

REINTERPRETATION OF *MALVINOCONULARIA CAHUANOTENSIS* (BRANIŠA AND VANĚK, 1973) (CNIDARIA) FROM THE DEVONIAN ALTIPLANO AND WESTERN ANDEAN CORDILLERA, BOLIVIA, SOUTH AMERICA¹

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Devonian strata of Bolivia have long been known for their exceptionally abundant and well-preserved invertebrate fossils, particularly in comparison with equivalent strata in other parts of the Malvinokaffric Realm. The most common fossils in the Bolivian Devonian rocks are trilobites, rhynchonelliform brachiopods, molluscs, and conulariids. Conulariids are very common in the Belén, Icla, and Sicasica formations, where they generally occur in hard siliceous concretions. In the most recent review of the conulariids of these strata six species were described: *Conularia albertensis* Reed, *C. quichua* Ulrich, *Paraconularia africana* (Sharpe), *P. ulrichana* (Clarke), *Reticulaconularia baini* (Ulrich), and *Malvinoconularia cahuanotensis* (Braniša and Vaněk). *Malvinoconularia cahuanotensis* was originally placed in the genus *Metaconularia*, and was erected on the basis of three specimens, all from the Lower Devonian Belén Formation. The holotype of *M. cahuanotensis* (Braniša and Vaněk), the type species of the monospecific genus *Malvinoconularia* Babcock *et al.*, is redescribed and refigured. *Malvinoconularia cahuanotensis* exhibits several gross morphological features that together are uniquely shared with *Reticulaconularia baini* (Babcock and Feldmann). In both taxa, the transverse ribs are nodose, the interspaces bear longitudinal ridges (bars or crests) that are collinear (line up) across the transverse ribs, and the longitudinal centerline (midline) of the faces is marked by a subdued ridge. Additionally, the two species may also be similar in the anatomy and external ornament of the corner sulcus. The slightly undulose geometry of the transverse ribs of *M. cahuanotensis* is also exhibited by certain specimens of *Reticulaconularia*; however, whether this feature is primary or taphonomic in origin is unclear at present. In short, then, *Malvinoconularia* exhibits all of the diagnostic characters of *Reticulaconularia*. For this reason, we conclude that *Malvinoconularia* should be placed within the genus *Reticulaconularia*. Thus, under the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature rules of priority, *Malvinoconularia* should be considered a junior synonym of *Reticulaconularia*, and *M. cahuanotensis* a junior synonym of *R. baini*.