

Dear editor,

Thanks for your comments and suggestions proposed to “ensure quality and clarity of the submitted work”. We have uploaded a new pdf file with only one modification in Figure 1A.

Point 1. You request some explanations in the text to justify why we consider “CZ, WALZ, CIZ as a par-autochthon” and you offer us a selection of data for such a discussion.

The purpose of figure 1 is to help any potential reader to place the rock samples in a tectonostratigraphic context. Figure 1A offers a tentative Variscan reconstruction where the tectonostratigraphic units are subdivided according to only two (coloured) features: Variscan allochthons and non-allochthons. Our selection cannot follow all the information available in the literature because there are as many Variscan models as authors. You claim that CL, WALZ and CIZ are Variscan autochthons because this is a kind of paradigm, but what’s about the remaining units coloured in grey? Should we also differentiate them according to other Variscan paradigms? We assume that, for you, OMZ is correctly labelled as autochthon or parautochthon, but this is against any paper co-authored by Ricardo Arenas where OMZ is considered as a Variscan allochthon. CLZ, WALZ and CIZ are different parts of the foreland and fold belt of a Variscan Orogen that you consider “Autochthon”. We understand that this foreland and fold belt could be considered as a relative autochthon by comparison with the NW Iberia allochthon complexes, but not as a Variscan autochthon by its own structural framework.

You say nothing about the OMZ, the Pyrenees, the Occitan Domain and SW Sardinia. Are there also autochthons for you? That’s why we tried to summarize all these domains as (par-)autochthonous units by comparison with the distinct Variscan allochthons of SW Europe. In any case, this cannot be summarized with a sentence in our text, as you suggest, but it is in need of a deep discussion that would need a complete paper or a chapter in a book. You did not like our solutions, and you want to see the word “autochthon” here because this is your paradigm. No problem. We have labelled all these units of SW Europe “autochthons and parautochthons” as a solution to distinguish them from the remaining “allochthons”. Hope this will solve your query. Ricardo Arenas will surely disagree but he has neither edited nor reviewed our paper, and we hope he will understand why we have selected such a solution for our figure 1A.

Point 2. You consider that adding Díez Balda (1986) and Valladares et al. (2000, 2006) lithostratigraphic nomenclatures for the Cambrian of “the northern part of the CIZ” “would help and guide the interested reader to understand the state of the art”. First at all, Díez Balda and Valladares et al.’s nomenclatures are completely different and uncorrelatable. This is clearly stated in Valladares’ works, where the contacts of the Monterrubio and Aldeatejada formations outside their type area are not identified. Other problems for Díez Balda’s nomenclature is the selection of a single toponymical term to name two formations (Tamames Limestone and Tamames Sandstone formations), which fails the stratigraphic rules of nomenclature. In addition, as clearly stated by the own authors, Valladares terms (I to XII) are facies associations and not lithostratigraphic units. If the authors were not able to correlate these units outside the Ciudad Rodrigo-Hurdes-Sierra de Gata domain, why should we solve this stratigraphic puzzle in our paper considering that these units are not used in our text? A Portuguese reviewer could request a justification for the absence of the Portuguese lithostratigraphic nomenclature from the Central-Iberian Zone. If we add the terminology of the Ciudad Rodrigo-Hurdes-Sierra de Gata domain and the Portuguese areas, the resulting figure would be incomprehensible and full of correlating hypotheses that would need explanations in the text. Figure 2 is there to illustrate the stratigraphic (mainly chronostratigraphic) setting of the analysed rock samples, trying to be as simple and comprehensible as possible. We are not trying to offer the state of the Cambro-Ordovician stratigraphic art in CIZ for the potential readers, but simply trying to place the study rocks in a stratigraphic context as simple and comprehensible as possible.

In short, we could blindly follow your indications to see our paper finally accepted and focus our attention on other questions. This would be the easiest solution, but we do not understand why you are suggesting such questions that, in our opinion, are not “ensuring quality and clarity”. We kindly disagree with your second revision (not edition) and have explained above why. Thanks again.