Yeast proteins reversibly aggregate like amphiphilic molecules

Pouria Dasmeh[1,3,4], Andreas Wagner[1,2,4]

[1]Institute for Evolutionary Biology and Environmental Studies, University of Zurich, Zurich, Switzerland. [2]The Santa Fe Institute, Santa Fe, New Mexico, [3]Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA USA 02139. [4]Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics (SIB).

Abstract:

More than a hundred proteins in yeast reversibly aggregate and phase-separate in response to various stressors, such as nutrient depletion and heat shock. We know little about the sequence and structural features behind this ability, which has not been characterized on a proteome-wide level. To identify the distinctive features of aggregation-prone regions, we apply machine learning algorithms to genome-scale limited proteolysis-mass spectrometry data from 96 yeast proteins that phase-separate upon heat shock. We find that the propensity to phase separate cannot be solely driven by disordered regions, because the aggregation-prone regions of our study proteins are not significantly disordered. Instead, the phase separation of these proteins requires contributions from both disordered and structured regions. APRs are significantly enriched in aliphatic residues and depleted in positively charged amino acids. Aggregator proteins with longer APRs show a greater propensity to aggregate, a relationship that can be explained by equilibrium statistical thermodynamics. Altogether, our observations suggest that proteome-wide reversible protein aggregation is mediated by sequence-encoded properties. Aggregating proteins resemble supra-molecular amphiphiles, where APRs are the hydrophobic parts, and non-APRs are the hydrophilic parts.

Body:

Proteins can aggregate reversibly or irreversibly. Irreversible aggregation is often pathological, indicates damaged cellular regulation[1-3], and is involved in multiple diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases[4,5]. Reversible aggregation, however, can be beneficial and help cells survive stressors. For example, in yeast more than a hundred proteins in multiple subcellular compartments form reversible aggregates in response to nutrient starvation, heat shock, or chemical stress[6]. These aggregated proteins are not misfolded or tagged for degradation[7]. Instead, they help increase cells re-initiate growth during recovery from stress by protecting metabolic enzymes from degradation[6-9].

Reversible protein aggregation is a special case of a widespread phenomenon called protein phase-separation. In this process, a well-mixed solution of proteins de-mixes into two phases of high and low densities[10]. Proteins can phase separate with other proteins, but also with RNA or DNA molecules, into biomolecular condensates that regulate transcription[11], chromatin states[12,13], and RNA metabolism[14]. Phase-separating proteins often harbor intrinsically-disordered regions (domains) that do not fold into well-defined tertiary structures[15]. These regions can form a network of specific and non-specific protein interactions to promote phase separation (see ref. [16] for a review).

The role of disordered regions in stress-induced phase separation has been controversial. On the one hand, mammalian and yeast proteins that phase separate under stress are highly disordered and enriched in features that favor liquid-liquid phase separation. These features include many protein-protein interactions and low complexity regions with multiple polar and charged amino acids, as well as specific amino acids such

as tyrosine[17]. These observations suggest that the assembly of low-complexity and

disordered regions drive stress-induced phase separation of these proteins. On the other

hand, disordered domains are not essential for phase-separation in some well-studied

proteins, where they only modulate the temperature at which phase separation begins.

Examples include the poly-adenylate binding protein (Pab1), and the ATP-binding RNA

helicase (Ded1) from yeast[18,19]. To understand the importance of disordered regions for

stress-induced aggregation and phase separation comprehensively requires a proteome-

wide view. In this work, we provide such a view. We also characterize sequence features

that can help predict whether proteins will aggregate reversibly.

We took advantage of recent proteome-wide data from limited proteolysis-mass

spectrometry (LiP-MS)[20,21]. This method permits the detection of both pronounced and

subtle changes that protein and peptide structures experience in response to stressors

such as heat and osmotic shock. Recently, Cappelletti *et. al.* characterized structural

changes within 96 proteins that reversibly aggregate upon heat shock in yeast[22]. These

proteins are also known as aggregators. They have diverse biological functions, such as

telomeric DNA-binding, RNA-helicase activity, or ribosome assembly. Because they are

functionally diverse, they constitute an excellent dataset to examine sequence features

that facilitate reversible protein aggregation. We studied regions within these proteins

whose proteolysis resistance changes significantly upon aggregation [22]. We refer to these

regions as aggregation-prone regions (APRs, Figure 1A).

Our first analysis focuses on the question whether APRs preferentially comprise

intrinsically disordered regions. To find out, we first calculated the disorder score of all

amino acids within the aggregator proteins using the *IUpred* disorder predictor[23] (Dataset

S1). This algorithm assigns a score between 0 and 1 to each amino acid using its

neighboring sequence in the protein, and calculated from a statistical approach that

distinguishes globular domains from intrinsically disordered regions. Residues with the

score > 0.5 are predicted to be disordered. Remarkably, these amino acids were not

significantly enriched in APRs ($p \sim 1$; Fisher's exact test). To the contrary, amino acids with

disorder scores less than 0.5 were enriched ($p \sim 10^{-7}$; Fisher's exact test). Thus, on

average, APRs do not preferentially comprise disordered regions. However, the incidence

of disorder in APRs substantially varied among individual proteins (Dataset S2). As shown

in Figure 1B, ~15% of aggregators were significantly more enriched with disordered

amino acids than expected by chance ($p < 0.05$; Fisher's exact test, false discovery rate

(FDR)-corrected for multiple testing[24]). Conversely, disordered amino acids were

significantly depleted in ~11% of aggregators ($p < 0.05$; Fisher's exact test, corrected for

multiple testing). The proteins whose APRs were significantly disordered are

preferentially involved in RNA and nucleic acid binding (Figure 1C; Dataset S3, GO terms

of GO:0003723, and GO:0003676). For example, the protein with the highest disorder

enrichment is the nuclear poly-adenylated RNA-binding protein 3 (NAB3; yeast gene

identifier YPL190C), which is required for packaging pre-mRNAs into ribonucleoprotein

structures for efficient RNA processing[25].

Because disorder scores may be subject to prediction errors, we validated this

approach with two well-studied aggregator proteins[18,26]. Specifically, we used the

polyadenylate-binding protein Pab1, which binds the poly(A) tail of mRNA, regulating

mRNA stability and translation; and the ATP-dependent RNA helicase Ded1, an ATP-

binding RNA helicase that helps identify start codons and initiate translation[27]. Both

proteins form reversible gel-like condensates upon heat shock[18,19]. Figure 1D shows

APRs within the two proteins. Importantly, only one of eight APRs falls within the

intrinsically disordered domain (green) of Pab1, and only one of two does for Ded1.

We then mapped APRs on the 3D structure of Pab1 (Figure 1E; PDB ID=6R5K[28]),

and a homology-modeled structure of Ded1 (Figure 1F; Dataset S4). A common feature

of both proteins are peptides that form long loops which occur either within an APR or

constitute an entire APR. The regions ^{151}D-K^{156}, ^{167}G-E^{176}, ^{186}L-R^{204}, ^{242}F-K^{252}, ^{383}N-L^{392}

in Pab1, and ^{122}T-R^{127} in Ded1 are examples of such loop-forming peptides. In the case

of Ded1, the APR ^{122}T-R^{127} lies near the disordered N-terminal domain of this protein,

which modulates the temperature onset of phase-separation[19]. This proximity suggests a

possible synergy between the N-terminal domain and the APR in the reversible

aggregation of Ded1. Altogether, our observations suggest that reversible aggregation of

yeast proteins require a synergy between both disordered and structured regions.

What are the characteristic sequence features of APRs? To answer this question,

we first performed a principal component analysis on the frequency of 20 amino acids in

all 270 APRs of yeast aggregators (Dataset S5). As shown in Figure 2A-B, the first and

the second principal components only accounted for ~12% and ~10% of the variation.

The PCA biplot for these components shows that no specific combinations of few amino

acids preferentially occur in APR sequences (Figure 2B, Figure S1), a further indication

that APRs do not show the kind of reduced sequence complexity characteristic of

disordered regions. We also looked for linear sequence motifs in APRs using DALEL[29],

an algorithm for the exhaustive identification of degenerate sequence motifs, but found

no such enriched motifs.

We then compared the frequencies of amino acids, dipeptides, and tripeptides in

APRs with the rest of the protein sequence in aggregators (Dataset S6). Here, we found

a significant depletion of the positively charged residues Arg and Lys, and their dipeptides

(Figure S2; $p\sim10^{-16}$; Wilcoxon signed-rank test). We also observed that aliphatic residues

Leu, Ile, Ala, Val, were significantly more frequent in APRs compared to the rest of the

protein sequence ($p\sim10^{-16}$; Wilcoxon signed-rank test). The fraction of positively charged

to aliphatic residues was the strongest predictor of APRs compared to the fraction of all

other amino acids (Figure 2C; $p\sim10^{-21}$; Wilcoxon signed-rank test).

To find out whether these patterns are linked to differences in physicochemical

properties of amino acids, we used a random forest approach, a widely-used machine

learning technique for the classification of two or more data sets[30]. Specifically, we used

all 96 aggregators with experimentally characterized APRs[22], and subdivided each

protein into two sequence data sets, one comprising the APRs and one comprising the

non-APRs. For each of these datasets, we calculated a feature matrix that consisted of

500 amino acid properties (Dataset S7, and S8). We took these properties from the

AAindex database[31], which curates various physicochemical and biochemical properties

of amino acids. The classifier achieved an accuracy of ~93% in 100 independent runs,

with the data split into a training set (80% of the data) and a testing set (20%) (Figure 2D;

Dataset S9). Two amino acid properties were most important in this classification. The

first is a low positive charge of amino acids in APRs compared to non-APRs. The second

is a high amphiphilic propensity of these amino acids. The amphiphilic propensity

measures the preference of amino acids to occur at protein-solvent interfaces, such as

the end regions of transmembrane helices[32]. Amino acids like arginine and lysine have

the highest preference for these environments, and the largest value of the amphiphilic

index. In contrast, hydrophobic amino acids such as leucine, isoleucine, valine, and

alanine prefer internal protein environments and have the lowest amphiphilic propensity[32].

Because of the statistically significant difference between the amphiphilic nature

of APRs and non-APRs, we argue that aggregator proteins resemble supramolecular

amphiphiles. These molecular structures have distinct hydrophobic and hydrophilic

parts[33]. In response to external stimuli such as temperature, pH, and ionic strength[33],

they can reversibly aggregate by non-covalent bonding forces, e.g., through electrostatic

and hydrophobic interactions.

We next investigated the relevance of amphiphilic aggregation to stress-induced

phase separation of our yeast aggregator proteins. An important feature of amphiphilic

molecules is that they are more likely to occur in an aggregated phase if their hydrophobic

chain is long[34]. We thus predicted that aggregator proteins with longer APRs will occur

preferentially in the aggregated phase. To test this prediction, we asked whether

aggregator proteins with long APRs preferentially occur in the pellet fraction of proteins

extracted from heat-stressed yeast cells[35]. Specifically, we used for this purpose the $\log_2$

ratio of the protein's abundance in the pellet fraction of yeast cells to that of supernatant

as a measure of protein's enrichment in the aggregated phase[35]. We found this

enrichment data for 31 aggregated proteins in our dataset. Indeed, aggregator proteins

with longer APRs preferentially accumulate in the aggregated pellet fraction (Figure 2F,

R = 0.53, p = 0.0021; Spearman's rank correlation). This association increases to R =

0.64 for aggregator proteins whose APRs have a low positive charge-to-aliphatic bias

(Figure 2G, p= 0.012; Spearman's rank correlation). To see whether this observation

extends to other stress-induced conditions, we also used the mass spectrometry dataset

of nutrient-starved yeast cells reported by Narayanasamy et al[36]. We identified 56

aggregator proteins in this dataset and checked the association between APR lengths in

these proteins and the Z-score of proteins' enrichment in the pellet fraction. In nutrient-

starved cells too, the aggregator proteins with longer APRs preferentially accumulate in

the aggregated pellet fraction (Figure 2F, R = 0.47, p = 0.00014; Spearman's rank

correlation), and the association increased for the low positive charge-to-aliphatic bias (R

= 0.53, p = 0.0022; Spearman's rank correlation).

We then investigated the relationship between APR length in aggregator proteins

and their differential enrichment in the aggregated phase using equilibrium statistical

thermodynamics. We considered a two-state model where proteins exist either as a

soluble monomer or an insoluble aggregate. The fraction of proteins occurring in the

aggregate at the critical concentration (cc) for aggregation ($\mathcal{F}_{cc}$) is expressed as:

$$\mathcal{F}_{cc}(theory) = \frac{(P_{agg})_{cc}}{(P_{agg})_{cc}+(P_{mon})_{cc}} = \frac{1}{1+e^{-\beta \Delta G_{agg}}} \qquad \text{(Eq. 1)}$$

Here, P_{agg} and P_{mon} are the relative concentrations of proteins in the aggregated and the

monomer phase, $\beta = 1/k_B T$ where k_B is the Boltzmann's constant, and ΔG_{agg} is the free

energy change upon aggregation. Because the aggregation free energy increases in

proportion to the length of the hydrophobic chain[37], we rearranged Equation 1 to:

$\mathcal{F}_{cc}(theory) = \frac{1}{1+e^{-\beta.B.L}}$ (Eq. 2)

Where B is the proportionality constant between the aggregation free energy and the APR

length. We then calculated the observed fraction of the aggregator proteins in the

aggregated phase from their reported log_2 enrichment ratio in the pellet fraction of heat-

stressed yeast ($log_2 \frac{[Pellet]}{[Supernatant]}$) as:

$\mathcal{F}_{cc}(experiment) = (1 + 2^{-log_2\frac{[Pellet]}{[Supernatant]}})^{-1}$ (Eq. 3)

Equation 2 predicted the observed relationship between APR length and a protein's

fraction in the aggregated phase well (Figure 2H, R=0.53, p=0.0021; Spearman's rank

correlation, see supplementary information for the fitted constants). Importantly, the

predictive power of Equation 2 was higher for proteins whose APRs had a low positive

charge-to-aliphatic bias (R=0.64, p=0.012; Spearman's rank correlation).

In summary, our work demonstrates that both structured and disordered regions

contribute to the reversible aggregation of yeast proteins upon heat shock. In the case of

the two well-known aggregator proteins Pab1 and Ded1, structured aggregation-prone

regions form long loops or short secondary structure elements. Our observations suggest

that these elements can readily unfold in response to stressors, form hydrophobic long

chains, and phase-separate in a manner akin to amphiphilic molecules. Although further

structural studies will be necessary to generalize these observations, we propose that the

partial unfolding of a protein's tertiary structure is a critical stage in stress-induced phase

separation. Indeed, the secondary structure of both Ded1 and Pab1 remains largely

unchanged and only their tertiary structures change when these proteins form heat-

induces condensates[18,38]. We also observed that aggregator proteins with longer APRs

are more prone to aggregation. This relationship also suggests that aggregator proteins

may leave the aggregated phase by masking their APRs from self-assembly or from

interaction with other proteins. Molecular chaperones can facilitate this step: They have

been co-purified with stress-induced aggregated proteins and can solubilize them[39].

Altogether, our study demonstrates that stress-induced phase separation is a sequence-

encoded phenotype. It can be both explained and predicted by the self-assembly and

aggregation of amphiphilic molecules.

Methods:

We identified aggregation-prone regions in the 96 aggregator proteins from the dataset

of Cappelletti et. al[22], and downloaded their sequences from the Uniprot database[40]

(Dataset S13). We chose 500 amino acid properties from the AAindex database to

distinguish the physicochemical properties of APRs from non-APR segments in the

aggregator protein[31]. For mapping APRs onto the 3D structure of proteins, we used the

structure of Pab1 as determined by electron microscopy (protein database (PDB) id:

6R5K[28]). We used homology-modeling with the Phyre2 portal to generate the structure of

Ded1[41]. In brief, Phyre 2 constructs a 3D structure from diverse homologs of the query

sequence using hidden Markov models. For the generation of Ded1 structure, Phyre 2

used the template structures of several Ded1 homologs, including the ATP-dependent

RNA helicase DDX3X from humans (PDB ID= 2I4I), the ATP-dependent RNA helicase

VASA from *Drosophila melanogaster* (PDB ID=2DB3), and the pre-mRNA-splicing ATP-

dependent RNA helicase PRP28 from *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* (PDB ID=5ZWN).

We used a binary classification to group regions within an aggregator protein into

aggregation-prone regions (class A) and the remainder of the protein (class B). More

specifically, we used a random forest classification, splitting aggregator proteins into a

random subset comprising 80% of aggregator proteins for training and 20% for testing.

To build features for the classification, we calculated the average value of 500

physicochemical properties for each sequence in the APR and non-APR dataset. This

yielded two feature matrices for the APR and non-APR sequences. To apply random

forest classification, we used the randomForest package in R[42], and evaluated the best

number of trees (*nTree*) and the number of variables randomly sampled at each split

(*mtry*), in the random forest algorithm. To do so, we systematically varied the *nTree* and

mtry, and calculated the accuracy of classification with 10-fold cross-validation and 3

repeats. We defined accuracy as the percentage of correctly identified classes of proteins

(APRs and non-APRs) out of all instances. The combination of *nTree*=5000 trees and

mtry=10 variables achieved the highest accuracy of ~ 90%. We then used these

parameters to perform 100 random forest clusterings, in which we randomly assigned

proteins to the training and the testing datasets. To quantify the accuracy of classification

we counted the number of true positive and false positive predictions and calculated the

area under the curve (AUC). These values are shown as a receiver operating

characteristic curve (ROC) in Figure 2D. The most important physicochemical properties

were the ones whose Gini index in the classification decreased the most compared to all

other properties. This index is a widely-used measure of dispersion that reflects inequality

in the values of a frequency distribution. Within the random forest framework, this index

is calculated as the average probability that each of 500 physicochemical properties

wrongly classifies APRs and non-APRs in the random forest algorithm. We used the

g:profiler server for Gene Ontology enrichment analysis[43]. We performed all models and

statistical analyses using R. Scripts are available at:

https://github.com/dasmeh/yeast_aggregators

References

1. Aguzzi, A. & Calella, A.M. Prions: protein aggregation and infectious diseases.
Physiological reviews **89**, 1105-1152 (2009).
2. Aguzzi, A. & O'connor, T. Protein aggregation diseases: pathogenicity and therapeutic
perspectives. *Nature reviews Drug discovery* **9**, 237-248 (2010).
3. Ross, C.A. & Poirier, M.A. Protein aggregation and neurodegenerative disease. *Nature*
medicine **10**, S10-S17 (2004).
4. Scheibel, T. & Buchner, J. Protein aggregation as a cause for disease. *Molecular*
chaperones in health and disease, 199-219 (2006).
5. Shulman, J.M., De Jager, P.L. & Feany, M.B. Parkinson's disease: genetics and
pathogenesis. *Annual Review of Pathology: Mechanisms of Disease* **6**, 193-222 (2011).
6. O'Connell, J.D. *et al.* A proteomic survey of widespread protein aggregation in yeast.
Molecular BioSystems **10**, 851-861 (2014).
7. Wallace, E.W. *et al.* Reversible, specific, active aggregates of endogenous proteins
assemble upon heat stress. *Cell* **162**, 1286-1298 (2015).
8. Saad, S. *et al.* Reversible protein aggregation is a protective mechanism to ensure cell
cycle restart after stress. *Nature cell biology* **19**, 1202-1213 (2017).
9. Cereghetti, G., Saad, S., Dechant, R. & Peter, M. Reversible, functional amyloids: towards
an understanding of their regulation in yeast and humans. *Cell Cycle* **17**, 1545-1558
(2018).

10.   Hyman, A.A., Weber, C.A. & Jülicher, F. Liquid-liquid phase separation in biology. *Annual*
284   *review of cell and developmental biology* **30**, 39-58 (2014).
285   11.   Hnisz, D., Shrinivas, K., Young, R.A., Chakraborty, A.K. & Sharp, P.A. A phase separation
286   model for transcriptional control. *Cell* **169**, 13-23 (2017).
287   12.   Erdel, F. & Rippe, K. Formation of chromatin subcompartments by phase separation.
288   *Biophysical journal* **114**, 2262-2270 (2018).
289   13.   Valsecchi, C.I.K. *et al.* RNA nucleation by MSL2 induces selective X chromosome
290   compartmentalization. *Nature* **589**, 137-142 (2021).
291   14.   Youn, J.-Y. *et al.* Properties of Stress Granule and P-Body Proteomes. *Molecular Cell* **76**,
292   286-294 (2019).
293   15.   Uversky, V.N. Intrinsically disordered proteins in overcrowded milieu: membrane-less
294   organelles, phase separation, and intrinsic disorder. *Current opinion in structural biology*
295   **44**, 18-30 (2017).
296   16.   Posey, A.E., Holehouse, A.S. & Pappu, R.V. Phase separation of intrinsically disordered
297   proteins. in *Methods in Enzymology*, Vol. 611 1-30 (Elsevier, 2018).
298   17.   Kuechler, E.R., Budzyńska, P.M., Bernardini, J.P., Gsponer, J. & Mayor, T. Distinct
299   features of stress granule proteins predict localization in Membraneless organelles.
300   *Journal of molecular biology* **432**, 2349-2368 (2020).
301   18.   Riback, J.A. *et al.* Stress-triggered phase separation is an adaptive, evolutionarily tuned
302   response. *Cell* **168**, 1028-1040. e19 (2017).
303   19.   Iserman, C. *et al.* Condensation of Ded1p Promotes a Translational Switch from
304   Housekeeping to Stress Protein Production. *Cell* (2020).
305   20.   Gao, X. *et al.* High-throughput limited proteolysis/mass spectrometry for protein
306   domain elucidation. *Journal of structural and functional genomics* **6**, 129-134 (2005).
307   21.   Schopper, S. *et al.* Measuring protein structural changes on a proteome-wide scale using
308   limited proteolysis-coupled mass spectrometry. *Nature protocols* **12**, 2391 (2017).
309   22.   Cappelletti, V. *et al.* Dynamic 3D proteomes reveal protein functional alterations at high
310   resolution in situ. *Cell* **184**, 545-559. e22 (2021).
311   23.   Dosztányi, Z. Prediction of protein disorder based on IUPred. *Protein Science* **27**, 331-
312   340 (2018).
313   24.   Bonferroni, C.E., Bonferroni, C. & Bonferroni, C. Teoria statistica delle classi e calcolo
314   delle probabilita'. (1936).
315   25.   Sugimoto, K., Matsumoto, K., Kornberg, R.D., Reed, S.I. & Wittenberg, C. Dosage
316   suppressors of the dominant G1 cyclin mutant CLN3-2: identification of a yeast gene
317   encoding a putative RNA/ssDNA binding protein. *Molecular and General Genetics MGG*
318   **248**, 712-718 (1995).
319   26.   Altmeyer, M. *et al.* Liquid demixing of intrinsically disordered proteins is seeded by poly
320   (ADP-ribose). *Nature communications* **6**, 8088 (2015).
321   27.   Jamieson, D.J., Rahe, B., Pringle, J. & Beggs, J.D. A suppressor of a yeast splicing
322   mutation (prp8-l) encodes a putative ATP-dependent RNA helicase. *Nature* **349**, 715-717
323   (1991).
324   28.   Schäfer, I.B. *et al.* Molecular basis for poly (A) RNP architecture and recognition by the
325   Pan2-Pan3 deadenylase. *Cell* **177**, 1619-1631. e21 (2019).

29. Kelil, A., Dubreuil, B., Levy, E.D. & Michnick, S.W. Exhaustive search of linear information
encoding protein-peptide recognition. *PLoS computational biology* **13**, e1005499 (2017).
30. Ho, T.K. Random decision forests. in *Proceedings of 3rd international conference on
document analysis and recognition* Vol. 1 278-282 (IEEE, 1995).
31. Kawashima, S. & Kanehisa, M. AAindex: amino acid index database. *Nucleic acids
research* **28**, 374-374 (2000).
32. Mitaku, S., Hirokawa, T. & Tsuji, T. Amphiphilicity index of polar amino acids as an aid in
the characterization of amino acid preference at membrane–water interfaces.
Bioinformatics **18**, 608-616 (2002).
33. Zhang, X. & Wang, C. Supramolecular amphiphiles. *Chemical Society Reviews* **40**, 94-101
(2011).
34. Shaul, B. & Gelbart, W. Theory of chain packing in amphiphilic aggregates. *Annual
Review of Physical Chemistry* **36**, 179-211 (1985).
35. Zhu, M. *et al.* Proteomic analysis reveals the direct recruitment of intrinsically
disordered regions to stress granules in S. cerevisiae. *Journal of Cell Science* **133**(2020).
36. Narayanaswamy, R. *et al.* Widespread reorganization of metabolic enzymes into
reversible assemblies upon nutrient starvation. *Proceedings of the National Academy of
Sciences* **106**, 10147-10152 (2009).
37. Budin, I., Prywes, N., Zhang, N. & Szostak, J.W. Chain-length heterogeneity allows for the
assembly of fatty acid vesicles in dilute solutions. *Biophysical journal* **107**, 1582-1590
(2014).
38. Iserman, C. *et al.* Condensation of Ded1p promotes a translational switch from
housekeeping to stress protein production. *Cell* **181**, 818-831. e19 (2020).
39. Cherkasov, V. *et al.* Coordination of translational control and protein homeostasis during
severe heat stress. *Current biology* **23**, 2452-2462 (2013).
40. Consortium, U. UniProt: a hub for protein information. *Nucleic acids research* **43**, D204-
D212 (2015).
41. Kelley, L.A., Mezulis, S., Yates, C.M., Wass, M.N. & Sternberg, M.J. The Phyre2 web
portal for protein modeling, prediction and analysis. *Nature protocols* **10**, 845-858
(2015).
42. Liaw, A. & Wiener, M. Classification and regression by randomForest. *R news* **2**, 18-22
(2002).
43. Raudvere, U. *et al.* g: Profiler: a web server for functional enrichment analysis and
conversions of gene lists (2019 update). *Nucleic acids research* **47**, W191-W198 (2019).
360
361

Figure captions:

Figure 1. Intrinsically-disordered and structured regions both contribute to reversible aggregation in yeast aggregators. A) Structure of data set and study design. We identified aggregation-prone regions within 96 aggregator proteins in yeast using a dataset of limited proteolysis-mass spectrometry by Cappelletti et. al[22]. We performed several sequence-based statistical and predictive analyses and investigated the enrichment of protein disorder, specific sequence composition, and distinctive features of aggregation-prone regions in these proteins. B) Volcano plot showing the preferential enrichment of intrinsically-disordered regions in aggregation-prone regions of the aggregator proteins. The y-axis represents the logarithm of the p-value calculated from Fisher's exact test and the x-axis shows the difference between the expected and observed fraction of intrinsically disordered amino acids. Proteins with significant enrichment and depletion of disordered amino acids in their aggregation-prone regions are shown in red, and blue, respectively. C) The enrichment of Gene Ontology terms for molecular function in proteins whose aggregation-prone regions are enriched for (red), and depleted in (blue) disordered residues. D) The sequences of Pab1 and Ded1 with their intrinsically disordered domains shown in green. Aggregation-prone regions are labeled P1 to P8 for Pab1, and D1 and D2, for Ded1. E) The crystal structure of Pab1 (PDB ID=6R5K[28]). F) The homology-modeled structure of Ded1 using the Phyre2 protein modeling web portal [41]. In both panels D and E, aggregation-prone regions are shown in red and labeled according to their definition in panel D. The regions P7 in Pab1 and D2

in Ded1 fall in the low complexity domains which are missing from the PDB X-ray

structure.

Figure 2. Sequence composition and physicochemical properties of aggregation-

prone regions in the yeast aggregators. A) The percentage of explained variance for

10 dimensions from a principal component analysis on the frequencies of 20 amino acids

in 270 aggregation-prone regions of 96 yeast proteins. B) Biplot for the first and the

second principal components. Grey circles, labeled by numbers from 1 to 270, represent

aggregation-prone regions. Red arrows represent the weight of different amino acid

frequencies. C) The amino acid frequencies in APRs (shown in red) versus the rest of the

protein sequence (shown in green) in 96 yeast aggregators. D) The receiver-operating

characteristic (ROC) curves for the clustering of APRs from non-APRs using random

forest classification. ROC curves in grey are from 100 random forest clustering and their

average is shown in black. E) Ranked importance of physicochemical variables quantified

as the average decrease in the Gini index for different physicochemical properties. F) The

log2 ratio of the protein's abundance in the pellet fraction to that of supernatant in heat-

stressed yeast cells (30 out of 96 aggregator proteins[35]) versus their APR length. G) The

aggregator proteins' enrichment in the pellet fraction upon nutrient starvation (59 out of

96 proteins[35]) versus their APR length in log-scale. The red and the grey circles in both

panels F and G represent all aggregator proteins, and those where the positive charge-

to-aliphatic-bias in APRs was lower than its median value ~ 0.25. H) The fraction of

aggregator proteins in the aggregated phase calculated from Equation 3 versus the length

of APRs. I) The fraction of aggregator proteins with a low positive charge-to-aliphatic-bias

in their APRs versus the length of APRs calculated from Equation 3. For both panels H

and I, the fitted curve to the observed fraction of proteins in the aggregated phase using

Equation 2 is shown in red. R values are the Spearman's rank correlation between the

expected (Equation 2) and observed (Equation 3) fractions of proteins in the aggregated

phase (See Dataset S12). J) Schematic of our two main findings. First, both disordered

and structured regions contribute to stress-induced phase separation in yeast. Second,

proteins whose aggregation-prone regions are longer or have a lower positive charge-to-

aliphatic bias, accumulate preferentially in the aggregated phase.

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 1

Figure 2