

“PHONETIC UNITY IN THE DIALECT OF A SINGLE VILLAGE”

Louis Gauchat, 1902.

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PHONETIC UNITY IN THE DIALECT OF A SINGLE VILLAGE

As counterpoint to my recently published study¹ on dialect boundaries—or, rather, on the degree of unity linking the varieties of a given region—I offer here a preliminary description of a linguistic type as spoken by the inhabitants of a single village. To the unity of the whole I oppose the diversity of the parts, to the dialect the speech of the individual, to the macroscopy of my earlier study the microscopy of this one. The results of this work will serve to correct and, for certain points, to explain those I obtained in my examination of the regional dialects of French-speaking Switzerland.

I must confess to feeling somewhat isolated this time. The issue of dialects has been the subject of lively scholarly debate, but variation in pronunciation among members of a single speech community has not been studied systematically, despite its potential contribution to our understanding of language change. Other than the brilliant work of Abbé Rousselot on the patois of Cellerfrouin, only haphazard comments on this subject are found. When I undertook the classification of Swiss dialects of French I had sufficient material, collected in all regions of western Switzerland; in examining the unity of a village dialect, I have only notes taken in a single location. And last, to establish the fine shadings of a variety requires a sharper ear than is needed to record general characteristics, and I am not sure that I meet this requirement.

My reason, despite these misgivings, for making public the opinions I have formed on the unity of speech in a single village is to encourage dialectologists to undertake similar research in other places. Concerted efforts will shed light on the degree to which the language of the individual is subordinate to the patois, language used among individuals. It has often been said that spoken dialects are the living embodiments of the phases written languages have passed through over time. Such dialects, whose free development is unhampered by the slightest concern for correctness, can serve as guides to help us better understand the history of conventionalized languages. Thus, after thoroughgoing examinations conducted in various linguistic domains, we will be better able to develop more accurate notions of the role of the individual in the evolution of human language.

In the meantime, let us look at what can be revealed by the study of a single speech community. I have selected as my field of investigation the speech of Charmey, a large village in the eastern part of the canton of Gruyère. Charmey is a good two hours' walk from Bulle. Engineers have not as yet provided a rail line there. Charmey is at an altitude of 900 metres. The existence of a Carthusian convent, the Chartreuse de la Valsainte, not far from Charmey proves that this area was once considered to be isolated and remote. The patois of Charmey is still flourishing, although even the humblest of its stables are lit by electric light, and despite the fact that Charmey has been frequented, for the past twenty years or so, as a holiday resort by large numbers of tourists from various countries, especially France. All the children in the village know the patois, which they learn from their friends and in the street, although a third of families are now bringing their children up in French. Schoolteachers speak only French in the classroom and pupils answer only in that language; but the moment the school doors close, they revert joyously to the old local tongue. Pronunciation of the patois has been influenced not at all by standard speech, but remains natural as it continues in its mysterious development.² I could have chosen a village where the invasion of French is more recent and has had even less effect, but I preferred Charmey for the following reasons: because of its geographical location, it has had little contact with other communities; and it is located on a single road, which leads through Bellegarde to Simmenthal in the canton of Bern. Charmey is the last French-speaking village on this road. The inhabitants of Charmey were a good choice for a detailed dialect study because of their large numbers (1,247 persons in the federal census of 1900) and because of the size of their village, which is divided into several neighbourhoods and outer districts (it takes about an hour to go from one end to another, from "the Praz" to "the Auges"). The population of the village has remained relatively pure; there have been only about 180 recent immigrants. The village registry, carefully maintained, names only 29 old families. The Fribourg dialect is fairly consistent; there are fewer and less obvious phonetic variants than in, for example, the cantons of Neuchâtel, Vaud, and Valais. If unity can indeed exist in the speech of a village, one would expect to find it in Charmey. To the advantages already cited, I will add another quite personal

one. I have stayed four times at Charmey, in visits of varying length, including one of five weeks. I have thereby become familiar with its language and inhabitants; in my consultations, which were often long and tiresome for the informants, they have shown me all the good will and friendliness that a minor celebrity might enjoy.

My materials comprise a short glossary of trades, compiled in 1898; ten long lists of words and phrases, containing approximately 400 forms and designed to elucidate the origin and distribution of all sounds of the dialect, which were drawn up with the assistance of informants of different ages, sexes, and neighbourhoods; and last, about forty short lists of approximately 60 typical words. I had intended to go further afield and to interview more people, but after establishing about forty records, I realized I was eliciting nothing new and stopped, so as not to waste time. I am not counting the many hours spent at the hotel, listening. The long questionnaires were given, one in 1899, the others in 1903, to the following persons: 1. Mme Tornare, age 36 (in 1899); 2. the same subject, age 40 (in 1903); 3. Angèle Tornare, her daughter, age 12; 4. Mme Brigide Rime, age 63; 5. Mme Madeleine Tornare, from another family, in the Auges district, age 85; 6. Jean-Jacques Tornare, age 87, the oldest man in the village; 7. Laurent Rime, husband of Brigide, age 59; 8. Pierre Rime, no relation to the above, age 13; 9. Xavier Limat, originally from the Echallens district (Vaud), who came to Charmey at the age of 25, age 83; 10. Dominique Dessarzen, schoolteacher, a native of Broye (Fribourg canton), age 42. The last two subjects were consulted to determine to what extent a former dialect is assimilated to the new environment and to learn whether the schoolmaster's speech has an influence on his pupils' pronunciation.

In the short questionnaire, given this spring, I grouped all points for which the 9 (10) subjects previously examined had displayed variation. The new subjects, both male and female, are representative of all age groups from 6 to 73 and all areas of the village. One list was done with a field-marshal, originally from Le Crêt in the canton of Fribourg, who has lived in the area for fifteen years; and three others were given in the neighbouring villages of Cerniat (2) and Châtel-sur-Montsalvans. I quote a few phrases from my short questionnaire, to give an idea of

my approach: *une heure, une heure et quart, un quart d'heure, il pleut, il ne pleut pas, il porte la barbe, cela coûte-t-il cher, une belle paire de boeufs*, etc.

Now I should explain my system of transcription:

Vowels: \hat{a} is close to φ and is always long; ϵ is also long and has approximately the sound of \hat{e} in *tête*; e and o are intermediate between closed ϵ , φ and open ϵ , φ ; ∂ is always short = Fr. *le*; u = Fr. *ou*; \tilde{a} , $\tilde{\epsilon}$ = nasal vowels.

Consonants: w and \tilde{w} = consonantal *ou* and *u* of French; θ = voiceless *th* of English; ʃ , \tilde{n} = palatal *l* and *n*; χ = as in German *ich*; ʃ , ʒ = French *chat*, *je*. Stress, which is inconsistent and subtle, would require a separate study entirely. Very roughly, it can be said that stress remains at its etymological place. To avoid overloading the transcription, I have not marked stress. \sim = "different".

I. Sources of phonetic divergences

Variation observed in a single dialect may be real or imaginary. Imaginary variation may result from the investigator's inexperience, incompetence, or poor selection of informants; or it may be due to all kinds of technical difficulties that can hamper the work of even the best investigator. Real variation, based on fact, results from a number of causes: 1. the influence of other dialects, especially that of the standard written language; changes in meaning; loss of older words, etc.; 2. the same word may be pronounced in quite different ways by a single individual, depending on the emphasis the word receives; 3. a word may be pronounced differently under identical syntactic conditions because of individual habits or tendencies. This last point is by far the most curious.

I have often had occasion to study dialects described by other philologists, and to compare records made by several persons, sometimes even two lists from the same investigator. Never are the forms collected in the same spot completely identical. This is a constant cause of complaint. In publishing his tables of Valais forms, Zimmerli³ expressed regret that he was unable to agree with Gilliéron's findings; critics of the *Atlas linguistique de la France* sometimes

dispute Edmont's ear; and so on. A single list may contain a host of contradictions⁴, provided the investigator makes sure—and this is the only proper method—to record each form according to the immediate acoustic impression, without making any touch-ups or undertaking any previous phonetic preparation (such as examining earlier records from the same or neighbouring locations).

For the village of Lignièrès, in the canton of Neuchâtel, of which I am a native, I have before me Zimmerli's material, that of Urtel⁵, a wordlist that I made in 1886 by consulting my grandmother, and another wordlist from 1899 provided by a robust old man of 80, M. Descombes. The first time, I recorded *a* for free Latin *a*, the second time I distinctly heard *ǣ* (*pratu* = *pra* ~ *prǣ*); in 1886 I recorded *nü* for *nodu*, in 1899 *ñü*; for *ungula* first *ōy*, then *ōł*. Zimmerli and Urtel differ between them, so the degree of uncertainty increases with the number of observers. Here is an example:

	Zimmerli	Urtel	Gauchat 1886	Gauchat 1899
<i>gentes</i> =	<i>džę</i>	<i>džǣ</i>	<i>džä</i>	<i>džę</i>

As for the outcome of Latin *a*, Zimmerli and Urtel write *a*, and yet I am absolutely certain I heard *ǣ* in 1899; they both note *nyü* for *nodu*, *y* for Latin *gl*.

How can these discrepancies be explained? Are they such that they invalidate the authority of our records? The form *nü* that I recorded in 1886 is erroneous; I admit it candidly, adding that this form is part of the first dialectal study I had done and of my first, very modest, attempt at transcription. Zimmerli's and Urtel's *nyü* supports my second notation, which is in fact better than theirs, for we have a palatal *n* here. The well-known difficulty of distinguishing between *n* and *ñ* before *i* and *ü* explains my error. On the other hand, Urtel must have been mistaken in hearing *džǣ*⁶ (p. 17); this is shown by the agreement between Zimmerli and my two lists and by the forms *vǣ*, *mǣtǣ* (*vin*, *matin*) that Urtel cites on page 24, not to mention Haefelin, who gives, for example, *tǣdr^e* (*tendre*).⁷ The difference between *ę* and *ǣ* is minimal, but a simple affair of judgement, as we will see below. The sounds *a* and *ǣ*, *y* and *ł* of the other examples do indeed represent the actual pronunciation. My phonetic experiments enable me to state that these

variants exist in a number of French dialects of Switzerland. My grandmother said *a* and *y*, like most inhabitants of Lignières and the environs, and M. Descombes, who is still alive, says *ɬ*, as did everyone in the French-speaking cantons not too long ago, and he says *ɑ̃*, *as a matter of individual habit*.⁸ The distinction Urtel establishes between *y* for the region from Lignières to Le Landeron and *ly* (= *ɬ*) for St. Blaise, for example, is entirely fictive. If the Neuchâtel dialect had survived longer, he would have found tokens of *ɬ* in each location.

I am able to compare my notations of the Isérables dialect, in Valais, with those of Jeanjaquet, and to study variants noted by a single observer by means of two successive lists that Jeanjaquet obtained with two informants from Dardagny (in the Geneva canton), etc. There is never perfect agreement, but the differences should not occasion a loss of confidence in our own work. While I have heard *pā* where Jeanjaquet heard *paa* (*pa1a*), *dzor* for *dzo* (*diurnu*), *vwi* for *wi* (*hodie*), the discrepancy is due to the phrase as a whole, the fact that *w* and *vw* are barely distinguished in these dialects, and the fact that Jeanjaquet's ear is better practised than mine at hearing the sounds of the Valais dialects. The two Dardagny lists show the doublets *dɛ* alongside *dɛⁱ* (*digitu*); *lɛ* and *lɛⁱⁱ* (*lupu*), *ivɛ* and *ivɛr* (*hibernu*), but some of these forms can be easily explained as archaisms.

The examination of these few discrepancies in notation proves that all kinds of opportunities for error lie in wait for the explorer, but that disagreement is not usually great, that material obtained in the neighbouring areas can serve as a corrective, and that diverse forms can and do exist in reality. My study will emphasize the individual colour contributed to phonetic records by both the dialectologist and his subject and will show how to make use of this without displaying either blind faith or an exaggerated and unworthy mistrust.

After this preamble, I now propose to examine each source of phonetic variation in turn.

II. Presumed Variation

Even the best ear is not sufficient in itself to properly identify the sounds of a dialect. Like any instrument, it is helpful only when one has learned how to use it. Only after methodical training is the ear able to perceive the nuances of pronunciation that must be noted in a work of

any depth.⁹ We perceive with wondrous subtlety the slightest deviation from the sounds of our mother tongue, to which we become accustomed in infancy and for which we probably have a physiological predisposition. But we are utterly oblivious to the details of articulation of these same sounds. Only the scientific study of phonetics reveals to us how the speech organs work. Upon first encountering new sounds we are totally disoriented. I have often noticed that young Germans who are learning, for example, the nasal vowels of French initially have difficulty in distinguishing between *ẽ* and *œ*, and especially between *ã* and *õ*. Repeated dictations of series such as *ã ã õ ã õ ã* and so on at the blackboard do little to correct their mistakes. Similarly, I recall the difficulty I had when I was required for the first time to distinguish between *õ* and *ũ* in the Bernese Jura patois.¹⁰ In a new phonetic environment, our ear is like a poorly tuned violin on which we are trying to play perfect semiquavers. One must first gain a little familiarity with the phonetic structure of a new dialect before one can properly analyze its sounds. I do not believe that a stranger who has just recently come to a valley in the Valais could immediately seize the true character of all the curious outcomes of Latin *bl*, *pl*, and *fl*, appearing and disappearing sounds, the patois word in all its variability. One only hears correctly the sounds one already possesses.¹¹ And the slightest inflection differentiating a Gallo-Roman sound from the corresponding sound, if it exists, in the speech of Paris constitutes a new sound. The greater the distance and difference between dialects studied by a dialectologist in a short space of time, the greater the chances of error.¹² I do not believe that the mere possession of a very good ear and sufficient theoretical knowledge of phonetics makes one capable of recording dialectal data. Intellectual and physical apperception would necessarily be subjective. Everyone agrees that some practice is required to pronounce the sounds of a new language as native speakers do; our speech organs stumble at first. Why should the ear be quicker and more precise than the organs that produce speech? The ear, like the eye, plays an *active* role in perception. It does not perceive sounds effortlessly and tirelessly, like a mirror reflecting an image. There are times when the mouth is slow to obey, and similarly the ear may often deceive us. Any violinist will report that he sometimes has more difficulty tuning his instrument than at other times. Perhaps

even the majority of our errors of pronunciation are due to the ear's ineptitude rather than that of the speech organs. We only hear a foreign sound properly when we are able to reproduce it and we only truly recognize its character when we pronounce it ourselves and the familiar timbre of our voice reaches our ears. We therefore move in a vicious circle that is very detrimental to the accuracy of our dialectological notes.

But these difficulties may be overcome,¹³ provided one becomes accustomed to the new phonetic environment, frequently goes back over the ground covered, and is not fooled by incorrect information.

The selection of subjects is, in fact, a far more delicate matter than generally supposed.¹⁴ With an illiterate subject, there is difficulty obtaining the morphological material requested, for example subjunctives; a literate informant may have preconceived opinions about his pronunciation and lead us astray. An elderly person does not display the language at its most advanced stage, that of greatest interest to us; and older informants may have handicaps (missing teeth, hearing loss) that hinder observation of certain nuances—for example, those of sibilant consonants. Subjects who are too young often display a weakened dialect, contaminated by French. Facts of ancestry are very important. If the subject's mother was not born in the village whose speech is under study, there is a risk of encountering a mixed dialect. Today's population is less stable than in earlier times and it is often difficult to find subjects whose parents can both offer the guarantee of dialectal purity and who have never left the village themselves, if only for a few years. In places where speakers of the patois are few and far between, one must beware of patois dilettantes, those who pride themselves on their knowledge and sprinkle their conversation with a few trite expressions in patois, or invent when pressed for more detail. Authorities consulted for the addresses of good informants do not always have the appropriate information at hand, and nearly every time you return to a village you will be told, "You should have talked to so-and-so, but we didn't think of it!" You may often spend more time finding a good informant than on eliciting data. A good portion of the doubtful or contradictory forms in our lists must be attributed to underqualified informants. One cannot recommend excessive caution to those who

have only a half-day, in the midst of an unknown population and unfamiliar sounds, to draw up a list of typical terms which will be the basis of scientific speculation.

An uncertain and fickle memory adds new obstacles to those already mentioned. Just as it is difficult to attribute transitory shades of colour to certain archetypes—to say for example that a particular shade of orange should be classified as yellow rather than red, for there is no actual boundary between them—it is extremely difficult to opt for an *ā* or an *ɛ*, when confronted with a variety of open *e*, to mention but one example among a hundred. Our transcription symbols have only a relative value: we write *ā* when we believe we have heard a more open sound than that which we have chosen as the norm for open *e*. But what is this norm? The best way of establishing benchmarks in the vowel scale is to choose a few typical words in one's own pronunciation of French. For example, I note as *ā* any patois *e* that seems more open than the *ê* in the word *fenêtre* as I pronounce it. But can I always be sure of my own *ê*? And if, in the next village, I encounter an *e* that is significantly more open, should I not assign *ā* to this new sound, and use *ɛ* for the first? I can always go back and re-elicite the first words on my list. I can compare the *e*'s of two or more words that I am considering at the moment, but it is impossible to recall exactly the sounds I heard the day before in another location. Therefore the distribution of the symbols *ɛ* and *ā* over the large (in theory infinite!) number of varieties of open *e* will always be arbitrary, even for the best dialectologist in the world. Regularizing the degrees of length of these same vowels is no less difficult. We have the signs \sim and $\bar{}$, but how can we designate half-long vowels, and where does one draw the line in doubtful cases? One dialectologist will tend to transcribe sounds as open and long, another will hear them as closed and short. The phonetician in the field has neither a tuning fork nor a graduated scale to hand.

I was once asked to participate, as a musician, in an investigation intended to show the regularity of an electric motor's operation. A siren, through sharpness of tone, indicated acceleration or deceleration of rotations. We had to determine the possible deviation between the highest and lowest tones and a kind of norm represented by a mid tone. But we were soon forced to abandon this flimsy basis for judgement, for as the pitch rose we forgot the note that

the siren had emitted at the beginning. It was only after we were given a little flute that we were able, based on the fixed notes of this instrument, to determine the maximum distances between the highest notes and the middle norm, and were therefore able to express an opinion on the machine's regularity.

When will the time come when philologists are equipped with a little flute showing a norm for ϵ and a norm for ϵ ; when will we measure to the millimetre the angle of the jaws, the distance between a given area of the tongue's dorsum and the palate during articulation of the sounds under study? When will we have a dial that automatically shows the degree of nasalization in vowels, and so forth?¹⁵

In the meantime, someone is bound to point out, we have Abbé Rousselot's clever machines. But this great scientist is the first to recognize their current imperfections. They are expensive and difficult to transport. Their operation requires a complex procedure. They are the heavy artillery that can ensure the triumph of laboratories in the Romance capitals, but would only prove cumbersome to the mobile troops in the fields of provincial dialectology.¹⁶ The artificial palate, the most practical of the phonetic devices, has to be reconstructed for each new subject! And how many invaluable old dialect speakers would send us packing if we asked them to bite into godiva so we could make an imprint of their palate!

III. Variation outside phonetic change

Here I address speech differences within a single dialect that do not arise from errors in observation but actually exist. I will begin with those that result in variation in the pronunciation, morphology, syntax, or lexicon of the dialect of a village, outside of spontaneous change.

A. Foreign influences

1. Influences of other dialects

One subject, Limat, a native of Echallens in the canton of Vaud, who has died since my study was conducted, had lived in Charmey for 48 years; however, he still retained vestiges of

the dialect he had spoken until the age of 25. Given the affinity between the two dialects, he could continue to pronounce certain words in the Vaud way, without being considered an outsider. Neighbours declared that he spoke exactly as they did, and he had indeed acquired all the typical sounds of the Fribourgeois dialect, *š* for *s*, *θ*, etc. The only unusual phonetic trait he had was the isolated maintenance of *a* for Latin *a*, instead of the Charmey *ǎ*. I heard him say, for example, *ābro* (*arbre*), *prā* (*pré*), *fāvr* (*maréchal*), *błā* (*blé*), *trābłā* (*table*), etc. But he made many concessions to the new sound, especially in serial forms, such as infinitives of the first conjugation which he pronounced almost regularly with *ǎ*, collective nouns in *-ata* = *-ǎ*, the ending *-ez* (*vous parlez*) = *-ǎde*, words ending in *-age* = *ǎdzo*, etc. His Vaudois origin was revealed as well by the use of certain words such as *le žǎ* = *les yeux* (Charmey *le-ž-yę*), *pχęra* = *pierre* (Ch. *pęra*), *mōņę^v* = *meunier* (Ch. *mō^unę^v*). He sometimes had hybrid forms, such as *dzěšǎna* = *gentiane* (Ch. *dzěθǎna*), which is the Vaudois word *dzěšǎna* pronounced with the Charmey *š* for *s*.

Pillonel, the farrier, (aged 48, had lived in the area for 15 years, originally from Le Crêt, Fribourg canton, la Veveyse district) has retained his first accent in a nearly unaltered form. His pronunciation differs from that of his entourage on several points; he says for example *ǎ* for *ę* in words such as *drǎ* (*droit*), *pǎ* (*poil*), *lǎvro* (*lièvre*), etc.; he says *o* instead of *ǎ*: *bōrba* (*barbe*), *fōva* (*fève*), etc.; the old pretonic diphthongs *ey* and *ow* turn into *ę* and *o*, instead of *i* and *u*: *dō pǎ* = *du pain* (Ch. *du pǎ*), *avwę lǎ* = *avec eux* (Ch. *avwi lǎ*), etc. He makes concessions for some words, such as *pęra* instead of the *pχęra* of his old dialect, he usually (but not always) assimilates the final support vowel *u* of masculine nouns, etc. to the *o* of Charmey: *tsqnu* = *chêne*, but *pǎdzo* = *pouce*, etc. He claims to have become completely acclimatized as concerns the expressions and vocabulary of his trade, but I did not have the time to check this. The fact that his wife is from the same village as he, and that his family life is therefore a separate milieu, has contributed to keeping his original pronunciation intact. His children tend to speak French.

Dessarzen, a schoolteacher (42 years old, has lived in Charmey for 21 years, married to a woman from Charmey) speaks a capricious dialect with elements of both Broye and Gruyère.

He translates the word *il* sometimes as *yə*, sometimes as *i* (Broye ~ Gruyère), he says *mdzī* or *mdži* = *manger*, following no rule; he still says *kütsī*, *martsī*, *etsīla*, *kōdzī* = *coucher*, *marché*, *échelle*, *congé* instead of *kütšī*, etc.; he usually says *θa*, *θu* = *cette*, *ces* ~ *ha*, *hu* in Gruyère; he has a lot of trouble with *s* and *z*, which he cannot always manage to pronounce as *š* and *ž*, as local usage would require; he has not been able to shed his former pronunciation of nasals, for example, *bēⁱⁿ*, *fēⁱⁿ* = *bien*, *foin* (Ch. *bē*, *fē*). He would find assimilation easier if he were not determined to always speak French at home and, naturally, in all of his teaching.

I did not think it necessary to continue my investigation of the foreign sounds imported by immigrants. I have already mentioned that the number of immigrants is small; they are in large part German women, originally from the neighbouring village of Bellegarde (Jaun), who have married Charmey men and who try to speak their husbands' dialect. It is astonishing how easily they adapt. The fact that the dialect has two words to designate those who do not come from the village – *defurē* (< *foris*) and *aviñtro* or *aviñero* (< *advenariu*), the first with no pejorative meaning and the second referring to servants or transients – indicates that such persons are relegated to a lower status (except in the case of exceptional merit). The sounds of foreign dialects are thus hardly felt; they do not distort the Charmey accent, nor alter the unified character of village speech, nor contribute in the slightest to changing the local dialect in a particular direction. I am convinced that Mr. Dessarzen's children, if they spoke patois, could not be distinguished from other villagers. In German-speaking Switzerland, where visits among families are very frequent, we have constant opportunity to admire youth's great faculty for assimilation.

There is, however, one detail in the pronunciation of the young people of Charmey that puzzles me somewhat. This is their manner of articulating nasal vowels. I have often observed *pχāⁿta*, *bō^{wn}* = *plante*, *bon*, etc. Since the schoolteacher pronounces nasals even of the standard language in this way, one might think he is influencing the phonetic system of the dialect. Pupils would imitate the teacher speaking French, and then transfer this articulatory tendency to the dialect. I believe it would be a mistake to accept this explanation, for why then would we not

find the sound \tilde{e}^{in} , which is so characteristic of Mr. Dessarzen's speech; why would the girls, taught by nuns of whom one is German in origin, have the same tendency to decompose the nasals \tilde{a} and \tilde{o} , and lastly, why would we find this same tendency in isolated cases in the speech of adults? It is a shared development, a slow generalization of a particularity of the sound system of the central and northern parts of Fribourg canton and Gros-de-Vaud. We are touching here upon one of the greatest mysteries of linguistics, the invasion of certain articulations into new territory. Our ideas on the subject are still confused. I do not think that personal influence has anything to do with it, and I believe that the impulse is internal rather than external. The sound systems of Fribourg and other places must be undergoing a more or less rapid transformation as regards these sounds. Charmey is not imitating Broye when its inhabitants say $m\tilde{a}^n$, $by\tilde{a}^n$, $ts\tilde{a}^n taove$, etc. = *main, blanc, chantait*; guided more by instinct than imitation, it is merely stepping onto the same path that others went down some time ago.

2. Influence of the standard language

The influence of French is a factor more powerful than that of the *defurẽ* and the *aviñero* in the destruction of dialectal unity, although its force has only recently been felt. The standard language has been creeping into dialects since the 13th century, but only in the 19th century has the struggle become serious. French is conquering syntax and lexicon but has little hold on morphology, and (in Charmey) has mounted a fruitless assault on phonetics. I would have great reservations in attributing to the influence of French the tendency to pronounce final *o* as o^o , a sound intermediate between *o* and ∂ , as in $k\tilde{a}do^{o17}$ = *coude*, etc. I view this rather as a spontaneous phenomenon, which has long been manifest in the masculine article *lo*, pronounced $l\partial$ by elders in the village, but which is barely beginning in other cases. It can be observed entirely outside the influence of French in dyo^o = *dico*, $to^o te le dz\tilde{e}$ = *totas illas gentes*, etc. Today's pronunciation of $p\tilde{e}r\partial$ = *père*, instead of *p\tilde{a}re* is not a case of an *e* replacing an \tilde{a} , but rather of one word supplanting another.

My questionnaires¹⁸ focussed primarily on phonetic unity, and for this reason I have only a few examples to document morphological, syntactic, and lexical diversity. But these few examples suffice to give an idea of the degree and the processes of diversification.

Morphology

Imitation of French, where *ée* corresponds to both nominal *-aɛa* and participial *-aɛa*, must have given rise to the form *rožaoyə* instead of *rožā* (~ *tsātāyə*), which I noted on a single occasion. This form could have been reached solely within the dialect, by analogy, but in this word the influence of French must be solely responsible. All other discrepancies in inflections on my lists can be explained internally.

Syntax

The sentence "ils vont se guérir" was usually rendered by the curious construction *i vā lu vwēri* = *ils vont leur guérir*, which must have been fairly general in earlier times. The Fribourgeois even sing (in French):

"Les Suisses ne sont jamais si fous

De leur (= se) quitter sans boire un coup."

However, some subjects gave *še vā v...*, with the old synthetic construction common in all our patois, or even *i vā še v...* which syntactically has no patois character. The expression *lę fę vini* (*j'ai fait venir*) for *lę fę a vini* is also French. Similarly, *pru d'ardzē* for *pru ardzē* = *assez d'argent*.

Lexicon

Despite the simplicity of my sentences, I obtained a number of lexicological variants created under the increasing ascendancy of French. I will cite the most striking: *la pęra i tape la fīθa* = "la pierre elle frappe la tête" (patois: *fχę*); *sā* for all subjects = 100 but some still say *ōθē*, *du θē*, etc. "un cent (de clous), deux cents", etc.; *no pęrmę* = *nous permet* (patois: *no bał a kōdži* ("nous donne à congé"); *še mę a płorā* = *se met à pleurer* (patois: *se bāte* or *še fo a płorā* = *buttare, foutre*); *prāna*¹⁹ = *prune* = a contamination of *prune* and *prāma*; *ō lyęyvro*¹⁹ = *un lièvre* for *(u)na lęvra*; *lę pidyī* = *j'ai pitié* (patois: *me fęžo mọ*); *kāža* = *cage* (patois: *dzębā*);

vũto = *vite* (patois: *rĩdo* = *rude*); *θẽ frã* = *5 francs* (patois: *na pĩθa* = *pièce*); *pẽra* = *père* (patois: *šẽna* or *šẽne* = *seigneur*); *i parto dǎdzā* = *je pars jeudi* (patois: *i mǎdo dǎdzā* = *movitare*); *ẽtẽde* = *entende* subjunctive (old patois: *udze*), and so forth.

Obviously, if this comparative study had been undertaken fifty years ago, most of these variants would not have been found. In this regard, dialectal unity was more intact in the past than it is now.

But the dialect itself provides a multitude of variants of the same kind where foreign influence cannot be implicated.²⁰

B. Spontaneous change

1. Morphology

Morphological doublets are much more common than my phonetic lists indicate. I can cite only *pũyo* = *je puis*, instead of *pũ*, among young people; *tsǎžũ* alongside *tsǎžẽ^v* = *tombé* (*utu* ~ *-ectu*, cfr. *cazut* ~ *cazeig* in Provençal); "il faut qu'il parte" translated either with the present or the imperfect of the subjunctive *mǎdo*, *modẽ²¹*, *modišo*, *parto*, *partǎšo*. The form *tre* (*il tire*) in older people is replaced by *tire* among the young, by analogy.

2. Lexicon

The main source of diversity resides in *synonymy*, which sets the lexicon into constant fluctuation. A word is lost and replaced; another word suddenly finds it has a rival. The dialect of Charmey is still strong enough to display the full range of creative and destructive forces.²²

a) The battle is drawing to a close for the following words on my lists: *fuχĩ* = *manche de la faux*, from *falcariu*, replaced in the usage of young people by *mǎdzo de la fǎ*; *χlā* = *fleur*, from *flore*, replaced by *botχẽ* = *bouquet*, whereas *χlā* is kept in the sense of *crème*; *šā*, fem. *šāla* = *seul* is known only by a few very old persons²³, having been replaced by *šolẽ*, *-ta*, from *solittu*; *pũθẽ* = *poudre médicinale*, from *pulvis* + *ittu* (young people do not know this word and use instead the general term *pũθa* = *poudre*, *poussière²⁴*); *ẽlǎ* = *aigle* has become very rare; I often got *putožĩ*, from *putidu* *avicellu*, which properly refers to the sparrow hawk.²⁵

b) The battle is still raging for the words *på* and *rẽ* as negation: *på* or *rẽ de fũ šẽ fumẽra* = *pas de feu sans fumée*; *tseχĩ lẽvi* and *fro* = *chasser (loin)*, from *captiare illa via* or *foris*; *i šũ-ž-ā* or *ālā* = *je suis eu* or *allé* (meaning: *je suis allé*); *guna* and *truyə* = *trueie*²⁶; *fier* was translated as *fχe*, *kraono* (= *crâne*) and *grẽdzo* (which properly means *de mauvaise humeur*); for "gâter les livres", I have heard with no distinction among them: *bəržĩ* (*briser*), *gaotao*, *devorā le lẽvro*; the pronoun *qui* is translated by *kə* (*quale*), *nəkə* (*illu quale*), *kwe* (*cui*), *nəkwe* (*illu cui*); "il fait du vent" is rendered by *i fā de l'ura* (*aura*) or *du šĩ* (*ventu cisu?*), depending on whether the wind is brisk or light; "il en a davantage" = *nẽ-d-ā mẽ* (*magis*) or *de plā* (*de plus*); *demeurer* = *reštā* or *šobrā* (*superare*); *tourmenter* (*les bêtes*) can be said as either *bərgādā* or *tortürā* or *tormẽtā* or *devorā le bĩθe*; *toujours* = *todulõ* (*tout du long*) or *totevi* (*tota via*), etc.

c) The battle is just beginning for the word *arañā* (*araignée*), which is replaced from time to time by *ekoŋẽ*^v = *cordonnier* (compare in German-speaking Switzerland *Zimmerman* for *Spinne*).

Ordinarily the countryman makes no distinction among these synonyms, and many more (a distinction is made however between *ura* and *šĩ*); logical distinctions are less sharp in patois than in standard languages; rival words coexist in the mind and are used in turn, or just one or the other. The result is a vast medley that makes lexicological unity illusory. The degree of diversity was probably greater in earlier times, in the heyday of the patois, when the language still deployed all of its productive forces. Old people complain that the young are forgetting the expressions of olden days. But it has ever been thus, as witness ancient texts containing words nobody recognizes anymore; as witness place names of often impenetrable mystery; as witness the hundreds of lexicological islands in the Romance languages, islands that were once connected and formed a compact area; as witness especially the fundamental differences in vocabulary among Romance dialects, which all stem from Latin. The work of selection must have been enormous to result in such variety. It is entirely natural that the dialect of Charmey

today should offer so few instances of developing battles between synonyms, for it is a language on the brink of extinction.

Individual influence in this area seems substantial. A certain expression is preferred over another because one's relatives or one's friends use it. There are family words that have often resulted in the creation of nicknames.²⁷

The great wealth of synonyms in dialects should not be forgotten when consulting the maps of the *Atlas linguistique de la France*. The presence of a certain word does not imply the absence of another. Subjects did not always supply the word corresponding to the idea the investigator had in mind. Where there are, for example, two expressions for a big or a little *bobine*, or even two words for *bobine* with no distinction in size, informants may have given sometimes one, sometimes the other, or perhaps the name of a special type of *bobine*, all purely on whim. These maps do not represent lexicological research but rather, as Gilliéron puts it so well, *instantanés* – snapshots – forms elicited by a thousand rapid-fire questions, with no logical link between them. This does not preclude the great usefulness of this material, provided it is used properly.

IV. Phonetic variation resulting from sentence rhythm

The variation discussed in the previous chapter is revealed only to the patient, attentive investigator; several subjects must be interviewed before one can be sure that certain concepts have two or three equivalent representations in the patois. In contrast, there is one cause of diversity that is obvious in even the most superficial observation of a single individual: the same word may, in different circumstances, be pronounced differently. I do not refer to the influence of meaning which can cause words like *oui* and *non* to be said quite differently, giving an accent of surprise, regret, joy, anger, etc. by varying the rhythm and intensity of speech components. Nor can I undertake here a detailed study of the mutual influence of sentence rhythm and long and short stressed vowels, although my notes contain all sorts of interesting examples in this regard: long vowels shortened at the end of a sentence, greater opening of such vowels, etc. All

this is better studied with the apparatuses of experimental phonetics. I will merely mention the rules which produce acoustic effects quite audible to the naked ear.

Dialects are a better field of exploration for the study of doublets than are standard languages, because the speaker feels no hindrance to his free impulse, no habit of proper diction, and above all, no influence of the written word. Compare the relative rigidity of the French form *avoir* to its Charmey counterpart, a model of fluidity! I transcribe some of my notations of this form below.

...₁₂₃₄ - il faut | avoir de l'argent pour |...: *i fə avē d l ardžē (erdzē) po...*

...₁₂₃ - il faut | avoir du cuir|: *avē^v – avēy*

...₁₂₃ - il faut | avoir patience|: *avē^v – avēy*

₁₂ - | avoir faim |: *avēy – avi – ai*

...₁₂₃ - tu ne peux | pas avoir cela |: *...po i šē*

...₁₂₃ - faut | pas avoir peur |: *fə po i pwērə.*

Similarly *savoir* = *šavē* (stressed form), then through all the phases of diminishing stress: *šavēy – šavēy – šavi = šai*, where the series stops for this verb, because the *a* is protected by the *š* and probably also because of the lesser frequency of this infinitive in unstressed position.

Subjects' temperaments make them prefer forms associated with either rest or acceleration. Some have only *avi – ai – i* in proclisis; others will place more stress and choose a form higher up in the series. The phrases given above are only an average norm; in reality there is far less regularity.

Obviously, what we have here is an exceptional case where several rules or tendencies of the dialect are in play (unstressed *ēy = i*, intervocalic *v* is easily dropped, successive vowels are easily coalesced: *po-a = po*, cfr. *doit être*: *dī īθr – dīθr*; *mal au coeur*: *mə u k̄ā = mukā*, etc.), which facilitates the extremely rapid pace of change. But as we shall see, the number of words that undergo the main rule among these, unstressed *ēy = i*, is considerable. This rule is one of the greatest destroyers of the unity of the Charmey patois.

As can be seen, these are genuine patois doublets, created by sentence and word rhythm. I will not discuss those that are characterized by popular or learned formation. I will say, however, that this type of doublet is strongly represented in dialects that have an abundant source of educated terms, i.e. the standard language. Dialectologists are subject to error in this regard. For example, I was eliciting the word *guère* in the canton of Neuchâtel, to determine if Germanic *w* gave *g* or *(v)w*, in the sentence *on ne l'a guère revu depuis*. The result was always *gër*, until by chance I learned of the dialectal variant with the meaning *(pas) beaucoup*:²⁸ *endavwër = il n'en a pas beaucoup*, at Dombresson, Val-de-Ruz. In the canton of Fribourg, the word exists with the meaning *combien*: *vwëro*.

As for phonetic rather than lexicological doublets, some dialects are virtually static while others are seething with them. The dialects of the Bernese Jura fall into the first category, while those of Fribourg, Vaud, and Valais belong to the second. The Neuchâtel dialect is poorer in linked forms than French; it does not even have final consonant *liaison* except for a few cases that have naturally escaped total extinction: *les hommes*, etc. This is not due to the dialect's vitality (the Neuchâtel patois does not lack doublets because it is a dead language with only a few remnants still extant), but is rather the very nature of dialects. Sounds do not all march to the same beat. The sound structure of a dialect fosters or hinders the formation of linked forms. Among vowels, diphthongs are more mobile than monophthongs. The immobility of the Neuchâtel dialects can be explained by the fact that they long ago passed the diphthong stage. In Charmey, certain diphthongs are still detected in the speech of old people, and young people unconsciously produce new diphthongs. Hence the great diversity of forms that we shall see. The following section deals with the introduction of new articulations. Here I will discuss only phonetic variation in which all speakers participate.

The most variable sounds in Charmey are pretonic *ei* and *ou*. Odin (*Phonologie des patois du canton de Vaud*, p. 32) makes the same observation concerning the patois of Bloday and environs²⁹, and Morf discusses the problem in his *Göttinger gelehrte Anzeigen* 1889, 20–21. I studied the problem in my dissertation on the patois of Dompierre, but that part of the thesis has

remained buried in my desk drawers. Having had the opportunity shortly thereafter to enrich my dialectological materials, I no longer had the will to pursue publication of my thesis, which would have had to be completely reworked.

The Fribourg diphthongs *ei* and *ou* are largely the outcome of Latin vowels \bar{e} , \check{e} , \bar{o} , \check{o} (examples: *credit* = **krei*, *mel* = **mei*, *nepote* = **nevou*, *potet* = **pou*) but also stem from *al-* (example: *caldaria* = **tsoudeire*), from *-ariu* (*febrariu* = **fevrei*), and other sounds whose historical interpretation would lead me too far afield, such as *de illu*, *ad illu* = **dou*, **ou*, *de illos*, *ad illos* = **deis*, **eis*, *factu* = **feit*³⁰, and \bar{e} or \check{o} + yod (examples: *tectu* = **teit*, *apudhoc* = **avwei*), etc.

In Dompierre, three outcomes of the two diphthongs are readily observable: 1) ϵy , φw when there is no stress 2) *ay*, *aw* under secondary stress, and 3) \bar{a}^e , \bar{a}^o , with barely perceptible e , o under strong (sentence) stress.

- 1) *bεy pā* = ne bois pas
yə vφw gutā = il veut souper
- 2) *vo dayte fεr sã* = vous devez faire cela
yə pχaw a la vεsə = il pleut à verse
- 3) *y'ε sã^e* = j'ai soif
ēd ε prã^o = j'en ai assez.

An investigator who is unaware of these conditions would perhaps put two words from his list, *volet* and *sapere*, in a single sentence and elicit from his informant: *il veut tout savoir*. The response would be: *yə vφw to savã^e*. The form *vφw* would be a linked form, *savã^e* a stressed form, and it would be mistaken to classify them at the same level because they arise from different conditions. Forms with *ei*, *ou* are older. As is often the case, proclisis remains at a stage that the stressed position has long since surpassed.³¹ Under stress *ei* and *ou* became ϵi qu – $\check{a}i$ $\check{a}u$ – *ai* *au*, then, because of the prominence of the first element of the diphthong, a^e and a^o , or even both \bar{a} , as in St. Aubin (Broye), where young people have completely dropped the rudimentary off-glides that can still be heard at Dompierre. I cannot determine what confusion

prompts Odin to a different viewpoint. He considers *ai* "as the nature of things indicates", to be older than *ei*. He forgets that words develop in the body of speech, that in expressions such as *habere famem* = *avɛy fã* or *ille volet* + infinitive the words *habere* and *volet* have never borne strong stress and therefore could not have become **avai*, **vaut*. Odin is however correct in other cases, that is for words that are accidentally proclitic. In the sentence *lɛ ðna say dɔw dyābyu* = *j'ai une soif du diable*, the word *say* is not in its usual position; the real patois outcome is *sā^e* which was changed into *say* according to the model of *il voit* = *yə vā^e* ~ *il ne voit pas* = *yə vay pā* (or *vɛy pā*). These two forms can be traced directly back to Latin, one to *vīdet*, the other to *vĭdet*, just as the French *moi* and *me* relate to *mé* and *mĕ*; *say* is just an analogical form. The proof that Odin is wrong, in other cases, is that words where the diphthong is necessarily in proclisis show the same evolution as unstressed words; for example *caldaria* = *tsɔwdā^erə* versus *calidu* = *tsɔ*. Here the unstressed syllable clearly trails the stressed one.

Once they reach the point of separation, stressed or unstressed *ei* and *ou* can go their separate ways. This happened in the Gruyère dialect, where unstressed *ou* goes to *ɔw – u*, by assimilation of the first component of the diphthong to the second; whereas under stress the first element becomes more open, becomes *a*, and triumphs over the second element, which is gradually disappearing. Curiously, the treatment of *ei* is not exactly parallel: unstressed *ei* becomes *ɛy – i*, but the stressed diphthong, instead of also appearing as *ā*, winds up as *ē*. Since **ai* reappears further south, in the cantons of Vaud and Valais, it is likely that Gruyère also had this stage, and that the bifurcation took place after *ou*, *ei* = *au*, *ai*, where the first member would go through *a^o* to *ā* and the second would go from *āi* to *e*. Fifteenth-century Fribourgeois still showed no signs of *ai* or *au* (Girardin, *Zeitschrift f. rom. Phil.* XXIV, p. 220: *teisa* = *toise*, *lo^ur* = *illoru*). The entire development in question thus seems to have taken place after this time. This would have to be checked against archival forms, but unfortunately I have none at hand. The historical aspects of the study of our dialects have hardly been touched! Today the young people of Charmey say *avĕ^v*, the old people *avē*, so that with my explanation we would be forced

to allow the series *aver* – *aveir* – *avair* – *aveiʳ* – *avɛ* – *avɛʷ*, that is, three separate stages containing *ei*, which is somewhat surprising; yet such retreats are not impossible.

The present state of the Charmey dialect (the pronunciation of the middle generation), for example in phrases such as *il pleut, il ne pleut pas* = *i pχā ~ i pχu pā* demonstrates, interestingly, that the old diphthong *ou* has as outcomes the two extremes of the labial series *ā* – *u*; we could not imagine a greater divergence.

The following examples give a more detailed idea of the phenomenon.

*A. Within the word*³²

Derived: *catena* = *tsɛʷna*, *catenitta* = *tsinɛta*.

Compound: *crepa* = *krɛʷva*, *a kriva-bo* = *à crève-crapaud*, a way of taking hay onto a fork by spearing it from above (as if one were trying to kill a toad).

Derived: *spola* = *epāla*, *spolitta* = *epuleta*.

Compound: *prode* = *prā*, *prode-materia* = *prumatɛr* = *beaucoup*.

B. Within the phrase

1. Stressed forms

a) main stress:

l'année a douze mois = *l'ā ła dodze mɛ*

bois! = *bɛ*

j'en ai trois = *ně-d-ɛ trɛ*

"vas-tu avec" = *vāθo avwɛ*

cette fille est faible = *ha fɪlə ɛ fɛblə*

il peut s'il veut = *i pa šə va*

il mène le boeuf = *mɛne lə ba*

la poule a fait un oeuf = *la dzənɪlə ła fɪ õ-n-a*

je pars jeudi = *i modo dɛdza*

j'ai mal au coeur = *ɛ mɔ u ka*

c'est mon neveu = *lə mō neva*

b) secondary stress:³³

la soif me dévore = *la šɛ me devare*

il voit son père = *vɛ šō šena*

vous devez faire cela = *vo dɛde fɛr šẽ*

le boeuf est gros = *lə ba lɛ grɔ*

il pleut à verse = *i pɣa a la vɛša*

le coeur vaut mieux

que l'esprit = *lə ka vo mi tɣe l'ešpri*

le loup te prendra = *lə la te prɛdre*

un oeuf de Pâques = *ō-n-a de pātɣe*

jeudi prochain = *dədza kə vẽ*

2. *Unstressed forms*

ne bois pas = *(nə) bi pã*

derrière moi = *dɛri me*

le mois d'août = *lə mi d'u*

en voulez-vous = *nẽ voli vo*

avec mon frère = *avi mō frâre*

vois-tu = *viθo*

neuf femmes = *nu feñe*

une heure et demie = *un ur e dmi*

du pain = *du pã*

au chaud = *u tsɔ*

il ne peut pas = *i* (n) **pu** pã

The words that undergo this rule are almost exclusively monosyllabic; the reduction of *ou* to *u*, *ei* to *i* occurs if the speaker hurries over the word to get to the stressed syllable. In the rhythm $_ _ \acute{_}$ the first syllable usually has too much force to undergo reduction. We nonetheless found *avi mō frãre*, *un ur e dmi*, where the rhythm $_ _ \acute{_}$ changes to $_ _ \acute{_}$. This way of speaking is not used by all subjects. But all say *du pã*, from one end of the village to the other.³⁴ Alongside *avi* for *avec* one hears *avwẽ – avwey – avwi – ai*³⁵, depending on the degree of intensity assigned to the word³⁶; *un ar(a) e dmi* is also heard. The stress pattern $_ _ \acute{_}$ thus gives rise to a floating pronunciation, which we find in phrases³⁷ like the following:

oeuf de Pâques = *ā* and *ū de pãtχe*; out of about fifty subjects, only six gave *u*; *jeudi prochain* = *dãdzã* and *dãdzu kã vẽ*; the linked form is preferred, giving *k' vẽ* as well, which has the rhythm $_ \acute{_}$; *une heure et demie* = *un ar(a) e dmi* or *ur(a)*; *ara* is much preferred: *un ara pχã ðẽ* = *une heure plus loin* is used exclusively, and almost always *un ara e õ kã* = *une heure et quart*. This last phrase already displays the rhythm $_ _ _ \acute{_}$, which rarely leads to reduction. I did, however, note by accident *i uže to fẽrã* = *il ose tout faire*, *avi du korãdzo* = *avoir du courage*. These forms can no doubt be explained by analogy: *avi fã* (*avoir faim*) gives rise to *avi pãχẽθã* (*avoir patience*) and eventually *avi du korãdzo*. The Charmey speaker winds up using *avi*, etc. whenever the verb occurs before stress. Habit contributes a great deal, and this helps us understand that subtle distinctions like *mẽ de fevrẽ* = *mois de février* ($_ _ _ \acute{_}$) ~ *mi d'u* = *mois d'août* ($_ \acute{_}$), still found in some speakers, give way to a single unstressed form (*mi*). This explains why there is always *vu* for *veut* + infinitive, no matter what the stress pattern of the second word, e.g. *i vu marẽdã* = *il veut souper*. The word *deux* has a single form: *du* (in the masculine); the doublet **dã* is unknown, because the word developed in an unstressed form.³⁸ It is easy to see why some words have only one form, like *neige* = *nẽ*, *pouce* = *pãdzo*, *miel* = *mẽ*, etc. Even eliciting forms such as *la neige froide*, *un pouce malade*, *le miel doux*, etc. will not obtain linked forms; *neige froide* and *miel doux* are not common expressions, and in patois *pouce*

malade = ˌ m ˌ ʎ ˌ and the union is too accidental. The following two examples illustrate the limits of our phonetic rule very well. In Charmey people speak too infrequently of a *croix blanche* to wind up saying *la kri blātsə*; this form is however very common in Bulle, where there is an inn with this name. Charmeyans distinguish very clearly between a *poil de chien* = ɔ̃ pɛ de tsɛ̃ and *du poil de chien*, the name of a plant (*nardus stricta*) = du pi de tsɛ̃.

The speech of the oldest inhabitants of the village enables us to reconstruct the phase of this phenomenon that immediately preceded the present pronunciation. They still say ɛy and ɔw (those aged 70 and over). I even found one Louis Niquille, aged 52, who still had this pronunciation. He must belong to a family where the old speech is more entrenched than in others. In old people, nonetheless, the diphthong is not found in all examples; the same individual may say *tsɔwdɛrə*, *ʃɔwtā* (*sauter*) and *du pā* (*du pain*), *u tsɔ* (*au chaud*), *di fāve* (*des fèves*), *vuθo* (*veux-tu*). We may therefore assume that phonetic change began with these phrases, which were extremely frequent,³⁹ and others gradually followed suit. On the other hand, very young subjects of six and seven sometimes forget to use the linked forms and say for example *i pχā pao* = il ne pleut pas. They do not yet manipulate the language with assurance.

It goes without saying that these changes are made unconsciously. Subjects are usually astonished when you point out the rule to them and they refuse to believe that old people still say ɔw, ɛy. I even got into a little argument with one subject who was angered at this lack of unity in his dialect. "We all speak the same," he kept protesting.

The individual has no control over this phonetic shift. The first person who said *du pā* for *dɔw pā* had no intention that others would imitate. It was not even noticed. But this negligence, which consists in anticipating the position of the back of the tongue for *w* when articulating *ɔ* (*ɔw* - *uw* - *u*) was in the nature of things. It must have been repeated over and over. Young people learned to speak this way and also to say *tsudɛrə*, *pχu pā*, etc. because they thought they always heard *u*,⁴⁰ and old people, already predisposed to this vice, failed to correct them.

V. Phonetic variation by age

In the previous section we looked at differences in pronunciation between different generations. Young people unconsciously break away from those who have brought them up, not only in their habits and customs, but in the details of articulation. Even the old patois is modernised a touch. But before it disappears for good, a few young shoots show that the vital sap is still flowing in this endangered language.

The wish to study phonetic change a bit more closely led me, in my first stay at Charmey, to discover certain nuances in pronunciation which distinguished the various generations. Since then, my attention has been focussed on this aspect, and the results of that investigation have led to this essay. The phonetic differences that I spoke of in section IV are determined by special circumstances; the variants that I will take up here are part of phonetic change itself, about which much is said without its true nature having been grasped. As for myself, I have managed only to recognize certain facts, without understanding their motivation. But have we any reason to complain when we look without seeing and listen without hearing? Would science have such irresistible attraction, if we had only to approach a phenomenon to understand it? Mother Nature has not condemned us to small discoveries; she has blessed us with them. The small advances maintain interest and encourage us to undertake work that is constantly renewed and eternally fecund. Each generation of humans shall have its share.

But let us return to phonetic change in Charmey.

It would be mistaken to think that languages are continually changing in all their aspects. On the contrary, each phenomenon has its moments of change and its times of stasis. Not that inaction is absolute. Phonetic laws arise out of contact between sounds and the distribution of energy over the word and the sentence. This contact, these stress conditions are always present. The long process of disintegration and assimilation lasts for centuries. But its effects are visible only at certain moments. Evolution, constant all along, brings in its wake partial perturbations belonging to different times.

So most of the elements of the Charmey patois seem static to the ear of the observer, and only a few points display noticeable change.

Almost all consonants are stable and are pronounced identically by all inhabitants of the village. We have observed changes only for *t*, *v*, and *θ*, and a few metatheses of *r*, which have always been present. Among the vowels, *i*, *ɛ*, *e*, *a*, *ɔ*, *o*, *u*, *ü* show no movement, whatever their origin. The sound *i*, for example, may stem from Latin *i* (*nidu* = *ni*), from Latin *a* after palatalization (*manducare* = *mdžĩ*), from *ě* + *s* followed by a consonant (*testa* = *tiθa*), from *e* + yod (*sex* = *šĩ*), from *-ellu* (*avicellu* = *ožĩ*), etc. All of these *i*'s are pronounced the same throughout the village. It must, however, be noted that short *i*, especially in final position, has a tendency to open; similarly for *ü*, which is never long. Even in French, the *ü* of *vendu*, *dur*, etc. is pronounced with varying degrees of openness. The vowel *ɔ* shows a slight tendency toward diphthongization in young speakers. From time to time one hears *tsɔ^u* for *tsɔ*, *calidu*, etc. I have already mentioned above that final *o* is moving toward *ə*, and that nasal vowels are beginning to break down.

For most vowels, there is no sign of conflict. However, three sounds of the oldest generation display some very interesting disturbances: *a^o*, *ɛ* and *ā*. The stable vowels are many but infrequent, except for *i*; the vowels undergoing change are in contrast heavily used, especially the last, which corresponds to the French endings *er*, *é*, *ée*, *ez*, etc. The other two, *ɛ* and *a^o*, are usually equivalent to French *oi* and *eu*, whose frequency is known. One has only to think, for example, of the verbal forms *peut* and *veut*, of nouns ending in *-eur*, of adjectives in *-eux*, etc. In ordinary speech, sentences containing none of these elements must be extremely rare. The diversity in pronunciation of these three sounds is of the greatest importance in assessing the degree of unity in the Charmey dialect.

Each point in the evolution of this dialect deserves to be discussed separately, for the distribution of these phenomena over the various generations, the origin and culmination of each are very different.

To facilitate the discussion, I divide the population of Charmey into three age groups, the youngest comprising those aged 1 to 30 (III), the middle group 31 to 60 (II), and the oldest group 61 to 90 (I).

A. Consonants

I. *ʔ*

The sound *ʔ* is found in isolation and in conjunction with the consonants *p*, *b*, and *χ*. Morf considers the cluster *χʔ* as a voiceless palatalized *l* (*Literaturblatt für germ. u. rom. Philologie* XXI, col. 70). The acoustic impression is indeed that of a single sound rather than a cluster, and the fact that Latin *gl* regularly gives voiced *f*⁴¹ could lead one to think that the modern outcome of *cl* is the unvoiced variant. Nonetheless, I do not believe that Morf is correct for Gruyère; I believe I hear a remnant of the *c* before the *ʔ*, which is indeed partially unvoiced, and a confirmation of my position is the fact that the modern reduction of *χʔ* is *χʲ*, just as *pʔ* and *bʔ* are reduced to *pχ* and *bʲ*. Experimental phonetics might clarify the matter.

The dialects of French-speaking Switzerland participate in the evolution of *ʔ* to *y* prevalent throughout northern France. If, in Charmey, *foʔə* = *feuille* becomes *foyə*, this should not be seen as an influence of the standard language, for schoolteachers, faithful to Littré's demands, still preach the palatal *l*, and go to great lengths to eradicate the patois *y* from their pupils' pronunciation, although it is today the only legitimate sound. The replacement of *ʔ* by *y* is thus as spontaneous in Swiss patois as in French. Generations I and II still say *ʔ*; and, without a single exception, generation III says *y*. Those between 30 and 40 fluctuate between the two pronunciations.⁴² Among those over 40, one sometimes hears *y* **among the women**. I noted *viyo* (*vec̥lu*), *pχāre* (*plorat*), *byātsə* (*blanca*) in a list elicited from a 63-year-old woman. The age of those who retain palatal *l* allows us to date the change from *ʔ* to *y* at around 1870.

In another case, for which I have no explanation, *ʔ* ends up not as *y* but rather as *l*; this is in the verbal forms *ʔe* (*est*), *ʔa* (*habet*), *ʔe* (*habeo*), etc. Old people say *lə mɛ ʔe dā°* (*le miel est doux*); generation III says *lə mɛ^e le dā*. The origin of these forms, with the pronoun fused to the verb, is not clear. The starting point must be the third-person forms, with *ille* _

est and *ille_habet* becoming *le* and *la*, forms which are widespread in Swiss dialects and still present in the dialects of northern and central Fribourg. I do not know how the *l* came to be palatalized in Gruyère. The first-person form appears to have been influenced by the third-person form. The substitution for *le*, *la*, *lę*, etc. with forms having palatal *l* is probably independent of the change from *l* to *y* and is an extension of forms from other parts of the canton rather than an instance of phonetic change.

2. *v(vw)*

The sound *v* in the Charmey dialect has a very lax pronunciation; the upper teeth are not close enough to the lower lip to produce a clear, distinct sound. It is sometimes rather difficult to record forms, especially those that have *v* in the context of a rounded vowel.⁴³ Sometimes one hears *liira* for *liivra* (*libra*), *kü^va* for *küva* (*coda*), *ɔrę* for *ɔvrę* (*operariu*), and almost always *ura* (*aura*) (alongside *uvra*, whose *v* is not etymological but very widespread in these dialects), though without a set rule. The rate of speech has an influence; when the speaker is asked to repeat the sentence and speech slows down, the *v* often reappears. The word *deux*, in the feminine, sounds like *düve* when enunciated carefully, but becomes *düe* and even *dwie* in rapid speech (cfr. the comments above about *habere*, *sapere*).

The French *gu* (stemming largely from Germanic *w*) has as dialectal correspondants *vü* (generation I) and *vw* (generations II and III); thus *vüeri* (*guérir*), *vüipa* (*guêpe*), *lëvüa*⁴⁴ (*langue*), etc. For *vw* I sometimes noted *w* (*wipa*). Parallel to *vü* = *vw* from **gw*, in Charmey we observe *vü* = *vw* in *vüę* = *vwę* (*voix*), *avüi* = *avwi* (*avec*), *küę* = *kwę* (*cuir*), *püę* = *pwę* (*porc*), etc. Forms with *w* are much more widespread in the canton than the other forms.

Phonetic change is consistent with a massive movement toward generalization.

3. *θ (θr)*

A superficial observer might believe that this sound is intact in Charmey, that it has undergone no change for a century at least. Detailed research has led me to a different conclusion. This sound very easily shifts to *h* (= German *hoch*). The tip of the tongue, instead of being placed between the two rows of teeth, stops midway, and air passes through without

meeting any obstacle. This phonetic law, like so many others, originates in a sloppily executed movement of articulation. Obviously, all θ 's are in theory liable to become h , and this sloppy articulation can happen to anyone. Everyone is capable of feeling insufficient energy. Change will not occur on the basis of *one* individual but, given the nature of things, will necessarily be repeated in the pronunciation of many, and will finally triumph. The difficulty is in understanding how the sloppiness of a few individuals can become generalized, how a mistake comes to have the force of a rule, why such a phenomenon takes place in 1900 but did not happen earlier in 1850. To this, one can reply that instinctive imitation, especially by children, contributes enormously to the spread of a new articulatory fashion, especially since the new pronunciation is usually, but not always, more convenient. Imagine a busy path that makes a sharp turn. One day someone suddenly decides to take a short cut through a meadow. The owner of the meadow makes no protest. Suddenly there are several new walkers on the new path. The old path grows over with grass, and the new way becomes the official route.

With the help of my many informants⁴⁵, I am able to trace the entire history of θ in Charmey in the nineteenth century. It is not a long story, but an instructive one. The first word to undergo replacement of θ by h is the demonstrative pronoun and adjective *ecce ille* in the plural. This word is one of the most interesting phonetic cases in Swiss French patois. While Bernese Jura and two districts of Neuchâtel (Montagen and Val-de-Travers) have a plural that recalls the French *fors*, *sę*, *sę*, the Neuchâtel vineyards⁴⁶, Béroche, and the cantons of Fribourg and Vaud have forms that go back to *ecce illorum* for both genders. In the cantons of Geneva and Valais, *ecce illorum* is used only for the masculine, and *ecce illas* gives rise to a special feminine plural form. It is not easy to tell what sound the consonants of *ecce illorum* should wind up as, for they are a *sui generis* case. **celour* becomes **slour*, whose l is palatalized as in **flour* < *flore*. This, along with its feminine forms **sla* (pl. **sles*) is the only word with the cluster *sl*. In general this cluster follows the fate of *fl* or *cl* (by substitution?), hence the Vaud and Valais forms with χt , χ , χl , θ , etc.; but fairly often *sl* takes its own path and winds up as $s t$, $\check{s} t$, etc. The dialects that retain the l in the clusters *cl*, *fl*, etc. do not palatalize it in

sl either (western Vaud and Geneva). Those that have only *s* in the modern form have undergone an analogous simplification, following the masculine singular. The entire canton of Fribourg has either *θ* or *h*. Thus in Charmey the declension goes:

ši bā = ce boeuf

hu bā = ces boeufs

ha vātsə = cette vache

hu vātse = ces vaches

I do not know the origin of the *θ*⁴⁷ in this word, but we are entitled to consider it, throughout the canton, as the ancestor of *h*, for the following reasons: 1. several dialects have retained *θ* in the fem. sing. and in the plural (e.g. Châtel-St.-Denis, Attalens, Murist); 2. *θ* appears in many dialects in various regions in the speech of old people (in Cugy, Rue, Charmey, etc.), sometimes only in the fem. singular form (Montbovon, Cheyres). In Charmey, a single subject, a woman of 85, still used *θ* in both forms. My records from Montbovon and Cheyres show that *θ* first succumbed in *θou(r)*, which became *hou*, then in *θa* – *ha*. This occurred around 1820-1830, if one considers that the *θ* of Mme Tornare of Auges is a relic of her youth.⁴⁸

If *θou* has been quicker to become *hou* than *θa* has to become *ha*, this may be due to vowel quality: *ou* is articulated farther back than *a* and the distance from *θ* to *o* is thus greater. The movement of *θo* expends a bit more energy than that of *θa*. This perspective is entirely confirmed by the following observation: the second case where *θ* goes to *h*⁴⁹ in the Charmey dialect is found in the verbal forms *veux-tu*, *vois-tu*, *sais-tu*, etc. which regularly give *vuθo*, *viθo*, *šaoθo*, etc., the *s* of the verb and the *t* of the verb being treated like the internal cluster *st* in *festa* = *fiθa*, etc. The rule changing *vuθo* into *vuho* is now becoming established. The oldest subject who said *vuho* was 73⁵⁰; the youngest subject interviewed, a girl of 6, still regularly says *vuθo*. In general, generation II still maintains *θ*, while generation III is moving toward *h*, **especially girls**. I became convinced of this trend when I visited a school, where I interviewed separately many boys and girls of various ages. The switch in sounds is achieved quite unconsciously. When I asked them to repeat the sentence, they often came back with *vuθo*, without recalling that they had said *vuho* the first time, in the natural abandon of the unconsidered response.

The third-person interrogative also has a θ ; *où est-il* is translated as *yə eθə*. In the third person, *h* is heard much less frequently for θ than in the second person; even in the complicated sentence *cela coûte-t-il cher* = *šẽ koθeθə tʃẽ*, I only heard *koθehə* twice in fifty times. Of the two θ 's, the one in the radical does not change in this case. The morphological θ , if one may call it that, is more exposed than the lexical one. In many words with θ , such as *tiθa* (*tête*), *koθã* (*coûter*), etc., I have never heard an *h*. The following vowels *o* and *ə*, then, are not solely responsible for the phonetic effect; the high frequency of the forms is also a factor. Sounds wear down less easily when they are infrequent, just as coins that are kept out of circulation retain their engravings longer.⁵¹

Because of their frequency and their sound structure, the pronoun / demonstrative adjective *θou*, *θa*, and the verbal form *vouθo* = *vuθo*, etc. have become vanguards for the ranks of words containing θ . They were the first to succumb. Women are more willing to accept this innovation than are men, just as we observed above for the change from *t* to *y*.

A third case is represented by the cluster *θr*, which easily becomes *hr*. The reason is the same: the tip of the tongue is pulled back in anticipation of the position of *r*. This *h* often merges into a *single* sound with *r*. The *r* is, so to speak, surrounded by aspiration, which, because of the narrow closure of the organs articulating *r* (which is still lingual), becomes a bit rougher. The oldest subject to say *hr* (*fənihra* = *fenêtre*, *ihrə* = *être*, etc.) among those I consulted is 23 years old. I noted *fənihra* much less frequently than *vuho*, etc. This case is thus more recent.

Some places in the Gruyère region, for example Gruyères itself, go much farther in changing θ and have *h* even in *tiha*, *kohã*, etc. In these locations the change from θ to *h* has lasted nearly a century. If these places went through the same stages as Charmey is now going through, they started with the sound *h* in a single word,⁵² a phonetic luxury that is not in the least implausible,⁵³ and wound up with a quite common sound.

B. Vowels

1. a^o

Of the three rules whereby a^o , e , and \bar{a} have now become a , e^v , and ao , the first is the oldest. The pronunciation \bar{a} for a^o is well established today in Charmey; one has to speak with the very oldest persons to hear a^o , and it has but a rudimentary o , produced by an articulatory movement having almost no corresponding sound. Generations II and III have suppressed all trace of the former sound, along with the movement of the speech organs. The number of persons who still say a^o can be estimated very approximately at 5 – 10 per cent. This a^o is a remnant of the old diphthong *ou*. It is found in words that had free $\bar{o}(\bar{u})$ or \bar{o} in Latin, whose outcomes have merged; thus in **volet*, *ovu*, *die jovis*, *novu-nova*, *novem*, *prode*, *lupu*, *illoru*, *nepote*, and especially in words having the suffixes *-ore*, *-osu* (as well as *-oriu*); then there are some cases of earlier $o + l$: *dulce*, *pollice*, *genuclu* and $o + \text{labial consonant}$ (*cubitu*), and $a + u$ (*maturu*), etc.

The earlier diphthong *ou* = *ao* could be a) final, b) internal, or c) in pretonic position.⁵⁴
For example,

a) *il veut* b) *neuve* c) *le loup te prendra*

Case a) was where the sound o first started out, followed by c), then b). It happens sometimes that a person who says $\bar{o} \bar{l}\bar{a}$ (*un loup*) will say $\bar{l}\bar{a} \bar{l}\bar{a}^o \text{ te pr}\bar{e}dr\bar{e}$ (*le loup te prendra*). Stress is the deciding factor; \bar{a} is stressed more strongly in $\bar{o} \bar{l}\bar{a}$ than within a sentence, and the extra sound is lost. Similarly o is maintained longer word-internally than word-finally, where energy is concentrated in the usurping sound. All of generation I (aged 60 to 90) still say *ma^ora* (*matura*),⁵⁵ *a^ora* (*hora*), *na^ova* (*nova*), *deva^ore* (*devorat*), *tra^ovo* (*turbo* = *je trouve*), *pa^odzo* (*pollice*), etc., with few exceptions the reason for which escapes me. Thus an old man of 68 says *pa^odzo* but *kādo* (*cubitu*); a woman of 85 says: *kār d'aora* (*quart d'heure*) ~ *katr'āre* (*quatre heures*), etc. These uncertainties prove that even in this position o began to disappear early. The subject's mood or desire to please are not without influence. I am not reluctant to attribute a share of the hesitation to myself; without equipment I was unable to monitor all the remnants of articulations and can only report on the acoustic effect as perceived by an ear for which I make no claims of infallibility. Nonetheless I do not think I am mistaken

on the essential points. Younger than 60, the inhabitants of Charmey say *pādzō*, *kādo*, etc. I encountered a trace of a diphthong in only one younger person, a man of 52, M. Niquille.⁵⁶ Some families are conservative in linguistic matters. All of the age brackets I mention are necessarily artificial to a degree.

Moreover, women in generation I drop the sound more easily than do the men. I was struck by this on many occasions, most notably when comparing the couple Laurent and Brigitte Rime, aged 59 and 63 respectively. In the sentence *la pomme est douce*, among others, he said *da^oθə*, and she said *dāθə*.

To observe *a^o* in final position one must talk to the very oldest inhabitants. And there are certain words where the second sound is absent in the speech of all subjects, as in *dzénā*, *névā* (genuclū, nepote), certainly due to the shifted stress; *lā* (illoru = *eux*), *prā* (prode = *beaucoup*), *vā* (volet);⁵⁷ *kolā* (colatoriu = *passoire*), *dzoyā* (gaudiosu) – these are words that tend to be stressed on the penultimate syllable.

Generations II and III, aside from the exception mentioned earlier (Niquille), have only forms with *ā* and no longer distinguish between internal and final *a^o*.

The sound *o* discussed in this section is barely perceptible and is often reduced, as I mentioned, to an articulatory movement with no acoustic result. Its disappearance from the first of the words affected is perhaps due, in Generation I, to an increase in intensity in articulating *ā*.⁵⁸ The cause of its disappearance in Generations II and III is probably different: I believe that Generation II, as children, did not repeat the sound *o* **because they did not hear it**, and their fathers and mothers, unconcerned by this slight divergence, **did not correct them**. Tiny differences between the pronunciation of the younger folk and that of their elders play a role in phonetic change, and should be attributed to the **ear**.⁵⁹ The action – or rather inaction – of this organ seems obvious to me in consonant *assimilation*. Rousselot, in the profound reflections which close his study on phonetic change in speech in the *Revue des patois gallo-romains* V, 412, speaks of the determinant principle of phonetic change: "*This principle is within the child...The change has been nurtured by the parents, [but] it only bursts forth in the children,*

when they gain possession of the language." These words apply to Generation I in Charmey, who are just continuing a trend begun by their ancestors; they do not apply, in our own special case, to the other generations, in whom the disappearance of the sound *o* should, in my opinion, be attributed more to the ear's inability than to an hereditary⁶⁰ diminution in the effort required.

Furthermore, Rousselot's position is perhaps not entirely accurate. Is the *principle* of change to be seen in the child's muscular exaggerations or neglect, or rather in the uncertain fumbings of the generation that initiates the change? I believe also that the language takes a decisive step forward with each new generation, but the first impetus, the one that triggers all change, must reside in the speech of adults. Childhood is at first only imitative and children participate in change by imitating poorly; but speech will only begin to deform and reform when the organs have firmed up and the new generation has gained full and free possession of its language. Phonetic laws are the interest yielded by the capital of expression. They are proportional to the amount of linguistic material available to the individual.⁶¹

2. *e*

Whereas in Broye, for example, the parallelism between Latin *ō, ǒ = a^(o)* and Latin *ē, ě = a^(e)* is complete, the Gruyère dialect today has reduced the outcome of *ō, ǒ* to a monophthong and has diphthongized the outcome of *ē, ě*. In Dompierre, *frigidu = fra^(e)* is becoming *frā*; in Charmey, on the other hand, *frę* is moving towards *frę^v*.

This rule affects words that in Latin had a free *ē (ĩ)* or *ě*, such as *tela, pre(hen)sa, pilu, medicu, mel*; *ē* + palatalized velar: *directu, tectu*; and finally a patois *ę* from quite diverse sources: *-ariu, -aria, a* of *carru, carne*, even *e + r* followed by a consonant: *ferru, hibernu*, etc. and the *e* of *mġere = *morit* and *pġe = porcu*, etc. The shift from *ę* to *e^v* is not found in words like *ęrba, męrda, pęrda (perđita)*, that is in closed syllables; even *pęra (petra)* seems to be an exception. The rule spares all the short *ę*'s of *verda, kreθrā* (*crescere*), *vġe (hodie)*, etc., which moreover have a different timbre, being more closed. Also exempt are all cases where *ę* is followed by *l* or *y*: *pęlo (pensile)*, *šęya (seta)*, *muneęa*

(moneta), etc. Finally, *e*'s that only recently acquired stress, such as *vwéři* = *guéri* (which many still pronounce *vwerî*) etc. are not subject to the rule.

The quality of the sound *e*, which is always long, is approximately that of French *ê* in *tête*. This sound is the outcome of a former diphthong *ei*. The first question is whether the pronunciation *e*^{y62} is an incipient or a disappearing diphthong. As young people say *e*^y with perfect regularity, while old people alternate between *e*^y and *e*, and as Gruyère dialects in general display *e*⁶³, it is certainly an incipient diphthong.⁶⁴

Between *e* and *e*^y is *e*^e, which I often remarked in listening to elderly people, but it is so difficult to distinguish between *e*^e and *y* that I have given up trying to maintain this difference, partly artificial, in my notations; I always write *e*^y every time I hear the parasitic sound.

The distribution of the two pronunciations is more arbitrary than for *a*^o and *a*. In general, one can say that young people (up to age 30) say *e*^y in all examples, with one notable exception which will be taken up below. Generations II and I display a broad mix, within which it is nonetheless easy to recognize that *e*^y is usually word-internal. Some families scrupulously maintain the old pronunciation *e*, like Laurent and Brigide Rime, 59 and 63 years old, in almost all examples.⁶⁵ The oldest inhabitant of the village, aged 87, has in this regard a more advanced pronunciation: I noted in his speech the words *fumē^yrə* (*fumaria* = *fumée*), *tsə^wdē^yrə* (*caldaria*), *mē^ydzo* (*medicu*). *lē^yvro* (*libru*), *lē^yvra* (*lepore*), *vē^yro* (*vitru*), *prē^ysa* (*prehensa*), *vē^yr* (*vídere* for *vidére*), *eθē^yla* (*stella*), *nē^y* (*nigru*), *šē^y* (*site*), but *tēla* (*tela*), *pēvro* (*pipere*), *fēvre* (*februriu*), *gurne* (*granariu*), (*ə*)*vē* (*hibernu*), *yē* (*heri*), *tsē* (*carru*), etc. Generation II has inconsistent pronunciation. Mme Tornare provided *mune^y* (*molinariu*), but also *ovrē* (*operariu*), *tē* (*tectu*), but then *frē^y* (*frigidu*), etc.

In one class of words *e*^y is produced by all speakers, with a few rare exceptions. These are words ending in -ena: *tsē^yna* (*catena*), *avē^yna* (*avena*), *plē^yna* (*plena*), etc.

The two older generations, especially Generation II, are going through what Rousselot calls "the critical moment" in change, when the application of the rule is still optional, while already marking certain preferences (word-internal).

The young people of Charmey hesitate in only *a single* series of words, for the type **er*. In some families the children say *tɛʷ* (*tectu*), *vɛʷ* (*videt*), etc., but *tʃɛ* (*caru*), *fɛ* (*ferru*), *ẽfɛ* (*infernu*), *yɛ* (*heri*), *əvɛ* (*hibernu*), etc. I even interviewed a family where one son (Reymond Chappallaz, age 19) said *ɛ* in these words, while the other (Oscar, age 25), said *ɛʷ*.

If the phonetic rule had come into being in Charmey itself, this exception would remain incomprehensible, for one can hardly countenance the influence of French or linked forms. Would the dialectal form *gurnɛʷ*, for example, owe its *ʷ* to the French word *grenier*? But then we would have to assume an analogous action of the *w* sound of *poivre* on *pɛvro* = *pɛʷvro*, or even an effect of French orthography! The linked form *vow* (*volet*) has not prevented the reduction of the stressed form *va^o* to *vā*; why then would the unstressed form *vey* (*videt*), in influencing *vɛ* = *vɛʷ* have such opposite effects? In the pronunciation of old people I have sought in vain a phonetic difference between *fɛ* (*ferru*) and *fɛ* (*fel*). The divergent pronunciation *fɛ fɛʷ* of young people therefore cannot be due to local tradition. There remains but one explanation: this is a rule that comes from far away, for example from Basse-Gruyère, where there is a distinction, as in French, between *fɛ* (*ferru*) and *fɛy* (*fel*).⁶⁶ This is one of the generalizing trends that tend to reduce the dialects of the canton to a single type, as we saw above with nasal vowels, etc.

In this case the transformation of *fɛ*, *əvɛ* (*ferru*, *hibernu*), etc. into *fɛʷ*, *əvɛʷ*, etc. by only a part of the population constitutes a fine example of what Schuchardt has called *phonetic analogy*. The words *pwɛ* (*porcu*), *vwɛ* (*voce*), etc. are in the same situation. The phonetic rule, attaining a new location, breaks loose and starts to apply to words that should be out of bounds.

It is curious to see *factu* fall into line as well. The old people regularly say *fɛ* (cfr. *braci* = *brɛ*, *radiu* = *rɛ*, etc.) and *fɛy* as a linked form. The preponderant use of this form

in unstressed position has removed it from the series *fɛ*, *brɛ*, *rɛ*, etc. and placed it with the words ending in *-ɛʸ* from *-ectu* (see note 30).

3. *ǣ*

Latin stressed *a*, free or checked, comes out as *ǣ*. Examples: *vadis* = *vǣ*, *pala* = *pǣla*, *cantare* = *tsǣtǣ*, *barba* = *bǣrba*, *parte* = *pǣ*, *barra* = *bǣra*, *die martis* = *dǣmǣ*, *pasquas* = *pǣtɕe*, *pasta* = *pǣθa*, etc. Exceptions are *cattu* = *tsa*, *quattuor* = *katro*, *saccu* = *ša*, and *habes*, *habet* = *ā*.⁶⁷

Thus all *a*'s appearing before *r* or *s* + consonant have merged with Latin free *a*, while the *a*'s of *cattu*, etc. have remained *a*. The exception is only an apparent one, for *ǣ* is the outcome only of *long a*, and before *r* and *s* + consonant, vowels, not only *a*, have lengthened over a vast region, cf. the difference in length between the French *pâte*, *quart* ~ *chat*, *sac* and cf. the rule as given by Salverda de Grave for the French dialects which have given rise to numerous Dutch words (*Rom.* XXX, 112).⁶⁸

The sound *ǣ* is very close to *ɔ* and it is often very difficult to detect a difference. In other villages, for example in Basse-Gruyère, in *kwɛtsu* country (the middle of the canton), the two have totally merged into *ɔ*.

Today, in Charmey, the sound *ǣ* is in the throes of disintegration and is becoming *ao*. One even hears *ow* frequently, especially at the end of the word and in proclisis: *ō now drɛʸ* = *un nez droit*. The ear can perceive several stages between the two extremes of pronunciation: *ǣ* - *ǣ^o* - *a^o* - *ao* - *aw* - *ow*. However, so as not to overly complicate my transcription, and since it is the mere presence of diphthongization that interests me, I will ignore these variants in my notations and will write *ao* in all cases where there is no longer a single sound. Once the path of diphthongization has been embarked upon, passage from one stage to the next is effortless. In summary, young people are now at the stage of *ao*, which is pronounced in a single emission. I have occasionally heard two syllables, as in *a|ono* (*asinu*), *ba|ora* (*barra*), *pa|otɕe* (*pasquas*), *tsa|ono* (*casnu*), uttered by two subjects aged 13. The vowel *ǣ*, when it is

maintained, is always long; in the diphthong the first element cedes a part of its length to the second, and in general the entire diphthong is shorter than the single sound whence it arose.

I have heard \bar{a} instead of ã from a single subject native of Charmey. M. Jacques Tornare, age 87, said $\tilde{o} \text{ kâr } d'a^{\circ}ra$ (*un quart d'heure*) and $al\bar{a}de$ (*allez*); except for these two examples, I always heard only ã from him, never *ao*. Could the two examples of *a* represent a stage even earlier than ã ? This is a possibility, for in interviewing Mariette Müller (who was at the time 93 years old, but has been dead now for three years) during my first visit to Charmey, I thought I heard several instances of \bar{a} , but I had such difficulty understanding the poor woman that I would not like to attach too much importance to my notes. She had just put her spindle away for good and, reading the Bible beside the coffin she had had made in advance, she was already no longer of this world.

The phenomenon of ã becoming *ao* has intrigued me greatly ever since my first visit to Gruyère. Among the shifting sounds of Charmey, it is the one that first struck me. In the beginning I was so intent on the idea that Latin *a* becomes ã in this dialect that I stubbornly continued to record ã until finally one word set me on the right track. While I was eliciting the names of the tools used for plaiting straw, on the table I noticed a little board. The woman braiding called it $\tilde{o} \text{ kaw}$. Not immediately recognizing the etymology of the word, I was forced to rely on my acoustic impression. A moment later, having learned that the little board was used to measure blades of straw for the plait, I realized the word came from Latin *quartu* (*quart d'aune* = 30 cm), and I was alert to ã - *ao*.

The appearance of *ao* is very inconsistent, especially in the middle generation. Among the older speakers I found subjects in whose speech ã is still intact; for example, M. Joseph Blanc, aged 68, who is considered in the village to be a model of good patois pronunciation. One woman of 85 pronounced only a single word with incipient diphthongization: *pala* = $p\text{ã}^{\circ}a$. A 72-year-old provided two examples: *plu pao* = *il ne pleut pas* and $b\text{ã}^{\circ}$ = *le bât*. A 59-year-old man already says *nao* (*nasu*), *bao* (*bât*), and once *tsãtao* (*cantare*), but otherwise uses ã regularly. As always, women set off more easily on the path of diphthongization than do men.

M^{me} Rime, 63 years old, provided three times more instances of *ao* than did her husband, aged 59. M^{me} Tornare, baker, aged 40, often says *ao*, whereas her husband, only one year older, has it only as the ending of a few infinitives. Comparing the pronunciation of a 30-year-old woman to that of a man the same age, one will almost always find clear diphthongization in the woman, and a mixture in the man. The last generation, that is all the children, follow their mothers and have *ao* definitively. There is good reason for the expression "mother tongue"! In the country, a father leaves the house early to do his work, and is seen doing it throughout the day, taciturn and often isolated. In the summer he spends more time talking to his animals than to his children. A mother spends far more time in the home, in company, cooking and washing, and she speaks much more. If one has to say the word *pāla* 10,000 times before one winds up saying *paola*, the new pronunciation will obviously appear sooner in a woman's speech than in the more infrequent and slower speech of a man.⁶⁹ Since a language is learned in the home and not out in the fields, it is clear that children will follow the example set by their mothers.⁷⁰

I did not note a predilection in my subjects for *ao* in proclisis or internal position. M^{me} Tornare for example says *ši de me fow mō = ce doigt me fait mal*, *tχow na püdz = tuer une puce*, etc. Still, the fact that the most advanced stage *ow* is found in proclisis does not prove that change was earlier in this position; it merely indicates that in proclisis the vocal scale is easier to run through than in a stressed position. I consider proclitic diphthongization as secondary and, in fact, I did not find it in persons who had not changed their stressed *ā*.

M. Tornare says *ao* for *ā* only in the infinitive. This must be a matter of mere chance.

In theory, diphthongization should be the result of a change in stress. It is impossible for me to demonstrate this in the present case. In the meantime, I tried to see whether certain consonantal environments were not likely to foster change. Here is what I found.

The oldest subjects tend to say *ao* before or after a labial consonant. The subject Limat, originally from Vaud canton, who usually says *ā* and not *ā̃*, said *ehrāb̃lo*, *χlā̃*, *fāvr*, *tsātā̃*, etc., but *fumā̃*, *bā̃*, *nā̃*, *pā̃*, with a marked preference for *ā̃* in the environment of a labial. M^{me} Louise Rime, age 46, usually says *ā̃*, but says *tsaono*, *dāmao (mardi)*, *baō*. A girl of 13 tended to say

pādzō (*pouce*) rather than *pādzo*. This same tendency has been found elsewhere. Perhaps Latin *a* changed to *ā* first under the influence of labials, and under this same influence the new sound *ā* has now embarked on the change *ā* – *ao*.

What we call a sound is in reality the sum of combined articulations: only the ear perceives a single sound. Just as a line that seems straight to the naked eye appears wavy under a magnifying glass, each vowel, especially a long one, contains the elements of a diphthong. In addition to the characteristic and roughly regular curves corresponding to vibrations of the tongue, the physiological analysis of a vowel in isolation shows three periods of movement: *tension, holding, release*. These three periods are quite visible, for example, in figure 158 (the low vowel *a*) in Rousselot's book (*Principes* II, p. 355). The tongue rises gradually, to a distance of 5 mm (in the graph this corresponds to an actual movement of 0.31 mm) from the resting position. Pitch varies between #₁ and re₂. A slight change in intensity creates a diphthong (see p. 368 and 369, graph of the vowel *é*). Conditions are complicated greatly when the vowel is preceded or followed by a consonant. If, in articulating the *ā* of *āno* (*asīnu*), we partially anticipate the closure of the lower jaw⁷¹ necessary for *n*, the final part of the sound *ā* will become slightly more closed and we will have *ā^o* – that is, the first stage in the change *ā* – *ow*. I admit, however, that this explanation holds only for *ā* + labial; a preceding labial would give *oā* instead.

Whether or not the starting point is a partial assimilation of *ā* to a neighbouring sound, one cannot resort to the general law of least effort which is often invoked to explain linguistic change. Even allowing an imperfect attempt at assimilation, *ao* involves greater effort than *ā*: the *a* component requires that the mouth be opened more than before, and two sounds are articulated instead of one. Only breath intensity seems to be diminished. Comparing the change from *pālā* (*palata*) to *paolaoy^o*, bringing both phonetics and analogy into play, one is obliged to recognize that linguistic change does not tend exclusively to *shortening* and *flattening*.⁷²

The rule under discussion has also brought about another complication, in the speech of some young subjects. In general, young people say words like *pwōrta*, *kwō*, *pwōrte* (the noun *porta*, *corpus*, the verb *portat*) etc. as do the other generations. However, subjects Pierre

Rime (age 13), Louis Rime⁷³ (13), André Pipoz (15), César Rime (11), Marie Repond (15), Céline Chollet (14), Emma Tornare (13), and probably a great many others, say *pwaorta*, *kwao*, *pwaorte*, etc. This is another instance of *phonetic analogy*, more interesting than *fɛ*, *əvɛ* – *fɛʷ*, *əvɛʷ* mentioned above, for this time, the law covers not only all existing *ɑ*'s but also *ō*, the closest sound.

VI. Conclusion

I have far from exhausted my subject. I might have dwelled longer on certain trends I perceived in the younger generation's speech, such as the progressive lengthening of some previously unstressed vowels that are now stressed: *tsāvɔ* (*caballu*), *vwēri* (*waritu*), etc., or that of a few consonants: *dəlō* (*die lunae*); on the palatalization of *n* in *vini* = *viñi* (*venire*), which is becoming more and more widespread; on cases of metathesis: *fəniθra* becomes *fərniθa* by way of *fərniθra*, *fərmya* – *frəmya* by way of *fṛmya*; and on other, apparently individual, phenomena.⁷⁴ However, my material on these topics is insufficient and I am eager to finish. I beg just to be allowed to summarize my observations in a few conclusions, which I offer for what they are worth, given the narrowness of my field of investigation. Although recollections of my many dialectological wanderings tell me that the same conditions are found just about everywhere, I do not wish to overgeneralize the results of this survey undertaken in a single village, and my conclusions apply primarily to the speech of Charmey. The constituent elements of a village dialect are the same elsewhere, but may combine in different ways. There are patois that have been dominated by French to a greater extent, in which phonetic rules have affected other less obvious cases, where the population is more diverse, where the proximity of several dialect types brings about the kind of diversity that I have not had occasion to discuss. The degree of unity will thus not be the same in other villages.

It is important to note, however, that in Charmey, where conditions are all rather favourable for unity, diversity is much greater than I would have imagined after a short visit. Zimmerli's wordlist, for example, quite uniform and consistent with lists from other parts of the canton, betrays not the slightest discord. All Latin *a*'s appear as *ɑ*; there is no trace of this

sound's dismemberment or the uncertainty in the alternation between \hat{a} and ao in the middle generation's speech. The reason is that Zimmerli transcribes but a single individual's speech, which he unconsciously makes consistent, as any one of us might do when unwilling and unable to undertake an in-depth study. Zimmerli's purpose was not a detailed comparison of these dialects; he was studying the French-German border in past and present.

Upon a closer look, unity in the Charmey dialect proves non-existent. The influence of French is felt a little in inflection, a great deal in syntax, and very strongly indeed in the lexicon. One hears of other Fribourg dialects which, without exerting a significant influence on the evolution of the Charmey dialect, have a somewhat detrimental effect on its unity through the retention of foreign pronunciations, despite the greatest wish for assimilation. Analogy has created all kinds of morphological forms which continue to compete for primacy. The language has ceased to enrich its lexicological stock, but its rich heritage offers several terms to express the same concept more often than one might think. A single word may be pronounced differently by all the inhabitants of the village, from the oldest to the youngest, depending on sentence rhythm. Last but not least, the dialect is subject to a good half-dozen phonetic rules, some of which are quite typical ($\theta = h$, $e = e^v$, $\hat{a} = ao$) and affect a very large part of the vocabulary ($\hat{a} = ao$). And all this does not include the tiny phonetic inflections of each individual, differences in internal language which govern the selection of words and forms, regulate the rate of speech, etc.

Let us evaluate in turn each of the elements that have a part in the destruction of the dialect's unity.

Borrowings from French separate the young from the old, and are symptoms of a cultural transformation which does not concern us here. They do not alarm the population of Charmey, which is more than tolerant of the standard language. The subject Pillonel and the teacher Dessarzen have been able to maintain their foreign accents intact or partially so, without encountering the slightest hostility from their fellow citizens. Ordinarily there are not cases like the one reported by Wechssler (p. 377, n. 2), where a young student from foreign parts was

persecuted because of his dialect. Nothing in Charmey indicates a tendency to force foreign elements to assimilate. Wechssler, though far from elevating this necessity to a principle, still goes too far when he speaks of an authoritarian tendency among the strongest.⁷⁵ I would prefer to speak of an involuntary tendency to assimilate on the part of the weakest, newcomers who have great difficulty retaining their old phonetic habits, as shown by the case of the subject Limat. Morphological and lexical differences do not stand out. In almost all cases, these are forms or words that are linked in the mind of the speaker, who could just as well have used the other form or word. Their use is not a distinctive criterion for a group of inhabitants. Some verbal forms, however, belong exclusively to the young, but there are not many of them. The rules that govern phonetic doublets of the type *i vā = i veut ~ i vu alā = il veut aller* leave little room for individual variation. Marginal cases, like *ā* or *u de pātxe (oeuf de Pâques)* are rare, and the choice of one or another of the phonetic variants is usually decided in advance. This rule, observed by all speakers almost identically, disturbs the phonetic unity of the patois of Charmey only in that the pronunciation of linked forms is not identical from one generation to the next. The older people still say *pχow pā = pleut pas*, while those under 60 say *pχu pā*, etc. This difference is minimal. There remain those phonetic rules which, exceptionally, because of their incisive and universal nature, do constitute a strong attack on the unity of local speech. Still, we must not exaggerate. Consonants are the stable element of the language.⁷⁶ The rule replacing *ʔ* with *y* is the only strict one. The loss of *v* and the change of *θ* to *h* are still too capricious to weigh in the balance; *θ = h*, while readily observable, is still just beginning. Vowel change is evinced in but three observable rules, of which one, *a° = ā*, is hardly perceptible; the others, *e = e°*, *ā = ao*, distinguish quite clearly the middle and especially the youngest generation from the oldest one.

The degree of diversity in the Charmey dialect can thus be summarized by the following table:

		Generation I age 60 - 90	Generation II age 30 - 60	Generation III age 30 and under
Consonants	<i>t</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>t</i> and <i>y</i>	<i>y</i>
	<i>θ</i>	<i>θ</i> , but <i>hōw</i> , <i>ha</i> = <i>ces</i> , <i>cette</i>	<i>θ</i> , but <i>hu</i> , <i>ha</i> rarely <i>ho</i> = interrogative <i>tu</i>	<i>θ</i> , but <i>hu</i> , <i>ha</i> fairly often <i>ho</i> , <i>hə</i> = interrogative <i>tu</i> , <i>il</i>
	<i>θr</i>	<i>θr</i>	<i>θr</i> , rarely <i>hr</i>	ditto
Vowels	<i>a^o</i>	<i>a^o*</i> (and <i>ā*</i>)	<i>ā*</i>	<i>ā*</i>
	<i>e</i>	<i>e^{**}</i> (and <i>e^{v**}</i>)	<i>e^{**}</i> and <i>e^{v**}</i>	<i>e^{v**}</i>
	<i>ā</i>	<i>ā***</i>	<i>ā***</i> and <i>ao***</i>	<i>ao***</i>

The number of asterisks indicates the importance of the phenomenon. In regard to the phonetic laws in action at present, note first of all the relative unity in generations I and III, compared to the high degree of hesitation in generation II. The period of greatest expansion for phonetic laws is from the ages of 30 to 60, when one speaks energetically and has something to say.

This table, which is of course only an approximation, is more accurate for men than for **women**, who often anticipate the outcome of the next column (see sections V.A.1, V.A.3, V.B.1 and V.B.3). I would attach less importance to this small discovery if the history of the French language did not confirm this trend. We lack data on Old French, but some benefit could be derived from studying the rhymes of female poets with this in mind. However, I note in passing that the first critique of pronunciation was put in the mouth of a woman, queen Aélis of Champagne: "*La roïne n'a pas fait que cortoise, qui me reprist, ele et ses fiz li rois. Encor ne soit ma parole françoise, si la puet on bien entendre en françois*" (*The queen did not act in*

courteous fashion when she berated me, she and her son the king. Although my language is not French, it can be understood well in French.) (Conon de Béthune, *Mout me semont Amors*, in 1182). Some carelessness, especially in inflection, begins to show up in the speech of Marie de France. Thurot's work shows a number of passages, all proving that women were quick to embrace any linguistic innovation.⁷⁷ I cite the main passages, in the order they appear in the two volumes.

I, 3. Tory: "The women of Paris say *e* often instead of *a* when they say: *Mon mery est a la porte de Peris ou il se fait peier*."

I, 205. Restaut: "the double *ss* that ends the imperfect subjunctive of all verbs should always be strongly articulated...Nonetheless, it is very frequently omitted, and there is nothing more common every day than hearing a number of good people, especially the ladies, say *il fallait que j'écrivis, il voulait que j'allas avec lui, il attendoit que j'eus dîne*".

II, 24-25. Tory: "the ladies of Paris, for the most part, observe the poetic figure of apostrophe [i.e. deletion] very well, dropping the final *s* in many words; when instead of saying *nous auons disne en ung jardin, et y auons menge des prunes blanches et noires, des amendes doulces et ameres, des figues molles, des pommes, des poires et des gruselles*, they do say and pronounce *nous auon disne en ung iardin, e y auon menge des prune blanche et noire, des amende doulce et amere, des figue molle, des pome, des poyre et des gruselle*."

II, 169. Villecomte: women "sometimes are negligent to the point of saying *c'est un menteu, c'est un causeu, c'est un craqueu*, etc."

II, 271. Erasmus. "Idem faciunt hodie mulierculae Parisinae, pro *Maria* sonantes *Masia*, pro *ma mere*, *ma mese*."

II, 276. Poitiers. "Some affected women say *pindaliser*" (for *pindariser*).

Domergue: "Un lapin *angola*, say the women."

II, 300. Boulliette: We see "many people, especially soft and delicate women, who say *li* instead of *ill* [4] and say *consélier, feuliage, boulion*."

II, 479. Du Val berated Parisian women for saying "*cousaine, raçaine, voisaine*, instead of *cousine*, etc."

Other citations can be found by consulting the index (under *dames, commères, femmes, Arthénice*). The *Précieuses* of the 17th century probably had a fairly strong influence on pronunciation. They are commonly credited with the use of uvular *r*, which they did not invent but adopted to distinguish themselves from the vulgar masses, who used a rolled *r*. Today this sound continues to conquer urban areas especially, and is spreading widely outside France, especially in Northern Europe. We are witnessing an international phonetic movement, and it will be interesting to study its gradual spread in detail.

According to our table, the only notable variation is that separating the generations. I observed no difference among the various neighbourhoods of Charmey, despite the fact they are distant from one another. I was very surprised to find, in the neighbouring village of Cerniat at the foot of the Berra, on the other bank of a mountain stream called Javroz, about three quarters of an hour from Charmey, phonetic conditions that were absolutely identical.⁷⁸ In Cerniat the speech of young people diverges from that of old people in the same way and to the same extent as in Charmey. The speech of two old men, one from each village, is more alike than that of two individuals of different generations from the same village. A single phonetic shift is under way in both locations. This is all the more curious in that there is no mixing and little contact between the populations of the two villages. Yet the pronunciation of young people is so consistent, it is as if they had conspired. One can treat the Charmey dialect as unified only by establishing an average among the different generations, selecting for example the middle generation. From the perspective of an exact science, this generation is only roughly representative of the actual speech of Charmey. Observation of the same circumstances elsewhere makes the establishment of a Charmey type even more illusory. Strictly speaking, there is no unity in the speech of Charmey, because the generations do not agree, and unity is even less of a reality because other villages have come to the same point in linguistic evolution.⁷⁹

This can be demonstrated by comparing the following forms:

	Charmey Niquille Louis age 52	Cerniat Charrière Louis age 51	Cerniat Overney Ernest age 15	Charmey Pipoz André age 15
<i>le miel</i>	<i>lə məʸ</i>	<i>lə mə</i>	<i>lə məʸ</i>	<i>lə məʸ</i>
<i>est doux</i>	<i>ʔe dā</i>	<i>ʔe (ye) dā</i>	<i>ʔe dā</i>	<i>le dā</i>
<i>neuf</i>	<i>nəw</i>	<i>nəw</i>	<i>nu</i>	<i>nu</i>
<i>pommes</i>	<i>pəme</i>	<i>pəme</i>	<i>pəme</i>	<i>pəme</i>
<i>un bon</i>	<i>õ bõ</i>	<i>õ bõ</i>	<i>õ bõⁿ</i>	<i>õ bõⁿ</i>
<i>livre</i>	<i>ləʸvro</i>	<i>ləvro</i>	<i>ləʸvro</i>	<i>ləʸvro</i>
<i>l'âne</i>	<i>l'āno</i>	<i>l'āno</i>	<i>l'aono</i>	<i>l'aono</i>
<i>a perdu</i>	<i>ʔa pərdu</i>	<i>ʔa pərdu</i>	<i>ʔa pərdu</i>	<i>ʔa pərdu</i>
<i>son bât</i>	<i>šõ bā (-bao)</i>	<i>šõ bā</i>	<i>šõ bao</i>	<i>šõ bao</i>
<i>chaudière</i>	<i>tsəwdeʸr</i>	<i>tsəwdeʸr</i>	<i>tsudeʸr</i>	<i>tsudeʸr</i>
<i>il chantait</i>	<i>tsātāve</i>	<i>tsātāve</i>	<i>tsāⁿtaove</i>	<i>tsātaove</i>
<i>un oeuf</i>	<i>õn a^o</i>	<i>õn ā</i>	<i>õⁿn u</i>	<i>õⁿn ā</i>
<i>de Pâques</i>	<i>de pātɕe</i>	<i>de pātɕe</i>	<i>de paotɕe</i>	<i>de paotɕe</i>
<i>une belle</i>	<i>õ bi</i>	<i>õ bi</i>	<i>õⁿ bi</i>	<i>õⁿ bi</i>
<i>paire</i>	<i>pā</i>	<i>pā</i>	<i>pao</i>	<i>pao</i>
<i>de boeufs</i>	<i>de bā</i>	<i>de bā</i>	<i>de bā</i>	<i>de bā</i>
<i>en veux-tu</i>	<i>ně vəwθo</i>	<i>ně vuθo</i>	<i>ně vuθo</i>	<i>ně vuθo</i>
<i>des fèves</i>	<i>dey fāve</i>	<i>dī fāve</i>	<i>dī faove</i>	<i>dī faove</i>

A few individual differences are noted. Thus, in comparison to Charrière, Niquille has a more advanced pronunciation of $e = e^v$, and is behind for $a^o = \bar{a}$, but the phonetic shift is absolutely identical.

This mysterious link connecting the two villages is proof that it is a mistake to attribute phonetic changes solely to the transmission of language from one generation to another; how could it be, then, that the young people of both Charmey and Cerniat have decided to differ from the speech of their parents in exactly the same details? This agreement remains inexplicable unless one recognizes a principle common to several locations which, each independently of the others, undergo speech change in identical ways, not by generalizing their own carelessness but in obedience to a higher law. Nor do I understand how one could conclude that the children of a single village have all decided to make the same mistakes, unless they are continuing a tradition. In recent works on phonetic rules, too much stress has been placed on the role of children. Passy (*Études sur les changements phonétiques et leurs caractères généraux*, p. 231) claims that "all perceptible phonetic changes – all those which we may account for – begin with the child", and he cites Darmesteter (*Vie des mots*, p. 7): "The child alters and corrupts words that he is still unable to pronounce. Oftentimes he is corrected by parents or teachers, sometimes he may correct himself; but still more frequently he maintains as he grows older his own original pronunciation errors and reaches manhood with faulty pronunciation. These corruptions spread from the individual to the contemporaneous generation in the family, the village, the town, the district. Like an oil stain they spread until they are facts of the language."⁸⁰ Similarly, H. Paul (*Prinzipien* p. 58): "Man wird wohl sagen können, dass die *Hauptveranlassung* zum Lautwandel in der Übertragung der Laute auf neue Individuen liegt." I myself cannot endorse this perspective. It is too facile a solution to an important problem that will occupy philology for as long as it exists. Note also that this theory is not satisfactory to its defenders either. Passy is quick to add a note to his categorical law: "except perhaps a certain number of reductions." Increases in intensity (for example, diphthongization) would thus be attributed to children who have mispronounced – pronounced with too much energy, all of them, the frail as well as the

robust – whereas reductions (for example, the loss of a consonant?) would be partially due to adults. The irregularity and excessive arbitrariness of this system are obvious. Phonetic laws, in my opinion, are not identical to the *errors* of children's pronunciation, that is, to phenomena such as *yēs mwa* for *laisse-moi*, *pizin'*, *epal* for *cuisine*, *étoile*. These errors made by young French children are *potential* phonetic changes that are found as generic laws in certain phases of Romance, but in no way indicate *the current progression of the French language*. The child word *trōkiy* = *tranquille* (Passy, p. 233) contains two errors, one individual and non-symptomatic (*l* = *y*), the other generic, indicative of the movement in common speech (*ã* = *õ*). The child says *õ* because of an evolving phonetic law. He hears it said around him and is predisposed to pronounce this way.

Did those Parisian ladies who say *œ* instead of *o*, a characteristic that "seems to stem from their habit of smiling in an affected manner" (Passy, p. 248) all acquire this bad habit in their childhood? What ill wind was it that made all the young ladies of Paris smile in an affected way? Lastly, if the law formulated by Passy were true and correct, able to dispel all mystery, why does the author himself, at the end of his study, allow himself this frank admission: "In summary, what we know of the primary causes of phonetic change is very little indeed." I couldn't have said it better myself! But then he should not have claimed two pages later in his summary that "the main cause of this instability is children's imperfect imitation of the language of adults".

Rousselot's claim that the principle of evolution is present in the child has a totally different orientation (*Revue des patois g. r.* V, 412), for he goes on to speak of absolute and hereditary tendencies. Wechsler does not seem to have understood, for he classifies Rousselot among the partisans of the "*Einübungstheorie*".

The change of *â* to *ao* is not unique to Charmey and Cerniat; I have encountered it in several other locations in the canton of Fribourg, as far away as Cugy, near Estavayer. Must one necessarily suppose an unbroken chain of speakers from Charmey to Cugy using *ao* instead of *â*? I believe it would be extremely difficult to demonstrate personal links connecting these two

villages. In the absence of a relationship among persons, could not one consider a relationship among things? Could not a language contain within itself the elements of change, in its phonological make-up? Could this not be the best way to explain the perfect agreement between Charmey and Cerniat, and the partial agreement between two villages as distant from one another as Charmey and Cugy? Could one not think that a language possessing consonant clusters such as *pk*, *ts*, etc. is subject to assimilations for as long as these clusters remain; and after their reduction to *k*, *s*, etc. it will tend toward voicing, etc.? Thus phonetic rules dovetail, and current trends are but the most recent consequence of earlier ones.⁸¹

The table given above proves, for Charmey at least, that phonetic rules influence several generations; they are, for example, more or less latent in the first generation, appear irregularly in the second, and spread triumphantly in the third. Other rules come into being among the youngest generation (for example, *tsɔ* = *tsɔ^w*, from *calidu*) and still display inconsistent and variable effects. Our materials force us to seek the immediate motivations for a phonetic rule *within a single generation*. In Charmey, the active role of the child consists in generalizing a fact that appears capricious in the mother's pronunciation. The most striking example among those analysed seems to me to be the change from *a^o* to *ā*, where one can truly speak of imperfect imitation. This is a case of *discontinuity* from one generation to another. In the change from *ā* to *ao*, we have a case of *transition* by stages.

To explain the agreement among children, instigators of phonetic change according to the theory of incorrect imitation ("*Einübungstheorie*"), Wundt and his partisans invoke the influence of certain individuals who supposedly have more authority than others. Not surprising from a psychologist! Phonetic changes would appear first in the *individual*, and then under favourable conditions become widespread. Delbrück, in *Grundfragen*, p. 98, writes: "Den hauptsächlichsten Grund, warum die Mehreren den Wenigen nachahmen, darf man wohl in dem persönlichen Einfluss der Wenigen suchen." But then, how can the learner's change in articulation be explained, and how is it that these learners become influential? Do you have to be the child of a rich family or a schoolteacher to play a role in language change?

Our materials provide no hint of personal influence. The phrase *dow pã* (*du pain*) may become *du pã* in the speech of any person. The erroneous pronunciation *du pã* becomes the rule only after having been made independently by a great number of individuals. Only generic divergences have hopes of becoming established. What indeed is the result of my work at Charmey? I made a summary study of about 50 *individual languages* and found nothing that was individual.

I will not exclude imitation from my system. Without imitation, it is impossible to explain how emigrating rules become established in new homes; I have perhaps been mistaken to view changes that actually come from afar as spontaneous. But in any case, imitation is usually *unconscious*. Even rules such as those that change *vuθo* (*veux-tu*) to *vuho*, which the observer notes effortlessly, are totally imperceptible to locals. A subject who has just uttered *vuho* will protest that he never says such a thing. As Rousselot (*Principes* I, 35) says so well: "In general, the speaker is not interested in *how* one speaks, but *what* one says. As soon as meaning is clear in the mind, sound is ignored. It follows that, without having undertaken a special study, no one is aware of how he himself speaks nor (aside from special cases) of how others speak." One family in Charmey, whose members belonged to all different age groups, were quite surprised to learn of their lack of unity, when I tried to show them the nuances of pronunciation that distinguished each one's speech from the others'. So, cried one of the sons, we don't speak the same language! But he said it as a joke and a tactful way of pointing out to the poor philologist that none of these differences was of the slightest importance. The peasant has no respect for his patois; he might correct blatant mistakes he notices in the speech of one of his children, for fear of ridicule, but he will not hear, much less censure, the details of genuine phonetic change which subtly differentiate the generations.

Lastly, the state of affairs that I observed in Charmey does not support those who still believe in the infallibility of phonetic laws. Individuals do not play a major role in language change, but words do. In discussing the issue of $\theta = h$, we saw that first $\theta\phi w = ces$ succumbed, then $\theta a = cette$, then *vuθo*, etc. = *veux-tu*, $\theta r = hr$, and the stage of complete change of θ to *h*,

which exists elsewhere, has not yet arrived in Charmey. Instead of constantly seeking the reasons why certain words escape the effect of phonetic laws, would it not be worthwhile to ask, for once, why these laws have such a radical effect? This seems to me to be equally difficult to comprehend. Schuchardt's pamphlet, *Über die Lautgesetze*, remains for me the philologist's bible. So thoroughly have I adopted its views that I have not quoted them in this study, and I beg the author's pardon for this. My work is but an illustration of the formulas he established based on an enormous amount of data from languages having the most diverse range of structures. The agreement between his formulas and my observations of the dialect of a single village is what validates the publication of these few conclusions. But I would be remiss to close without mentioning the man who introduced me to all these difficult problems, my venerated master and friend, Heinrich Morf, from whom I learned that the smallest linguistic fact is capable of leading to a major conclusion.⁸²

L. Gauchat

Berne

NOTES

¹ *Gibt es Mundartgrenzen?* in *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen*, 1904, CXI, pp. 365 ff.

² This is not the case for syntax and lexicon.

³ *Die deutsch-französische Sprachgrenze in der Schweiz*, Part III.

⁴ Contradictions that come to light when one is scrutinizing the data often lead to insights.

⁵ *Beiträge zur Kenntnis des Neuchâteller Patois*, Darmstadt, 1897.

⁶ His subject may have pronounced the word and those accompanying it as recorded, under the influence of French. Urtel elicited the entire series (dentes, gentes, centu, tempus, etc.) thereafter, so that the forms influenced one another. It is preferable to separate identical cases, grouping words in sentences.

⁷ *Die romanischen Mundarten der Südwestschweiz* I, p. 16.

⁸ With the sound *ɑ̃*, he is probably anticipating a development the Lignièrès dialect would have undergone had it not disappeared. I have found this trend of *a* moving toward *ɑ̃* in the neighbouring locations of Nods and le Landeron, and Haefelin noted it in Fenin (Val-de-Ruz, *loc. cit.*, p. 10). On the other side of lake Neuchâtel, *ɑ̃* is the norm, for example in Estavayer.

⁹ Cf. Rousselot's excellent article, *Éducation de l'oreille*, in his *Principes de phonétique expérimentale* I, 34 ff.

¹⁰ Rousselot, *Principes* II, 321: "...although I have never confused *ly* and palatal *l*, *ny* and palatal *n*, still I was unable to distinguish clearly between *ty* and palatal *t*, *dy* and palatal *d*, until I observed on artificial palates the difference of articulatory movements between the two".

¹¹ Rousselot, *Principes* I, 37, says the foreigner is "extremely hard of hearing when it comes to unfamiliar sounds".

¹² This is why the data in the *Atlas linguistique de la France* inspire some doubt.

¹³ Morf rightly stresses the value of dialectology as training for the ear in his admirable methodological treatise, *Die Untersuchung lebender Mundarten und ihre Bedeutung für den akademischen Unterricht*, *Zeitschr. f. neufr. Spr. u. Litt.* X, p. 187-207.

¹⁴ In this regard see Rousselot's comments, *Principes* I, 318 ff.: *Choix des sujets à expériences*.

¹⁵ This time will come; note the synthesis machines of Willis, etc., described in Rousselot's *Principes* I, 166 ff.

¹⁶ Rousselot's suggestion for an apparatus to replace them in the field (*Principes* I, 77-78) is but a makeshift solution.

¹⁷ The old pronunciation is definitely *o*, and I will note it as such in following pages, to avoid complicating the transcription.

¹⁸ I must admit that a few of my sentences were poorly chosen in terms of dialectal purity. My subjects informed me too late that in patois one doesn't say "il porte la barbe", but rather "il a la barbe" or "il laisse la barbe". Most of them, however, translated the sentence without objection. The most unfortunate of my sentences was *cette écurie est claire*, which my subjects translated

as follows: "l'étable est bien éclairée, on voit bien beau dans cette étable, c'est une étable qu'on voit beau", etc.

¹⁹ These two examples are from a young subject, a poor informant.

²⁰ That is, a good number of the variants we will mention probably arose elsewhere but gained legitimacy fairly rapidly.

²¹ A special form, created under the influence of the subjunctive of the verb *être* (and *stare*?).

²² Except for the processes of *derivation*, of which I found not a trace.

²³ An old woman of 85 claimed never to have heard it.

²⁴ *~pudra* = gunpowder.

²⁵ Birds of prey are scarcer these days, which accounts for the younger subjects' ignorance. Nor do young people know botanical names in patois. They are gradually becoming separated from nature, with which man formerly lived in harmony, and are instead becoming familiar with the world of machines.

²⁶ The first form is preferred; *truyə* has taken on a pejorative sense = woman of low morals, etc.

²⁷ On this whole issue of the life of words, see Nyrop's book, as amusing as it is instructive, translated into German by Vogt: *Das Leben der Wörter*, Leipzig, Avenarius, 1903.

²⁸ This is, by the way, the primitive sense of the word.

²⁹ He is mistaken in thinking the phenomenon to be limited to this part of the canton.

³⁰ With this exception, the outcome of *a + yod = ɛ* is unchanged; *factu* seems to have been influenced by the many participles ending in *-ectu* where **ei* is variable.

³¹ Cfr. *corteisie* alongside *cortois* in Chrétien de Troyes, Cligès, Förster's shorter edition, p. XLIV.

³² The following examples are based on an average pronunciation; see details in section V.

³³ This corresponds to category 2 in Dompierre, with no change in articulation in Charmey.

³⁴ See below for a restriction.

³⁵ This word is just as fluid as *habere*, with which it shares the same phonic structure.

³⁶ Depending on the rate of speech. The influence of stressed forms can counteract the tendency to reduction.

³⁷ Some of which have already been cited.

³⁸ The form *rey*, from *radice*, is found in the same conditions. This word exists only in an unstressed form in the expressions *rey d'abōdāθə* = betterave, *rey de dzēθāna* = racine de gentiane, *rey rošeta* = carotte jaune, *rey rodžə* = radis rouge (pronunciation of an old person). Young people use the form *ri* with the last two terms because of the stress pattern ˘˘ or ˘˘˘; in the first two terms the form *rey* has prevailed (˘˘˘˘). Under stress, *radice* would probably have given **raits -raits - *rɛ - *rɛ*. The usual word for *racine* is *rāθəna*.

³⁹ It seems unlikely to me that the old people would have learned to say *du pã*, etc. from young people.

⁴⁰ Actually the acoustic impression of an unstressed *ɔw* pronounced rapidly is that of *u*. I was unable to detect *uw*, despite the closest attention on my part, and yet this transitory articulation between *ɔw* and *u* must have been produced in my hearing.

⁴¹ For example, *glacie* = *ɬɛšə*.

⁴² Mme. Tornare (aged 40) said e.g. *plɛ* (*plenu*), but *eθrābyo* (*stabulu*), and *yɛšə* (*glacie*).

⁴³ *libru*, *febre*, etc. never lose their *v*.

⁴⁴ The very old say *lěvŵe*, cfr. *aqua* = *ivŵe*, with all inhabitants having an *e* today. The *e* seems to be due to the preceding *ŵ*. In *ivŵe*, a very frequent form, this feature was preserved; in the other word, *e* was replaced with the usual feminine ending.

⁴⁵ The oldest one is 87.

⁴⁶ The northernmost villages having the form *ecce illorum* are Orvin: *saw*; Plagne: *say*; Péry: *sɔ*; and the Vallon de St. Imier. For the vowel, formerly *ou*, compare the development of *paucu* (**pou*) = *paw*, *pay*, *pɔ* in the same locations.

⁴⁷ Nothing can be determined from old texts, such as the *Églogues de Virgile*, translated into Gruyerien in the 18th century by the lawyer Python. This text shows *h* for *θ* as well as for our *h*. *hous* was very probably pronounced *θow*.

⁴⁸ These dates are obviously very approximate, for one can assume that a phenomenon beginning, say, in 1880 affected the pronunciation of all individuals living then except for a few holdouts.

⁴⁹ Instead of *h*, a rougher aspiration is sometimes heard, resembling the sound *ch* in German *ach*. This is explained by anticipation of raising the back of the tongue to say *o*. The vocal tract becomes somewhat narrower.

⁵⁰ Had he learned this pronunciation from young people?

⁵¹ This comparison, which seems so natural, is often used. Wechsler, *Gibt es Lautgesetze*, in the *Festgabe Suchier*, p. 482 fn., has asked that we refrain from making poetic comparisons in our scientific writings. But we often need them to make ourselves understood.

⁵² Perhaps also in *hə = aɪtʊ*, where the *h* may be just as old.

⁵³ This recalls Wulff's famous *an[are]*!

⁵⁴ This must not be confused with *liaison*, § IV.

⁵⁵ Often *o* acquires more body in this position, and one hears *mawra*, etc.

⁵⁶ We have already observed his tendency towards archaisms, section IV.B.

⁵⁷ In these last examples the influence of frequency of use could be considered.

⁵⁸ We do not know the fundamental cause of this increase in intensity.

⁵⁹ Since so many parents tolerate lisping and other pronunciation faults, we should not be surprised that they are indulgent towards pronunciations they themselves are not sure of.

⁶⁰ The principle of heredity in phonetic change is not widely accepted, cf., among others, Wechsler, *Gibt es Lautgesetze?*, p. 378: "Unsere Aussprache beruht also nur auf Nachahmung mittels des Gehörs."

⁶¹ And even to the number of speakers.

⁶² In the diphthong the *ɛ* loses some of its length and becomes a bit more closed, under the influence of the parasitic sound.

⁶³ According to my phonetic lists from Montbovon, Grandvillards, Gruyères, etc.

⁶⁴ For the history of the diphthong see section IV. Further proof that *ɛ* is older in Charmey than *ɛ^v* is this: A very old subject first gave *pɛ^v* (*poil*), then, repeating the word, *pɛ*. The first response, more spontaneous, generally elicits the more advanced forms, while the careful response is archaic.

⁶⁵ An interesting exception is *bibere*, which Laurent always pronounces as *ir* = linked form.

⁶⁶ La Broye makes an even stronger distinction: *fɛ* ~ *fã^(e)*.

⁶⁷ This last exception can be explained by proclisis: the *a* of *habes*, *habet* is treated like the *a* of *avena*, etc.

⁶⁸ The rule stating that long *a* becomes *â*, *whether the syllable is open or closed*, demonstrates that our usual way of formulating phonetic rules is mistaken. We should not say, for example, "Latin *ĕ* becomes *ie* in Old French in open syllables", but rather "*ē* (from Latin *ĕ* in open syllables) = *ie*". Primary conditions should not be confused with immediate conditions (=conditions of quantity and quality). Cf. Wechssler, p. 477-479, who also criticizes the current system, but replaces it with an hypothesis I cannot endorse.

⁶⁹ Should one also mention a certain psychological predisposition in women toward any new fashion? Consider the comment of a Valais subject reported by Gilliéron (*Patois de Vionnaz*, p. IV): "We used to call this room *lə paylə*, now we call it *la tsābra*, and my wife, who tries to be more refined than the rest of us, calls it the *kabine*." The ancients thought differently; see quotations from Plato and Cicero in Schuchardt, *Vokalismus d. Vulgärl.*, I, p. 2. The principle of frequency has been vigorously attacked by many (cf. Wechssler, p. 482) but, while recognizing the worth of some of their arguments, I see no need to abandon the principle. Just as a word that we write often takes on the quality of an abbreviation, our speech organs become lazy when we pronounce a word we have said a thousand times before. Thus a grammarian may say *part'cipe*, but not *al'bi* for *alibi*, or *char'vari* for *charivari*.

⁷⁰ Passy, *Études sur les changements ph.*, p. 23: "In general, the child imitates the phonetic system of its mother."

⁷¹ To mention only this aspect of articulation.

⁷² Passy, *Étude sur les changements phon.*, p. 227, is right when he says that Old French *chevalzt* requires greater effort than Latin *caballīcet*.

⁷³ Belonging to different families with the same name.

⁷⁴ It may also be that certain aspects of phonetic change in Charmey escaped me entirely.

⁷⁵ "So ergibt sich uns aus der unmittelbaren Beobachtung die Tatsache, dass innerhalb einer Sprachgemeinschaft ein beständiges Streben nach Erhaltung und Ausglei chung wahrzunehmen ist", p. 378. Could not one just as rightly say "Streben nach Differenzierung"?

⁷⁶ The opposite situation holds in Bernese German, where vowels are more stable than consonants.

⁷⁷ Excepting cases where their pronunciation is expressly described as mannered or affected.

⁷⁸ At Châtel-sur-Montsalvans, the first village one comes to on the Bulle road, I elicited a list only. On the basis of this list, I believe that phonetic conditions there are not entirely identical to those of Charmey-Cerniat. Instead of *ɛ* I heard a mid *e*, for *â* - *ao*: *ō* or *qō*. My subject was 25 years old.

⁷⁹ I speak here only of pronunciation; in vocabulary, for example, the speech of Charmey and Cerniat may differ, although no one was able to cite any examples for me.

⁸⁰ More or less the same opinions are found in the discussions among Wundt, Delbrück, and Sütterlin, cf. Delbrück *Grundfragen der Sprachforschung*, p. 97: "Unter diesen Umständen ist es begreiflich, dass neuere Sprachforscher and die Stelle der Vererbungstheorie die **Einübungstheorie** gesetzt haben, die sich in den Satz zusammenfassen lässt, dass der Lautstand einer Sprache sich darum verändert, weil es der nachwachsenden Generation immer nur unvollkommen gelingt, das Gehörte nachzuahmen." Wechsler, however, remains unconvinced (*Giebt es Lautgesetze?*, p. 435).

⁸¹ Cf. the very interesting *Réflexions sur les lois phonétiques* (*Mélanges Meillet*), Paris 1902), by J. Vendryes, who suggests that "phonetic laws" should be properly called "phonetic tendencies" in a more general perspective. He says, for example: "Any phonetic change thus applies not to a specific phoneme, but to the whole of articulation; and the alteration of one phoneme supposes the concomitant alteration of several others."

⁸² While these pages were in press I received, too late to benefit from it, the excellent book by E. Herzog, *Streitfragen der romanischen Philologie*, Halle 1904. The greater part of the first fascicle (pp. 1-81) is devoted to a critical examination of the *Lautgesetzfrage*, which is full of new and stimulating ideas, supported by a wealth of documentation. I am pleased to note that, like me, the author discards the theory of childhood errors and recognizes in generational alternations the true principle of phonetic change (*Ablösungsprinzip*).

APPENDIX: IPA SYMBOLS CORRESPONDING TO GAUCHAT'S TRANSCRIPTION SYSTEM

<i>Gauchat</i>	<i>IPA</i>
ɑ	a
ɑ̃	ɑ̃
ɛ̃	ɛ̃
ɔ̃	ɔ̃
e	e
o	o
ɛ̄	e
ō	o
ə	ə
u	u
ũ ã	ũ ã
w	w
ŵ	ɥ
θ	θ
ʃ	ʃ
ñ	ɲ
χ	ç
š	ʃ
ž	ʒ