

# Review of: "One Archaeology of Knowledge Constructs"

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I laud the author for attempting to “ask what constitutes archaeological knowledge, its construction, its limits, its veracity, and its validation.” This paper contributes to a critical self-reflexivity in archaeology. It emphasizes the contributions of Alain Gallay and Jean-Claude Gardin, voices that – at least in US-American archaeology – are seldom heard. I hope that the following comments will help the author to improve this manuscript:

- I strongly recommend a thorough proofreading. As a non-native speaker of English myself, I understand the difficulties of writing in what I assume to be a foreign language for the author of this manuscript. Nonetheless, I struggled many times to follow the author’s argument and I highlighted incomprehensible phrases like “to the sad of some critics.”
- On page 4, the sentence “the reduction of this information, and how it occurs to symbolically substitute the raw data for the mental conceptions that represent it” seemingly summarizes two distinct arguments: how archaeological data simplifies the original data and how do archaeologists think about their data. Yet, these two arguments are not – but should be, in my esteem – clearly differentiated.
- On page 10, the author concludes that “the free translation that we do every day, when transposing materiality into discourse, must be guided by a structure that is not reproducing current domination (whether social, political, economic, or even scientific), but libertarian in every sense.” – Apart from the questionable use of ‘libertarian’, this conclusion hints at a critical question – how power structures in modern society influence language and users like archaeologists – that remains undeveloped in this manuscript.
- The author focuses on Alain Gallay’s and Jean-Claude Gardin’s work; yet, it doesn’t feel appropriate for a theoretical paper like this to disregard other scholars and their work. The author is clearly aware of the latter and says on page 2 that “[t]he option for following an “interpretative island” of empirical French archaeology, is not a calculate absences of the seminal work of Ian Hodder, John Barrett, and Linda Patrik for example.” – The necessity of citing other scholars was especially clear on page 3 (“The symbolic aspects of archaeological knowledge”). The observation that “the material remains are only a small part of the constituted society that before animating them, and they do not have more present the actions or intentions that compounded the relationship between the human and the object” reflects the work of many scholars – most notably Michael Schiffer – and it is inappropriate to not even reference them.
- The use of “symbolic” is vague. Terms like “iconic representation of archaeological data” suggest an unacknowledged influence of Pierce’s work.