Chloroplast acquisition in Virgulinella fragilis (foraminifera)

Masashi Tsuchiya¹*, Takashi Toyofuku¹, Katsuyuki Uematsu², Hiroshi Kitazato¹

¹JAMSTEC, ²Marine Works Japan Ltd.

Both bacteria and kleptoplasts exist in Virgulinella fragilis, thought to be allowing V. fragilis to survive in dysoxic environments. V. fragilis kept a same kind of delta-proteobacteria, closely related to Desulfobacterium, distribute at the host foraminiferal cell surface. Desulfobacterium uses dissolved for the heterotrophic oxidation of organic matter. These bacteria may therefore use organic material provided by the host for carbon oxidation. Kleptoplasts in host individuals of different investigated areas differ in origin of diatom species. From the expected four membranes around single kleptoplasts, we can only find double membranes. This strategy may have a role in the interaction between the cellular substrates and the kleptoplasts.

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