

Dear topic editor and third reviewer,

Regarding your last queries:

1. You want to see “all the Variscan zones either in the autochthon or in the allochthon-parautochthon in Figure 1A”. It is clear that you cannot see a paper focused on pre-Variscan issues without finding the classical Variscan subdivision of the Iberian Massif. But this paper is not focused on ALL the Variscan zones of the Iberian Massif. Why should we include those Variscan zones that are neither described nor considered in our paper? I guess you refer to the non-periGondwanan South Portuguese Zone or terrane which was far from the southwestern European margin of Gondwana during Cambro-Ordovician times. If this was not a peri-Gondwanan sector during Cambro-Ordovician times neighbouring the south-western European Gondwana margin (what was clearly stated in the figure caption) why should we highlight it? Simply, because you want to impose us the models are in your mind considering that other models are not scientific.

We have adapted the figure caption of Figure 1A as follows: “Pre-Variscan reconstruction of the Variscan tectonostratigraphic units bearing Cambro-Ordovician exposures REPORTED IN THIS WORK, from the south-western European margin of Gondwana; based on Pouclet et al. (2017) and Álvaro et al. (2020).” In addition, we have added the setting of the South Portuguese Zone (not coloured it) though it is not reported in our work, it has no Cambro-Ordovician exposures and was not fringing the targeted Gondwana margin during Early Palaeozoic times. Of course, this figure is based on Pouclet et al. (2017) and Álvaro et al. (2020 and already online); we are sure you consider these works as scientifically unacceptable because you only understand your own dogmas, but if you try to open a little your mind you would be able to remember the times when you were still able to accept other ideas than yours.

2. In your previous revision, you “suggested” (or wanted to impose) “a good compromise about Ediacaran-Cambrian lithostratigraphic chart issue is to declare well into the main text or the caption that you are aware of other evidence (e.g. Díaz Balda, Valladares et al...) but you are taken, as a reference for the whole ZCI, the stratigraphic model developed in the southern part of the ZCI, because of its consistency/coherency/ degree of development”.

This was done in our last version, where we reported Díaz Balda et al. (1990) and explained that we had selected no samples from the Salamanca area, another of your obsessive ideas. We explained you the difference between lithostratigraphic units and facies associations in order to avoid citing papers that include no lithostratigraphic subdivisions (cf. Valladares' papers). Now you write the sentences you want to read in our paper behaving like a co-author. As explained several revisions ago, there are other areas with their own lithostratigraphic subdivision that are not included in our figure 2, and not only Salamanca, Salamanca and Salamanca. Looking for consistency, we have included a selection of them in the new version, because Salamanca is not special for us, only for you, which says: “Cambro-Ordovician lithostratigraphic chart OF THE AREAS STUDIED IN THIS WORK from the Central Iberian Zone, Galicia Trás-os-Montes Zone, Occitan Domain, Eastern Pyrenees and Sardinia; modified from Álvaro et al. (2014b, 2016, 2018), Pouclet et al. (2017) and Sánchez-García et al. (2019); other areas, such as the Ciudad Rodrigo-Hurdes-Sierra de Gata Domain (Díez Balda et al., 1990) and the Portuguese sector (Medina et al., 1998; Meireles et al., 2013) in the Central Iberian Zone, the central Pyrenees (Zwart, 1979; Laumonier et al., 1996), the Albigeois Mountains from the Occitan Domain (Guérangé-Lozes and Alsac, 1986; Pouclet et al., 2017) and northern Sardinia (Elter et al., 1986), are not included here”. We think this is not too complicate to understand. There is even a section entitled “Material and methods” were the study areas are clearly documented.

We are looking forward to receiving your new queries.

Kind regards

JAVIER ALVARO on behalf of ALL the authors