

758 (solid, closed circles) and ATc induced (dashed, empty circles) conditions. (D)
759 Fluorescence microscopy of a *Ms ttfA* targeting CRISPRi strain marked with MalF(1,2)-
760 mCitrine (MGM6433) 15 hours post CRISPRi induction with ATc (top, -TtfA) or,
761 uninduced control at 15 hours (+TtfA, bottom). YFP (left) and DIC (right) image shown.
762 White bar indicated in bottom of panel image is 2 micron. Exposure times for YFP
763 250ms, 40% LED. (E) Loss of TtfA leads to short cells. Cell lengths of non-targeting
764 (MGM6418, graph:blue, triangles) and TtfA targeting (MGM6419, red, squares)
765 CRISPRi strains induced for 12 hours. Representative DIC /FM 4-64 images used for
766 quantitation shown above the graph.

767 **Figure 3. TtfA is a membrane protein that localizes to poles and septa.**

768 (A) *M. smegmatis* TtfA-mCitrine expression strain (MGM6423) imaged during
769 logarithmic growth. YFP (left), DIC (middle), and Overlay (right) image shown. White bar
770 is 1 micron indicated in bottom of panel image. Exposure times for YFP 1s, 75% LED.
771 (B) Localization of TtfA-msfGFP by cellular fractionation. Cell free supernatant and cell
772 pellet fractions (left) and cytoplasmic and membrane fractions (right) probed for
773 secreted protein Ag85 (top), membrane protein FtsY (top, middle), cytoplasmic protein
774 RpoB (bottom, middle), and GFP for TtfA-msfGFP (bottom).

775

776 **Figure 4. TtfA and MmpL3 form a complex *in vivo* via the essential region of TtfA**
777 **and independently of TMM synthesis.**

778 (A) DDM solubilized *M. smegmatis* lysates (left) and GFPTrap eluates (right) of
779 msfGFP expressing control (MGM6828) and TtfA-msfGFP (MGM6815) both co-
780 expressing MmpL3-mCherry and probed with anti-RFP (top) and anti-GFP (bottom). (B)

781 The essential region of MsTtfA is necessary and sufficient for MmpL3 interaction. DDM
782 solubilized lysates (top) and GFPTrap eluates (bottom) of msfGFP control (MGM6828),
783 full-length TtfA-msfGFP (1-278, MGM6829), or TtfA-msfGFP truncations (1-
784 23:MGM6826, 1-50:MGM6823, 1-100:MGM6827, 1-150:MGM6824, 1-205:MGM6822,
785 24-278:MGM6825) co-expressing MmpL3-mCherry and probed with anti-RFP (top) and
786 anti-GFP (bottom). (C) The MsTtfA-MmpL3 interaction is independent of mycolate
787 synthesis. GFPTrap eluates of MmpL3-mCherry expression strains co-expressing
788 msfGFP control (MGM6828) or TtfA-msfGFP with either control CRISPRi for (NT,
789 MGM6816) or *pks13* (MGM6817) depleted for 6 hours with ATc. Top panel is probed for
790 MmpL3-mCherry with anti-RFP and bottom with anti-GFP.

791 **Figure 5. TtfA and MmpL3 co-localize at cell poles and septa independently of**
792 **TMM synthesis.** (A) Localization of MsTtfA-mCherry/MmpL3-msfGFP (MGM6433, top)
793 and MmpL3-mCherry/TtfA-msfGFP (MGM6434, bottom). (B) Localization of TtfA-
794 msfGFP or MmpL3-msfGFP in Pks13 depleted or mock depleted cells.

795

796 **Figure 6. MsTtfA and MtbTtfA are required for TMM transport.**

797 (A) TLCs of extractable mycolic acids from three replicate ¹⁴C-acetic acid labeled *M.*
798 *smegmatis* cultures carrying CRISPRi targeting guide RNAs (non-targeting, MGM6418),
799 *ttfA* (middle, MGM6419), or *mmpL3* (right, MGM6637) (B) Graph of TDM/TMM ratio for
800 quantitation of TMM and TDM of TLCs in panel A. (C) TLCs of extractable mycolic acids
801 from three replicate ¹⁴C-acetic acid labeled *M. tuberculosis* cultures depleted for TtfA
802 (left, MGM6675), or MmpL3 (right, MGM6676) (D) Quantitation of TDM/TMM ratio from
803 quantitation of TMM and TDM of TLCs in panel C.***=p<0.01.

804 **Figure 7. MSMEG_5308-msfGFP accumulates in response to MmpL3 dysfunction**

805 (A) Lysates of MSMEG_5308-msfGFP expression strains with CRISPRi constructs non-
806 targeting control (NT, MGM6766), MmpL3 (MGM6718), TtfA (MGM6717), or Pks13
807 (MGM6767) (ATc induction at 0, 2, 4, 6, 8 hours) and probed with anti-GFP or anti-
808 RpoB. (B) Lysates of MSMEG_5308-msfGFP expression strain (MGM6681) treated with
809 DMSO, 10 μ g/ml INH, 20 μ g/ml INH, 5 μ M SQ109, 5 μ M BM212, 5 μ M AU1235 for 0, 1.5,
810 or 3 hours and probed with anti-GFP and anti-RpoB (loading control)

811

812 **Figure 8. MSMEG_5308 localizes to cell poles and septa and stabilizes the**
813 **TtfA/MmpL3 interaction.**

814 (A) MSMEG_5308-msfGFP expression strain (MGM6681) imaged during logarithmic
815 growth. GFP, DIC and merged images are shown. (B) GFPTrap pulldown of TtfA-
816 msfGFP /MmpL3-mCherry co-expression strains with non-targeting or MSMEG_5308
817 targeting CRISPRi constructs. Left panel is the input and right panel is the eluate from
818 the GFPTrap column, either in the presence of DDM or Triton X-100.

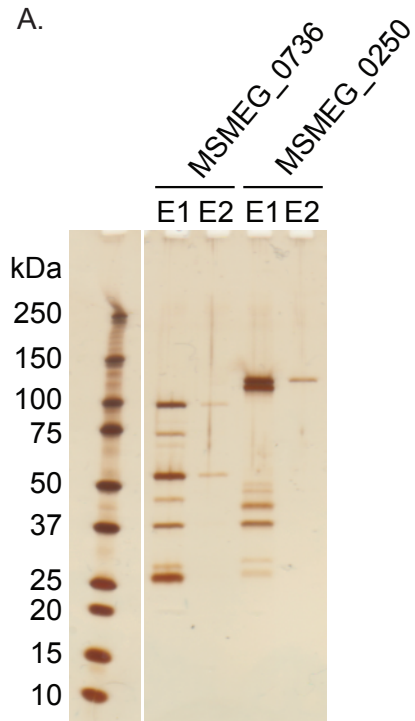
819

820

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A.



B.

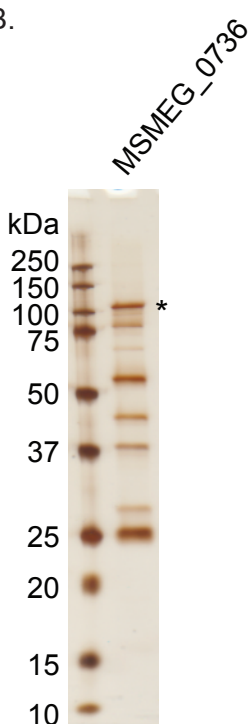


Figure 1

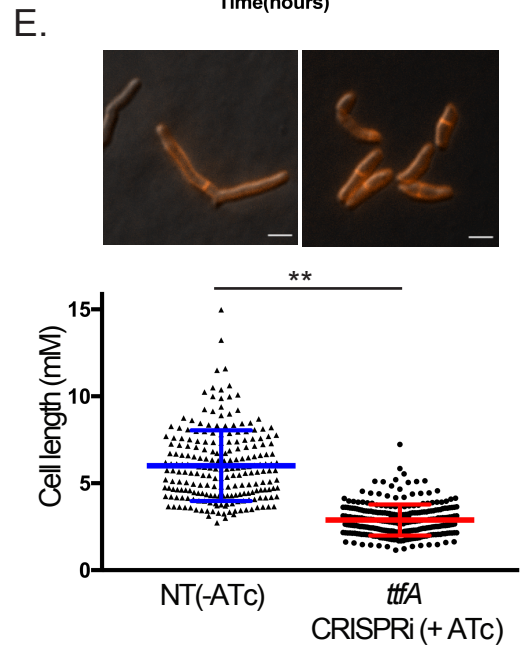
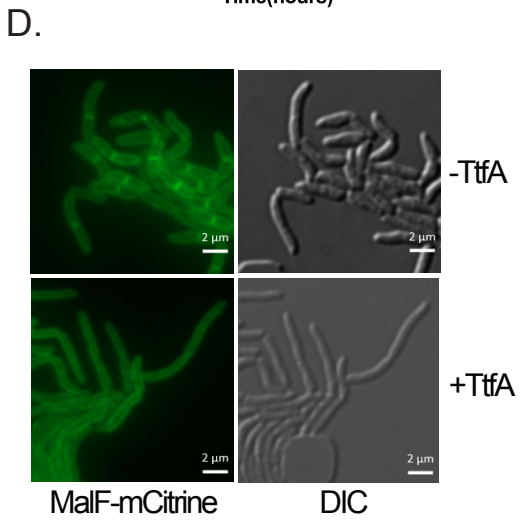
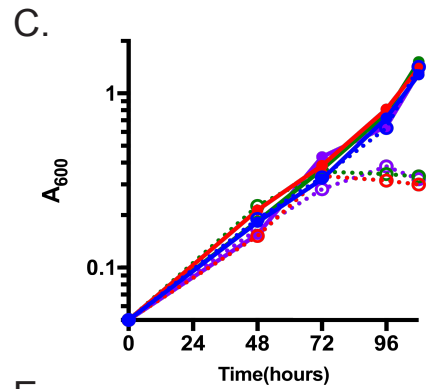
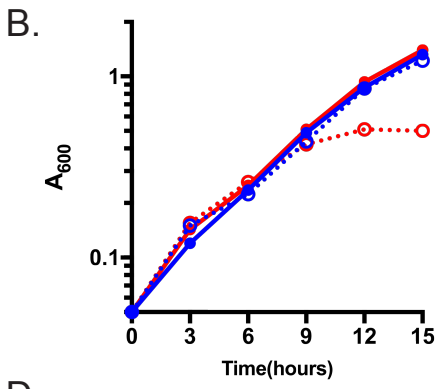
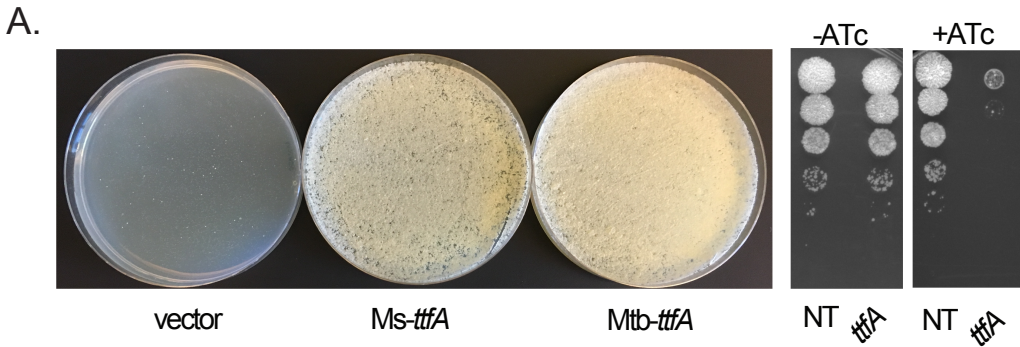
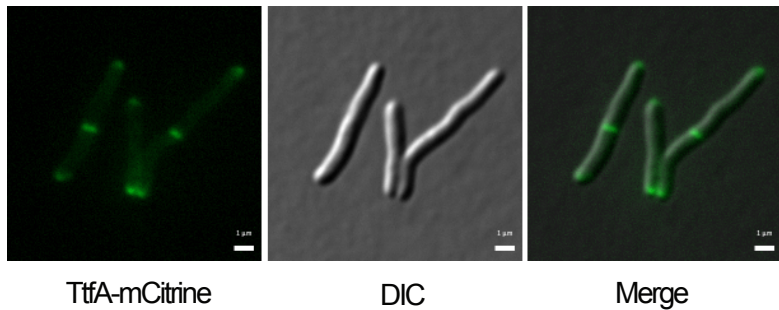


Figure 2

A.



B.

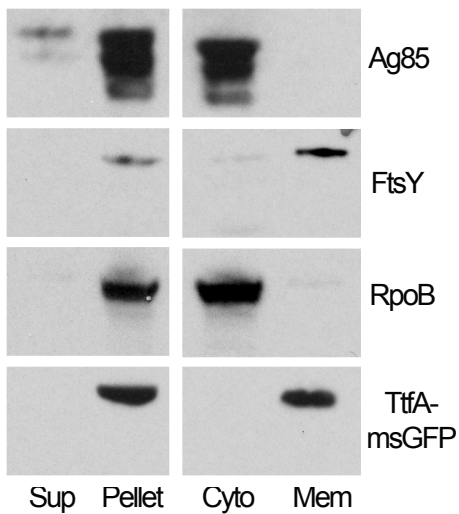


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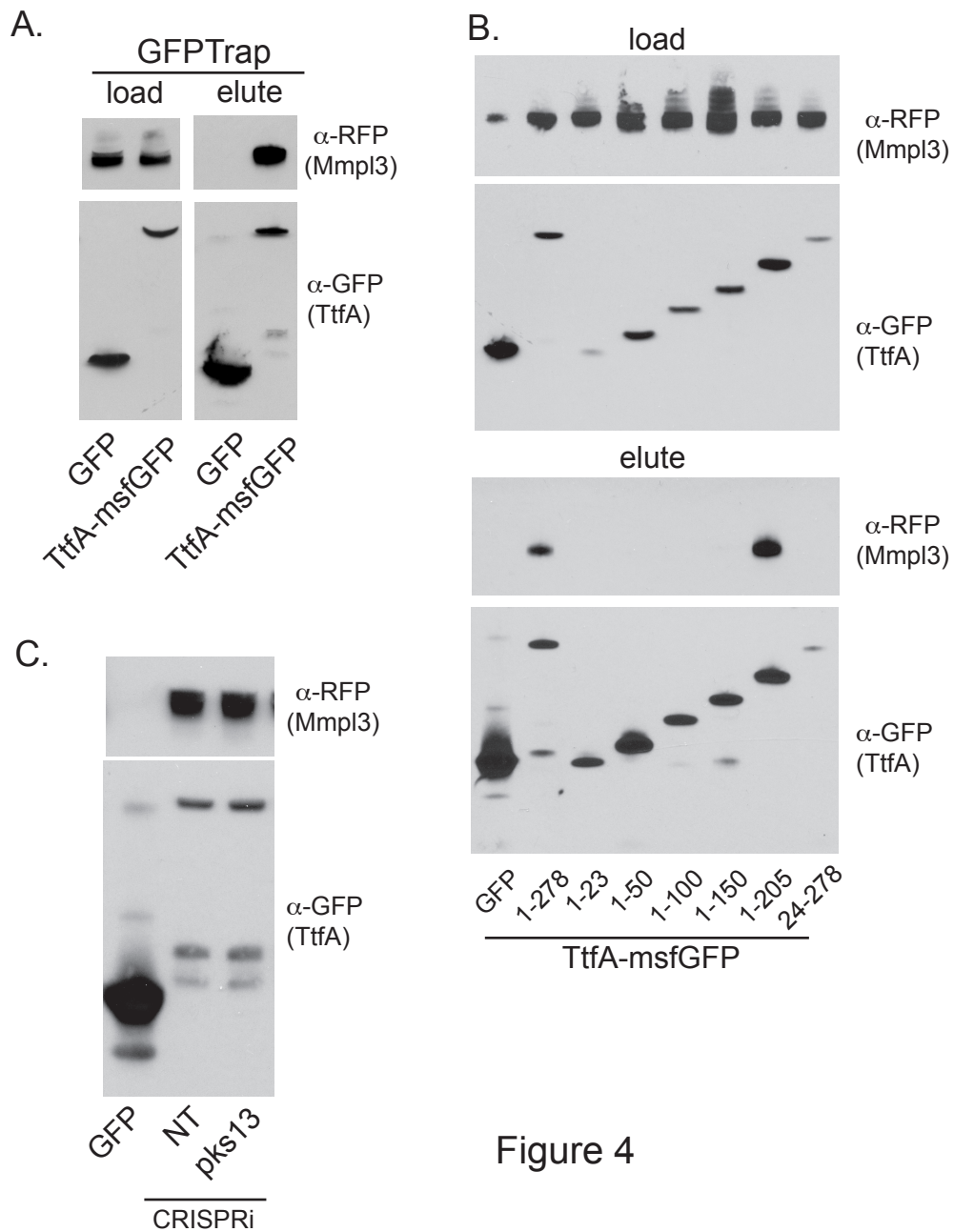
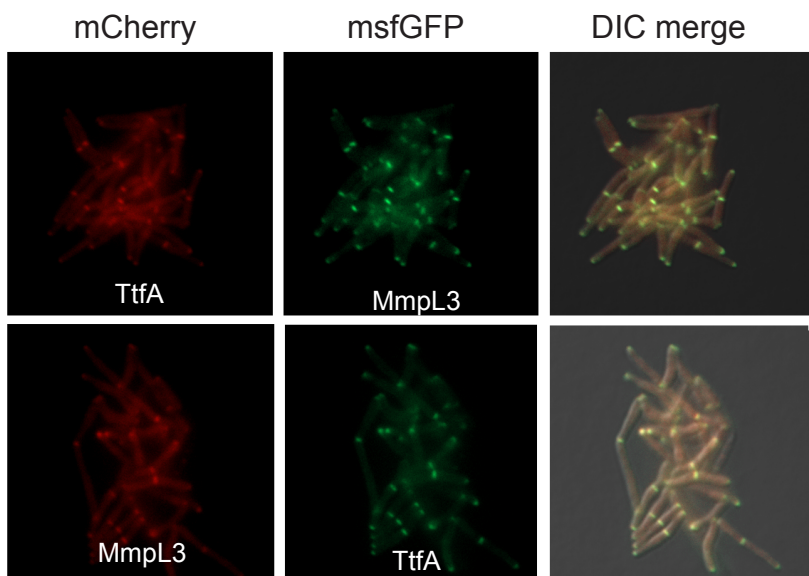


Figure 4

A.



B.

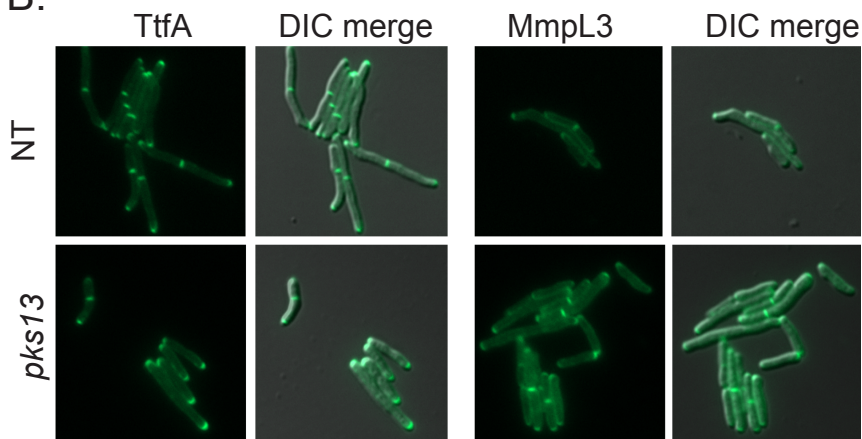
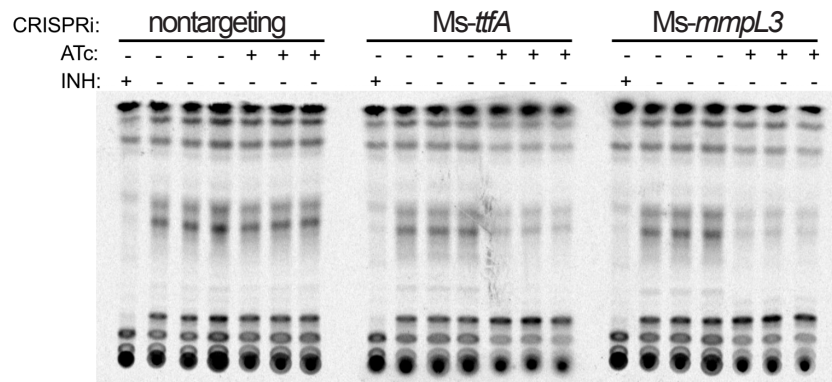
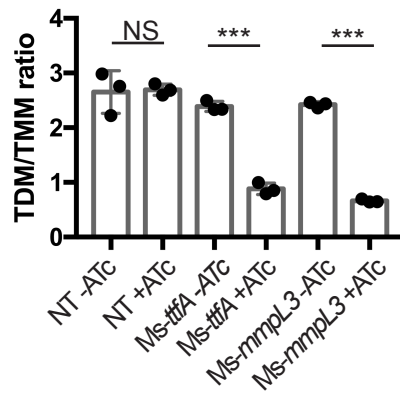


Figure 5

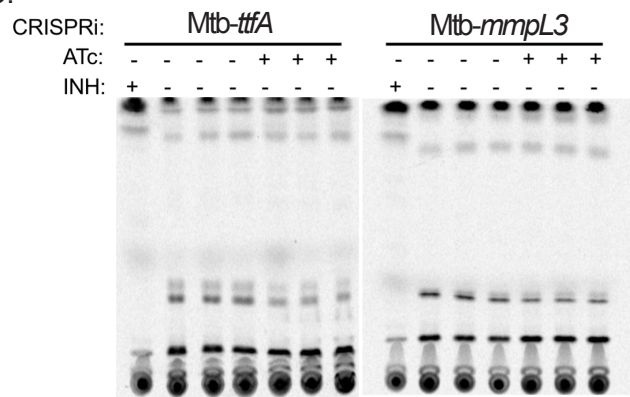
A.



B.



C.



D.

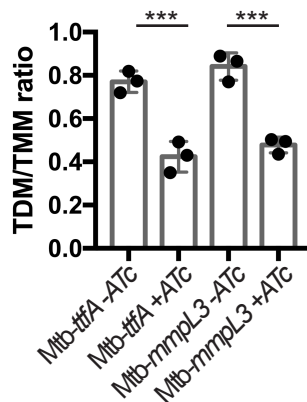


Figure 6

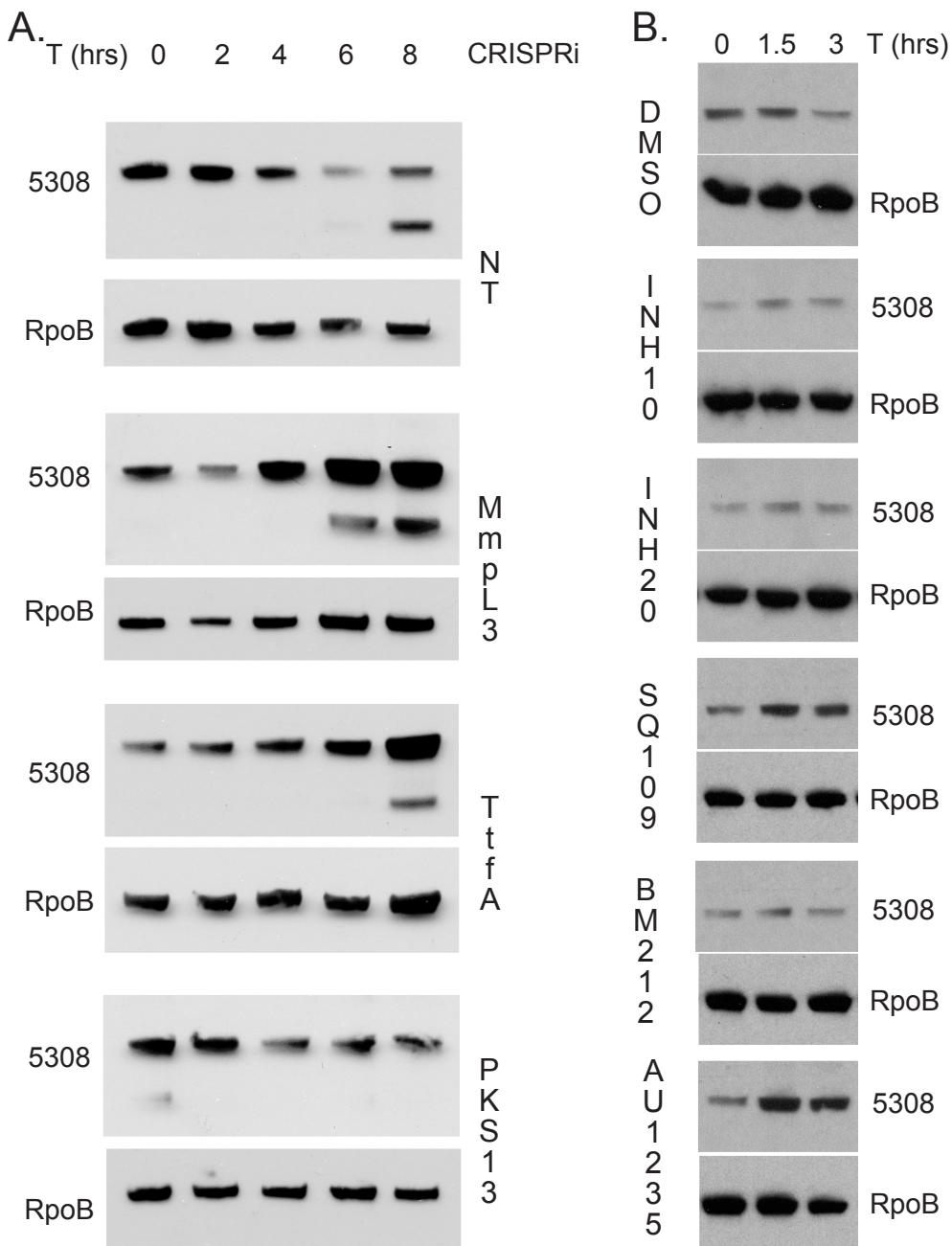
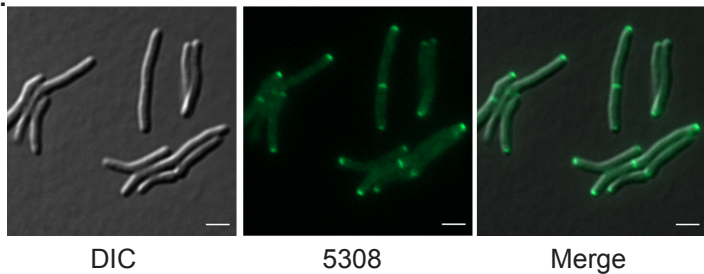


Figure 7

A.



B.

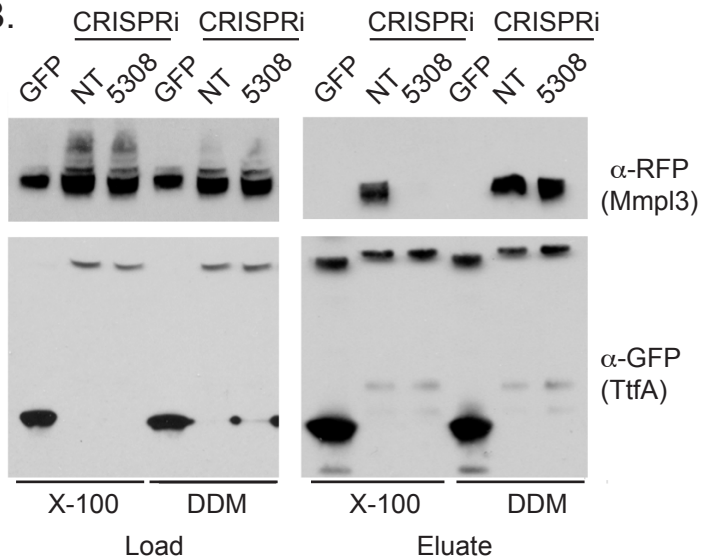


Figure 8