Supporting Information

Rocha et al. 10.1073/pnas.1102835108

SI Methods

Analysis of CUG-Encoded Residue Distribution in Fungal Proteins. For multiple sequence alignments, the *Candida albicans* proteins containing at least one CUG-encoded residue (corresponding to 3,998 ORFs) were selected using ANACONDA (1). Putative/ identified S. cerevisiae orthologues (expectation value >10⁻⁵) were obtained from the Candida Genome Database ([http://](http://www.candidagenome.org/) www.candidagenome.org/). Finally, orthologous proteins from yeast species (Candida glabrata, Kluyveromyces lactis, Ashbya gossypii, Debaryomyces hansenii, Yarrowia lipolytica, and Schizosaccharomyces pombe) sufficiently distant to allow an accurate identification of similarity regions within the selected proteins were chosen using the Génolevures web resource ([http://](http://www.genolevures.org/) [www.genolevures.org/\)](http://www.genolevures.org/). Multiple sequence alignments were preformed with ClustalW (2), using the BLOSUM62 similarity score matrix, and displayed with ESPript (3). The final sample comprised a total of 680 CUG-containing proteins for which the positions of the CUG-encoded residues were scored according to their location in the multiple sequence alignment (within columns of strictly identical residues, of residues with conserved chemical properties, or of nonconserved residues).

Available experimental three-dimensional models for the selected C. albicans proteins were identified in the Protein Data Bank (<http://www.rcsb.org/pdb/home/home.do>) and whenever possible theoretical models were generated by comparative homology modeling using SWISS-MODEL (4) [\(http://swiss](http://swissmodel.expasy.org)[model.expasy.org](http://swissmodel.expasy.org)). All models with less than 30% target-to-template sequence identity were rejected. Local model quality was assessed with ANOLEA and GROMOS, and only models for which the CUG-encoded residue was located in a reliable region and had an energetically favorable conformation (5) were considered. This defined a subset of 72 C. albicans ORFs for which orthologous sequences for CTG-clade organisms (Candida lusitaniae, Candida tropicalis, Candida parapsilosis, Candida guilliermondii, Debaryomyces hansenii, and Lodderomyces elongisporus), WGD-clade (Saccharomyces mikatae, Saccharomyces bayanus, Candida glabrata, Saccharomyces castellii) and other fungi (Kluyveromyces lactis, Ashbya gossypii, and Kluyveromyces waltii) were obtained from the Broad Institute Fungal Orthogroups Repository [\(http://www.broadinstitute.org/regev/orthogroups/](http://www.broadinstitute.org/regev/orthogroups/)). The distribution of CUG-encoded residues in CTG-clade fungi and Saccharomyces cerevisiae was determined from the alignment of this subset of sequences, as described above. Three-dimensional models were obtained for all CTG-clade and S. cerevisiae orthologs using the procedure and quality criteria described above for C. albicans ORFs. This new subset includes 1,392 CUG-encoded residues of which 702 could be structurally analyzed.

For all models, solvent-accessibility and secondary structure location of each CUG-encoded residue was calculated with WhatIf (6) or DSSP (7), classifying the residues as buried, intermediate or exposed, according to the criteria defined in ESPript (3).

Analysis of the Expression Levels of Genes Related to Protein Quality Control Mechanisms upon Increase of CUG-Ambiguity. Proteasome activity was assayed as previously reported (8). Briefly, 2 mL of assay buffer (10 mM Tris-HCl, 20 mM KCl, 5 mM $MgCl₂$, pH 8.0), 150 μL of protein extract and 10 μL of proteasome substrate succinyl-leucine-leucine-valine-tyrosine-MCA (Sigma) were mixed. The variation in fluorescence intensity (emission at 435 nm, excitation at 365 nm) over 1 h incubation at 37 °C was measured with a luminescence spectrometer (Perkin Elmer) and used to calculate the normalized proteasome activity (fluorescence per μg of total protein).

Heat shock protein mRNA levels were determined by quantitative PCR (qPCR). Total RNA was prepared using the hot acidic phenol method (9) with some modifications to completely remove DNA contamination. First-strand cDNA synthesis was carried out in 20 μL reactions using the SuperScript II RT kit (Invitrogen) and quantifed using an Applied Biosystems 7500 Real-Time PCR system with SYBR Green I dye (Applied Biosystems, Power SYBR Green® PCR Master Mix), according to the manufacturer's instructions. The real-time qPCR reactions were performed using default conditions except for the number of cycles (45–50 cycles). The presence of nonspecific products was verified by dissociation curve analysis. Every target gene was quantified using the mean value of nine independent replicates; outliers were rejected according to the critical values of Dixon'^s "Q" parameters at 95% confidence level (10). The mean values were normalized to the amplification efficiency and to the expression levels of Actin-1 (endogenous reference gene). Samples displaying statistically significant differences according to the Fourier test of variances were further analyzed with Student's t test or with the Welch test for unequal variances.

Structure Determination and Refinement. The C. albicans SerRS isoforms SerRS_Ser197 and SerRS_Leu197 were purified as previously described (11). Crystals of the apo-forms of both SerRS variants and of SerRS_Ser197 complexes with SerSA and ATP were grown using ammonium sulfate as a precipitant, and X-ray data were collected using synchrotron radiation at beamline ID14-1 of the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility (ESRF) (Grenoble), processed and the initial model was obtained as previously described (11). Refinement was carried out with a single step of rigid-body refinement, followed by several cycles of energy-gradient minimization, simulated annealing, and restrained individual B factor refinement (as implemented in CNS) (12), alternating with rounds of manual model building with COOT (13). An additional step of translation/libration/screw (TLS) refinement was included in the final refinement stage with PHENIX (14), using four TLS groups (residues 1–101, 102–162, 163–297 and 298–452) defined using the TLS motion determination (TLSMD) server (15). The final model comprises residues 1–452; two segments (residues 284–288 and 388–393) are not visible in the electron density map and were therefore omitted. The structure of SerRS_Leu197, SerRS–SerSA, and SerRS–ATP were solved using $SerR\overline{S}$ Ser197 as a search model, and refined similarly. In the SerRS–SerSA model region 284–288 (motif 2 loop) is visible in the electron density, but residues 69–71 (at the tip of the helical coil) and 396–388 are not and were omitted. In the SerR-S Leu197 structure residues 68–74 (at the tip of the helical coil), ²⁸⁴–290, and 388–393 were not visible in the electron density. A significant residual electron density was observed in the active site pocket of SerRS_Leu197 variant, suggesting the presence of a discretely disordered adenine moiety, although no nucleotide was added to the crystallization buffer. However, no adenine moiety was included in the final model due to positional instability during refinement. Stereochemical quality of the refined models was calculated with MOLPROBITY (16) as implemented in PHENIX (14). Refinement statistics are summarized in Table S2. For pairwise or multiple structure alignment, the programs LSQMAN [\(http://X-ray.bmc.uu.se/usf/lsqman_man.html](http://xray.bmc.uu.se/usf/lsqman_man.html)) or MUSTANG (17) were used. Figures of protein structures were prepared with PyMOL ([http://www.pymol.org\)](http://www.pymol.org). The final 3D coordinates and

structure factors have been deposited in the Protein Data Bank (PDB) with ID codes 3QNE (SerRS_Ser197), 3QO5 (SerR-S Leu197), 3QO7 (SerRS Ser197 in complex with ATP), and 3QO8 (SerRS_Ser197 in complex with seryl-adenylate analog). C. albicans SerRS closest structural homologues are the SerRS from Pyrococcus horikoshii [PDB ID 2DQ0 (18), rmsd 2.2 Å for 414 aligned C α residues, 40% sequence identity] and *Thermus* thermophilus [PDB ID 1SRY (19), rmsd 2.1 Å for 408 aligned $C\alpha$ residues, 28% sequence identity].

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In Vitro SerRS Activity. The seryl-adenylate formation was followed by monitoring pyrophosphate (PPi) release at 360 nm at 25 °C as described by Lloyd et al. (20) with the EnzChek PP_i assay kit (Molecular Probes) according to the manufacturer's instructions. The reaction mixture contained 2 mM ATP, 1 mM L-serine, 50 mM Tris \cdot HCl (pH 7.5), 10 mM MgCl₂, 40 mM KCl and 0.1 mM sodium azide. Enzyme concentrations ranged from 0.1–0.8 ^μ^M (SerRS monomer). To analyze the effect of tRNA on the specific activity of SerRS 4 mg∕mL of yeast unfractioned tRNA (Roche) was used. For Km determination the concentration of serine was was used. For Kin determination the concentration of series was varied between 0.1 and $20 \times$ Km. In all cases the reaction mixture was incubated at 25° C for $5'$ prior to starting the reaction by L-serine addition. All data was corrected against a reference background measured without addition of the substrate. The initial velocities obtained for each substrate concentration were fitted to a Michaelis–Menten equation and kinetic parameters were calculated using nonlinear regression. Active site titration was performed according to the method of Fersht et al. (21) using the buffer described above and showed that the fraction of active enzyme (70%) was similar for both SerRS isoforms.

In Vivo SerRS Activity. The activity of C . albicans SerRS in vivo was studied by expressing the orthogonal synthetase/tRNA^{Ser}CAG pair in *Escherichia coli* and measuring the mistranslation pheno-

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type. For this purpose, the *C. albicans* CAI4 strain tRNA^{Ser}_{CAG}
gene was amplified by PCR from genomic DNA using primers 5'gene was amplified by PCR from genomic DNA using primers \overline{S} -GTACTCGGGAACACCAAACAAAAGATGC-3′ and 5′-TCT-ACCTTAGGTGATTGACTTTATTACATGC-3′ and the tRNA-GTACTCGGGAACACCAAACAAAAGATGC-3' and 5'-TCTencoding fragment was cloned into the Eco88I and Eco81I restriction sites of the pACYC184 vector (New England Biolabs).

The compatible pACYC-tRNA and pT7-SerRS plasmids were cotransformed into E. coli BL21(DE3) (Stratagene). To avoid the negative pressure caused by CUG-ambiguity C. albicans SerRS CUG codon (that codes for residue 197) was mutated to UCG, to create the SerRS_Ser197 isoform, or to CUG, to express the SerRS_Leu197 isoform. Overnight cultures of fresh transformants (grown at 30 °C in LB medium supplemented with 1% glucose and antibiotics) were used to inoculate LB supplemented with 100 μ g mL⁻¹ ampicilin, 25 μ g mL⁻¹ chloramphenicol and 1 mM IPTG. IPTG was added to induce the expression of C. albicans SerRS, whereas the expression of C. albicans tRNA^{Ser}CAG was constitutive. Bacterial cells grew at 37 °C and cell growth (A_{600}) was monitored as a function of time to determine the specific growth rate (average of 3–5 independent experiments). The amount of expressed SerRS was quantified by western blot analysis. For this, E. coli BL21 (DE3) lysates were prepared and protein extract was quantified by measuring A_{280} .

Equivalent amounts of total protein (20 μg) were separated on a 12.5% SDS-PAGE, transferred to a nitrocellulose membrane (Hybond ECL, Amersham), and analyzed by Western blot using an antiHis monoclonal antibody (Genscript), and the IRDye800 conjugated secondary antibody antimouse IgG (Li-Cor Biosciences). Signals from four-independent western blots were quantified (intensity 10.0) with an Odyssey Infrared Imaging System (Li-Cor Biosciences). The total β-galactosidase activity present in E. coli BL21(DE3) cells cotransformed with the orthogonal synthetase/tRNA pair was determined (average of 12–17 independent experiments) as previously described (22).

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Fig. S1. CUG-encoded residue location in nonconserved positions is optimized to prevent misfolding induced by Ser-to-Leu exchange. (A, B) Spatial distribution of CUG-encoded residues in the catalytic subunit of cAMP-dependent protein kinase (isoform 2, TPK2) from C. albicans and S. cerevisiae. Surface (Left) and cartoon (Right) representations of C. albicans TPK2 (A) and S. cerevisiae (B) homology models, with the CUG-encoded residues (serine for C. albicans and leucine for S. cerevisiae TPK2) highlighted in red. S. cerevisiae TPK1 (1FOT (1), 74% identity with both TPK2 orthologs) was used as template. The CUG-encoded leucines in S. cerevisiae TPK2 are predominantly buried in the protein core, whereas CUG-encoded residues are exposed at the surface in the C. albicans protein. The divergent CUG localization suggests a relocation of the CUG-encoded residues from the protein core to the surface to avoid protein structure destabilization and misfolding induced by serine/leucine ambiguous CUG decoding in C. albicans. (C) Representative fragment of the multiple sequence alignment of fungal TPK2 highlighting the CUG-encoded residues in C. albicans (green) and in other members of the CTG- and WGD-clades (cyan). Strictly identical residues are shown in white on a red background and conserved residues are shown in red type. (D) Distribution of CUG-encoded residues by secondary structure elements in S. cerevisiae and CTG-clade organisms shows that in the latter most of them are found in loops or within α-helical regions. (E) Activation of the ubiquitin-proteasome pathway. Highly ambiguous cells were engineered by expressing a mutant S. cerevisiae tRNA^{Leu}_{CAG} that efficiently decodes CUG codons as leucine (2), increasing leucine misincorporation to 28% (3). A second C. albicans cell-line was created with induced-genetic code ambiguity in standard leucine-UUA via heterologous expression of a mutant S. cerevisiae tRNA^{Ser}_{UAA}, which recognizes leucine-UUA codons and translates them as serine. Hydrolysis of the fluorogenic substrate succinyl-Leu-Leu-Val-Tyr-MCA was used to assess proteasome function in these two C. albicans lines (4). C. albicans UUA ambiguous cells showed higher proteasome activity comparatively to wild-type and highly ambiguous CUG decoding cells, which have identical activities. Hence, conversely to other genetic code ambiguities, CUG codon ambiguity in C. albicans does not seem to cause massive protein structural changes/misfolding. Fold variation represents the variation in fluorescence intensity (average) for each strain comparative to C. albicans wild-type and is expressed as fold \pm SD of five independent experiments. *P < 0.05. (F) Quantification of the heat shock (HSP) mRNA expression levels by real-time qPCR in wild-type and highly ambiguous C. albicans cells. Fold induction or repression shown for each gene represents the variation in gene expression (average) for C. albicans pUA15 relative to the control situation (pUA12 cells) and is expressed as fold \pm SD. of 7-9 independent experiments.* $P < 0.01$; ** $P < 0.001$; *** $P < 0.0001$. None of the HSPs measured contain CUG codons in their coding sequences.

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Fig. S2. CUG-containing ORFs are widely distributed by multiple functional categories. Despite the wide distribution of C. albicans proteins containing CUGencoded residues over all cellular processes, a representative group is involved in membrane and cell-wall structure and composition, and in other virulence attributes such as filamentous growth.

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Fig. S3. Functional impact of serine/leucine incorporation in C. albicans proteins (A, B) and plasticity of the SerRS active site in the first steps of the aminoacylation reaction (C, D). (A) Cartoon representation of C. albicans Ras1 GTPase homology model (based on the human Ras structure 3K8Y (); 65% amino acid sequence identity) in the vicinity of the CUG-encoded Ser66 (carbon atoms in magenta). The active site bound nonhydrolyzable GTP analogue (GNP) is shown in orange (carbon atoms). Ser66 is within the conserved switch II region (2) (residues 62–65, carbon atoms in green). In human Ras, the side-chain of the structurally equivalent serine participates in an extended hydrogen bond network, correctly orienting Glu62 (Glu63 in this model) to stabilize the catalytic Gln61 (Gln62 in this model) into the active site poised for GTP hydrolysis (1). Mutations in this region, locking Ras in the active GTP-bound conformation, have been identified in human tumours (3) and shown to generate transient activated phenotypes in S. cerevisiae (4). The incorporation of leucine at position 66 will disturb this hydrogen bond network, likely interfering with GTP hydrolysis. (B) Cartoon representation of C. albicans Cek1 protein kinase homology model (based on the yeast FUS3 structure 2B9F (5); 58% amino acid sequence identity). The invariant CUG-encoded serine (carbon atoms in magenta) is within the ATP-binding pocket (carbon atoms of bound ADP molecule in blue), and its main chain accepts a hydrogen bond from the ribose hydroxyl group, whereas the side-chain directly positions a water molecule (red sphere) coordinating the active site magnesium ion (pale pink sphere). Introduction of a leucine at position 199, will compromise the CEK1 active site. Residues represented as sticks are color-coded (nitrogen in blue, oxygen in red phosphate in orange, carbon in gray unless stated otherwise), hydrogen bonds are represented by dashed black lines. Representative fragments of Ras1 and CEK1 multiple sequence alignments highlighting the CUG-encoded serines (boxed in green) are shown below each structure. Identical residues are shown in white letters against a red background and conserved residues are represented by red letters. Secondary structure elements from the C. albicans Ras1 and CEK1 homology models, are displayed above the alignment. The calculated solvent-accessibility for each residue is indicated by a colored bar below the aligned sequences (blue: accessible; cyan: intermediate; white: buried). (C, D) Stereoview of the SerRS–Ser197 active site in the SerRS–ATP and SerRS–SerSA complexes. Close-up view of SerRS active site with the conserved structural motifs coloured as in Fig. 2A, with ATP (C) and SerSA (D) molecules as well as interacting active site residues shown as sticks (color code:

red, oxygen; blue, nitrogen; yellow, sulfur; orange, phosphorous; green, carbon in active site ligands). The $2F_0 - F_c$ maps for ATP and SerSA, contoured at 1 σ , are shown as green meshes. The magnesium ion in the SerRS–SerSA complex (D) is shown as a yellow sphere and links to the coordinating atoms represented as red dashed lines. Notice the large inward movement of Glu281, and concomitant ordering of motif 2 loop (A-conformation) upon SerSA binding. SerSA binding induces a closed conformation (or A-conformation) of the active site motif 2 loop (ordering of residues 283–290), a region also involved in tRNA acceptor stem binding (6). In the SerRS–ATP complex (panel C), nucleotide binding does not induce the switch to the A-conformation (motif 2 loop is partially disordered in this complex). The side chains of Glu281 (180° rotation), Glu230, Arg279, and Arg294 in the active site show the largest differences in orientation between the two complexes (panels C and D). All SerSA and ATP interacting residues are highly conserved in all cytoplasmic SerRSs (Fig. S4), underscoring the similarity of the interactions and ligand binding modes between this fungal enzyme and its archaeal and bacterial homologues (6–8).

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TA S

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Fig. S4. Cytoplasmic seryl-tRNA synthetases from three kingdoms of life. Amino acid sequence alignment of canonical SerRS from archaea (Aquifex aeolicus), bacteria (Escherichia coli, Thermus thermophilus, and Pyrococcus horikoshi), higher eukaryotes (Caenorhabditis elegans, Drosophila melanogaster, Dario rerio, Mus musculus, and Homo sapiens) and lower eukaryotes (Candida albicans, Candida guilliermondii, Candida glabrata, Debaryomyces hansenii, Pichia stipitis, Kluyveromyces lactis, Ashbya gossypii, Sacharomyces cerevisiae, Yarrowia lipolytica, and Schizosaccharomyces pombe). Strictly identical residues are shown in white letters against a red background and conserved residues are represented in red type. The secondary structure elements of C. albicans SerRS are shown above the alignment; numbers refer to the C. albicans SerRS sequence. The conserved class II synthetase motifs 1, 2, and 3, and the C-terminal tail are underlined in yellow, red, blue, and pink, respectively. The residues belonging to the dimer interface are highlighted by asterisks. The CUG-encoded residue (serine, in the alignment) is boxed in green.

Fig. S5. The Saccharomycetales-specific insertion loop and a model for tRNA binding to C. albicans SerRS. (A) Sequence alignment of the SSI loop connecting strand β1 and helix α6, highly conserved in the CTG-clade and Saccharomycetales in general, with the exception of the SerRS of the early diverging lineage Yarrowia lipolytica (see Fig. S4). Strictly identical residues are shown in white letters against a red background and conserved residues are represented in red type. Numbers refer to the C. albicans SerRS amino acid sequence. (B) Stereoview of the surface hydrophobic pocket, highlighting the conservation of the residues interacting with the SerSA molecule (carbon in magenta, oxygen in red, nitrogen in blue, sulfur in orange). Strictly conserved residues in Saccharomycetales are represented as red sticks, water molecules as light blue spheres and hydrogen bonds as black dashes. The electron density map, contoured at 1 σ , is represented as a dark blue mesh. (C) A docking model of SerRS-tRNA^{Ser} complex was generated by superposing the catalytic core domain of C. albicans SerRS with E. coli ThrRS in complex with its cognate tRNA [1QF6 (1)]. As some regions are missing in the crystal structure of T. thermophilus tRNA^{Ser}, including the acceptor arm and anticodon loop (2, 3), a theoretical model of yeast tRNA^{Ser} (5TRA) was further overlaid onto the tRNA^{Thr} in the initial docking model of the SerRS-tRNAThr complex. The tRNA binds across the two monomers and this rigid docking model emphasizes the putative role of the proximal region of the C-terminal tail (residues 443–449 of the proximal region, coloured in red and residues 450–452 coloured in orange) as a structural element for tRNA interaction. The dimeric C. albicans SerRS surface is coloured in violet (monomer A) and pink (monomer B), and residues corresponding to those involved in T. thermophilus SerRS-tRNA^{Ser} interaction (2-4) are highlighted in green. The tRNA^{Ser} is coloured red, except for the D-loop (orange), T-loop (blue), and variable loop (purple). The pockets at the protein surface binding SerSA in the SerRS–SerSA structure are shown.

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Table S1. Accessible surface area* of C. albicans CUG-encoded residues Table S1. Accessible surface area* of C. albicans CUG-encoded residues

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*Calculated with Whatif (1). *Calculated with WhatIf (1).

The CUG-encoded residue position was scored as nonconserved (black), conserved (gray), or strictly conserved (bold text) in the multiple sequence alignments.
'Structural analysis of CUG-residue position also described in r †The CUG-encoded residue position was scored as nonconserved (black), conserved (gray), or strictly conserved (bold text) in the multiple sequence alignments. ‡Structural analysis of CUG-residue position also described in ref. 2.

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1 Vriend G (1990) WHAT IF: A molecular modeling and drug design program. *J Mol Graph* 8:52–56.
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Table S2. Refinement statistics

*R_{factor} = $\sum||\mathcal{F}_\text{obs}||-|\mathcal{F}_\text{calc}||/\sum|\mathcal{F}_\text{obs}|$, where $|\mathcal{F}_\text{obs}|$ and $|\mathcal{F}_\text{calc}|$ are observed and calculated structure factor amplitudes, respectively.
*R_{free} is the cross-validation computed for a random ‡ Values obtained using the PISA server (Protein Interfaces, Surfaces and Assemblies) at the European Bioinformatics Institute [\(http://www.ebi.ac.uk/msd-srv/](http://www.ebi.ac.uk/msd-srv/prot_int/pistart.html) [prot_int/pistart.html](http://www.ebi.ac.uk/msd-srv/prot_int/pistart.html)) (1).

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Other Supporting Information Files

[Dataset S1](http://www.pnas.org/lookup/suppl/doi:10.1073/pnas.1102835108/-/DCSupplemental/SD01.xlsx) [Dataset S2](http://www.pnas.org/lookup/suppl/doi:10.1073/pnas.1102835108/-/DCSupplemental/SD02.xlsx)

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