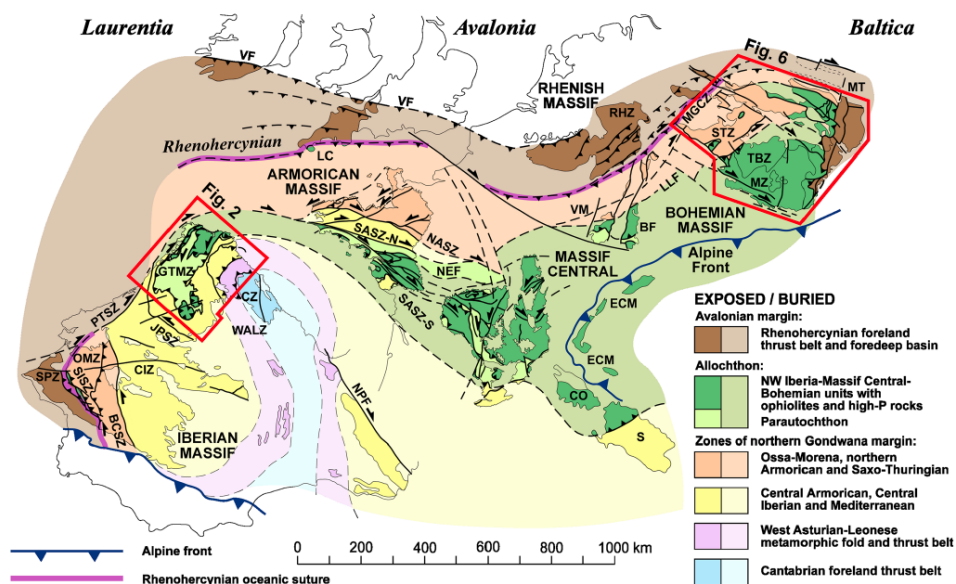


Thank you for your kind and passionate response. I fully agree that the dialectical confrontation of ideas is the basis for science to advance and improve. The process may seem long, as when we learn to read, but the result is certainly worthwhile. Having said this and although the digressions raised by the author are certainly interesting, I think it is important that authors focus their efforts on presenting scientific arguments.

Although reasonable corrections have been made to the text and figures of the article, the answers have never been directed at answering the only question that remained: Why are the Variscan zones classified in the new way in which they appear in Figure 1A? This is a relevant aspect in the context of the special volume that concerns us.

The repeated lack of data in the responses on this point, the surprising use of ad hominem-type argument fallacies in a scientific context, as well as the less elegant resort of threatening the editorial team with withdrawal of the article, clearly indicate that the author's fundamental argument for supporting the model in Figure 1A is "just because".

It is great the author decided to show different reconstructions of the variscan belt in his last letter. This is a good starting point. But please, note that in addition to beautiful figures, there is a clear explanation of the scientific data, and arguments that support those figures, in the text of those articles. This is the only request throughout this editing process that the author seems unwilling to share with everyone. I sincerely hope that the author's recent readings will lead him to explain this in future publications. I have also noticed that some recent references are lacking like this one from 2019: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00531-019-01800-z>



In this line, a published inconsistency is an inconsistency (or error). In Fig1A in Alvaro et al 2020 GSL there are similar inconsistencies in their use of variscan

parautochthon, allochthon and autochthon, particularly when they are compared to their main text.

It is much appreciated that the author has specified the extension of the application of his lithostratigraphic data of the Cambrian and Ordovician, initially presented as an over-generalization of the whole of the central Iberian zone, as there were notable absences not initially declared in the manuscript. Similarly, in this last version, he has abandoned the idea of including the Portuguese Southern Zone in the debate, something that was not requested in the revisions, or defining new allochthonous complexes such as that of Verín-Bragança. I am sure that the latter was due to a totally involuntary drawing flaw on the part of the author. As probably is the inclusion of the Schistose Domain among the allochthonous sequences, or perhaps it is simply an incipient color blindness that surreptitiously affects my perception of the chromatic shades of figure 1A.

Fortunately after the last corrections the bulk of the article is not affected by the problem detected in figure 1A and presents excellent data (e.g. geochemistry) that will be very useful to understand the evolution of the Variscan Orogen in a broad sense. I hope that the interested reader will appreciate this balance between what can reasonably be expected from an editing process, and the argumentative licenses that can inevitably lead us all to force arguments and manners because of the passion with which we live this science.

Although it would have been preferable to see the argumentation reflected in the manuscript itself, I refer the reader to the fruitful discussion held throughout the process, to form his/her own idea about the interpretation of the different zones of the Variscan Orogen.

I thank the authors again for their effort and patience.

Cordially yours

Juan Gómez Barreiro