

# Review of: "One Archaeology of Knowledge Constructs"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

First of all, I would like to thank the Author for providing with an opportunity for readers (i) to reflect on epistemological matters, which does not happen as often in archaeology as it should; and (ii) to discover two French theorists whose works I knew very little until now.

In a nutshell, this manuscript is epistemological in nature. It seeks to address how archaeological knowledge is constituted, how mental constructions constrain our ability to perceive and understand the various archaeological materials that archaeologists routinely uncover. It touches upon these subjects by providing with a synthesis of two bodies of works, Alain Gallay and Jean-Claude Gardin.

It is a welcome contribution that I hope will come to fruition in the following months. Considering that it is only a first preprint, I will stick to comments of a general nature rather than nitpick on this and that. Indeed, I believe that issues relating to the “shape” of the text rather than its “content” need addressing before its readers can more fully engage with the matters discussed here.

First, the manuscript’s English would benefit from some major editing. In its present shape, strange sentences, spelling errors or misplaced words greatly impair one’s reading and distract from fully engaging with the ideas summoned here.

Second, I think that even though the Author does not wish to engage with other theorists in the field, this manuscript might benefit from spelling out more clearly how Gallay’s and Gardin’s works differ from others’ works, and why one might want to engage with their works rather than sticking to what they already know. How, for example, does Gallay’s approach to archaeological knowledge (what is accessible to archaeologists) differs from Binford’s ladder of inference or Schiffer’s systemic and archaeological contexts, and why this difference matters.

Third, the groundwork for the paper’s final section needs to be prepared more thoroughly. This should start with the introduction. A clearer recap at the beginning of the last section should anchor what was learned in the previous sections and how this connects with the social power relations summoned very late in the manuscript. Alternatively, this last section could be removed completely and kept for another paper, and the focus held on Gallay, Gardin, and how their approach differs or not from others (see comment above). Indeed, I feel that the last section opens a completely new box of issues that need to be engaged with more thoroughly later on.

Only then, I think, can issues related to “content” be more fully engaged with following lines of agreement or discord. And such lines are many. Foremost to my mind would be the idealist-materialist approach that seems to underlie most of Gallay’s and Gardin’s work (whereas I have for example tended to favour more relational/ecological [sensu Bergson,

Bateson] approaches to knowledge).

I hope these general comments help the Author at least a little, and I look forward to perusing through future versions of this manuscript.