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Joseph de Jouvancy, Historian of the Society of Jesus, on the Jesuit Mission to New France

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Joseph de Jouvancy, Historian of the Society of Jesus, on the Jesuit Mission to New France

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In 1699, Jesuit Joseph de Jouvancy (1643–1719) was summoned from Paris to Rome by Superior General Tirso González de Santalla (1624–1705, in office 1687–1705) in order to continue the *Historia Societatis Jesu* (History of the Society of Jesus), which had been begun by Niccolò Orlandini (1553–1606) and Francesco Sacchini (1570–1625) and at the latter's death in 1625 had advanced only until the first half of part 5, published in 1661 with some additions by Pierre Poussines (1609–86), covering the first ten years of the generalship of Claudio Acquaviva (1543–1615, in office 1581–1615) until the year 1590. This summons came quite unexpectedly for Jouvancy, who in the same year had just been charged with translating into Latin the most valuable Greek manuscripts in the possession of his Parisian college, the Collège Louis-le-Grand, formerly (until 1682) Collège de Clermont,[1] where Jouvancy, after earlier posts in Compiègne, Caen, Rouen, and La Flèche, had been a highly successful professor of rhetoric for twenty-two years since 1677.

Born in Paris in 1643, Jouvancy (Juvencius in Latin),[2] entered the Society of Jesus at the age of sixteen in 1659 and made a quick career as a teacher and pedagogue. His pedagogical, rhetorical, and poetical writings became highly influential.[3] He also maintained a close and mutually trustful relationship with King Louis XIV (1638–1715, r.1643–1715).[4]

His probably only extant portrait, an oil painting in the custody of the École Notre Dame de Mongré in Villefranche-sur-Saône in France, which was a Jesuit college until

1. See Victor Alet, S.J., "Un professeur d'autrefois," *Études religieuses, historiques et littéraires par des pères de la Compagnie de Jésus* 5, no. 2 (1872): 745–61; 894–912, here 909; English trans. by Morton A. Hill, S.J., "Joseph Jouvancy, Jesuit Teacher," *Jesuit Educational Quarterly* 13, no. 3 (1951): 139–56.
2. Most probably for this reason, his French name is frequently misspelled Jouvency instead of Jouvancy, which latter spelling is authorized by his autograph signature in his preserved letters; see Alet, "Un professeur," 746.
3. His most influential pedagogical treatise *De ratione discendi et docendi* (Lyon and Paris, 1692; Florence, 1703) is now available in a modern edition with English translation in Joseph de Jouvancy, S.J., *The Way to Learn and the Way to Teach*, ed. Cristiano Casalini and Claude Pavur, S.J. (Chestnut Hill, MA: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2020).
4. For detailed accounts of his biography, see Alet, "Un professeur," and Karl Hoeber, "Jouvancy, Joseph de," in *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Robert Appleton, 1910), 8:527b–528a, which still forms the base of the Wikipedia entry on Jouvancy: "Joseph de Jouvancy," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_de_Jouvancy (accessed October 21, 2025). For an extensive bibliography of his works, see Carlos Sommervogel, S.J., "Jouvancy, Joseph de," in *Bibliothèque de la Compagnie de Jésus, nouvelle édition*, tome 4 (Brussels: Schepens, 1893), 830–59.

1950, shows an unpretentious, modest, and friendly man clad in a simple cassock, deeply devoted to his faith and scholarship.[5]

The second volume of part 5 of the *Historia* was published in Rome in 1710,[6] after a decade of assiduous collection of material by Jouvancy, a task he admirably accomplished alongside many other important publications during that period (such as his famous revised version of François Pomey's *Candidatus rhetoricae* [The aspirant to rhetoric],[7] to name only the most prestigious).

The volume is subdivided into fifteen "books" (*libri*), that is, books 11 to 25 of the whole of part 5. Out of these, books 17 to 23 are dedicated to the Jesuits' propagation of the Christian faith in various parts of the world, beginning with Europe (*lib*. 17) and continuing with India (*lib*. 18), China (*lib*. 19), Japan (*lib*. 20), Oceania (*lib*. 21), Africa (*lib*. 22), and America (*lib*. 23). When one wishes to read about the Jesuit mission to North America, one would at first sight naturally expect to find such information in book 23, which is dedicated to America. Yet that book, as it turns out, is entirely confined to Latin America, from Mexico to Peru, Brazil, and Chile. For information about North America, quite surprisingly, one needs to look into book 15 instead, which bears the rather unspecific title *Societas Jesu honore, domiciliis, viris aucta et ornata ab anno millesimo quingentesimo nonagesimo primo ad millesimum sescentesimum sedecimum* (The Society of Jesus augmented and endowed with honor, settlements, and men from the year 1591 to 1616). This fifteenth book does indeed contain two separate paragraphs that deal with the Society's mission to what was then commonly known as La Nouvelle France or Canada: §2 gives a report of the first arrival of Jesuit missionaries in that part of the world,[8] and §10 describes the characteristics of the geography and natives of Canada.[9] It is immediately striking that these two paragraphs should not be placed next to one another but separated by a number of paragraphs on completely different topics, yet curiously each of the two paragraphs is immediately followed by a parallel

5. By courtesy of the school headmaster and administration, I was able to obtain a colored photograph; a black-and-white engraving produced after the original oil painting can be found in Alfred Hamy, *Galerie illustrée de la Compagnie de Jésus: Album de 400 portraits* (Paris: Chez l'auteur, 1893), 4:plate 34.

6. Joseph de Jouvancy, *Historiae Societatis Jesu pars quinta, tomus posterior: Ab anno Christi MDXCI. ad MDCXVI* (Rome: Ex Typographia Georgii Plachi, 1710). In that context, it needs to be mentioned that Jouvancy's volume of the *Historia* later turned out to be particularly ill-fated, for reasons that however had nothing to do with the sections on Canada: first, in 1715, it was officially banned in France by decree of the Parisian parliament because of its fervid defense of the innocence of Father Jean Guignard, S.J. (*lib*. 12, §3, 51–52), who had been hanged in January 1595 on the accusation of having instigated the attempted assassination of Henri IV by Jean Châtel; then, in 1722, some parts of it were even placed on the Roman Index because they supposedly contradicted the papal decree "On the Chinese Rites," which however was probably issued only after the respective sections of the *Historia* were accomplished by Jouvancy; see Franz Reusch, *Der Index der verbotenen Bücher: Ein Beitrag zur Kirchen- und Literaturgeschichte*, 2 vols. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2019 [Bonn: Cohen, 1883–85]), 1:772.

7. (Rome: Josephus Nicolaus de Martiis, 1710). A modern edition with French translation, based on the 1712 Paris edition (Jean Barbou), is now available in Joseph de Jouvancy, *L'élève de rhétorique*, édition dirigée par Francis Goyet et Delphine Denis, L'univers rhétorique 10 (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2020).

8. Jouvancy, *Historiae*, pars 5.2, 321–25 (in table of contents, p. 271, and p. 321 *in margine* titled "Societas Jesu in Canadam, seu Novam Franciam inducta"; no extra subheading in the text).

9. Jouvancy, *Historiae*, pars 5.2, 344–47 (titled "Peculiaria quaedam de barbaris Canadensibus" in table of contents, p. 271, but "De regione ac moribus Canadensium, seu barbarorum Novae Franciae" in subheading p. 344).

account of the Jesuit missionary efforts in what was then called Cochinchina, that is, the southern parts of what is now Vietnam and Cambodia.[10] This coupling appears to be deliberate.

Nonetheless, both paragraphs were later reprinted next to one another and equipped with English translations and indexes by Reuben Gold Thwaites in 1896 in volume 1 of the *Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*,[11] based on earlier reprints published anonymously in 1871 by Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan.[12] In these reprints, both texts were explicitly marked as extracts from the *Historia Societatis Jesu*, and Jouvancy was invariably named as the author of both texts (*auctore Josepho Juvencio, Societatis Jesu, Sacerdote* [by Joseph de Jouvancy, a priest from the Society of Jesus]), which thus came to be the *communis opinio*.

Yet, in respect of their contents and structure, these two reports on Canada and its inhabitants greatly differ from one another: the first is of a more historical character and basically proceeds along the timeline of the events reported, while the second might better be called an ethnographic and geographic study. In the following, I will look more closely at these two accounts and compare them with respect to their contents, structure, provenance, and sources. In both sections, Jouvancy is heavily dependent on his respective sources, which are themselves quite selective and hence do not give a fully representative account of the events related to the Jesuit missionary activity in New France in that period.

The first text (§2) sets out with a list of the European nations involved in the colonization of North America and their distribution over that continent. The three most important nations are the French, the English, and the Spaniards, followed by the Dutch and the Swedes. What our author then describes as New France or Canada in fact stretches out over the vast area from Labrador and the estuary of the Saint Lawrence River in the north down to Louisiana and the Gulf of Mexico in the south. With respect to the ferocious character of the inhabitant native tribes, a brief cross-reference in fact refers to §10 (*ut patebit ex iis quae paragrapho decimo referentur* [as will appear from matters that will be presented in the tenth paragraph]).[13]

The report then turns to the first beginnings of the Canadian mission. Since the timeframe set for part 5 of the *Historia* was from 1591 to 1616, only the very first years of that mission, which effectively started in 1611, were to be covered in this context. Basically, the text consists of two different and to a certain extent reverse narratives: first,

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10. Jouvancy, *Historiae*, pars 5.2, *lib*. 15, §3, 325–26: "Ingressus Societatis in Cocincinam"; §11, 347–51: "De regione incolisque Cocincinae."

11. Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, vol. 1, *Acadia: 1610–1613* (Cleveland, OH: Burrows Bros. Co., 1896), 193–235; 239–91. All English translations in the following will be taken from the editions by Thwaites in the *Jesuit Relations*.

12. [Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan, ed.], *Canadicae missionis relatio: Ab anno 1611 usque ad annum 1613, cum statu eiusdem missionis, annis 1703 & 1710*, auctore Josepho Juvencio (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1871); *De regione et moribus Canadensium seu barbarorum Novae Franciae*, auctore Josepho Juvencio (Albany: Joel Munsell, 1871). On O'Callaghan, see Jack Verney, *O'Callaghan: The Making and Unmaking of a Rebel* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1994).

13. Jouvancy, *Historiae*, pars 5, 321; Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:204–5. This cross-reference may be a later insertion.

the Jesuits' arrival and their initial successes with the natives, and second, the disruption of these first attempts by the sudden and unexpected intervention of the English.

After the first exploration of the area by Jacques Cartier (1491–1557) in 1534[14] and its colonization by Samuel de Champlain (1574–1635) from 1603,[15] at the instigation of Father Pierre Coton (1564–1626), King Henri IV (r.1589–1610) decided to send a mission of Jesuits to Canada in 1608. For this enterprise, Coton appointed Fathers Pierre Biard (1567–1622)[16] from Grenoble and Énemond Massé (1575–1646)[17] from Lyon. Things were slowed down, however, by King Henri's assassination in 1610. Also, the ship *Grâce de Dieu* that was to take the missionaries to Canada from the harbor of Dieppe continued to be delayed by two Calvinist merchants that held shares in the vessel, until an influential noblewoman, Antoinette de Pons, Marquise de Guercheville (1560–1632), intervened and paid them off, so that the ship could finally sail, if in winterly January of 1611. The fathers reached the settlement of Port Royal in Acadia on Whitsunday, May 22, 1611, started to build chapels and cottages, and tried to acquire the local natives' languages (with initial difficulties). They also immediately started catechizing and baptizing the natives. Since other missionaries had already been active in the area, such as l'Abbé Jessé Fléché in 1610–11,[18] the Jesuits did not need to start from scratch.[19]

With respect to baptism, maybe as a defense of the Jesuits' staunch refusal to baptize anyone without previous extensive catechization (a malpractice of which they accused l'Abbé Fléché), except if that person was close to death, a narrative excursus on three exemplary cases follows. First, a nine-year-old girl severely ill is handed over to the fathers by her parents, who had given her up according to the natives' custom not to foster any sick children (*Puellam annos natam novem, oppressam gravi morbo, parentes abjecerant* [...] *quippe quae instar mortui canis haberetur* [A girl aged nine years, afflicted with a grievous disease, had been abandoned by her parents (...) inasmuch as she was considered no better than a dead dog]).[20] The fathers nurse her, give her religious instruction, and finally baptize her, but she dies after nine days. A second case concerns a young man by the name of Actaudin, second son of the mighty chief (or *sagamore* in the native idiom) Membertou (*c.*1507–1611) of the Mi'kmaq nation, who had adopted

14. Cf. Jacques Cartier, *Récits de mes voyages au Canada (1534–1535–1540): Textes et documents retrouvés* (Montreal: Pacifique St. Laurent, 1984).
15. Cf. Samuel de Champlain, *Premiers récits de voyage en Nouvelle-France 1603–1619,* ed. Mathieu d'Avignon (Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval, 2009).
16. On Biard, see Lucien Campeau, "Biard, Pierre," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1 (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–), https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/biard_pierre_1E.html (accessed October 21, 2025).
17. On Massé, see Lucien Campeau, "Massé, Énemond," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1, https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/masse_enemond_1E.html (accessed October 21, 2025).
18. On Fléché, see André Vachon, "Fléché (Flesche, Fleche, Fleuchy, Fleuche), Jessé (Jossé, Josué)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1, https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/fleche_jesse_1E.html (accessed October 21, 2025).
19. See Matteo Binasco, "Capucins, jésuites et récollets en Acadie de 1610 à 1710: Une première évangélisation assez chaotique," *Histoire et missions chrétiennes* 2 (2007): 163–76, here 164–65, https://www.cairn.info/revue-histoire-monde-et-cultures-religieuses1-2007-2-page-163.htm (accessed October 21, 2025).
20. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:210–11.

the Christian faith.[21] The son was considered fatally ill, and the rest of his clan were already preparing the traditional festivities for his funeral. Against instructions and warnings from the pagan witch doctors, Biard had the young man transferred to his cabin with his father's consent and eventually succeeded in curing him, which, as the text reports, converted many natives to the Christian faith (*Patrum tamen arte ac studio, & scilicet Dei benignitate, recreatus est; nec ipse tantum in fide catholica confirmatus, sed ejus capessendae desiderio complures inflammati* [Nevertheless, by the skill and devotion of the fathers, and by the kindness of God, he was restored; nor was he alone established in the Catholic faith, but many of his countrymen were inflamed with the desire of adopting it]).[22] When Chief Membertou himself fell seriously ill shortly afterward, he likewise wished to be transferred to the Jesuits' settlement. When he died there despite the missionaries' efforts, he was granted a Christian funeral and was buried in the Jesuits' cemetery. For he had lived an almost Christian life even before his baptism, had adopted the Christian name Henri (after King Henri IV), had refused to be married to more than one woman, and after he had taken on the Christian faith in 1610 came to be a source of admiration to the savages and a shining example to the Christians (*Post susceptam vero Christi Fidem ita vixerat, ut barbaris admirationi esset, Christianis exemplo* [But after his acceptance of the faith of Christ, he so lived that he was to the savages an object of admiration, to the Christians an example]).[23] He eventually became a famous Canadian national hero.[24]

The source of this detailed tripartite narrative is pretty easy to discover, since a letter in French from Biard himself to his Reverend Father Provincial at Paris, sent from Port Royal on January 31, 1612, is extant,[25] in which these events are narrated exactly in the same way and order, and partly even in precisely identical wording, if in French, which evidently discloses its direct parentage. Jouvancy, in his account, in fact only produced an abridged version, translated from Biard's original French into his own brilliant Latin, and once in a while spiced with some classical Latin highlights familiar to the well-educated professor of rhetoric and his intended readership (such as

21. On Chief Membertou's baptism by l'Abbé Fléché in 1610, see the *Lettre missive, touchant la conversion et baptesme du grand Sagamos de la nouvelle France, qui en estoit auparavant l'arrivée des François chef & souverain* (A letter missive with regard to the conversion and baptism of the Grand Sagamore of New France, who was, before the arrival of the French, its chief and sovereign), sent from Port Royal by one Sieur Bertrand on June 28, 1610; first published in Paris (Jean Regnoul, 1610); republished with English translation in Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:115–23.
22. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:214–15.
23. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:214–15.
24. On the various narratives on Chief Membertou's conversion, baptism, and death, see also Maureen F. O'Meara, "Converting the Otherness of Membertou: The Patriarchal Discourse of Champlain, Lescarbot, and Biard," *L'esprit créateur* 30, no. 3 (1990): 51–58; see also E. [Erik] R. Seeman, "Reading Indians' Deathbed Scenes: Ethnohistorical and Representational Approaches," *Journal of American History* 88 (2001–2): 17–47; Stéphanie Béreau, "Membertou (Baptized Henri)," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1, https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/membertou_1E.html (accessed October 21, 2025).
25. Published in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, vol. 2, *Acadia: 1612–1614* (Cleveland, OH: Burrows Bros. Co., 1896), 3–55.

an occasional line from a comedy by the Roman poet Terence).[26] Biard's letter was undoubtedly treasured in the Roman archive, where Jouvancy will certainly have found it.

Jouvancy then goes on to talk about the poverty, famines, and hardships suffered by the first missionaries, but also giving a flash forward to the much more prosperous situation achieved by the year 1703, in which he was obviously penning this passage. He presents a long list of the Jesuit mission posts established in the vast area north and south of the Saint Lawrence River, up to Sault Ste. Marie north of Lakes Michigan and Huron, and of the numerous native nations evangelized in the course of the seventeenth century.[27] Furthermore, from his personal eighteenth-century perspective, he also mentions the huge and as yet mostly unexplored areas beyond, both in the arctic north up to Hudson Bay, and to the west of the Mississippi River:

> *Restat ignota Europaeis adhuc pars Canadae immensa, ultra Missisipum fluvium, clementiori subjecta coelo, frequens incolis, armentis frugibusque laeta; vitae verae ac salutis expers. Haec generosos Christi milites vocat. Nec non altera longe isti dissimilis, quae rigidis circa Hudsonium sinum, a gradu LV. ad LX. aut LXX. subjecta septentrionibus, nivibus ac pruinis demersa, tanto aequius implorat opem, quanto gravioribus incommodis conflictatur.*
>
> There remains unknown to Europeans, up to the present time, an immense portion of Canada, beyond the Mississippi River, situated beneath a milder sky, well inhabited, and abounding in animal and vegetable life; the whole, deprived of true life and of salvation. This region calls to the generous soldiers of Christ. So is it, likewise, with another region far dissimilar to that, around the frozen Hudson Bay, from the fifty-fifth parallel to the sixtieth or seventieth; lying at the north, plunged in snows and frosts, it even more justly implores aid, as it is afflicted by more weighty ills.[28]

Jouvancy tacitly skips the episode of the special mission of Brother Gilbert Du Thet (1575–1613),[29] sent to Port Royal by the Marquise de Guercheville in 1612 to inquire about alleged discord in the relationship of Fathers Biard and Massé with the *seigneur* of Port Royal, Jean de Biencourt de Poutrincourt. Du Thet arrived there in January 1612, and after partial accomplishment of his mission returned to France in June/July of the same year. In the course of these events, Biard was forcibly prevented from leaving Port Royal and imprisoned by Biencourt, an action he answered with excommunication. Jouvancy clearly missed out on this embarrassing episode, since his primary source, Biard, for obvious reasons, does not report on it.

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26. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:212/15: *bolum tantum tam subito e faucibus ereptum sibi* (that such a morsel should be snatched suddenly from their jaws); cf. Terence, *Heauton Timorumenos* 673: *crucior bolum tantum mi ereptum tam desubito e faucibus* (I'm vexed that such a morsel has been so suddenly snatched away from my jaws) (trans. Henry Thomas Riley, 1874).

27. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:218–23; cf. also the appendix (236–37) listing Jesuit mission posts in North America according to the *status quo* in 1710.

28. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:222–23.

29. On Du Thet and this episode, see Lucien Campeau, "Du Thet, Gilbert," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1, https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/du_thet_gilbert_1E.html (accessed October 21, 2025).

For the second part of his narrative in §2, Jouvancy instead turns to an even more somber topic: on July 3, 1613, shortly after Father Jacques Quentin (1572–1647)[30] and Du Thet had again arrived from France in 1613 aboard the vessel *Jonas* to escort their brethren from Port Royal to some safer place, equipped with a royal commission to found a major new settlement in a suitable location, and had consequently founded the Jesuit mission called Saint-Sauveur on Mount Desert Island on the coast of what is now Maine, an English fleet under the command of Sir Samuel Argall (1580–1626)[31] was incidentally borne astray by bad weather conditions from their course to Virginia to that area. When they spotted the French ship, they instantly attacked it with their canons. Within a few minutes, Brother Du Thet, who had rushed on board the *Jonas* to act as a gunner, was hit in the chest by a fatal bullet from a musket (*Primo in conflictu Gilbertus Thetus* [...] *confossus lethali plaga, postridie religiosa morte occubuit* [In the first onset, Gilbert Du Thet (...) was stricken with a mortal wound and on the following day piously departed this life]),[32] thereby to become the first Jesuit missionary to die in North America. Commander Argall captured the remaining Jesuit missionaries he found on shore and embezzled the royal commission he found on board the French ship. Initially accusing the captive Jesuits of piracy and threatening them with death by hanging (*fugitivos & praedones conclamat, ac necem commeruisse pronunciat* [(he) pronounced them runaways and pirates, and declared that they deserved death]),[33] he finally changed his mind and decided to send Father Massé back to France, whereas he kept Biard and Quentin as his captives. When Argall returned to Jamestown, Virginia with his French captives and reported the incident to the governor of Virginia, Sir Thomas Dale, that man, extremely hostile to the French and to Jesuits in particular, decreed that all Frenchmen be expelled from New France. By the skin of their teeth and Argall's intervention, Biard and Quentin again escaped the gallows. Dale instantly sent Argall back to the French settlements—with Biard and Quentin in his custody—with the order to set them all on fire and destroy them, an order he duly executed, consecutively setting fire to the settlements of Saint-Sauveur, Sainte-Croix, and Port Royal.[34]

In reality, while the ship with Father Massé on board had luckily joined another ship on its way to France, and arrived safely at the harbor of Saint Malo by October 1613, Biard and Quentin still remained in Argall's custody until after the destruction of Port Royal. Yet Argall's fleet, sailing back from Port Royal to Jamestown in November, got caught in a heavy storm, and the ship carrying Biard and Quentin, the ill-fated *Jonas*, was cast far adrift, and after a long odyssey first landed on the Portuguese Azores, from whence it finally sailed to Pembroke in England. After further threats to their life, the two fathers, through negotiations by the king of France, were finally released and given permission to return to Amiens in France, arriving there on April 14, 1614.

30. On Quentin, see Léon Pouliot, "Quentin, Jacques," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1, https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/quentin_jacques_1E.html (accessed October 21, 2025).
31. See W. Austin Squires, "Argall, Sir Samuel," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, vol. 1, https://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/argall_samuel_1E.html (accessed October 21, 2025).
32. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:228–29.
33. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:228–29.
34. See Austin Squires, "Argall"; Harry Bruce, *An Illustrated History of Nova Scotia* (Halifax, NS: Nimbus, 1997), 50–52.

This catastrophe, brought about by a mere accident, for quite some time put an end to the Jesuits' attempts to establish a mission among the Canadian natives.

Again, the source for Jouvancy's account of these events is quite evident. Immediately after his return to France, directly from Amiens on May 26, 1614, Biard dispatched a letter to Superior General Acquaviva with a detailed report about these incidents, relating the founding of the Saint-Sauveur mission, the attack launched by Argall, the capture of the Jesuit missionaries, and their eventual safe return to France. That letter by Biard is also available with English translation in vol. 3 of the *Jesuit Relations*.[35] Later, in 1616, Biard himself published in Lyon a much longer and more detailed account of those events, addressed directly to King Louis XIII (r.1610–43).[36] There are also more reports from the actual period by other Jesuits,[37] and with respect to the situation in his own days, Jouvancy had also received several letters written directly to him from missionaries active in Canada in his time, such as the one sent by Joseph Aubery (1673–1756), his former student at the Collège Louis-le-Grand, from the mission of St.-François-de-Sales in October 1710, the administration of which he had taken over the year before.[38] Jouvancy thus in principle had at his disposal an ample pool of materials originating from immediate eyewitnesses, which he only needed to collect, write out, abridge, and compose to form a coherent narrative. Nonetheless, owing to its specific genetic history, some breaks in the composition of this section are still noticeable. In particular, his report on the sack of Saint-Sauveur and the subsequent diverse fate of the individual captured Jesuits is remarkably condensed, if not distorted, and blurs to some extent the details of their repatriation to France by making it look as if Argall had sent them all back at the same time on two different ships.

Since Biard's extended 1616 *Relation*, as its very title already betrays, also contained quite detailed accounts on the geography, flora, and fauna of New France and on the character, customs, and traditions of its native inhabitants,[39] it is strange that Jouvancy did not follow the same source and procedure of adaptation for his §10 but instead inserted a text of a completely different provenance. As mentioned earlier, this text of §10 used to be regarded as stemming from Jouvancy's own pen as well, until Fannie Dionne in her 2012 Montreal MA thesis convincingly argued that this text could not have

35. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, vol. 3, *Acadia: 1611–1616* (Cleveland, OH: Burrows Bros. Co., 1897), 3–19.
36. Pierre Biard, *Relation de la Nouvelle France, de ses terres, naturel du païs, & de ses habitans* [Report on New France, its regions, the nature of the countryside, and its inhabitants] (Lyon: Louys Muguet, 1616); also published in Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 3:21–283 and vol. 4, *Acadia and Québec: 1616–1629* (Cleveland, OH: Burrows Bros. Co., 1897), 7–117.
37. See, e.g., the anonymous *Relatio rerum gestarum in Novo-Francica missione annis 1613 & 1614* [A relation of occurrences in the mission of New France during the years 1613 and 1614] (Lyon: Claudius Cayne, 1618); in Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 2:193–285.
38. Published in Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, vol. 66, *Illinois, Louisiana, Iroquois, Lower Canada 1702–1712* (New York: Pageant 1959 [Cleveland, OH: Burrows Bros. Co., 1900]), 174–80.
39. Chapter 1 describes the location of New France and its first settlers; chapter 2 its weather and climate; chapter 3 the soil, native tribes, and vegetation; chapter 4 the natives' character, clothing, homes, and diet; chapter 5 their ways of government; chapter 6 marriage rites and reasons for the sparseness of their population; chapter 7 their customs of healing and medicine; chapter 8 their funeral rites, burials, and religion; hence, these chapters on pages 38–135 in Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, vol. 3, would have provided ample material for §10.

been written by Jouvancy,[40] nor even by a Jesuit or a missionary, nor in the eighteenth century, but must originally have first been composed in the early seventeenth century, most probably in French, by a layman who apparently lived and worked in the Quebec area, perhaps as a merchant or trapper, but more plausibly as an educated administrator in the service of Champlain,[41] who may have collected his information from other people traveling and exploring in the area, or even from natives directly.[42] In fact, as Dionne convincingly demonstrates, in stark contrast to §2, the text shows little traces of religious interest, nay, is on the contrary even rather critical of any missionary activity, and does not say a word at all about the Jesuit mission to that part of the world.[43] Dionne's conclusion is therefore that this original text was actually written around 1616,[44] at some later point translated from French into Latin, maybe by some anonymous Jesuit father, and then sent to the Jesuits' Roman headquarters, perhaps in order to refocus interest on the Canadian mission,[45] which in the period around 1700, *in* which Jouvancy wrote, had again gotten under hard pressure from the British as well as from the Iroquois natives, who were in the habit of regularly raiding and pillaging Jesuit mission posts. Hence the situation in Jouvancy's own time was not dissimilar to the one at the time when that treatise was first written, which however happened to coincide with the period *on* which Jouvancy was commissioned to write.

The internal structure of this text is also greatly different from that of §2. There is no chronological narrative, with the material instead being arranged according to rubric headings. Since Dionne has perfectly analyzed this text in her thesis,[46] I can confine myself to a brief outline. First, a geographical survey of the area is given, with its main rivers and lakes described, followed by a passage on its peculiar wildlife:[47] typical animals such as moose and beavers and the latter's habit of building dams; then there follow the fish, with the description focusing lengthily on the *causarus*,[48] or longnose gar-pike (*Lepisosteus osseus*), a huge and voracious predator, and its insidious tricks of ambush. Finally the birds, especially edible water-birds. In the following section,[49] we hear about the natives' family lives and their technique of building longhouses for their homes, their treatment or non-treatment of illnesses, and their indifferent attitude toward death. The high mortality rate among children is emphasized, which keeps their populations reduced. Particular attention is given to the burial rites of various tribes, which in many respects differ immensely from Christian traditions (a topic that had in fact already been occasionally alluded to in §2).

40. Fannie Dionne, "De regione et moribus Canadensium seu Barbarorum Novæ Franciæ: Les 'Barbares de Nouvelle-France', texte anonyme (1616) édité par Joseph de Jouvency (1710)" (MA thesis, Université de Montréal, 2012).
41. Dionne, "De regione," 16.
42. Dionne, "De regione," 18.
43. Dionne, "De regione," 16–17.
44. Dionne, "De regione," 18–19.
45. Dionne, "De regione," 15; 22–23.
46. See especially the "Table des matières" in Dionne, "De regione," 24.
47. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:244–55.
48. On this Latin name as a neologism, see Dionne, "De regione," 15.
49. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:256–67.

A special section is dedicated to warfare.[50] The natives, we are told, never engage in civil wars within their nations but only go to war with their neighbors either for vengeance or for looting. Sometimes they even settle a war conflict by way of a ritual duel. The influence of imported European firearms (a rifle being called a *ferrea fistula*, an "iron pipe") is also mentioned, as well as their peculiar way of handling a shield (*Non gestant e brachio suspensos, sed funem, ex quo pendent, rejiciunt in humerum dextrum: adeo ut latus corporis sinistrum clypeo protegatur; mox ubi jaculum emiserunt, aut ferream disploserunt fistulam, paulum retrahunt dextrum latus, ac sinistrum clypeo tectum obvertunt hosti* [They do not carry the shield suspended from the arm, but cast by a cord over the right shoulder, so that it protects the left side of the body; when they have cast their spears or fired their guns, they slightly retire the right side and turn toward the enemy the left side, which is protected by the shield]).[51] But most important of all to them is to capture their enemies alive and to slowly torture them to death by all sorts of cruel and devilish methods, which are described in the text in all vivid details. Vice versa, they hold the ability to withstand the most evil torture without showing any sign of pain or suffering in the highest esteem (*Laudatur qui rogum, cultros, vulnera, irretorto vultu aspexerit, & exceperit: qui non ingemuerit, qui risu cantuque tortoribus illuserit: nam canere tot inter mortes, amplum ac magnificum esse putant* [The prisoner who has beheld and endured stake, knives, and wounds with an unchanging countenance, who has not groaned, who with laughter and song has ridiculed his tormentors, is praised; for they think that to sing amid so many deaths is great and noble]).[52]

The longest and final section first deals with their character traits,[53] some of which are praised as laudable, such as their munificence (*liberalitatis & munificentiae famam aucupantur: sua largiuntur ultro; ablata vix repetunt* [These people seek a reputation for liberality and generosity; they give away their property freely and very seldom ask any return]),[54] their forgiveness (*quam autem erga liberos & familiares comitatem prae se ferunt, eandem cum ceteris civibus suis, ac popularibus, usurpant* [they exercise the same mildness they exhibit toward their children and relatives, toward the remainder of their tribe and their countrymen]),[55] but above all their esteem not only of subtle humor (*dicaces vulgo sunt, & in jocos effusi* [they are commonly very talkative, and are ready jesters])[56] but also of oratorial eloquence:

> *Scilicet ingenii laudem vindicant sibi; nec temere. Nemo inter illos hebes, ac tardus; quod nativa illorum in deliberando prudentia, & in dicendo facundia, declarat. Auditi quidem saepe sunt tam apposite ad persuadendum perorare, idque ex tempore, ut admirationem exercitatissimis in dicendi palaestra moverent.*

50. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:268–73.
51. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:270–71.
52. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:272–73.
53. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:274–91.
54. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:274–75.
55. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:276–77.
56. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:276–77.

> For they claim praise because of their intelligence, and not without good reason. No one among them is stupid or sluggish, a fact that is evident in their inborn foresight in deliberation and their fluency in speaking. Indeed, they have often been heard to make a peroration so well calculated for persuasion, and that off-hand, that they would excite the admiration of the most experienced in the arena of eloquence.[57]

The letter by Aubery to Jouvancy mentioned earlier reports a similar experience in an assembly of natives,[58] in which Aubery was able to coruscate among the native Abénakis by way of his excellent oratorial proficiency, which he owed to his education in rhetoric by Jouvancy:

> *Nam inter nostros Canadenses nihil majoris momenti deliberatur, aut decernitur, nisi in frequenti, ut ita dicam Senatu. Conveniunt proceres, id est, senes, ac ductores copiarum. Surgit in mediis orator et verba facit. Si apte, si eloquenter, si ingeniose perorat, causam vincit: si timide, titubanter, inornate, causa cadit.*
> For, among our Canadians, nothing of great importance is discussed or decided except, so to speak, in a numerous council. The notables, that is to say the elders and the captains of war parties assemble. A speaker rises in their midst and pronounces a discourse. If he perorate aptly, eloquently, or cleverly, he wins his cause; if timidly, hesitatingly, inelegantly, his cause is lost.[59]

This trait above all others in the character of the Canadian natives must have been particularly attractive to a professor of rhetoric such as Jouvancy.

But neither does the text fail to criticize the detrimental effects of imported liquor on the essentially noble morals of the natives (*inimicas bonae ac sanae menti potiones ab Europaeis mercatoribus acceperunt, quibus lucri bonus est odor, etiam ex flagitio, & scelerata nundinatione* [They have received (...) drinks hostile to a good and sound mind from European traders, who think much of profit, even when tainted with the disgrace of a wicked traffic]).[60]

Equally impressive is their care for their bodies, which they love to decorate with tattoos and various kinds of attire.[61] Yet while the author finds many details of their social manners to differ grossly from European etiquette rules, he quite unbiasedly and objectively describes their indifference in religious matters (*Religionis apud illos neque lex ulla, neque cura* [There is among them no system of religion, or care for it]),[62] which indicates that he may not have been a priest or missionary. Their strong belief in animal spirits and dreams is described as impartially and dispassionately as their (explicable) natural incredulity toward hard-to-believe Christian doctrines such as eternal fire, since they said there could be no fire where there was no wood. Therefore, one

57. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:276–79.
58. See n38 above.
59. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 66:176–77.
60. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:284–85.
61. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:276–81.
62. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:286–87.

missionary had to convince them by using a trick that involved sulfuric chemistry: the clever missionary showed them a lump of sulfur, which he declared to be a piece of earth from the Lower World. But when he threw it onto embers of coal, it went ablaze, sending off a pungent smell, which left the natives with gaping mouths.[63]

If Dionne is right, here Father Jouvancy for convenience adopted an older text that had already been translated into Latin and lay buried in some Roman archive; perhaps he did so because it fitted pretty well with the dates of his historical period. He only slightly polished the Latin, for which he was perfectly qualified due to his masterly fluency in Latin style and his long-standing experience as a translator of texts into Latin,[64] and made some smaller additions or modifications either from the point of view of a Jesuit priest or from contemporary knowledge. For instance, at the very beginning, the Mississippi is mentioned, which had not really been explored in the early seventeenth century.[65] Furthermore, in the section on the torturing of captives, a remark is inserted about Jesuit missionaries having suffered such tortures (*Huiusmodi carnificinam non pauci e Patribus Societatis pertulere* [Torture of this sort has been borne by not a few of the fathers of the Society]),[66] which had not yet been true by 1616;[67] the famous martyrdom of Fathers Gabriel Lalemant (1610–49) and Jean de Brébeuf (1593–1649) in 1649 may have been in his mind. Some retouching may also have been deemed appropriate in the passage on the natives' sexual permissiveness, to the perhaps intentional effect of virtually complete obscurity, as in the following passage:[68]

> *Quanta sit apud exleges, & omni freno solutos, intemperantiae impunitas & licentia, praesertim in adolescentibus, promptum est intelligere; nam grandiores natu libidinem certis finibus circumscribunt, cum aestus cupiditatum deferbuit: nec impune est peccanti feminae.*
>
> How great is the impunity and wantonness of licentiousness among men uncivilized and free from all restraint, especially among the youth, may be readily observed; for the elder men confine their lust within fixed limits, after the violence of their passions has subsided, and an erring woman does not go unpunished.[69]

As a whole, however, this intriguing text appears as a document of candid ethnological curiosity rather than as an expression of disdain for uncivilized "savages," and in passages it even comes close to evoking the positive stereotype of the "noble savage." In fact, its title *De regione et moribus Canadensium* (On the region and manners of the Canadian peoples) sounds pretty much like a deliberate calque of the well-known title *De origine et moribus Germanorum* (On the origin and manners of the Germanic

63. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:288–91.
64. See Dionne, "De regione," 20.
65. See Dionne, "De regione," 21–22.
66. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:270–73.
67. See Dionne, "De regione," 22.
68. See Dionne, "De regione," 22.
69. Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, 1:286–87.

peoples) of the ethnographic essay by the Roman historian Tacitus, another stock example of "noble-barbarians" literature.[70]

If we finally put both texts next to each other for comparison, on the one hand there are doubtlessly great differences: while §2 focuses on the adventures of the Jesuit missionaries and looks at the natives only from a missionary point of view, and at Canadian geography under the sole aspect of its aptness for settlements, its fertility for growing food, and the navigability of its rivers, §10 by contrast is interested in the country and its inhabitants from the perspective of an impartial observer. While §2 is bristling with polemics against English and Protestant adversaries, nothing of that kind of hostility ever shows up in §10. This is perhaps mainly because §2 is compiled from reports by directly involved authentic Jesuit witnesses, whereas §10 was not originally written for a history of the Society at all.

On the other hand, there are also clear links between both texts: certainly, there is the one single cross-reference to §10 in §2, yet most probably purposefully inserted later in order to superficially interconnect both texts. But there are also substantial parallels and similarities, especially with respect to the descriptions of the natives' exotic attitudes toward illnesses, death, and burials as well as of their natural critical intelligence and appreciation for humor and eloquence, an element that appears to have been of particular appeal to the fervid advocate of rhetorical education that Father Jouvancy never ceased to be during his entire lifetime.

Yet, in sum, it cannot be denied that in his *Historia* Jouvancy did not dedicate as much attention and labor to the precarious mission in New France as he did to Latin America or to the other areas described in books 17 to 23 of part 5. He appears to have worked on a small and selective basis of heterogeneous sources that happened to be available to him in the Roman archives and to have written them out in a quite uncritical way. That may have to do with the initially abortive activity of the Jesuits in that region, which was only taken up again more successfully from the 1620s, that is, beyond his primary reference period (1591–1616). That he included it at all, and in a quite unusual context, may have been motivated by the imperiled contemporary situation of the Jesuit mission in the area in the early eighteenth century, which had some clear parallels to the situation of the years 1611 to 1613, and called for a renewed interest in these remote places on the part of the Jesuit superiors.

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70. Dionne, "De regione," 69 discusses the text's employment of the term "barbarus" with explicit reference to Tacitus's *Germania*: "Dans la *Germanie* de Tacite, les Germains sont décrits comme de redoutables ennemis, tout en étant vigoureux, libres et même, à certains égards, méritant d'être cités en exemple aux Romains" (In Tacitus's *Germania*, the Germanic people are described as fearsome enemies, because of their being virtuous, independent, and even in certain respects deserving to be presented to the Romans as examples); see also Emilia Ndiaye, "L'altérité du 'barbare' germain: Instrumentalisation rhétorique de *barbarus* chez César et Tacite," in *Le barbare: Images phobiques et reflexions sur l'altérité dans la culture européenne*, ed. Jean Schillinger and Philippe Alexandre (Bern: Peter Lang, 2008), 47–66.