

The main burden of affording us the historical depth that we seek to find in primitive culture must always be borne, I believe, by the analysis of the culture elements and complexes rather than by the culture strata that we build out of them. However, the determination of sequences of strata and of synchronous or chronologically parallel culture areas helps greatly in giving us a larger historical perspective. The greater the number of successive culture strata we are able to unravel, the more distant our vision into the past. The greater the number of culture areas whose differentia reach back to an equally remote past, the greater age can we claim for the fundamental culture that includes the cultures of such areas.¹

Thus, it makes a great difference in historical perspective whether our recognized North American culture areas as such can be shown to be of approximately equal age or to loosen up, as it were, into a smaller number that lie back of them, as previously suggested. In the former case we must allow for a far greater lapse of time for the formation of present-day culture areas than in the latter. A further value of the employment of culture areas and strata lies in the readiness with which we may by means of them handle groups of descriptive facts without the irksome necessity of particularizing in every case. The economic value of such labels as "Plains culture area" and "Plains culture stratum" (or, in Graebnerian parlance, "camp-circle culture stratum") is by no means to be underrated, even by those to whom they seem of only secondary historical value.

EVIDENCE OF LINGUISTICS.

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE.

We have, finally, to consider the manner in which linguistic data may be employed to set culture elements in chronologic relation to one another. There are two basic factors which make it possible for linguistic evidence to serve such a purpose. In the first place, a language is not a disconnected complex apart from culture but, on the contrary, is an important part of

¹ A culture, I hasten to add, that need by no manner of means be assigned to America itself.