KSHV lytic mRNA is efficiently translated in the absence of eIF4F

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ABSTRACT

Herpesvirus genomes are decoded by host RNA polymerase II, generating messenger ribonucleic acids (mRNAs) that are post-transcriptionally modified and exported to the cytoplasm. These viral mRNAs have 5′-m^{7}GTP caps and poly(A) tails that should permit assembly of canonical eIF4F cap-binding complexes to initiate protein synthesis. However, we have shown that chemical disruption of eIF4F does not impede KSHV lytic replication, suggesting that alternative translation initiation mechanisms support viral protein synthesis. Here, using polysome profiling analysis, we confirmed that eIF4F disassembly did not affect the efficient translation of viral mRNAs during lytic replication, whereas a large fraction of host mRNAs remained eIF4F-dependent. Lytic replication altered multiple host translation initiation factors (TIFs), causing caspase-dependent cleavage of eIF2α and eIF4G1 and decreasing levels of eIF4G2 and eIF4G3. Non-eIF4F TIFs NCBP1, eIF4E2 and eIF4G2 associated with actively translating messenger ribonucleoprotein (mRNP) complexes during KSHV lytic replication, but their depletion by RNA silencing did not affect virion production, suggesting that the virus does not exclusively rely on one of these alternative TIFs for efficient viral protein synthesis. METTL3, an N^6-methyladenosine (m6A) methyltransferase that modifies mRNAs and influences translational efficiency, was dispensable for early viral gene expression and genome replication but required for late gene expression and virion production. METTL3 was also subject to caspase-dependent degradation during lytic replication, suggesting that its positive effect on KSHV late gene expression may be indirect. Taken together, our findings reveal extensive remodelling of TIFs during lytic replication, which may help sustain efficient viral protein synthesis in the context of host shutoff.

IMPORTANCE

Viruses use host cell protein synthesis machinery to create viral proteins. Herpesviruses have evolved a variety of ways to gain control over this host machinery to ensure priority synthesis of viral proteins and diminished synthesis of host proteins with antiviral properties. We have shown that a herpesvirus called KSHV disrupts normal cellular control of protein synthesis. A host cell protein complex called eIF4F starts translation of most cellular mRNAs, but we observed it is dispensable for efficient synthesis of viral proteins. Several proteins involved in alternative modes of translation initiation were likewise dispensable. However, an enzyme called METTL3

that modifies mRNAs is required for efficient synthesis of certain late KSHV proteins and

productive infection. We observed caspase-dependent degradation of several host cell translation

initiation proteins during infection, suggesting that the virus alters pools of available factors to

favour efficient viral protein synthesis at the expense of host protein synthesis.

INTRODUCTION

All viruses use host translation machinery to create viral proteins. Most RNA viruses replicate in

the cytoplasm where they cannot access normal host mRNA processing machinery, so they must

encode their own proteins to transcribe and process viral mRNAs, while accessing host factors

that promote mRNA stability and enable efficient ribosome loading. Some RNA viruses have

structured motifs in 5' untranslated regions (UTRs) that directly recruit the small ribosomal

subunit with minimal involvement of host proteins (1). By contrast, DNA viruses, such as

herpesviruses, replicate in the nucleus where they can access the full complement of host

transcription machinery (2–4) Thus, herpesvirus mRNAs are transcribed by RNA polymerase II

(Pol II) and processed by enzymes that add 5' m^{7}GTP caps and 3' poly-adenylate (polyA) tails,

features that promote mRNA stability and provide access to the same cap-dependent translation-

initiation factors (TIF) employed by cellular mRNAs (3, 5).

Despite their strong resemblance to their host counterparts, herpesvirus mRNAs benefit

from several advantages that confer priority access to host translation machinery. During

Kaposi's sarcoma-associated herpesvirus (KSHV) latency, viral mRNAs are spliced by host

machinery (6), which promotes recruitment of the human transcription/export (hTREX) complex

that promotes mRNA stability and export to the cytoplasm, just as it does for host mRNAs. By

contrast, most lytic KSHV mRNAs are not spliced, and hTREX recruitment requires the viral

RNA-binding protein (RBP) ORF57, a homolog of HSV-1 ICP27, also known as <u>m</u>RNA

<u>t</u>ranscript <u>a</u>ccumulation (Mta) (7–9). ORF57 RNA-binding determinants and interplay with other

components of the host mRNA processing machinery remain poorly defined, but it clearly

enables efficient constitutive export of unspliced viral mRNAs, providing a selective advantage

over host mRNAs that require splicing and are subject to stress-regulated regulation of the

splicing reaction (8). In the cytoplasm, ORF57 remains associated with these viral messenger

ribonucleoprotein (mRNP) complexes following translation initiation where it supports

translation of non-spliced viral mRNA (7). ORF57 is also sufficient to inhibit the formation of

cytoplasmic stress granules (SGs) that normally form in response to the accumulation of

translationally stalled mRNP complexes (10), suggesting that it may be able to sustain ongoing

protein synthesis during times of stress that would normally prohibit it. In addition to bypassing

canonical splicing-dependent mRNA export mechanisms, several studies have reported extensive

N^6-methyladenosine (m^6A) modification of KSHV mRNAs including mRNAs encoding the

immediate-early gene product RTA (11–14). m^6A is co-transcriptionally deposited on mRNA by

the m^6A "writer" enzyme, METTL3 (15–17). m^6A modifications have a variety of effects on can

regulate splicing, stability, secondary structure, accumulation in RNA condensates, and

translation (12, 15, 18–22). These effects are promoted by m^6A "reader" proteins YTH-domain

and Tudor family of RNA-binding proteins (14, 23, 24).

In typical cell culture experiments (normoxia, rich culture media), approximately two-

thirds of global protein synthesis requires eIF4F, a protein complex comprising the m^7GTP cap-

binding protein eIF4E1, the scaffolding protein eIF4G1 (or eIF4G3), and the eIF4A RNA

helicase (1, 25–27). After the cap is bound by eIF4E1, eIF4G1/3 recruits eIF3 and the small

ribosomal subunit to initiate scanning for the start codon. eIF4A with its cofactors eIF4B and

eIF4H reduce secondary structure in the 5'UTR to facilitate this process (26, 27). In response to

nutrients and growth signals, mechanistic target of rapamycin complex 1 (mTORC1) regulates

translation initiation by promoting assembly of the eIF4F initiation complex. When

unphosphorylated, repressive 4E-BP1 proteins bind to the eIF4E cap-binding protein and prevent

recruitment the eIF4G1/3 scaffolding protein. mTORC1-mediated phosphorylation of 4E-BP1

liberates eIF4E and enables eIF4F assembly and subsequent recruitment of the eIF3 complex and

the small ribosomal subunit (1, 2, 28). mTORC1 inhibition causes widespread decreases in

protein synthesis, but transcripts bearing 5' terminal oligopyrimidine (TOP) sequences (25) or

pyrimidine-rich translational element (PRTE) sequences (29) at their 5′ ends are especially

sensitive to mTORC1. These sequences allow for association of the cap-binding protein LARP1,

which sequesters the cap and limits further cap-dependent initiation (30–32). By contrast, eIF4F-

independent protein synthesis mechanisms remain poorly understood, and the field is only

beginning to identify and characterize TIFs involved in these processes (18, 33–35).

Herpesviruses from all subfamilies (alpha-, beta-, and gammaherpesviruses) have been

shown to activate mTORC1 during lytic replication (36–39), but paradoxically, viral protein

synthesis and virion production are largely unaffected by mTORC1 inhibition (38, 40, 41). We

and others have shown that eIF4F assembles and remains sensitive to the mTORC1 active-site

inhibitor Torin throughout the KSHV lytic replication cycle (38, 39, 42). However, mTORC1

activity was dispensable for KSHV protein synthesis and genome replication, and only modestly

inhibited virion production (38). These findings suggest that translation of KSHV mRNAs has a

reduced dependence on eIF4F.

To better understand the determinants of KSHV protein synthesis in the context of lytic

replication, we used polysome profiling to measure translational efficiency (TE) of viral

mRNAs. We observed that viral mRNAs readily persist in polysomes in the absence of eIF4F

components eIF4G1 and eIF4G3. This finding is consistent with previous observations of robust

translation of human cytomegalovirus (HCMV) mRNAs despite eIF4F disassembly (40) and

suggests that non-eIF4F translation initiation mechanisms are likely sufficient to support

synthesis of herpesvirus proteins. We found that pro-viral caspase activation during lytic

replication (43) causes cleavage of several host TIFs, but this has no effect on rates of global

protein synthesis in the low translation environment of lytic replication. We tested the

contribution of TIFs that participate in non-eIF4F translation initiation mechanisms and found

that NCBP1, eIF4E2, and eIF4G2 were dispensable for virion production. However, METTL3

silencing, which would result in defects in m^6A-dependent translation (18, 19, 44–46), caused a

ten-fold loss in virion production without affecting viral genome replication. These findings

suggest that viral mRNAs are efficiently recruited to ribosomes in the low-translation

environment of lytic replication despite significant changes in available translation initiation

factors.

RESULTS

Translation of KSHV lytic mRNAs are resistant to mTOR inhibition. Our group and others

previously reported that eIF4F assembles during KSHV latency and lytic replication and remains

under strict regulation by mTORC1 and 4E-BP1 (38, 39). Here, we used polysome profiling to

measure how eIF4F disruption affected translational efficiency (TE) of viral mRNAs.

Physiologic mTORC1 activity is regulated by amino acid abundance, but mTORC1 is readily

inhibited by several drugs, including the potent active site inhibitor Torin 1 (hereafter known as

Torin) (42). We observed that Torin treatment of uninfected iSLK cells for 2 h prior to harvest

caused dephosphorylation of ribosomal protein S6 and 4E-BP1 as expected, which was likewise

evident in latently KSHV-infected iSLK.219 cells, or cells which had been treated with

doxycycline (dox) for 48 h to activate the lytic cycle (Fig. 1A). In these experiments, we

reactivated iSLK.219 cells with doxycycline only; we omitted the HDAC inhibitor sodium

butyrate that is commonly used to promote lytic reactivation in an attempt to limit potentially

confounding effects of epigenetic regulation of transcription by histone acetylation. Under these

conditions, many of the iSLK.219 cells either fail to reactivate or undergo abortive replication.

Nevertheless, it remains clear that mTORC1 regulation of canonical target proteins S6 and 4E-

BP1 remain largely intact during latent and lytic phases of KSHV replication (Fig. 1A).

164   We observed that Torin treatment of uninfected iSLK cells shifted mRNAs from

efficiently translated heavy polysomes to poorly translated sub-polysomal fractions (Fig. 1B)

consistent with studies of other cell types (25, 40). Latently infected iSLK.219 cells treated with

Torin displayed a similar shift of mRNA into sub-polysomal fractions. After 48 h of dox

treatment, the heavy polysomes were depleted, likely due to host shutoff in lytic cells (47) and

the depletion of the media over the incubation time in cells in which KSHV failed to reactivate

from latency (Fig. 1B). In this population, Torin treatment further depleted the heavy polysome

fractions, although the effects were modest, likely due to the pre-existing low translation

environment in these cells.

173   To measure the effects of mTORC1 inhibition on the TE of viral and host mRNAs during

the KSHV lytic cycle, we isolated RNA from polysome fractions from Torin- and vehicle-treated

48 h post-dox cells (Fig. 1B, bottom panel), and processed it for RNA sequencing. We assessed

TE by division of the number of reads isolated from the polysomes compared to the reads found

in the total RNA fraction (# of reads polysome / # of reads total). The abundance of KSHV

transcripts differed by as much as 100,000-fold with ten-fold more of the non-coding PAN RNA

than the next most abundant RNA. The most abundant protein-coding viral mRNAs encode the

ORF59 processivity factor, Kaposin (K12), vIL-6 (K2), and the viral dUTPase-like gene ORF11

(Fig. 2A) (3, 48). The TE of viral mRNAs appeared to be generally similar to cellular mRNAs,

although assessment of cellular mRNAs is complicated in this system because they are derived

from a mixed population of lytically-replicating cells and non-reactivated cells. Consistent with

the literature, we observed alterations in TE of cellular mRNAs in the presence of Torin, with

populations of mRNAs displaying increased or decreased TE (Fig. 2B). We scored the difference

in translational efficiencies by using a sliding-window to calculate a Z-score of each detected

transcript compared to the surrounding 200 transcripts of similar abundance as measured by

count per million (CPM) (49, 50). The ΔTE of the majority of viral mRNAs (~90%) was not

inhibited or enhanced by a conservative Z-score of 1 (Fig. 2B, Z-score within 1 SD of the mean

in blue, Z-score > 1 SD of the mean in red), suggesting that the TE of viral transcripts is likely

not regulated by the mTORC1/4E-BP/eIF4F axis.

We analysed transcripts with a greater than 1.5-fold change in TE using the Panther GO-

Slim Molecular Function analysis (Fig. 2C). Both ribosomal structural proteins and TIF were

over-represented in host cell transcripts with reduced TE following Torin treatment, consistent

with previous studies (25, 29), which suggests that TOP-containing transcripts are regulated by

mTORC1 as expected during KSHV lytic replication. By contrast, host transcripts with increased

TE following Torin treatment did not group into any clear molecular function. Because we

mapped RNA-seq reads by individual transcripts rather than genes, we could detect a slight yet

significant (p<0.0001) enrichment of normally labile pseudogene mRNAs in high TE groups,

and their corresponding diminishment in low TE groups (Fig. 2D). Rather than reflecting

changes in TE of pseudogene mRNAs, we suspect this result could be explained by

accumulation of ribosomes due to halted elongation while the mRNA is processed by nonsense-

mediated decay (NMD) and other ribosomal quality control processes (reviewed in (51)).

eIF4F disassembly does not deplete viral mRNAs from polysomes. We corroborated our

findings of eIF4F-independent efficient translation of viral mRNAs in the primary effusion

lymphoma (PEL)-derived TREx-BCBL1-RTA cell model; these cells reactivate efficiently in

response to dox treatment compared to iSLK.219 cells, which helps reduce confounding effects

of failed lytic reactivation. Furthermore, the lytic cycle proceeds more quickly in TREx-BCBL1-

RTA cells, with robust virion production achieved by 48 hpi (38). TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells

were reactivated with dox for 24 h and treated with Torin or vehicle control for the final 2 h or

replication before lysis and polysome profiling. We isolated mRNA from sub-polysome, light

polysome, and heavy polysome fractions and performed RT-qPCR on select mRNAs to

determine their distribution across the polysome profile as an alternative measure of TE (52).

Consistent with observations in the iSLK.219 cells (Fig. 1B), Torin treatment of lytic TREx-

BCBL1-RTA cells caused a moderate shift of bulk mRNA from polysomes to sub-polysomal

fractions (Fig. 3A). We used RT-qPCR to measure the distribution of cellular and viral mRNAs

in polysomes or lighter fractions. Torin treatment caused shifted β-actin mRNA from heavy

polysomes to monosome and sub-monosome fractions (Fig. 3B). However, a significant

proportion of translating β-actin mRNA remained in the polysome fractions despite Torin

treatment. By contrast, Torin treatment caused the TOP-mRNAs encoding Rps20 and RACK1 to

completely shift from polysome fractions to sub-polysome and monosome fractions. This is

consistent with the RNA-seq analysis and confirms that TOP mRNAs remain susceptible to

eIF4F disassembly during the lytic cycle.

Historically, the contribution of monosomes to global protein synthesis has been

overlooked, but recent ribosomal foot-printing studies have revealed that monosomes contain

translationally active mRNAs, notably including unusual mRNAs with short open reading frames

(ORFs), up-stream ORFs (uORFs), or low initiation rates (53). We observed that mRNAs

encoding VEGF-A and IL6, two cytokines with significant contributions to KSHV pathogenesis

(54–56), were abundant in monosome fractions despite abundant VEGF-A and IL6 in

supernatants from lytic TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells (38); this suggests that monosomes may make

significant contributions to translation of these cytokines during lytic replication. We also

analyzed the polysomal distribution of viral mRNAs from all three transcriptional classes: Latent

(LANA, Kaposin), early (ORF11, ORF45, vIL-6), and late (K8.1, ORF26, ORF65). The TE of

all viral mRNAs tested generally seemed to resist Torin inhibition, but a slight shift towards the

sub-polysomal fractions can be detected (Fig. 4B). Combined with our previous assessments in

iSLK.219 cells (Fig. 2B), these findings suggest that during KSHV lytic replication, host cell

transcripts are regulated by the mTORC1-4EBP1-eIF4F signalling axis as expected, whereas

viral transcripts are not.

Translation initiation factors eIF2α and eIF4G1 are cleaved by caspases during lytic

replication. Activation of pro-apoptotic caspase-3 and caspase-8 during KSHV lytic replication

limit interferon (IFN) production and promote virus replication (43). Paradoxically, this caspase

activation does not contribute to apoptosis, likely due to the actions of viral anti-apoptotic

proteins vFLIP, vBcl2, and K7 (57–59). In uninfected cells, caspases also cleave the translation

initiation factors (TIF) eIF2α and eIF4G1, which may limit protein synthesis during apoptosis

(60, 61). We hypothesized that caspase-dependent cleavage of TIFs might contribute to host

shutoff and eIF4F-independent translation of KSHV mRNAs during the lytic cycle. Indeed,

TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells reactivated with dox displayed a decrease in total eIF4G1 abundance

consistent with caspase-3 activation and eIF4G1 cleavage during lytic replication (Fig. 4A; (62)).

We also observed faster-migrating protein species that reacted with anti-eIF2α, -eIF4G2, and -

ORF57 antibodies, all of which were previously described caspase substrates (60, 63, 64). To

confirm caspase activation during KSHV lytic replication, we reactivated TREx-BCBL1-RTA

cells with dox in the presence of a pan-caspase inhibitor IDN-6556 or vehicle control; we

observed the accumulation of cleaved caspase-3 over a 48 h time course, which was sensitive to

IDN-6556 (Fig. 4B). Caspase inhibition also prevented the degradation of eIF4G1 and cleavage

of eIF2α and ORF57. Loss of ORF57 cleavage with IDN-6556 also supports the notion that

caspases are active in lytic cells and not only in those latently infected or undergoing abortive

infection. We measured global protein synthesis using a ribopuromycinylation assay whereby

puromycin is incorporated into elongating polypeptides where it can be subsequently detected

using an anti-puromycin antibody (65). Similar to previous reports, we observed a clear decrease

in global protein synthesis during KSHV lytic replication (38, 66, 67) which was unaffected by

caspase inhibition (Figs. 4B, 4C). We conclude that TIF degradation by caspases does not

contribute to host shutoff.

eIF4F disassembly selectively displaces host translation initiation factors from polysomes

during KSHV latency and lytic replication. Considering the evidence for eIF4F-independent

translation of KSHV mRNAs and caspase-mediated TIF remodeling, we reasoned that

alternative TIFs could play an important role in supporting efficient synthesis of lytic proteins.

As a first step in this investigation, we profiled TIF recruitment to polysomes during lytic

replication and whether these components could be displaced by mTORC1 inhibition. TREx-

BCBL1-RTA cells were once again reactivated with dox for 22 h and treated with Torin for 2 h

prior to lysis and polysome profiling. Consistent with our previous findings, mTORC1 inhibition

caused dephosphorylation of canonical substrates S6 and 4E-BP1, both during latency and lytic

replication (Fig. 5A). Once again, lytic replication in TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells caused a bulk

shift of mRNAs from polysomes to sub-polysomal fractions, with the residual translation

remaining sensitive to mTORC1 inhibition and eIF4F disassembly (Fig. 5B). We assessed the

proteins associated with polysomes by immunoblotting proteins harvested from gradient

fractions using a low-salt lysis buffer to aid retention of eIF4F components and other RBPs,

consistent with previous ribosome isolation protocols (68, 69). Fractions were isolated from the

40S, 60S, and 80S sub-polysomal peaks, as well as light and heavy polysomes; RNA and

associated proteins were precipitated using ethanol and a glycogen co-precipitant.

Additional m^7GTP cap-binding proteins beyond the canonical eIF4E1 protein include

nuclear cap-binding protein subunit 1 (NCBP1), which promotes pioneer translation on newly

transcribed mRNA (34), and eIF4E2, which contributes to global protein synthesis at physiologic

oxygen tension and is strictly required for hypoxic translation (33). We observed that eIF4E1,

eIF4E2 and NCBP1 associated with polysomes in all conditions tested, as expected (Fig. 5C).

Torin treatment caused a progressive loss of eIF4F components eIF4G1 and eIF4G3 from

polysome fractions (Fig. 5C), consistent with displacement of eIF4G from the eIF4F complex by

hypophosphorylated 4E-BP1 (Fig. 5A). However, eIF4G2, which was found primarily in the 80S

monosome peak and sub-monosomal fractions, was unaffected by mTORC1 inhibition. eIF4G2

may function as an eIF4G1-like factor for cap-dependent translation of mRNA that directly bind

to eIF3 protein eIF3d (70). We noted a striking accumulation of a faster migrating species of

eIF4G1 in lytic cells that matches a previously reported 120 kDa caspase-3 cleavage fragment

(62), consistent with our observation of eIF4G1 cleavage by caspases in these cells (Fig. 4B).

Interestingly, this 120 kDa eIF4G1 fragment remained associated with polysomes in Torin-

treated cells, whereas full-length eIF4G1 is lost (Fig. 5C). Hyper-phosphorylated 4E-BP1 was

associated with polysomes in vehicle-treated samples, consistent with previous reports of 4E-

binding proteins co-sedimenting with polysome fractions (71). Hypophosphorylated 4E-BP1 was

found in sub-polysomal fractions of Torin-treated cells in both the latent and lytic cell

populations. This data is consistent with destabilization of eIF4G-eIF4E complexes upon cap

binding and dynamic disassembly of eIF4F after initiation, as hypothesized by Merrick (2015)

(27). Finally, consistent with previous reports (7), the lytic KSHV mRNA binding protein

ORF57 was associated with mRNAs in polysomes, and remained associated following mTORC1

inhibition (Fig. 5C). Taken together, these findings indicate that even though mTORC1 is active

and eIF4F is assembled during lytic replication, viral mRNAs can be efficiently translated

despite eIF4F depletion. Moreover, these experiments provide evidence for remodeling of

polysome- and monosome-associated mRNP complexes during lytic replication.

We next used RNA silencing to test the potential contributions of eIF4E2, eIF4G2, and

NCBP1 on virus replication, all of which could potentially support translation of viral mRNA

either constitutively or when eIF4F is limited. However, knockdown of these factors had no

effect on virus replication in the presence of absence of mTORC1 inhibition (Fig 6), consistent

with our previous observations that KSHV virion production has a limited requirement for

mTORC1 activity once early gene expression is established (38). We further tested the

requirement of eIF4E2 on KSHV replication during hypoxia. During hypoxia, regulated in

development and DNA damage response 1 (REDD1) normally promotes the inhibitory activity

the tuberous sclerosis complex (TSC) on mTORC1 (72), an action which could potentially be

antagonized by viral mTORC1-activating proteins. However, we observed that KSHV replicated

equally well in TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells in hypoxic conditions as it did in normoxia, and

eIF4E2 was dispensable, even when eIF4F was depleted (Fig. 6, top panels). This suggests that

KSHV is competent to complete its replication cycle during hypoxia and able to utilize an

eIF4E2- or an eIF4F$_H$-independent mechanism to support viral protein synthesis.

METTL3 is required for virion synthesis but not genome replication. N^6-methyladenosine

modification (m^{6}A) of RNA can stimulate mRNA translation by either recruiting eIF3 and the

small ribosomal subunit directly, or by the actions of m^{6}A reader proteins (18, 19, 44). Many

KSHV mRNAs are modified with m^{6}A and these modifications likely affect the fate of transcript

(11–14). The m^{6}A methyltransferase METTL3 and the m^{6}A reader YTHDC2 have been shown

to affect KSHV virion production, but with conflicting results in different systems (11, 13). We

found that METTL3 protein levels were reduced by 24 hpi in TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells (Fig.

7A). However, despite being reduced at the protein level during lytic replication, RNA silencing

of METTL3 diminished virion output by 10-fold (Fig. 7B). Viral genome replication was

unperturbed by METTL3 silencing (Fig. 7C), but accumulation of early proteins ORF45 and

ORF17 and the late protein ORF65 were disrupted. ORF57 accumulates normally when

METTL3 is absent, suggesting that m^{6}A is not required for translation of ORF57. Similarly,

ORF59, which requires ORF57 binding for mRNA export (73, 74), accumulates normally in

METTL3 knockdown, suggesting that m^{6}A is not required for ORF57 association with mRNA

(Fig. 7A). Thus, in our hands, METTL3 is required for efficient synthesis of certain KSHV

proteins and virion production in the TREx-BCBL1-RTA cell system.

In the course of studying the effects of m^{6}A RNA modifications during KSHV infection,

Hesser et al., (2018) (13) and Tan et al., (2017) (11) used the histone deacetylase (HDAC)

inhibitor sodium butyrate (NaB) to enhance lytic reactivation in iSLK.219 cells; Hesser et al.,

(2018) (13) also used the phorbol ester TPA in m^{6}A studies using TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells for

similar reasons. In our experiments, we exclusively used doxycycline to reactivate the TREx-

BCBL1-RTA cells in an attempt to eliminate broad confounding effects of HDAC inhibitors and

phorbol esters. We reactivated TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells and iSLK.219 cells with dox in similar

conditions and confirmed a decrease in METTL3 abundance (Fig. 8A, 8B). Because the

immediate early KSHV lytic switch protein RTA is a SUMO-dependent E3 ubiquitin ligase

(STUbL), and METTL3 has been reported to be sumoylated (75, 76), we hypothesized that RTA

may promote proteasome-dependent degradation of METTL3. We tested this hypothesis using

parental iSLK cells that express RTA from a dox-inducible promoter but lack KSHV episomes.

Treatment of iSLK cells with dox caused RTA accumulation but had no effect on METTL3

protein levels (Fig. 8C). Furthermore, inhibiting proteasome function with MG132 increased

levels of RTA (indicating that the proteasome controls RTA protein turnover), but had no effect

on METTL3 protein levels in the presence or absence of RTA, demonstrating that METTL3 is

not constitutively degraded by the proteosome. By contrast, treatment of TREx-BCBL1-RTA

cells with the caspase inhibitor IDN-6556 sustained METTL3 protein levels at later stages of

lytic replication (Fig. 8D), which indicates that METTL3 is another substrate for caspase-

mediated cleavage during KSHV lytic replication.

DISCUSSION

KSHV mRNAs broadly resemble their cellular counterparts which should allow their

recruitment to ribosomes in an eIF4F-dependent manner. Here, we demonstrate that activation of

caspases during lytic replication degrades TIFs, yet this has no effect on protein synthesis after

host shutoff. The remaining eIF4G1 and eIF4G3 are effectively recruited to polysomes in an

mTORC1- and eIF4F-dependent manner. These heavily-translated mRNPs contain viral mRNA,

which remain in these fractions when eIF4F is depleted, suggesting that viral mRNAs do not

require eIF4F for efficient translation initiation. These observations are consistent with reports

from Lenarcic, et. al. (2014)(40), who demonstrated that mTORC1 is dispensable for HCMV late

protein synthesis and that Torin had little effect on TE of viral mRNAs. They also support our

previous findings that eIF4F disassembly does not impede KSHV replication and virion

production (38). Together, these observations suggest that resistance to eIF4F loss might be a

general feature of herpesvirus translation, even for viruses like HCMV that do not shut off host

gene expression. Moreover, our study indicates that mTORC1 and eIF4F maintain broad roles in

global translation regulation during KSHV lytic replication. Torin treatment depletes heavy

polysomes during lytic replication and shifts TOP-containing mRNAs encoding ribosomal

proteins and TIFs into sub-polysomal fractions. The most recent and thorough efforts to map

KSHV mRNA 5'-ends have not identified any TOP sequences (3, 5), which is consistent with

the idea that they could be efficiently translated despite mTORC1 inhibition.

Our polysome RNA-Seq analysis was restricted to heavy translating polysomes, but there

is emerging evidence that light polysomes and monosomes also make important contributions to

bulk protein synthesis (53, 77). While we could detect almost the entire viral transcriptome in

heavy polysome fractions, subsequent RT-qPCR measurements of select viral transcripts

revealed broad distribution across gradient fractions. Two notable exceptions were the

K12/Kaposin and LANA mRNAs, which were largely restricted to sub-polysomal fractions.

Both of these transcripts are spliced and encode multiple proteins via complex translational

programs that include leaky ribosomal scanning mechanisms of initiation (78, 79). They also

have long stretches of repeats that may impede efficient translation. For example, polyproline

motifs are slowly decoded by elongating ribosomes (80), and protein products of Kaposin

mRNAs feature numerous polyproline motifs (78). We speculate that preponderance of Kaposin

mRNAs in sub-polysome fractions could result from close proximity of polyproline-encoding

sequences to the several start codons on this mRNA, which could slow elongating ribosomes and

prevent or slow assembly of subsequent 80S complexes. The emerging role of monosome

translation in controlling the synthesis of highly regulated proteins should be considered in future

investigations of KSHV lytic gene expression.

Several studies have reported m^6A modification of KSHV mRNA, and m^6A modification

of RTA is required for proper splicing and stability (11–14). However, the precise roles for m^6A

modifications and m^6A reader proteins in the biogenesis and fate of KSHV mRNA other then

RTA remain to be discovered and may be dependent on cell type and different chemical stimuli

of lytic reactivation (13). N^6-methyladenosine (m^6A) dependent translation initiation has been

shown to contribute to residual translation following eIF4F disassembly in normoxia (19).

Unlike HCMV, we found that METTL3 is degraded by caspases during KSHV lytic replication

(81, 82). While this may preclude a significant role for m^6A modification as a global mechanism

of translation of viral mRNA, this modification has nevertheless been found to be widely
distributed across the genome (14). The effects of m^{6}A on virus titer might largely be explained
by a Type-I IFN response. Loss of m^{6}A marks on IFN-β mRNA promotes stabilization of the
transcript and leads to the accumulation of ISGs (81, 82). Additionally, we expect the wide
effects of METTL3 depletion on global transcription (83) likely have pleiotropic effects on
normal viral replication.

During Torin treatment, both the TOP-containing transcript Rps20 and the non-TOP -β-
actin transcript were depleted from polysome fractions that retained viral mRNA. In these same
fractions eIF4G1 and eIFG3 are also lost, but ORF57 is retained. ORF57 and related herpesvirus
homologues (EBV EB2 and HSV1/2 ICP27) have previously been shown to interact with
initiation factors, and can be found in polysomes (84, 85). In our experiments, loss of eIF4G
from polysomes with Torin treatment suggested that ORF57-dependent recruitment of eIF4G to
viral mRNA was not required for their translation, yet ORF57 is clearly present in the same
fractions as viral mRNA and is not displaced with eIF4F loss. This data suggests that while
mTORC1 is active during KSHV lytic, it is not required for the translation of viral mRNA.
While eIF4F is assembled during lytic replication, it is not required for the association of viral
mRNA with the polysomes. Alternative translation initiation factors, including eIF4E2, eIF4G2,
NCBP1, and eIF3d are also not required for virion production. Similarly, m^{6}A is not required for
the translation of ORF57 mRNA. However, ORF57 remains associated with the polysomes in
the absence of eIF4F. It is possible that ORF57, or other viral factors are required for KSHV
translation initiation, but the complement of host and viral proteins associating with translating
mRNA during lytic replication is unknown.
426
METHODS
Cell culture and inhibitors. TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells (86) were cultured in RPMI*1640
supplemented with 10% vol/vol heat-inactivated fetal bovine serum (Gibco), 5 mM L-glutamine,
and 50 μM β-mercaptoethanol. 293T cells, iSLK and iSLK.219 cells (a kind gift from Don
Ganem, (87)) were cultured in DMEM with 10% FBS, 5 mM L-Glutamine. Cells were
maintained at 37°C at 5% CO2 using standards. All cells were maintained in 100 I/U of both
penicillin and streptomycin. iSLK.219 cells were cultured with 10 mM puromycin
(ThermoFisher Scientific) to maintain episome copy number of rKSHV.219. Puromycin was

omitted from cells seeded for experiments. Expression of the RTA transgene and lytic

reactivation in both the TREx-BCBL1-RTA and iSLK.219 was stimulated by treating the cells

with 1 µg/mL doxycycline. For hypoxia experiments, cells were placed in a Hypoxia Incubation

Chamber (StemCell); the chamber was purged with nitrogen at 2 psi for 5 min prior to sealing.

15 mM HEPES was added to the media in all hypoxia experiments to maintain media pH.

mTORC1 was inactivated by addition of 250 nM Torin (42) (Toronto Chemicals) in 0.1%

vol/vol DMSO. Caspases were inhibited with 10 µM IDN-6556 (Selleckchem) in 0.1% vol/vol

DMSO as described in (43).

Western blotting. TREx-BCBL1-RTA suspension cultures were collected by centrifugation at

1,500 x g, washed with ice-cold PBS, pelleted again, then lysed in 2x Laemmli buffer (4%

[wt/vol] sodium dodecyl sulfate [SDS], 20% [vol/vol] glycerol, 120 mM Tris-HCl [pH 6.8]).

iSLK and iSLK.219 cells were washed once with ice-cold PBS then lysed with 2x Laemmli

buffer directly in the well. DNA was sheared by repeated pipetting with a fine-gauge needle

before 100 mM dithiothreitol (DTT) addition and boiling at 95ºC for 5 min. Samples were stored

at -20ºC until analysis. Total protein concentration was determined by DC protein assay (Bio-

Rad) and equal quantities were loaded in each SDS-PAGE gel. Gels were transferred using to

polyvinylidene difluoride (PVDF) membranes (Bio-Rad) with the Trans-Blot Turbo transfer

apparatus (Bio-Rad). Membranes were blocked with 5% bovine serum albumin TBS-T (Tris-

buffered saline, 0.1% [vol/vol] Tween) before probing overnight at 4ºC with the following

antibodies: 4E-BP1 (Cell signaling technologies [CST] #9644), β-actin (CST #5125 or CST

#4970), cleaved caspase 3 (CST #9664), eIF2α (CST #9722), eIF4E1 (#2067), eIF4E2 (GeneTex

GTX103977), eIF4G1 (CST #2858), eIF4G2 (CST #5169), eIF4G3 (GeneTex GTX118109),

METTL3 (CST #96391), myc (CST #2276), NCBP1 (Abcam ab42389), Rps6 (S6; CST #2217)

phosphoSer235/6-Rps6 (CST #4858), ORF45 (ThermoFisher MA5-14769), ORF57 (Santa Cruz

Biotechnologies sc-135746), Kaposin (a kind gift from Don Ganem), LANA (a kind gift of Don

Ganem), RTA (a kind gift from David Lukac), ORF65 (a kind gift S.-J. Gao), ORF17 (a kind gift

from Charles Craik). Secondary antibodies HRP-conjugated for mouse (CST 7076) or rabbit

(CST 7074) were used with Clarity-ECL chemiluminescence reagent (Bio-Rad) for detection.

All blots were imaged on a Bio-Rad ChemiDoc-Touch system. Molecular weights were

determined using protein standards (New England Biolabs P7712, or P7719). Puromycin

incorporation assays were performed essentially as described in (38). Briefly, TREx-BCBL1-

RTA cells were treated with 10 µg/mL puromycin 10 min prior to harvest as described above.

Western blots for puromycin were run on 12% TGX Stain-Free FastCast acrylamide (Bio-Rad)

according to the manufacturer's instructions. Puromycin incorporation was detected using an

anti-puromycin antibody (EMD Millipore MABE43). For quantitative analysis, puromycin

signal was compared to the Stain-Free total protein signal.

Polysome Isolation. Polysomes were isolated by ultracentrifugation of cytosolic lysate through a

7-47% wt/vol linear sucrose gradient in high salt (20 mM Tris HCl, 300 mM NaCl, 25 mM

$MgCl_2$ in DEPC-treated or nuclease-free water) or low salt (15 mM Tris HCl, 50 mM KCl, 10

mM $MgCl_2$) lysis buffer with RNAse and protease inhibitors, as described in (52). High salt

conditions were used to isolate RNA from gradients and low salt conditions were used for

isolating proteins. Gradients were prepared using manufactures' settings on a Gradient Master

108 (Biocomp). For each gradient, ~8 x 10^6 iSLK.219 or 1.3 x 10^7 TREx-BCBL-RTA cells were

seed. Cells treated with 100 µg/mL cycloheximide (CHX, Acros Organics or Sigma) for three

min prior to harvest. Cells were washed with ice-cold PBS and scraped in a tube containing the

spent media and PBS wash. The cells were pelleted by centrifugation for 5 min at 500 x g and

washed again with ice-cold PBS. Cell pellets were resuspended in lysis buffer (high or low salt

buffer, with 1% v/v Triton X-100, 400 units/ml RNAseOUT (Invitrogen), 100 µg/mL CHX, and

protease and phosphatase inhibitors) for 10 min on ice. Lysate was centrifuged for 10 min at

2,300 x g the supernatant was transferred to a new tube and centrifuged for 10 min at 15,000 x g.

The supernatant was overlaid on sucrose gradients. Gradients were centrifuged at 39,000 rpm for

90 min on a SW-41 rotor. The bottom of the centrifuge tube was punctured, and 60% wt/vol

sucrose was underlain by syringe pump in order to collect 500 µL or 1 mL fractions from the top

of the gradient with simultaneous A_{260} measurement using a UA-6 detector (Brandel, MD).

Polysome sedimentation graphs were generated with Prism8 (GraphPad).

RNA-Seq Analysis of Polysome Fractions. Total RNA or pooled fractions from heavy

polysomes were isolated using Ribozol (Amresco) or Trizol (ThermoFisher) using standard

procedures, except the precipitant in the aqueous fraction was isolated using a RNeasy column

(Qiagen). mRNA was isolated from these total fractions using polyA enrichment (Dynabeads

mRNA DIRECT Micro Purification Kit, ThermoFisher) according to the manufacturers'

protocol, then library preparation was performed with Ion Total RNA-Seq Kit v2.0

(ThermoFisher). Library size, concentration, and quality was assessed using a 2200 TapeStation

(Agilent). Libraries were sequenced on Proton sequencer (ThermoFisher) with a PI chip and the

Ion PI Hi-Q Sequencing 200 Kit for 520 flows. Ion Torrent reads were processed using

combined Human Hg19 and KSHV (Accession GQ994935) reference transcriptomes. The

KSHV genome was manually re-annotated with the transcript definitions from KSHV2.0 (3)

reference transcriptome and the Quasi-Mapping software Salmon (88). Normalized counts per

million (cpm) were estimated for individual transcripts using the R package limma (89). Two

biological replicates were combined as a geometric mean (49). The transcripts were ordered by

abundance and the mean, standard deviation (SD), and Z-score were calculated using a sliding

window of 200 transcripts of similar abundance (49, 50). The most abundant 100 and the least

abundant 100 transcripts used the mean and SD of the adjacent bin. Translational efficiency (TE)

of a transcript treatment was determined by the formula $TE = \log_2(\text{polysome/total})$. The change

in translational efficiency (DTE) $= TE_{Torin} - TE_{DMSO}$.

Polysome RT-qPCR. TREx-BCBL1-RTA were reactivated with 1 µg/mL doxycycline for 24h.

Torin or DMSO was added two hours prior to harvest in high salt lysis buffer as described above.

Fractions were mixed 1:1 with Trizol and isolated as per manufacturer's directions except that

30-60 µg of GlycoBlue Co-Precipitant (Ambion) and 100 ng of *in vitro* transcribed luciferase

DNA (NEB T7 HiScribe) was added to the aqueous fractions during isopropanol precipitation

(52). The resulting pellet was resuspended in water and reverse transcribed with random primers

(Maxima H, ThermoFisher). mRNA was normalized to luciferase spike to control for recovery.

The quantity of mRNA detected in a given fraction was then calculated as a percentage of the

total detected in all fractions. The RNA recovery was controlled by subtracting the C_T of the

luciferase spike, which was assumed to be constant, from the target C_T. This ΔC_T value for each

fraction was then subtracted from the ΔC_T of the top fraction of the gradient to determine the

$\Delta\Delta C_T$. And transcript abundance (Q) was then calculated ($Q=2^{\Delta\Delta C_T}$) for each fraction and all

fractions were summed. The total quantity of a transcript is represented as a proportion of the

total amount of detected transcript as per (52). Transcript quantities from the light, heavy, and

sub-polysomal fractions were grouped and summed for statistical analysis. Primer sequences are

listed in Table 1. Due to common usage of polyA signals and nesting of the viral genome, qRT-
PCR primers could amplify mRNA originating from more than one viral promoter (3). For
simplicity, PCR products are referred to by the mRNA coding region targeted by the primers.
531
Polysome Western blot. 500 µL fractions of sucrose gradient mixed with 45 µg of GlycoBlue
and 1.5 mL of 100% ethanol and incubated overnight at -80°C. Fractions were centrifuged at
15,000 x g for 15 min at 4°C. Supernatant was decanted and the pellet was washed 70% v/v
ethanol made with RNAase-free water. Residual ethanol was dried at 95°C and the pellet was
resuspended in 1x Laemmli buffer with 100 mM DTT then boiled at 95°C for 5 min prior to
SDS-PAGE.
538
Gene Ontology Analysis. Gene lists were searched for statistical over-representation for
molecular functions, using the PANTHER Classification System (www.pantherdb.org, (90)).
Lists were compared against the complete database using a Fisher's exact test, with a 1% FDR.
To determine enrichment of non-coding transcripts in the polysomes, transcripts were manually
sorted into coding and non-coding (NMD, lincRNA, retained-intron, processed pseudogenes, or
antisense transcripts) groups and compared using a Fisher's exact test, compared to all quantified
transcripts with a 1% FDR.
546
shRNA gene silencing. Lentiviruses derived from pLKO or pGIPZ were derived from
transfection of 293T cells with packaging plasmids pMD2.G and psPAX2 (gifts from Didier
Trono Addgene plasmids 12259 and 12260) using polyethylenimine MAX (polysciences
#24765). Lentiviruses were filtered at 0.45 µm before aliquoting and storage at -80°C. TREx-
BCBL1-RTA cells were transduced with lentivirus overnight with 4 µg/mL polybrene
(hexadimethrine bromide, Sigma) and treated the following day with 1 µg/mL puromycin for a
further 2-3 d before seeding experiments. All experiments were seeded without puromycin.
shRNAs for eIF4E2, eIF4G2, and NCBP1 were selected from the GIPZ Lentiviral shRNA
library (ThermoFisher, sh-eIF4E2: V2LHS_68041; sh-eIF4G2 #1: V3LHS_323383, sh-eIF4G2
#2: V3LHS_323384; sh- NCBP1 #1: V3LHS_639361, sh-NCBP1 #2: V3LHS_645476). shRNA
sequences for METTL3 were selected from the RNAi Consortium (shMETTL3 - #1:
TRCN0000034715; shMETTL3 - #2: TRCN0000034714) and pLKO vectors were generated

according to the RNAi Consortium shRNA cloning protocol

(https://portals.broadinstitute.org/gpp/public/resources/protocols). A non-targeting shRNA

sequence was used as a control in all experiments, either pGIPZ-NS (ThermoFisher, RHS_4346),

or pLKO-NS-Puro, generated by replacing the BamHI/KpnI fragment of containing the

blasticidin selection cassette of pLKO-NS-BSD (a gift from Keith Mostov, Addgene plasmid

#26655 (91)) with the BamHI/KpnI-flanked puromycin selection cassette from pLKO-TRC (a

gift from David Root Addgene plasmid #10878 (92). Transduced cells were freshly generated for

every experiment and not maintained in culture for long periods. Knockdown was confirmed by

western blot after every lentivirus transduction.

Viral replication. DNAse-protected genomes were detected as described in (38). Briefly,

supernatant was treated with DNAse I (Sigma) for 30 min at 37°C to digest un-encapsidated

genomes. DNA was then harvested using DNeasy blood minikit (Qiagen) using buffer AL that

had been supplemented with salmon sperm DNA (Invitrogen) as carrier DNA and a luciferase-

encoding plasmid (pGL4.26, Promega). qPCR was then performed to detect viral gene ORF26

and luciferase from the carrier plasmid using *GoTaq* polymerase (Promega) and the $\Delta\Delta C_T$

method. Intracellular genomes were isolated from cells using DNeasy blood minikit and qPCR as

above.

Statistics. qRT-PCR values were calculated in Excel (Microsoft). Values were imported into

Prism8 (GraphPad) for statistical analysis and graphing. *P* values are represented in the figures

(*, $P < 0.05$; **, $P < 0.01$; ***, $P < 0.001$; ns, nonsignificant).

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Table 1. Oligonucleotide sequences

qPCR Target	Primer sequences (5'-3')	
	Forward	Reverse
luc2	TTCGGCAACCAGATCATCCC	TGCGCAAGAATAGCTCCTCC
Rps20	TTGACTTGCACAGTCCTTCTGA	ATGGTGACTTCCACCTCAAC
RACK1	GTGCTTCTGGAGGCAAGGAT	TCCCCACCATCTAGCGTGTA
β-actin	CTTCCAGCAGATGTGGATCA	AAAGCCATGCCAATCTCATC
LANA	TCCCACAGTGTTCACATCCG	GAGGTAAAGGTGTTGCGGGA
Kaposin	CACGTATCGAGGAGCGGTG	CAGGGTTCGCAGGGTTCG
VEGF-A	TTGTTGGAAGAAGCAGCCCA	AGGGGATGGAGGAAGGTCAA
hIL-6	TGCAATAACCACCCCTGACC	GTGCCCATGCTACATTTGCC
vIL-6	TCTCTTGCTGGTCGGTTCAC	CGGTACGGTAACAGAGGTCG
ORF11	ACATTTGACAACACGCACCG	AAAATCAGCACGCTCGAGGA
ORF45	TGATGAAATCGAGTGGGCGG	CTTAAGCCGCAAAGCAGTGG
ORF59	CACCAGGCTTCTCCTCTGTG	TCGCTGACAGACACAGTCAC
K8.1	AGATACGTCTGCCTCTGGGT	AAAGTCACGTGGGAGGTCAC
ORF26	CAGTTGAGCGTCCCAGATGA	GGAATACCAACAGGAGGCCG
ORF65	TGGCTCGCATGAATACCCTG	CTGCAGATGATCCCGCCTTT

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Fig 1. KSHV lytic replication reduces protein synthesis. (A) Western blots of whole cell lysates for polysome profiles. (B) Polysome profiles of uninfected, latent, or 48 hpi iSLK.219 treated with either Torin or DMSO for 2 h prior to harvest. Cells were treated with 100 µg/mL cycloheximide (CHX) for 5 minutes prior to harvest to prevent elongation. Cells were lysed in the presence of CHX and loaded on a 7-47% linear sucrose gradient. After separation by ultracentrifugation, the abundance of RNA (A_{260} nm) in the gradient was continually measure as fractions were collected. RNA from the 48 hpi polysome fractions was isolated for sequencing.

Fig 2. eIF4F disassembly does not affect translational efficiencies of viral mRNAs. mRNA from translating ribosomes (of DMSO treated cells) was sequenced and aligned to both the human and KSHV genomes. Viral transcripts are depicted in blue on top of the grey background of cellular genes. The dashed line represents the mean TE of all transcripts. (C) The Δ TE of viral transcripts is depicted in blue or red on a grey background of cellular genes. Viral transcripts beyond one SD of the mean are red, viral transcripts within on SD are depicted in blue. Vertical lines represent a 1.5-fold change in transcript TE. (D) Panther Gene Ontology-Slim molecular functions with a decreased TE during Torin treatment. (E) Depletion or enrichment of transcripts not predicted to encode functional proteins from TE < -1.5 Z or TE > 1.5 Z, respectively.

Fig 3. eIF4F disassembly does not deplete viral mRNAs from polysomes. (A) Polysome profile of TRex-BCBL1-RTA cells induced with 1 µg/mL dox for 24 h. Torin or DMSO control were added 2 h prior to harvest and polysome analysis. (B) qRT-PCR analysis of cellular and viral transcripts in polysome fractions. Total RNA was isolated from polysome fractions. RNA was co-precipitated with GlycoBlue and T7-transcribed luciferase RNA to improve and normalize for recovery. RNA was analysed by qRT-PCR for cellular, and viral transcripts. Vertical lines depict the boundaries between the monosomes, light polysome, and heavy polysome fractions (n=3; means±SEM; statistical significance was determined by two-way ANOVA).

Fig 4. KSHV lytic replication reduces levels of host translation initiation factors (TIFs) but mTORC1 regulation of eIF4F formation remains intact. (A) TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells were treated with 1 μg/mL doxycycline. 500 μM PAA was added to inhibit genome replication as indicted. Cell lysate were probed by western blot as indicated. (B)TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells were reactivated as in (A). 10 μM IDN-6556 was added as indicated to inhibit caspases. 10 μg/mL of puromycin was added to all sample 10 minutes prior to harvest. (C) Quantification of puromycin blot relative to total protein amount(n=3; means±SEM; statistical significance was determined by two-way ANOVA).

Fig 5. eIF4F disassembly selectively displaces host translation initiation factors from polysomes during KSHV latency and lytic replication. (A) Western blots of TREx-BCBL1-RTA whole cell lysates for polysome profiles. (B) Polysome profiles of TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells at 0 or 24 hpi, treated with Torin or DMSO control. Indicated 40S, 60S, 80S, light, and heavy polysome fractions were isolated for analysis. (C) Fractions were precipitated with glycogen and ethanol. The precipitate was resuspended in 1x Laemmli buffer and used for western blot analysis as indicated. Equal volume was loaded in all lanes.

Fig. 6. KSHV virion production is unaffected by silencing of polysome-associated alternative translation initiation factors eIF4E2, eIF4G2 and NCBP1. (A-C) Knockdown of eIF4E2, NCBP1, or eIF4G2 in latent TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells. (D) eIF4E2 knockdown cells were reactivated with 1 µg/mL dox. At 24 hpi, cells were treated with DMSO or Torin, then either maintained in normal culture conditions, or were moved to a hypoxia chamber. Supernatant was harvested at 48hpi and processed for detection of DNase-protected genomes. (E-F) Reactivated TREx-BCBL-RTA cells were treated with DMSO or Torin at 24hpi. Supernatant was harvested at 48hpi and processed for detection of DNase-protected genomes (n=3-4; means±SEM; statistical significance was determined by two-way ANOVA).

Fig. 7. The N6-methyladenosine methyltransferase METTL3 is required for efficient virion production but not genome replication (A) TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells were transduced with lentiviral shRNA constructs and selected with puromycin. Cells were reactivated with 1 μg/mL doxycycline and harvested as indicated. Lysates were probed for METTL3, early (E) proteins ORF57, ORF59 and ORF17 or late (L) proteins ORF65 or Kaposin. (B) Cells transduced and reactivated as in (A) were treated with DMSO or Torin at 0 or 24 hpi. Supernatant was harvested at 48hpi and processed for detection of DNase-protected genomes (n=3; means±SEM; statistical significance was determined by two-way ANOVA). (C) qPCR of intracellular viral geonomes from DNA extracted from TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells treated as in (A) (n=3; means±SEM; statistical significance was determined by two-way ANOVA).

Fig. 8. METTL3 is degraded by caspase activity during lytic replication. (A) TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells were reactivated with 1 µg/mL dox in the presense of absence of 20 ng/mL 12-O-Tetradecanoylphorbol-13-acetate (TPA) and (B) iSLK.219 cells reactivated with 1 µg/mL dox in the presence of absence of sodium butyrate (NaB). METTL3 abundance was assessed by western blot. (C) Uninfected iSLK cells treated with 1 µg/mL dox to stimulate RTA expression were concurrently treated 10 µg/mL MG132 for 24 h and probed as indicated by western blot. (D) TREx-BCBL1-RTA cells treated with 1 µg/mL dox and 10 µM of IDN-6556 to inhibit caspases. Lysates were probed as indicated by western blot.