

1 **A 19-isolate reference-quality global pangenome for the**
2 **fungal wheat pathogen *Zymoseptoria tritici***

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11

12 **Abstract**

13

14 **Background:** The gene content of a species largely governs its ecological interactions and adaptive
15 potential. A species is therefore defined by both core genes shared between all individuals and
16 accessory genes segregating presence-absence variation. There is growing evidence that eukaryotes,
17 similar to bacteria, show intra-specific variability in gene content. However, it remains largely
18 unknown how functionally relevant such a pangenome structure is for eukaryotes and what
19 mechanisms underlie the emergence of highly polymorphic genome structures.

20 **Results:** Here, we establish a reference-quality pangenome of a fungal pathogen of wheat based on 19
21 complete genomes from isolates sampled across six continents. *Zymoseptoria tritici* causes substantial
22 worldwide losses to wheat production due to rapidly evolved tolerance to fungicides and evasion of
23 host resistance. We performed transcriptome-assisted annotations of each genome to construct a
24 global pangenome. Major chromosomal rearrangements are segregating within the species and
25 underlie extensive gene presence-absence variation. Conserved orthogroups account for only ~60% of
26 the species pangenome. Investigating gene functions, we find that the accessory genome is enriched
27 for pathogenesis-related functions and encodes genes involved in metabolite production, host tissue
28 degradation and manipulation of the immune system. *De novo* transposon annotation of the 19
29 complete genomes shows that the highly diverse chromosomal structure is tightly associated with
30 transposable elements content. Furthermore, transposable element expansions likely underlie recent
31 genome expansions within the species.

32 **Conclusions:** Taken together, our work establishes a highly complex eukaryotic pangenome
33 providing an unprecedented toolbox to study how pangenome structure impacts crop-pathogen
34 interactions.

35 **Background**

36

37 Microbial species harbor substantial functional diversity at the level of gene presence-absence
38 variation (Tettelin *et al.* 2008). Genes not fixed within a species (*i.e.* accessory genes) can account for
39 a large fraction of the full gene repertoire (*i.e.* the pangenome). In bacteria, the proportion of core
40 genes in the pangenome can range from 5-98% and challenge taxonomic classifications (Ramasamy
41 *et al.* 2014; Rouli *et al.* 2015). The wide spectrum of pangenome sizes across species can be
42 associated with the species distribution and lifestyle (McInerney *et al.* 2017). Species showing a wide
43 geographical distribution and large population sizes characterized by frequent genetic exchange tend
44 to have expansive, open pangenomes (Lefébure *et al.* 2010). In microbial pathogens, accessory genes
45 play a major role in virulence and environmental adaptation (Jackson *et al.* 2011; Sánchez-Vallet *et*
46 *al.* 2018a; Wu *et al.* 2018). The notion of a pangenome led to the discovery that major elements of
47 intra-specific variation are often ignored in studies relying on a single reference genome. Large
48 pangenomes also can challenge association studies aiming to identify the genetic basis of phenotypic
49 traits because mapping is often performed against a single reference genome, making potentially
50 relevant genetic variation inaccessible (Marschall *et al.* 2016; Sánchez-Vallet *et al.* 2018b). Despite
51 their importance for unravelling the genetic basis of adaptive evolution, only a very limited number of
52 eukaryotic species have well established pangenomes.

53

54 Copy number variation including gene deletion generates intraspecific gene content variation in
55 nearly all species (Schridder & Hahn 2010). This variation can create extreme variance in fitness and
56 promote adaptive evolution (Araki *et al.* 2006; Brynildsrud *et al.* 2016; Plissonneau *et al.* 2016a;
57 Hartmann *et al.* 2018). In plant pathogens, the ability to infect a host often relies on the secretion of
58 effector proteins that interfere with the host cell machinery (Wit De *et al.* 2009; Lo Presti *et al.* 2015;
59 Toruño *et al.* 2016). Host plants evolved cognate resistance proteins that are able to recognize effector
60 proteins and trigger immunity (Jones & Dangl 2006). Gains and losses of effector genes can therefore
61 have a major impact on the outcome of host-pathogen interactions and challenge food security.

62 Recent studies on fungal pathogens highlighted that genes showing presence-absence variation are
63 enriched for predicted effectors (Yoshida *et al.* 2016; Hartmann & Croll 2017; Hartmann *et al.* 2018).
64 Effectors and transposable elements (TEs) are often tightly associated with fast-evolving
65 compartments of the genome (Sperschneider *et al.* 2015; Faino *et al.* 2016), also known as the “two-
66 speed” genome architecture (Dong *et al.* 2015). However, how TEs impact the birth and death of
67 effectors in fast-evolving compartments remains largely unclear (Fouché *et al.* 2018a; Sánchez-Vallet
68 *et al.* 2018a). The construction of pathogen pangenomes enabled crucial insights into functional
69 diversity and the evolutionary trajectories of host adaptation. Recent pangenome analyses of four
70 fungal species including opportunistic pathogens revealed that between ~9-19% of the pangenome is
71 accessory. Accessory gene localization was preferentially in subtelomeric regions, suggesting both a
72 mechanistic link to repeat-rich regions and relaxation of selective constraints (McCarthy & Fitzpatrick
73 2019). The wheat pathogen *Zymoseptoria tritici* was found to have one of the largest eukaryotic
74 pangenomes with an estimate of at least 42% of all genes being accessory (Plissonneau *et al.* 2018).
75 However, eukaryotic pangenomes remain shallow and are often based on not fully resolved
76 chromosomal sequences.

77

78 Fungal plant pathogens such as *Z. tritici* show extreme cases of genome plasticity. The reference
79 genome of *Z. tritici* has 21 chromosomes, of which eight are accessory and segregate presence-
80 absence variation in populations (Goodwin *et al.* 2011). The pathogen rapidly evolved virulence on
81 resistant wheat cultivars and has overcome all current fungicides (Cools & Fraaije 2008; Lucas *et al.*
82 2015; Blake *et al.* 2018). Host adaptation was driven among other factors by the rapid deletion of an
83 effector gene and structural rearrangements (Hartmann *et al.* 2017; Krishnan *et al.* 2018; Meile *et al.*
84 2018). Pathogen populations are highly diverse with high rates of recombination (Croll *et al.* 2015;
85 Stukenbrock & Dutheil 2018; Grandaubert *et al.* 2019). Meiosis can trigger large chromosomal
86 rearrangements and lead to aneuploid chromosomes in the species (Croll *et al.* 2013; Fouché *et al.*
87 2018b). A pangenome constructed for five *Z. tritici* isolates revealed that chromosome length
88 variation segregating within populations was mainly due to the presence-absence variation of large
89 TE clusters (Plissonneau *et al.* 2016b, 2018). Furthermore, accessory genes tended to form clusters

90 dispersed along chromosomes. Accessory genes also tended to be in closer proximity to TEs than core
91 genes and were therefore more likely to be affected by epigenetic silencing (Plissonneau *et al.* 2018).
92 However, the constructed pangenome was very likely incomplete given the fact that four of the
93 genomes originated from isolates collected in the same year from two nearby fields. Furthermore,
94 accessory genes were enriched for pathogenesis-related functions but the pangenome size did not
95 reach saturation. Given the global impact of the pathogen and the importance of accessory genes for
96 adaptive evolution, a comprehensive pangenome capturing worldwide genetic diversity is essential.

97

98 In this study, we constructed the pangenome of *Z. tritici* by including 19 isolates sampled from six
99 different continents and covering the global distribution of the pathogen. We find major chromosomal
100 rearrangements segregating within the species together with extensive presence-absence variation for
101 a range of pathogenicity-related gene functions. We also found major shifts in the TE content across
102 the species. Our data represent the largest eukaryotic pangenome to date based on complete genome
103 assemblies, providing an unprecedented toolbox for the analysis of adaptive evolution of pathogens.

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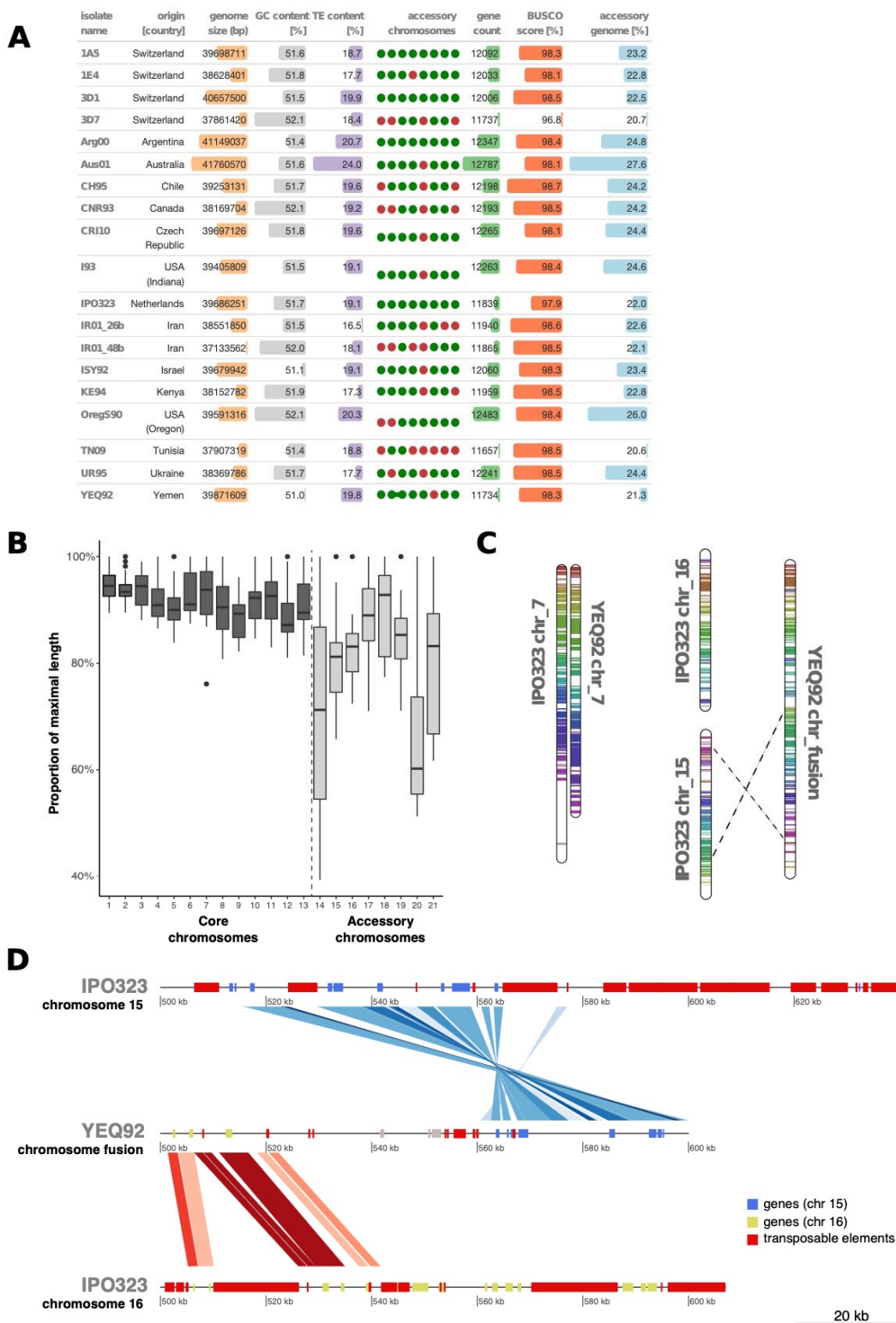
106 **Results**

107

108 **Major chromosomal rearrangements segregating within the species**

109 We constructed a global pangenome of *Z. tritici* based on 19 isolates sampled from six continents and
110 13 different countries (Figure 1A). The isolates included the previously described reference isolate
111 IPO323 sampled in the Netherlands and four isolates that were isolated from two nearby fields in
112 Switzerland (Goodwin *et al.* 2011; Plissonneau *et al.* 2016b, 2018). The geographic regions of origin
113 of the 19 isolates recapitulate a significant environmental gradient in mean annual temperature and
114 humidity and span the distribution range of the species. The sampling period ranges from 1984
115 (IPO323) to 2010 (CRI10). Fungicide applications against *Z. tritici* became widespread in the 90s and
116 early 2000s, hence the sampling covers both pre- and post-fungicide treatment regimes. We

117 sequenced long-read PacBio SMRTbell libraries to a depth of 40-110X and ~20 kb read coverage in
118 order to generate chromosome-level assemblies. Assembly sizes ranged from 37.13 Mb (IR01_48b) to
119 41.76 Mb (Aus01) (Figure 1A). We recovered all eight known accessory chromosomes of the species
120 but no additional chromosome. The accessory chromosome 18 is most often missing. Accessory
121 chromosomes display an average of ~37% size variation among isolates and a maximum of 60% for
122 chromosome 14 (Figure 1B). For core chromosomes, the average size variation accounts for 16% of
123 chromosome length going up to 23% for chromosome 7.



124

125 **Figure 1: Large segregating chromosomal rearrangements.** A. Summary of genome assembly
 126 characteristics for the 19 isolates. The bars represent the range of minimum to maximum values.
 127 Accessory chromosomes are shown from chromosome 14-21 with green dots for present and red dots

128 for missing chromosomes. The two linked dots for isolate YEQ92 represent a chromosomal fusion. **B.**
129 Chromosome size variation. **C.** Two large chromosomal rearrangements present in YEQ92. Colors
130 indicate macro-syntenic regions between YEQ92 and IPO323 chromosome homologs. The inversion
131 of chromosome 15 is represented by crossing dotted lines. **D.** Chromosomal fusion of 15 and 16
132 identified in YEQ92 and compared to the reference genome IPO323. Transposons are shown in red,
133 genes from chromosome 15 in purple, genes from chromosome 16 in green and genes specific to the
134 fusion in grey boxes, respectively. Inversions are shown in blue.

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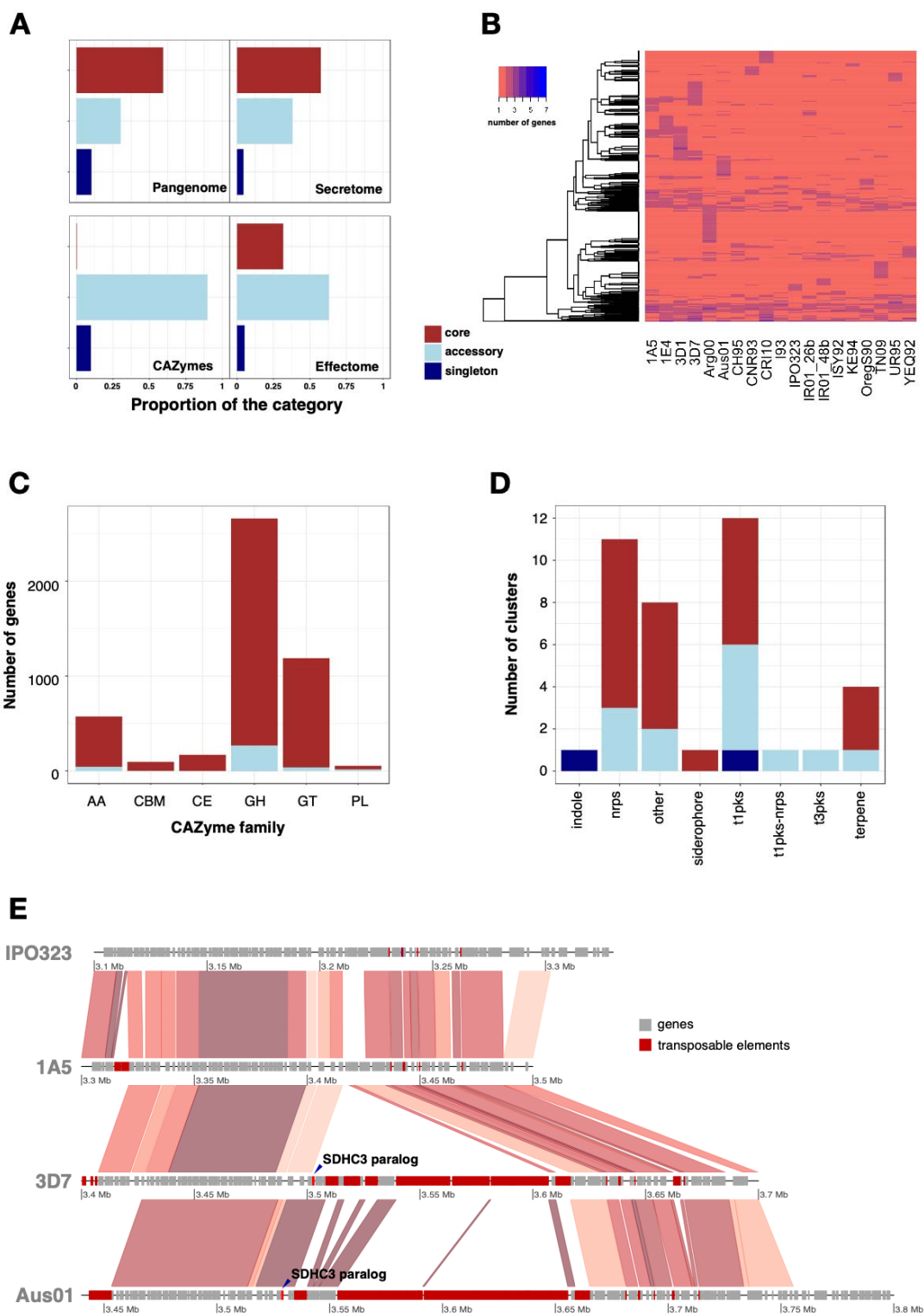
136 We identified a major deletion spanning 406 kb and encompassing 107 genes on the right arm of core
137 chromosome 7 of the Yemeni isolate (YEQ92; Figure 1C). The same isolate had chromosome 15
138 fused to the right arm of chromosome 16. The fusion event is supported by aligned PacBio reads
139 spanning the region between the two chromosomal segments (Figure S1). The resulting chromosome
140 is 1.20 Mb long and 49.5 kb shorter than the sum of the homologous chromosomes 15 and 16 of the
141 IPO323 reference genome. Approximately 90% of the genes on the IPO323 chromosome 15 and 16
142 belong to accessory orthogroups, as they lack an ortholog in at least one of the other isolates. We find
143 that the chromosomal fusion deleted about 150 kb affecting 1 and 12 genes on chromosomes 15 and
144 16, respectively (Figure 1D). We further assessed genome completeness using BUSCO analyses. All
145 genomes exceed the completeness of the fully finished IPO323 reference genome (97.9%) with the
146 exception of isolate 3D7 (96.8%; Figure 1A).

147

148 **Substantial gene content variation across the pangenome**

149 We generated RNAseq data to identify high-confidence gene models in all 14 newly assembled
150 genomes based on a splice-site informed gene prediction pipeline. The total gene count varied
151 between 11'657 and 12'787 gene models (Figure 1A). We assigned all genes to orthogroups using
152 protein homology and constructed a pangenome of all 19 complete genomes. The pangenome consists
153 of a total of 229'699 genes assigned to 15'474 orthogroups. The number of genes assigned per
154 orthogroup varies among isolates (Figure 2B). Approximately 99.8% of all orthogroups (15'451) are
155 single gene orthogroups and ~60% of all orthogroups are shared among all 19 isolates (9'193 core
156 orthogroups). Around 96% of the core orthogroups (8'829 out of 9'193) have conserved gene copy
157 numbers among isolates. Furthermore, we find that 30% of all orthogroups are shared between some

158 but not all genomes (4'690 accessory orthogroups) and 10% of the orthogroups are composed of
 159 genes found in a single genome only (1'592 singletons; Figure 2A-B; Supplementary Table 1).



161

162 **Figure 2: Pangenome diversification across gene categories.** **A.** Pangenome proportions across all
163 genes (upper-left), secreted (upper-right), carbohydrate-active enzymes (CAZymes; lower-left) and
164 effectors (lower-right). **B.** Gene copy number variation in core orthogroups across the 19 genomes. **C.**
165 Pangenome gene count across six CAZyme families. Families are divided into glycoside hydrolase
166 (GH), glycosyl transferase (GT), auxiliary activity (AA), carbohydrate esterase (CE), carbohydrate-
167 binding modules (CBM) and polysaccharide lyase activity (PL) categories. **D.** Pangenome categories
168 of secondary metabolite gene clusters.

169

170 To infect wheat, *Z. tritici* relies on specific gene functions (Steinberg 2015; Palma-Guerrero *et al.*
171 2017). Effectors play a major role in establishing infection and exploiting host resources. Hence, we
172 analysed how gene functions were structured across the pangenome components. Core orthogroups
173 showing variation in gene-copy number among isolates include five encoding predicted effectors.
174 Both accessory proteins and overall effector proteins are less conserved than core proteins at the
175 amino acid level (Supplementary Figure S2). A total of 3.5% (691) of all orthogroups encode at least
176 one predicted effector. Among orthogroups encoding at least one predicted effector, 31% were
177 conserved among all isolates (219), 63% were accessory (436) and 5% were found in only one isolate
178 (36 singletons). Notably, 99% of the predicted effector genes are located on core chromosomes. In
179 addition to effectors, enzymes enabling access to nutrients are important pathogenicity components.
180 We identified a total of 4742 annotated carbohydrate-degrading enzymes (CAZymes) clustered into
181 263 orthogroups. Notably, 92% of the orthogroups encoding CAZymes were conserved among all
182 isolates (Figure 2A). CAZymes grouped into 123 subfamilies. Glycoside hydrolases (GH) are the
183 largest family and account for 57% of all annotated CAZymes (151 orthogroups for 2717 genes).
184 Glycosyl transferases (GT) are the second most abundant family with 1188 genes and 66 orthogroups
185 (25% of all CAZymes) (Figure 2C). We also identified 33 orthogroups encoding for auxiliary
186 activities (AA), 9 for carbohydrate esterase activity (CE), 6 for carbohydrate-binding modules (CBM)
187 and 3 for polysaccharide lyase activity (PL). The PL family includes 29% accessory genes. Across
188 CAZyme families, 0-10% of the genes are accessory (Figure 2C). We found a singleton GH43
189 subfamily gene in the genome of the Australian isolate (Aus01).

190

191 The production of secondary metabolites contributes significantly to virulence and competitive
192 abilities of fungal pathogens. We identified between 29 and 33 secondary metabolite gene clusters per
193 genome depending on the isolate. A total of 70% of all genes predicted as components of a
194 biosynthetic gene cluster are conserved between all isolates and 30% are accessory (Figure 2D, Figure
195 S3). We identified 39 syntenic gene clusters in the pangenome classified into 12 type 1-polyketide
196 synthase (PKS), 11 non-ribosomal peptide synthetase (NRPS), four terpene, one type 3-PKS, one
197 siderophore, one indole and eight unclassified clusters. Sixteen (40%) of the identified syntenic
198 clusters show presence-absence variation. In the CH95 isolate, a gene cluster on chromosome 7 was
199 annotated as unclassified but annotated as a NRPS in 17 other isolates and absent from the IPO323
200 reference genome. The sole indole and type 1-PKS clusters located on chromosomes 5 and 10,
201 respectively, were only found in isolate TN09. Two type 1-PKS and one NRPS cluster were missing
202 in the isolates YEQ95, Aus01 and IPO323, respectively. Among the 39 identified syntenic gene
203 clusters, 23 included a predicted effector and nine included a gene annotated as a cell-wall degrading
204 enzyme.

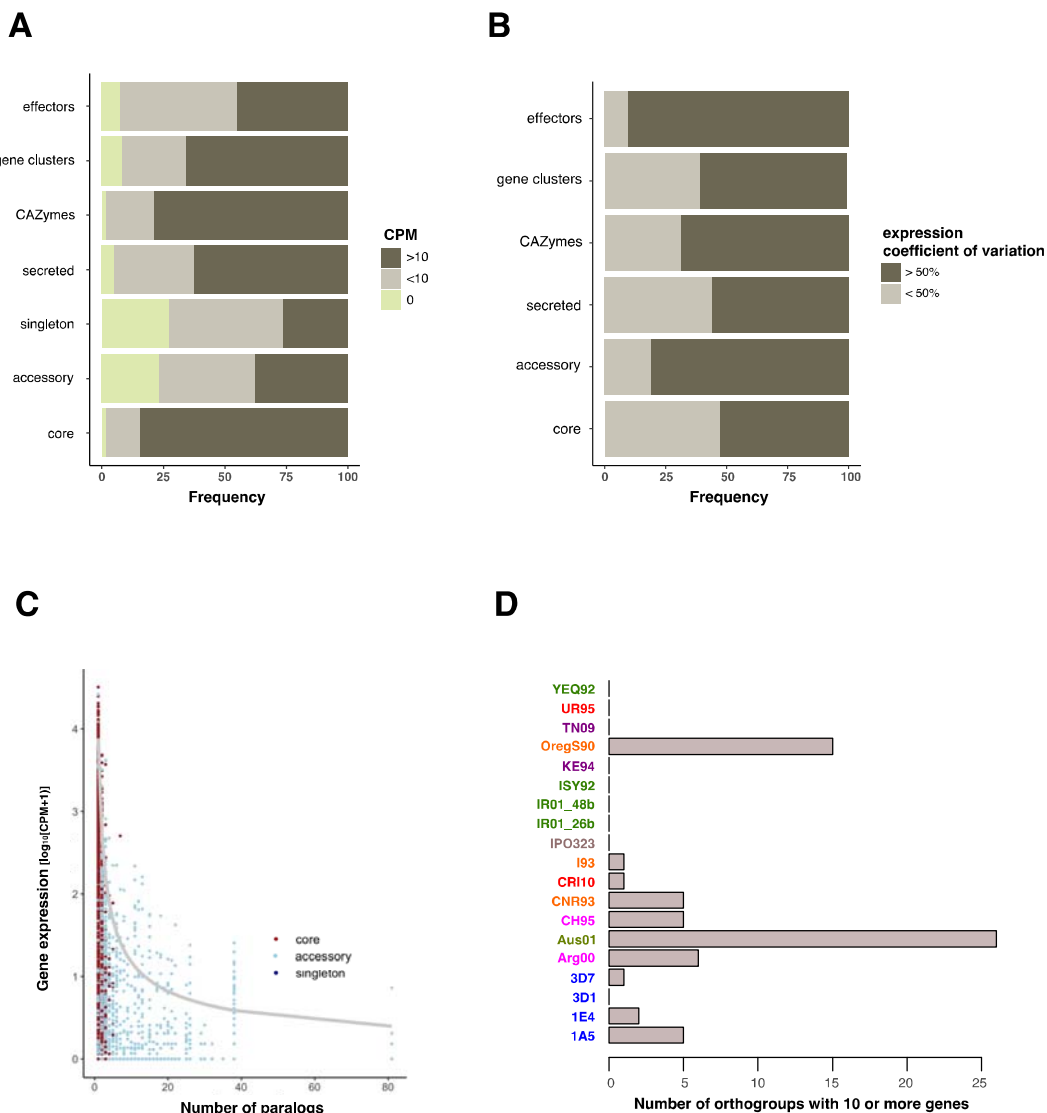
205

206 The emergence of fungicide tolerance in *Z. tritici* is a major threat to wheat production. Succinate
207 dehydrogenase (SDH) inhibitors are commonly used as control agents (Lucas *et al.* 2015; Steinhauer
208 *et al.* 2019). We identified five SDH orthologs, of which three were conserved among all genomes
209 (SDHB, SDHC and SDHD subunits). We find two distinct SDHC paralogs SDHC2 and SDHC3 in
210 eleven and two isolates, respectively. The SDHC3 paralog conferring standing resistance to SDH
211 inhibitors is located flanking a large cluster of TEs, suggesting that chromosomal rearrangements
212 were underlying the paralog emergence (Figure 2E). Genes encoding major facilitator superfamily
213 (MFS) transporters, which can confer multidrug resistance in *Z. tritici* (Omrane *et al.* 2017), grouped
214 into 336 orthogroups for a total of 5'787 genes (Supplementary Table 2). We find that 39 (11%) of
215 these orthogroups are part of a predicted secondary metabolite gene cluster and one is an annotated
216 CAZyme from the GH78 family. Overall, the results reveal that gene families essential for
217 pathogenicity and fungicide resistance show unexpectedly high levels of presence-absence variation
218 in the *Z. tritici* pangenome.

219

220 **Strong expression variation across major gene functions**

221 Differential gene expression is a major driver of intraspecific phenotypic differences. We performed
222 mRNA-sequencing of all 19 isolates grown on minimal media. Minimal media induces filamentous
223 growth of *Z. tritici*, mimicking the morphology and nutrient starvation that occurs early during plant
224 infection. We investigated isolate-specific gene expression by self-mapping RNAseq reads to each
225 isolate's genome assembly. Overall, 91.3% of the genes show expression on minimal media and 68%
226 have expression of more than 10 counts per million (CPM) (Figure 3A). Core genes have higher
227 expression than accessory genes (Figure S4). Among the genes showing no expression on minimal
228 media, 501 are predicted effector genes (8% of predicted effectors), 93 are predicted CAZymes (2%
229 of CAZymes) and 838 are members of a predicted gene cluster (10% of all gene cluster genes).
230 CAZymes are overall highly expressed on minimal media (~77% with CPM >10) when compared to
231 effectors (~45% with CPM >10) and gene cluster genes (~60% with CPM >10) (Figure 3A). About
232 53% of core single copy orthogroups with non-zero expression have a coefficient of variation >50%
233 (Figure 3B). Similarly, ~68% of CAZymes and ~60% of genes that are part of a secondary metabolite
234 cluster have expression coefficient of variation > 50%. In contrast, about 90% of orthogroups
235 encoding predicted effectors have a coefficient of variation >50%, together with ~81% of accessory
236 orthogroups.



237

238 **Figure 3: Expression polymorphism as a function of the pangenome.** **A.** Proportion of genes
 239 showing expression >10 counts per million (CPM) across genes categories. **B.** Proportion of
 240 orthogroups for which the expression coefficient of variation is >50% [$cov = sd(CPM) / mean$
 241 (CPM)] among different gene categories. As is (A) we show results for orthogroups with annotated
 242 effectors, secondary metabolite cluster genes (gene cluster), carbohydrate-active enzymes
 243 (CAZymes), secreted genes, or annotated as singleton, accessory and core in the pangenome. **C.**
 244 Variation of single gene expression with the number of paralogs per genome. The grey line shows the
 245 logarithmic regression calculated as the linear model $\log_{10}(CPM+1) \sim \log_{10}(\text{number of paralogs})$. **D.**
 246 Number of orthogroups with 10 or more paralogs per genome. Isolates are colored by continent of
 247 origin.

248

249

250 To identify broad patterns in the pangenome expression landscape, we performed a clustering analysis

251 of all core single gene orthogroups. We find that expression clustering does not reflect the

252 geographical origin or genetic distance with the exception of the four Swiss isolates (1A5, 1E4, 3D1
253 and 3D7; Figure S5). We also analysed the impact of copy-number variation on average expression
254 and find that single-copy orthologs are on average more highly expressed. In addition, we show that
255 gene expression rapidly decreases if an orthogroup includes 2-8 paralogs (Figure 3C).

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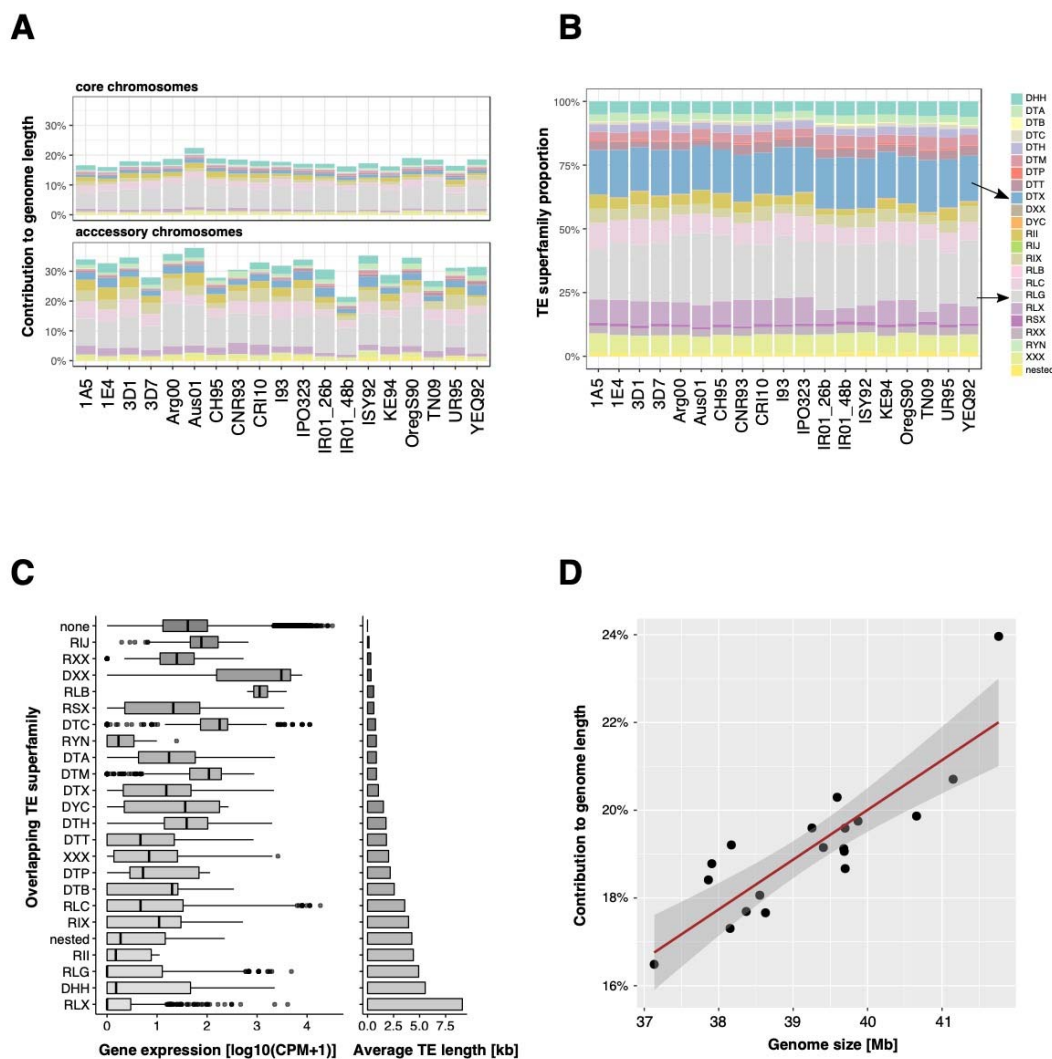
257 **A highly variable transposable element content within the species**

258 TEs are drivers of pathogen evolution by generating adaptive genetic variation. To identify genes with
259 a potential role in the mobilisation of TEs, we analysed large homology groups. Among the
260 orthogroups with 10 or more paralogs, ~88% of the genes encode proteins without homology in
261 databases, ~7% of the genes encode nucleic acid binding functions (GO:0003676), ~2% of the genes
262 encode a retrotransposon nucleocapsid (GO:0000943) and ~1.5% of the genes encode a DNA
263 integration domain (GO:0015074). Orthogroups with 10 or more paralogs are all accessory. For
264 isolates sharing the same large orthogroups, we identified variability in the gene copy number within
265 those orthogroups. Indeed, the isolates Aus01 and OregS90 have 26 and 16 orthogroups, respectively,
266 with more than 10 assigned genes. The isolates I93 and Arg00 count between one and six orthogroups
267 and nine other isolates have no orthogroups larger than ten genes (Figure 3D). Altogether, these
268 results show that large orthogroups (>10 genes) essentially regroup genes that belong to TEs. Our data
269 also indicates regional TE-driven genome expansions given the enlarged genome sizes in Australian
270 and North American isolates.

271

272 To elucidate the role of transposition on generating genomic variation, we screened the 19 genomes
273 for TE content. For this, we jointly analysed all complete genomes to exhaustively identify repetitive
274 DNA sequences. We identified a total of 304 high-quality TE family consensus sequences grouped
275 into 22 TE superfamilies. The GC-content of the consensus sequences is highly variable, ranging from
276 23-77% (Figure S6). On average, TE superfamilies have a GC-content lower than 50%, except for
277 unclassified SINE families (RSX; GC% ~50.6). The genomic TE content ranges from 16.48%
278 (IR01_26b) to 23.96% (Aus01) and is positively correlated with genome size ($cor = 0.78, p < 0.001$;
279 Figure 4D). Genome size correlates with genome-wide TE proportions on both core and accessory

280 chromosomes but is negatively correlated with the proportion of coding sequences (Figure S7, S8).
 281 The average length of individual TEs ranges from 102 to 51'298 bp (Figure S9). The largest element
 282 is an unclassified LTR (RLX_LARD_Thym) on chromosome 7, the size of which ranges from 6'282
 283 bp in CNR93 to 59'390 bp in ISY92. This particular LTR is present at the locus only in 18 isolates
 284 including ISY92, which has a fragmented secondary copy on chromosome 3. The
 285 RLX_LARD_Thym insertion on chromosome 7 overlaps with the ribosomal DNA locus and showed
 286 far above average mapped PacBio read coverage (~250X).



287

288 **Figure 4: Transposable elements (TEs) contribute to *Z. tritici* genome size variation.** A.
 289 Percentage of the core and accessory genomes covered by TEs across the 19 genomes. B. Relative
 290 frequency of the 23 TE superfamilies across all genomes. C. Relative impact of TE superfamilies on

291 genes affected by TE insertions (\log_{10} CPM+1; left panel) and as a function of TE mean length (right
292 panel). **D.** Correlation of genome-wide TE proportions with total genome size.

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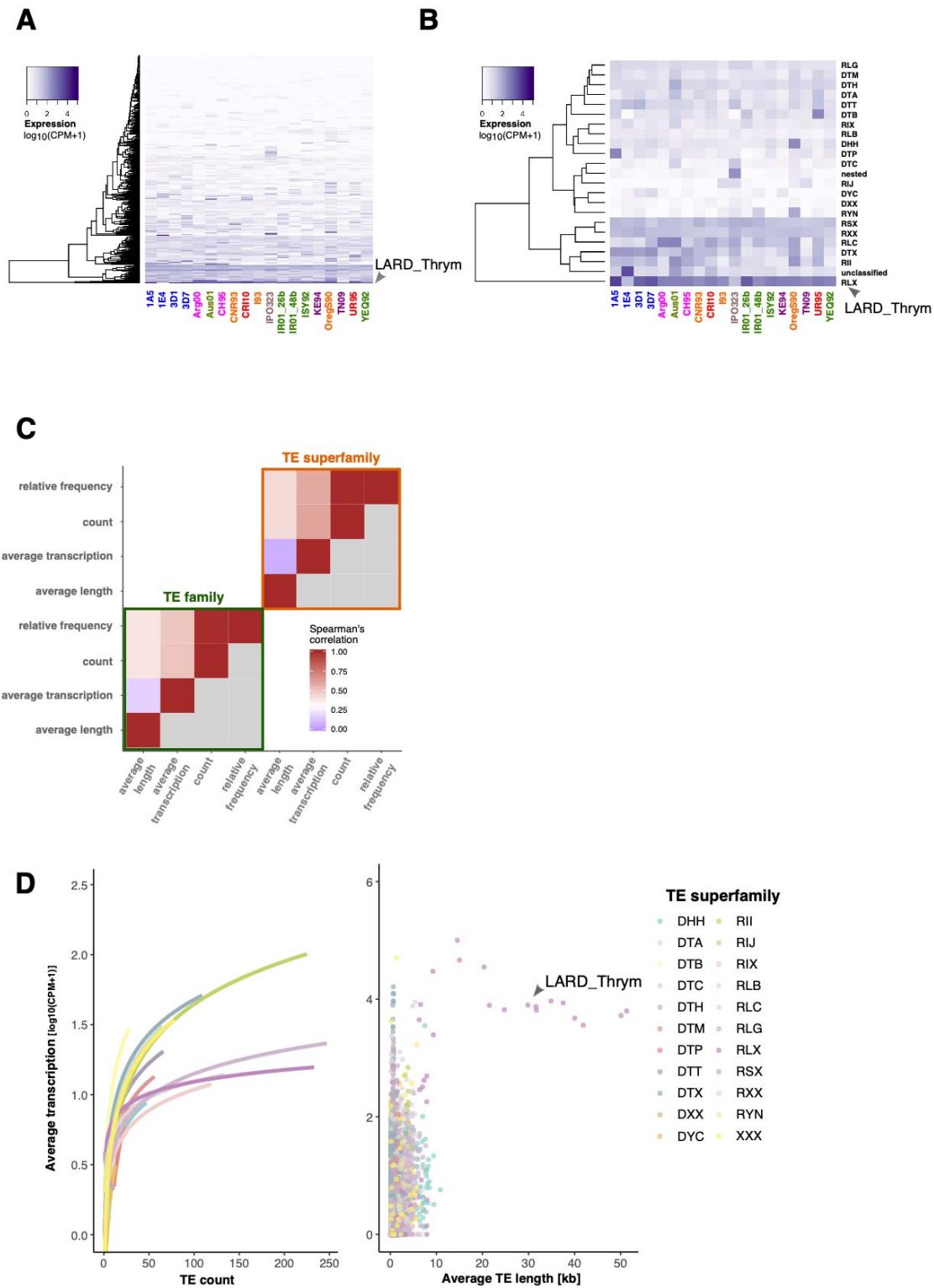
294 The genome-wide content of TEs shows substantial variation among the 19 isolates, however the
295 relative abundance of different TE superfamilies is relatively conserved with LTR *Gypsy*, unclassified
296 TIR and LTR *Copia* elements being the most frequent (Figure 4A-B). Accessory chromosomes
297 contain consistently higher proportions of TEs compared to core chromosomes (26-41% versus 17-
298 24%; Figure 4A). Aus01 and OregS90 isolates showed the highest TE content. Interestingly, the
299 Aus01 genome shows LINE *I*, LTR *Gypsy* and LTR *Copia* family-specific expansion compared to
300 other genomes. In contrast, the genome of OregS90 shows evidence for expansions of Helitron, LTR
301 *Gypsy* and LTR *Copia* families. On average, 10% of all TEs overlap with genes. Overall, singleton
302 and accessory genes tend to be closer to TEs and contain more often TE insertions than core genes
303 (Figure S11-S12). The isolates Aus01 and OregS90 have 12.8% and 12.4% of all TEs overlapping
304 with genes, respectively. In addition, Aus01 and OregS90 isolates have 7.4% and 5.4% of all genes
305 that overlap with TEs, respectively (Figure S13). The composition of TEs inserted into genes reflects
306 the overall TE composition in the genome, with more abundant TEs being more often inserted into
307 genes (Figure S14). TEs can carry their own regulatory sequences and are often epigenetically
308 silenced by the host. We found that orthogroups comprising a gene within 100 bp distance of a TE
309 show stronger expression variation (~62% of orthogroups with a coefficient of variation >50%)
310 compared to other orthogroups (~54% of orthogroups with a coefficient of variation >50%) (Figure
311 S15). We also found that different TE superfamilies have contrasting effects on gene expression, with
312 longer TEs having more drastic effects (Figure 4C). On average, genes with an inserted TE have
313 lower expression levels (\log_{10} CPM ~1.7-fold) and a higher coefficient of variation (\log_{10} CPM ~2-
314 fold) compared to genes without an inserted TE (Figure S16).

315

316 **TE transcription correlates with relative frequency across isolates**

317 Class I TEs replicate through an RNA intermediate and class II through a DNA intermediate.
318 Nevertheless, class II TEs can also transcribe into RNA. To gain insights into the mechanisms of
319 proliferation, we analysed the relative abundance of TE-derived transcripts across all genomes. The

320 highly repetitive nature of TEs typically prevents expression quantification at the individual copy
321 level. Hence, we focused on normalized TE expression across all copies. Overall, more than 70% of
322 the TE families have non-zero transcription levels. We find that the largest TE family, an unclassified
323 LTR identified as RLX_LARD_Thrym, was the most transcribed with an average \log_{10} CPM ~ 4.2
324 (Figure 5A). An unclassified DTX-MITE is the second most transcribed TE with an average \log_{10}
325 CPM ~ 3.6 followed by an unclassified TE (*XXX_Hermione* with an average \log_{10} CPM ~ 3.4). At
326 the superfamily level, LINES have the highest expression overall followed by the aggregation of
327 unclassified TEs (Figure 5B). Retroelements are more transcribed than DNA transposons (average
328 \log_{10} CPM ~ 2 and 1.2 , respectively).



329

330 **Figure 5: Transcriptional activity of transposable elements (TEs) and TE copy numbers.** **A.** TE
 331 family transcription levels across all 19 genomes expressed as \log_{10} (CPM +1). **B.** Average
 332 transcription levels of the 23 TE superfamilies across all genomes (average \log_{10} (CPM +1)). **C.**

333 Spearman's correlation matrix of four metrics (TE count, TE relative frequency, TE average length
334 and transcription) at the TE family and superfamily level. **D.** Variation of TE transcription (average
335 \log_{10} (CPM +1)) as a function of TE count (left panel) or TE average length (right panel). Curves in
336 the left panel show the logarithmic linear regression given by the linear model \log_{10} (CPM+1) \sim \log_{10}
337 (TE count). The large highly expressed LARD_Thrym family (RLX) is highlighted by arrowheads in
338 panels A, B, and D (right side).
339

340 To understand TE expression dynamics across the pangenome, we investigated associations between
341 TE transcription, length and frequency (Figure 5C). We found TE transcription to be highly correlated
342 with TE frequency in the genomes (Spearman's $r = 0.49$, $p < 5e-307$) and a weaker correlation at the
343 TE superfamily level (Spearman's $r = 0.1$, $p < 5e-13$). Furthermore, TE transcription is negatively
344 correlated with TE length at the superfamily level (Spearman's $r = -0.4$, $p < 1e-187$; Figure 5D).
345 Interestingly, the average TE superfamily transcription levels are positively correlated with the
346 frequency of the TE superfamily in the genome (Figure 5D). A notable exception is unclassified SINE
347 retroelements. The correlation of TE transcription levels and TE frequency in the genome strongly
348 suggests that transcriptional activity contributed to recent TE expansions in the genome.

349

350

351 **Discussion**

352

353 We established a global pangenome of a major fungal wheat pathogen based on the assembly and
354 analysis of 19 high-quality genomes. *Z. tritici* segregates major chromosomal rearrangements
355 affecting both the more conserved core chromosomes as well as the highly polymorphic accessory
356 chromosomes. The gene content is highly variable among genomes with only 60% of all genes being
357 conserved in the species. Accessory genes encode functions for a wide variety of interactions with
358 both biotic and abiotic environments. An exhaustive map of TEs across all genomes pinpoints
359 transposon-associated genome expansions across geographic regions.

360

361 We showed that the *Z. tritici* pangenome is expansive with ~40% accessory orthogroups. Compared
362 to a previous construction of the *Z. tritici* pangenome based on genomes from a much narrower

363 geographic breadth (Plissonneau *et al.* 2018), we used more relaxed criteria to assign genes into
364 orthogroups. Based on the tendency to assign more divergent gene variants into the same orthogroup,
365 we recovered a total of 911 orthogroups with at least one paralog compared to only 76 identified
366 previously. The number of paralogs remains low compared to species with larger genomes that
367 retained more paralogs of gene duplication events (Goodwin *et al.* 2011). A likely constraint on gene
368 duplication is the genomic defence mechanism that introduces repeat-induced point (RIP) mutations
369 (Selker 2002). Although these defences evolved to suppress transpositional activity of TEs, they can
370 also affect genome evolution by targeting gene duplicates (Selker 2002; Galagan & Selker 2004).
371 Recent sequencing efforts oriented around important crop species reported impressively large
372 accessory genome proportions (Hirsch *et al.* 2014; Zhou *et al.* 2017; Zhao *et al.* 2018). However,
373 nearly all eukaryotic pangenomes are partially based on short-read assemblies that challenge the
374 resolution of segregating gene variants within a species. With the conservative estimate of ~24% non-
375 reference orthogroups, the *Z. tritici* accessory genome is the largest reported for a fungal species to
376 date (~40% of the pangenome). This falls outside the upper range of comparative analyses of human
377 fungal pathogens and *S. cerevisiae*, where estimates of the accessory genome ranged from 10-20%
378 (McCarthy & Fitzpatrick 2019). However, bacterial accessory genomes can range from 0 to 95% of
379 the total pangenome (Rouli *et al.* 2015). The effective population size of a species, its lifestyle, and
380 niche heterogeneity are main factors influencing bacterial pangenome sizes (McInerney *et al.* 2017).
381 Similar to bacteria, the effective population size is likely to be the major factor maintaining a large
382 accessory genome in *Z. tritici*. Previous studies identified *Z. tritici* as a highly polymorphic species
383 with a rapid decay in linkage disequilibrium, high SNP densities and high recombination rates (Croll
384 *et al.* 2015; Hartmann *et al.* 2017). As a consequence, the pathogen likely retains significant
385 functional variation within populations as long as the variation is nearly neutral.

386

387 Bacterial and fungal genomes show clear functional compartmentalization between core and
388 accessory genes (McInerney *et al.* 2017; McCarthy & Fitzpatrick 2019). In fungi, core orthogroups
389 are enriched for housekeeping functions in contrast to an enrichment for antimicrobial resistance and
390 pathogenicity factors among accessory genes (Plissonneau *et al.* 2018). Here we show that genes

391 encoding carbohydrate-active enzymes (CAZymes) are highly conserved within the species.
392 CAZymes are involved in the degradation of the host cell wall and other storage compounds (Zerillo
393 *et al.* 2013; Lyu *et al.* 2015). Strong conservation of the content in CAZymes may reflect a
394 fundamental adaptation to wheat as a host plant. This contrasts with generalist pathogens, which often
395 evolved larger CAZyme repertoires (Zhao *et al.* 2013). In contrast to CAZymes, secondary metabolite
396 gene clusters show substantial presence-absence variation within the species. Fungi produce highly
397 diverse secondary metabolites that play a role during various life cycle stages, but often have poorly
398 understood functions (Calvo *et al.* 2002). Plant pathogens were also shown to depend on secondary
399 metabolite production for full virulence (Pusztahelyi *et al.* 2015). Hence, variation in secondary
400 metabolite production may underlie variation in virulence. Species from the genus *Aspergillus*
401 produce a large diversity of secondary metabolites for which the gene clusters often segregate
402 presence-absence (Kjærboelling *et al.* 2018; Raffa & Keller 2019). The *Z. tritici* pangenome was
403 constructed from isolates coming from six different continents and a wide array of agricultural
404 environments. Hence, differences in secondary metabolite production capacity may reflect local
405 adaptation and trade-offs that balance the cost of metabolite production. Virulence of *Z. tritici* is
406 thought to be largely governed by gene-for-gene interactions (Brown *et al.* 2015). In such interactions
407 effector proteins either promote disease or are recognized by the host and trigger resistance (Jones &
408 Dangl 2006). A gene encoding a recognized effector should therefore be rapidly eliminated from the
409 species gene pool. *Z. tritici* populations responded rapidly to selection on effector gene loci by either
410 mutating, deleting or silencing genes (Hartmann & Croll 2017; Krishnan *et al.* 2018; Meile *et al.*
411 2018). Our global pangenome analysis significantly expands our understanding of effector gene
412 diversification. We identified 652 orthogroups encoding predicted effector functions of which 63%
413 are accessory orthogroups. Accessory effector genes may be involved in arms races with strong
414 selection driving the gain or loss of individual effector genes in populations. As a contrast, we
415 identified 45 conserved and highly expressed effectors genes potentially encoding indispensable
416 pathogenicity functions.
417

418 Ultimate mechanisms generating pangenomes may include large population sizes and niche
419 complexity, however the proximate mechanisms generating pangenome diversification are poorly
420 understood. TEs can be key drivers generating structural variation (Beck *et al.* 2011; Kim *et al.* 2019)
421 and *Z. tritici* readily undergoes TE-mediated chromosomal rearrangements during meiosis (Croll *et al.*
422 2013; Fouché *et al.* 2018b). Here we show that *Z. tritici* genomes contain 16-24% TEs, with the
423 overall proportion of TEs accounting for ~70% of the intraspecific genome size variation. Hence, TEs
424 are key drivers of genome evolution in this species. Among the most drastic chromosomal
425 rearrangements, we detected a significantly shorter chromosome 7 homolog. The longer homolog was
426 hypothesized to have originated from a fusion with an accessory chromosome based on evidence from
427 large scale epigenetic remodelling (Schotanus *et al.* 2015). Our analysis likely identified the ancestral
428 variant prior to the suspected chromosomal fusion event. Hence, the species retained two major
429 chromosomal variants of a core chromosome.

430

431 TEs are often implicated in gene copy number variation through duplication or pseudogenisation
432 events suggesting that TEs directly contribute to pangenome diversification. We show that specific
433 *Gypsy* and *Helitron* elements were integrated into genes generating highly paralogous orthogroups.
434 These orthogroups may underlie recent expansions of specific TEs in the genomes of Australian and
435 Oregon isolates. The *Helitron* element is among the most transcribed TEs in the Oregon isolate,
436 suggesting a high potential for new transpositions. In contrast, the *Gypsy* element is only weakly
437 transcribed in the Australian isolate, suggesting that this TE has become deactivated by genomic
438 defences. In addition to transpositional activity causing loss-of-function mutations in genes, TEs can
439 also contribute to genome expansions (Naville *et al.* 2019). We found a strong correlation of overall
440 TE content and genome size across the analysed genomes. Intra-specific variation in genome size is
441 unexpected. However, local population bottlenecks could lead to changes in mean genome sizes given
442 the large structural variation segregating among isolates. Hence, the population history might have
443 impacted genome size evolution. Populations in Australia underwent a significant founder event
444 during the recent colonization of the continent (Zhan *et al.* 2005). Hence, our observation of an
445 expanded Australian genome may be causally linked to this bottleneck. Genome expansions may also

446 be triggered by TE activation through mobilisation triggered by stressors such as host infections
447 (Fouché *et al.* 2019b). Taken together, TE dynamics and large effective population sizes likely
448 constitute the proximate and ultimate drivers of pangenome size evolution. Understanding the birth
449 and death cycles of gene functions in such evolving pangenomes will help address major questions
450 related to crop-pathogen co-evolution.

451 **Methods**

452

453 **High molecular-weight DNA extraction and single molecule real-time (SMRT) sequencing**

454 Origin and year of sampling of all the isolates are described in Figure 1. High-molecular-weight DNA
455 was extracted from lyophilized spores following a modified version of a cetyltrimethylammonium
456 bromide (CTAB) protocol developed for plant tissue described in (Plissonneau *et al.* 2016b). Briefly,
457 ~100 mg of lyophilized spores were crushed with a mortar and transferred to a phenol-chloroform-
458 isoamyl alcohol solution. The supernatant was centrifuged and the pellet resuspended twice in fresh
459 phenol-chloroform-isoamyl alcohol. The resulting pellet was then washed three times and
460 resuspended in 100 μ l of sterile water. For each isolate, PacBio SMRTbell libraries were prepared
461 using between 15 μ g and 30 μ g of high molecular-weight DNA. Sequencing was performed on a
462 PacBio Sequel instrument at the Functional Genomics Center, Zürich, Switzerland.

463

464 **Complete genome assemblies**

465 We largely followed the pipeline described in (Yue & Liti 2018). In summary, raw PacBio
466 sequencing reads were assembled using *Canu* v1.7.1 (Koren *et al.* 2017). All assemblies were
467 performed with an estimated genomeSize of 39.678 Mb. Two correctedErrorRate (0.045 and 0.039)
468 and minReadLength (500 and 5000) were tested and the most contiguous chromosome-level
469 assemblies were retained for further analysis based on reference alignment. Reads were aligned to the
470 obtained assemblies using *pballign* v0.3.1 from Pacific Biosciences suite
471 (<https://github.com/PacificBiosciences/pballign>). The assemblies were polished twice using the
472 software *Arrow* v2.2.2 from the Pacific Biosciences suite with default settings
473 (<https://github.com/PacificBiosciences/GenomicConsensus>) and chromosome-level assemblies were
474 performed using *Ragout* v2.1.1 (Kolmogorov *et al.* 2014).

475

476 **RNA extraction, library preparation, sequencing and quantification**

477 For isolates 1A5, 1E4, 3D1 and 3D7, RNA sequencing experiments on minimal media were
478 performed by (Fouché *et al.* 2019a; Francisco *et al.* 2019). Raw reads were retrieved from the NCBI
479 Short Read Archive accession number SRP077418. Similarly, the 15 additional fungal isolates (Table
480 S1) were grown in YSB media (10g sucrose + 10g yeast extract per liter) and then 10e5 cells were
481 inoculated on liquid minimal media without a carbon source (Metzenberg 2003) for 7-10 days prior to
482 extraction. RNA was extracted using a NucleoSpin® RNA Plant kit following the manufacturer's
483 instructions. Library preparation was carried out according to the Illumina TruSeq Stranded mRNA
484 Library Prep protocol with unique indexes for each sample. Single-end 100-bp sequencing was
485 performed on a HiSeq 4000 at the iGE3 platform in Geneva, Switzerland. RNA-seq reads were first
486 filtered using Trimmomatic v0.38 (Bolger *et al.* 2014) using the following parameters:
487 ILLUMINACLIP:TruSeq3-SE.fa: 2:30:10 LEADING:10 TRAILING:10 SLIDINGWINDOW:5:10
488 MINLEN: 50, and then aligned to the corresponding genome assembly using STAR v2.6.0a (Dobin *et*
489 *al.* 2013) allowing for multiple read mapping (parameters set as --outFilterMultimapNmax 100 --
490 winAnchorMultimapNmax 200 --outFilterMismatchNmax 3). We used HTSeq-count v0.11.2 (Anders
491 *et al.* 2015) with -s reverse and -m union parameters to recover counts per feature (joint counting of
492 reads in genes and TEs). We calculated normalized feature counts expressed as counts per million
493 using the EdgeR package v3.24.3 (Robinson *et al.* 2010). We restricted our analyses to features with a
494 count per million >1.

495

496 **Gene prediction and genome annotation**

497 We used the gene prediction pipeline BRAKER v2.1 to predict genes in the 14 newly assembled
498 genomes (Altschul *et al.* 1990; Stanke *et al.* 2006, 2008; Camacho *et al.* 2009; Li *et al.* 2009; Barnett
499 *et al.* 2011; Lomsadze *et al.* 2014; Hoff *et al.* 2016). BRAKER combines coding sequence and intron
500 hints based on the mapping of conserved protein sequences and introns identified in RNA-seq data,
501 respectively. The above described RNA-seq datasets were joined with predicted protein sequences
502 from the reference isolate IPO323 (Goodwin *et al.* 2011) and used to predict gene features and guide
503 splice site mapping. RNA alignment files were generated with HISAT2 v2.1.0 using the --rna-
504 strandness R option (Kim *et al.* 2015). The resulting bam files were provided to BRAKER (--bam

505 option) together with mapped IPO323 reference proteins (--prot_seq option) to generate gene
506 predictions for each assembled genome using the --alternatives-from-evidence=false --prg=gth --
507 etpmode --fungus parameters. Orthologous genes were identified using protein sequences from all 19
508 isolates and Orthofinder v2.1.2 with default parameters (Emms & Kelly 2015, 2019).

509

510 **TE consensus identification, classification and annotation**

511 To obtain consensus sequences for TE families, individual runs of RepeatModeler were performed on
512 the 19 complete genomes in addition to the genome of *Z. pseudotritici* (REF Stukenbrock et al 2010
513 PLOS Genetics). The classification was based on the GIRI Repbase using RepeatMasker (Bao *et al.*
514 2015; Smit, AFA, Hubley, R & Green 2015). In order to finalize the classification of TE consensus
515 sequences, we used WICKERsoft (Breen *et al.* 2010). The 19 complete genomes were screened for
516 copies of consensus sequences with blastn filtering for sequence identity of > 80% on >80% of the
517 length of the sequence (Altschul *et al.* 1997). Flanks of 300 bp were added and new multiple sequence
518 alignments were performed using ClustalW (G Higgins & M Sharp 1988). Boundaries were visually
519 inspected and trimmed if necessary. Consensus sequences were classified according to the presence
520 and type of terminal repeats and homology of encoded proteins using hints from blastx on NCBI.
521 Consensus sequences were renamed according to a three-letter classification system (Wicker *et al.*
522 2007).

523

524 A second round of annotation was performed based on predicted protein sequences of TE
525 superfamilies from other fungal species. Here again, the 19 complete genomes were screened for a
526 protein sequence of each superfamily using tblastn. Blast hits were filtered for a minimal alignment
527 size of 80 bp and sequence similarity >35%. Flanks of 3'000 bp or more both up and downstream of
528 the sequence were then added. Hits were pairwise compared with dotplots using dotter and grouped
529 into families based on visual inspection (Sonnhammer & Durbin 1995). Finally, multiple sequence
530 alignments were performed with ClustalW to construct consensus sequences and the consensus
531 sequences were renamed according to the three-letter system (Wicker *et al.* 2007).

532

533 A third round of annotation of the 19 complete genomes was done to identify four groups of short
534 non-autonomous TEs. LTR-Finder was used to screen for LARDs (LArge Retrotransposon Derivates)
535 and TRIMs (Terminal Repeat retrotransposons In Miniature) with the filters -d 2001 -D 6000 -l 30 -L
536 5000 and -d 30 -D 2000 -l 30 -L 500 respectively. MITE-Tracker was used to screen for MITEs
537 (Miniature Inverted-repeat Transposable Elements) and SINE-Finder in Sine-Scan to screen for
538 SINEs (Short Interspersed Nuclear Elements) (Xu & Wang 2007; Wenke *et al.* 2011; Ma *et al.* 2015;
539 Gao *et al.* 2016; Mao & Wang 2017; Crescente *et al.* 2018). For each detected LARD, TRIM and
540 SINE, consensus sequences were created as described above and duplicates excluded. All genome
541 assemblies were then annotated with the curated consensus sequences using RepeatMasker with a cut-
542 off value of 250 and ignored simple repeats as well as low complexity regions. Annotated elements
543 shorter than 100 bp were filtered out, and adjacent identical TEs overlapping by more than 100 bp
544 were merged. Different TE families overlapping by more than 100 bp were considered as *nested*
545 insertions and were renamed accordingly. Identical elements separated by less than 200 bp indicative
546 of putative interrupted elements were grouped into a single element using minimal start and maximal
547 stop positions. TEs overlapping ≥ 1 bp with genes were recovered using the *bedtools* v2.27.1 suite and
548 the *overlap* function (Quinlan & Hall 2010). Correlations were calculated in RStudio version 1.1.453
549 using Spearman's coefficient for pairwise complete observations and statistics were inferred with the
550 *psych* package using the Holm correction method (Revelle 2017).

551

552 **Functional annotation of predicted genes**

553 Protein functions were predicted for all gene models using InterProScan v 5.31-70.0 (Jones *et al.*
554 2014) adding -goterms -iprlookup and -pathway information. Secretion peptides and transmembrane
555 domains (TM) were identified using SignalP v 4.1 and Phobius (Käll *et al.* 2004; Petersen *et al.*
556 2011). The secretome was defined as the set of proteins with a signal peptide but no TM as predicted
557 by either SignalP and Phobius. Putative effectors were identified with EffectorP v 2.0 with default
558 parameters using the set of predicted secreted proteins (Sperschneider *et al.* 2016). Carbohydrate-
559 active enzymes (CAZymes) were identified using dbCAN2 release 7.0 server (Lombard *et al.* 2014;
560 Zhang *et al.* 2018) with the three tools HMMER, DIAMOND and Hotpep (Finn *et al.* 2011; Buchfink

561 *et al.* 2015; Busk *et al.* 2017). Proteins were classified as a CAZyme if predicted by each of the three
562 tools. We searched for secondary metabolite gene clusters using the online version 4 of antiSMASH
563 (Blin *et al.* 2017). Genes belonging to an identified cluster were annotated as “biosynthetic”,
564 “biosynthetic-additional”, “transport”, “regulatory” or “other”. Gene clusters mapping at a conserved,
565 orthologous locus shared by two or more isolate were considered as syntenic.

566

567 **Declarations**

568 *Ethics approval and consent to participate:* n/a

569 *Consent for publication:* n/a

570 *Availability of data and materials:* The genome assembly and annotation for new genome assemblies
571 are available at the European Nucleotide Archive (<http://www.ebi.ac.uk/ena>) under accession number
572 PRJEB33986. The RNA-sequencing raw sequencing data was deposited at the NCBI Short Read
573 Archive under the accession number PRJNA559981.

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584

585

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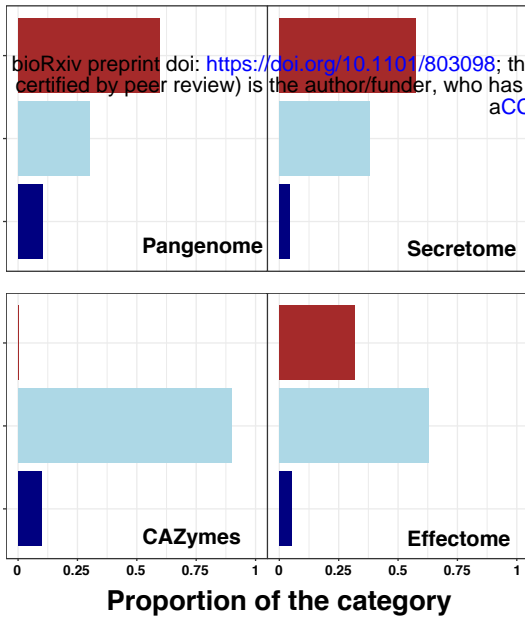
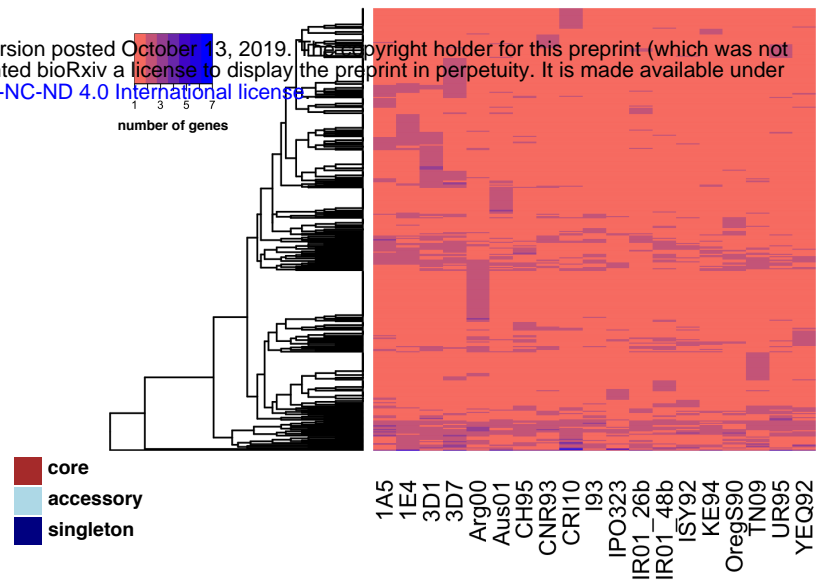
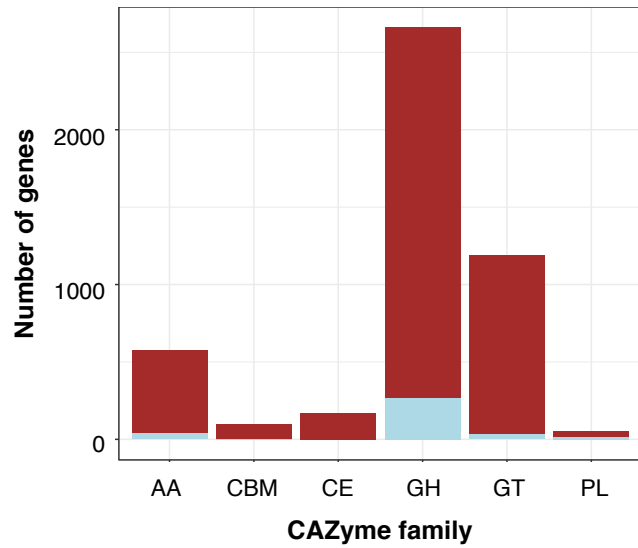
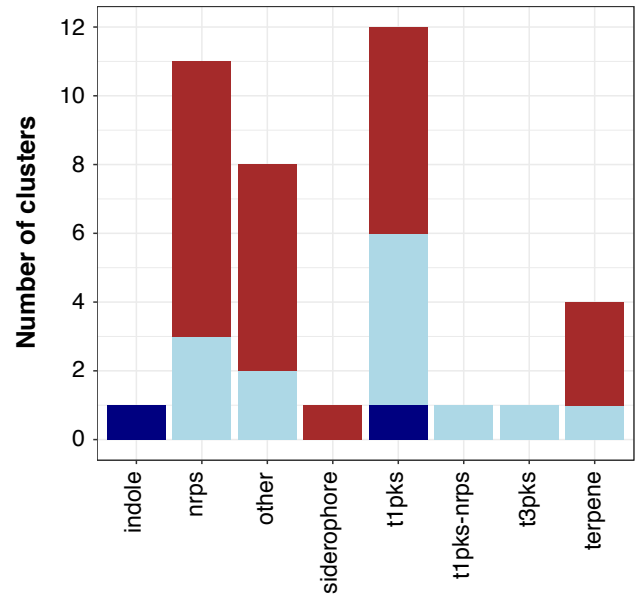
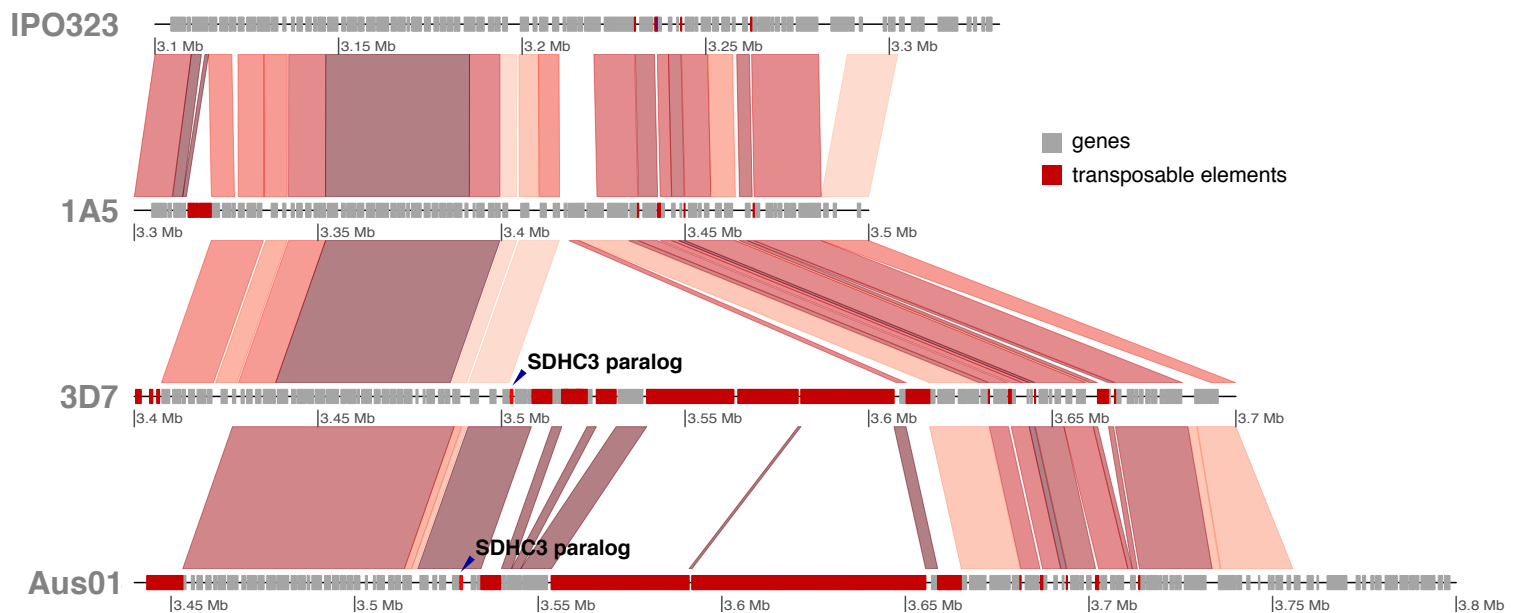
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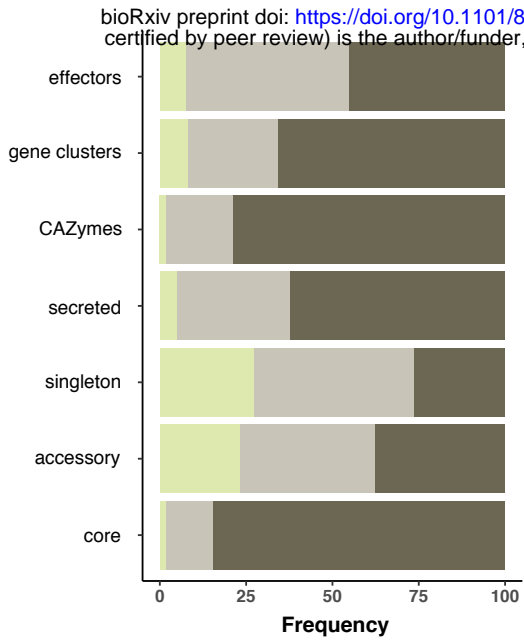
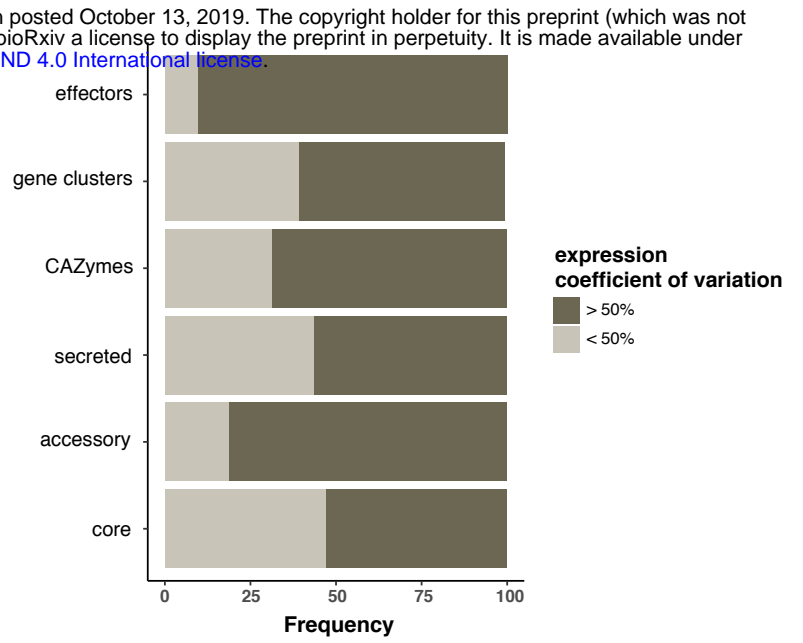
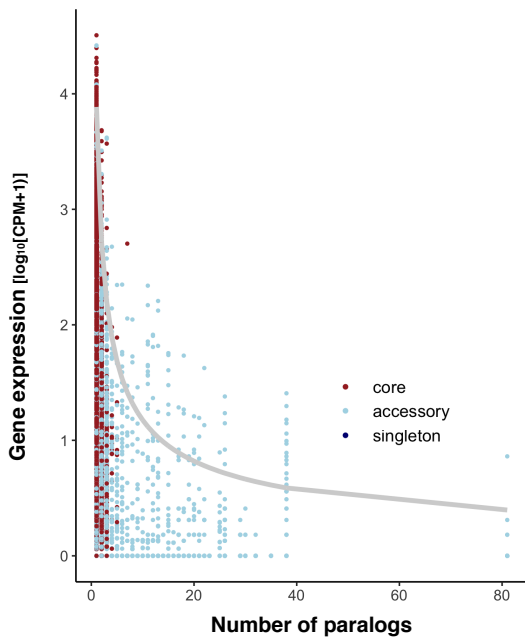
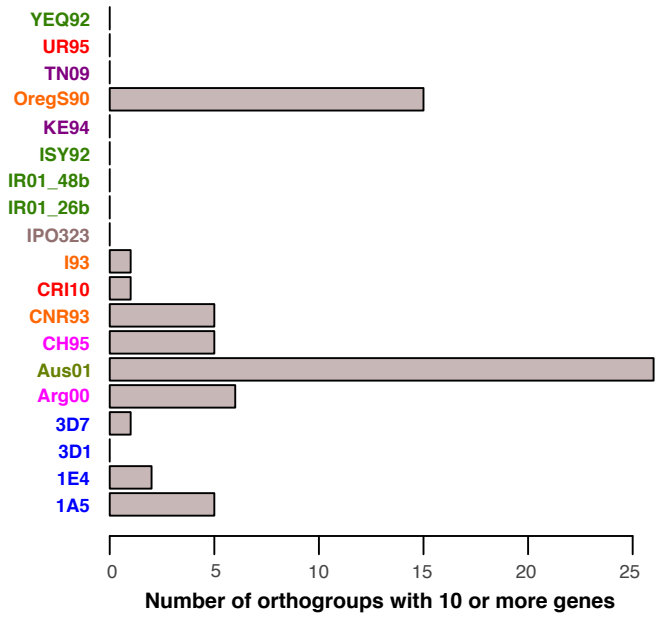
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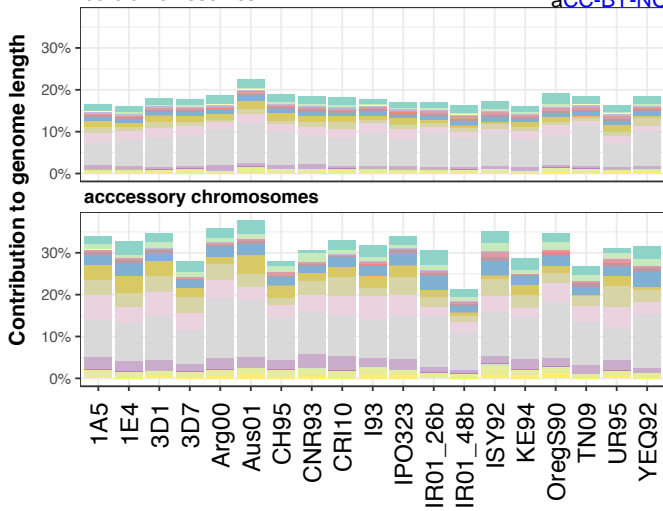
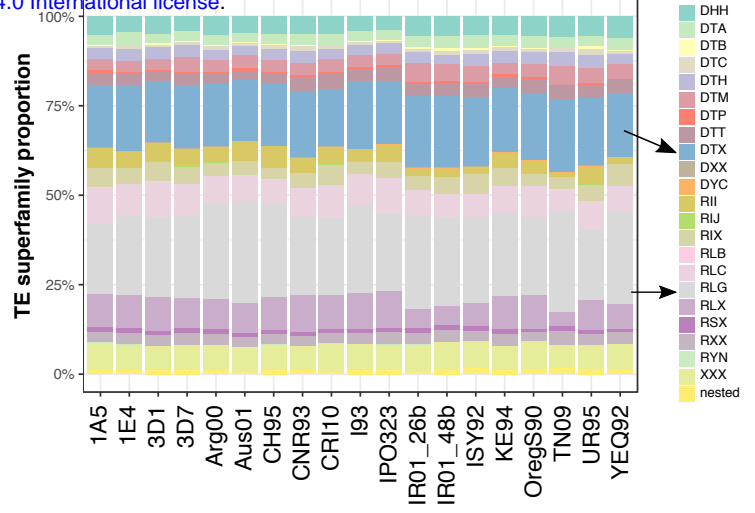
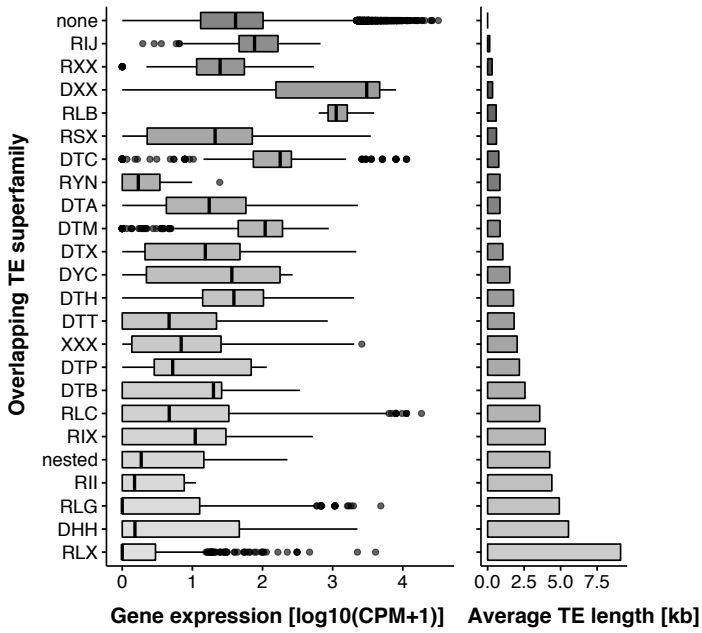
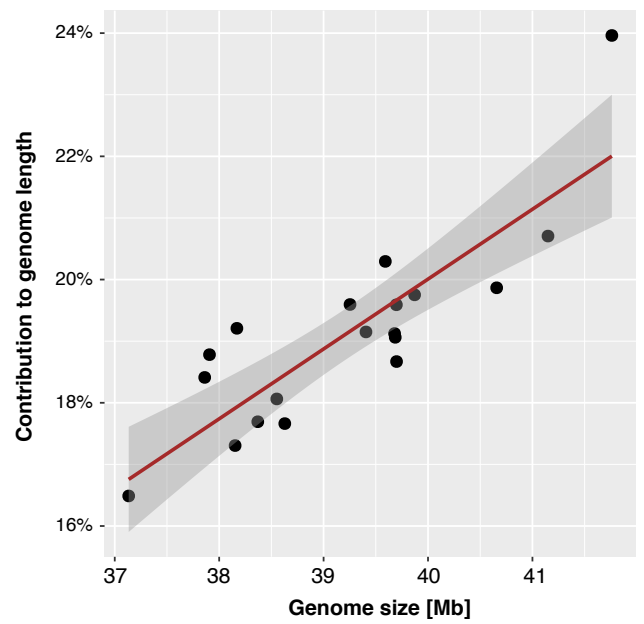
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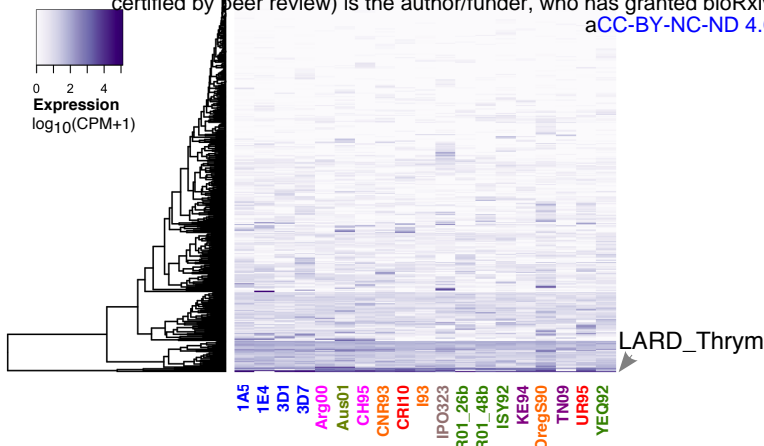
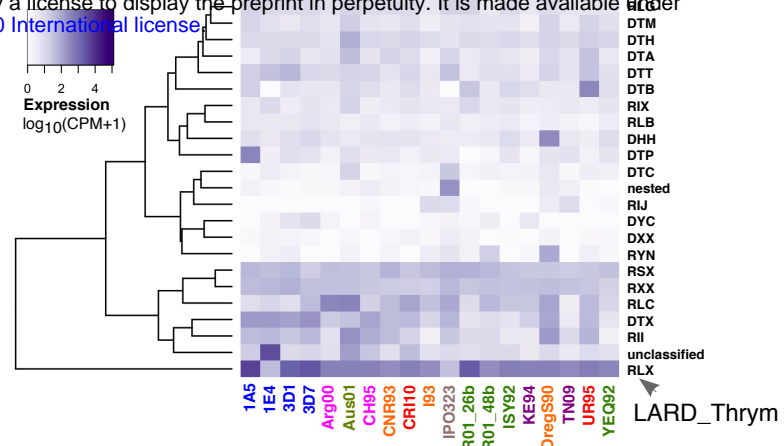
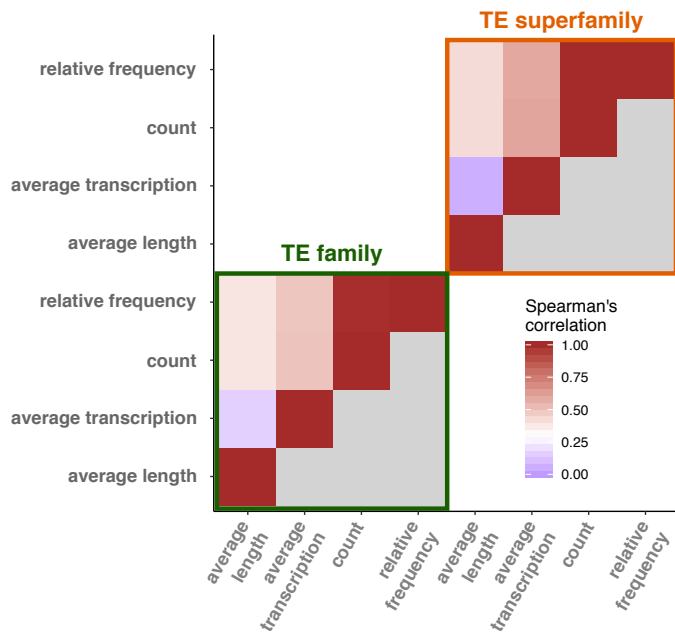
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