

## Antoine Joseph Lottinger’s first book on the common cuckoo and its fosterers: a rare book with three different title-pages

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**ABSTRACT:** Responses of fosterers to parasitism by the common cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*), recorded experimentally by Antoine Joseph Lottinger in eastern France between 1772 and 1775, were published in a book in 1775. Typographical errors in the text indicate that all extant copies of the book constitute a single impression from standing type, yet three separate title-pages were printed and circulated. Successive title-pages provided slightly different information, providing clues about the book’s circulation. Initially driven by curiosity, Lottinger’s work was fuelled by a desire to dispel a culture of misconceptions held by many naturalists about the cuckoo’s effects on its fosterers. He was among the first naturalists to conduct egg-exchange experiments in the field specifically to record what fosterers would accept or reject.

**KEY WORDS :** *Le coucou* – bibliography – book history – *Cuculus canorus* – natural history – printing.

### INTRODUCTION

Antoine Joseph Lottinger (1725–1793)<sup>1</sup>, an eighteenth-century physician and naturalist, was fascinated by the peculiarities of the interactions between the common cuckoo (*Cuculus canorus*) and its fosterers.<sup>2</sup> Lottinger wondered which species accepted cuckoo eggs or whether some removed them, leaving their own clutches free of parasitism. He realized that observing parasitized nests was not enough to reveal whether a cuckoo’s egg had been rejected, as fosterers may remove the foreign egg before an observer can record its presence. Working in a forest in eastern France, Lottinger exchanged eggs between nests of several potential foster species and recorded their fates, thus becoming one of the first naturalists to conduct experiments in the field designed to elucidate responses by fosterers to cuckoo eggs and young in their nests (Sealy and Guigueno 2011).<sup>3</sup> The initial clutch manipulations, or “observations” as Lottinger called them, were conducted in May 1772 and June 1773, and extended in May and June 1775. Results of the experiments and other notes on the cuckoo were published in two books, the first in 1775 (*Le coucou. Discours apologétique ou mémoire sur le coucou ...*), and the second in 1795 (*Histoire du coucou d’Europe*).

While scrutinizing experiments proposed by Edward Blyth (1810–1873) to elucidate responses of fosterers to cuckoo parasitism in England (Blyth 1835), Sealy (2009) referred to Lottinger’s experimental protocol and cited his 1775 book by a title that was subsequently determined to differ from the one usually cited, albeit infrequently, by other authors. In fact,

there were three title-pages bearing two different titles, all issued in 1775 (Lottinger 1775a, 1775b). Sealy (2009) cited the title printed on the third title-page. Lottinger inserted more details about his work and added the name of a bookseller to the second and third title-pages, suggesting that he intended to broaden the appeal of his book. Lottinger's frustration had grown over the persistence of what he believed were misconceptions about the cuckoo and its negative effects on fosterers by other observers of nature. We examine the information added to each title-page, in light of Lottinger's ongoing study and desire to communicate information about the cuckoo. We also present evidence that only the title-pages changed during the production of the book, not the text.

## DISCOVERING NEW INFORMATION ABOUT THE CUCKOO

Lottinger's desire was that his book would change the perception of the cuckoo held by many naturalists who considered the cuckoo destructive to other birds. He believed this perception clouded their understanding of the cuckoo's place in nature, and he (Lottinger 1775: 9) expressed his admonishment in the first sentence of the text<sup>4</sup>:

Le Coucou d'Europe est un oiseau très-connu de nom, & par son chant; mais les phénomènes qu'il présente étant des plus singuliers, ils ont fourni matière à bien des conjectures ou plutôt à bien des contes ridicules. Les Naturalistes mêmes ne sont rien moins que d'accord à son sujet, & il est peu d'oiseaux sur lesquels ils aient plus varié. [The European cuckoo is a bird well known by name and by its song; but the phenomena presented by it are very peculiar; they have provided material for many conjectures or rather to many ridiculous tales. Even naturalists are not more in agreement with it, and there are few birds upon which there is such a variety of opinions.]

Lottinger stated further (1775: 13), "J'ai toujours été surpris que sur des simples apparences l'on ait conçu des idées aussi désavantageuses. [It has always surprised me that such unhelpful ideas about the cuckoo have been conceived on simple appearances.]" He believed the best way to challenge these misconceptions was to record reactions at the nests of different foster species after cuckoos, or Lottinger himself, manipulated their clutches, and then publish the results. Lottinger was one of the first naturalists to describe responses of fosterers to foreign eggs placed into their nests experimentally, therefore, providing one of the earliest records of the practice of experimenting with cuckoos' eggs in this way.

## LOTTINGER'S 1775 BOOK

This book is rare. We located only 19 copies (Table 1) through an internet search, augmented by correspondence with major libraries throughout Europe and North America: four copies were catalogued in libraries in England, twelve in France, one in Germany, and two copies (one now in Canada) were of unknown provenance. Mornet's (1910) study of private libraries in eighteenth-century France did not turn up any copies of this book. We examined all but one copy in person. The title-page of that copy (**19**) was seen as an image printed in Aguttes's auction catalogue, and it is considered below only when title-pages are compared.<sup>5</sup> Another copy was accessioned on 4 March 1851 by the library of the Academy of Sciences of Philadelphia (Anonymous 1851: 193), but the title given was incomplete, precluding identification of the title-page; this copy was eventually withdrawn from the library's holdings and has not been traced. Spencer G. Sealy purchased copy **18** from a

Table 1. Copies of Lottinger's *Le coucou* ... examined in this study.

Copies are referred to in the text by the number (in bold) used in this table. All copies were published in 1775 with one of three title-pages (t-p): original (O), second (S), and third (T); ded. = dedication; Y = yes, N = no, ? = unknown.

no.	t-p	library	shelf-mark	ded.	errata
1	O	Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, UK	18961 e. 475	Y	N
2 <sup>a</sup>	O	Bibliothèque des Sciences, Université de Louis-Pasteur, Strasbourg, France	H 126.719	N	N
3	O	Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Germany	Zool. 337	N	N
4	O	Bibliothèque municipale de Versailles, France	Rodouan D 722	N	N
5 <sup>b</sup>	O	British Library, London, UK	B.562.(3)	N	N
6 <sup>c</sup>	O & S	John Innes Foundation, Library of Rare Books, Norwich, UK	1775 Zool.	Y	N
7	O	Bibliothèque Universitaire de Médecine, Montpellier, France	N231855	N	N
8	O	Bibliothèque carré d'art, Nîmes, France	3850 Théologie	N	N
9	S	Bibliothèque publique de la Ville de Nancy, France	2253 bis	N	N
10	S	Bibliothèque d'étude et du patrimoine, Toulouse, France	Fa C 861(5)	N	N
11	T	Médiathèque Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Chambéry, France	PER A 7244	N	Y
12	T	Bibliothèque Méjanes, Ville d'Aix-en-Provence, France	8° 4219	N	Y
13 <sup>d</sup>	T	Balfour & Newton Libraries, University of Cambridge, UK	EUR 555	N	Y
14	T	Bibliothèque Centrale du Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France	7520(4)	N	Y
15	T	Bibliothèque Centrale du Muséum national d'Histoire naturelle, Paris, France	5437	N	Y
16	T	Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris, France	8-S-8501	N	Y
17	T	Bibliothèque publique de la Ville de Nancy, France	2253	Y	Y
18	T	Elizabeth Dafoe Library, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada	QL 696 C83 L67	N	Y
19 <sup>e</sup>	T	Claude Aguttes, rare book auction, Paris, France (17 June 2004)	Lot 279	?	?

<sup>a</sup> This copy bears the signature of Jean Hermann (1738–1800) plus a hand-written inscription (see Sealy and Guigueno 2011: 223, Figure 2) that referred to Lottinger's record of multiple parasitism on a cuckoo fosterer, and observations of cuckoo eviction by Edward Jenner (1749–1823). (Marginal notes were made by Hermann on several pages of the text.)

<sup>b</sup> Book-plate and signature of Joseph Banks (1743–1820) on the verso of the title-page.

<sup>c</sup> Signature of William Bateson (1861–1926).

<sup>d</sup> Rebound with slipcase; signature stamp of Paul Leverkühn (1867–1905).

<sup>e</sup> Only the title-page was examined. The auction was held at Hôtel des Ventes de Neuilly, 164 bis, avenue Charles de Gaulle, 92200 Neuilly sur seine, Paris, France.

bookseller in Massachusetts in the mid-1990s. It is now bound in patterned paper-covered boards with no label on the spine and no marks of other evidence of former ownership. This copy does not have multiple stab holes in the quires, which suggests that it may initially have circulated in sheets or bound in a loose paper wrapper, for binding was normally separate

from printing in the eighteenth century (Gaskell 1995: 146–147), though it is also possible that this book was re-bound carefully. It is now held in the Archives and Special Collections of the Elizabeth Dafoe Library, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada.

### Consistency among the copies

All copies are octavo with the text printed on laid paper with vertical chain lines and no apparent watermarks on the title-pages or other pages. Variation in leaf size reflects trimming that occurred during binding and re-binding of many of the copies.<sup>6</sup> Edges of all copies were opened and all were trimmed except those in copies **3**, **6** and **11**; edges of several copies of all title-pages were stained with carmine. Pages were numbered at the outer top corners. A line-by-line comparison of text on pages vi, 15, 41, 64 and 72, and the vignettes on pages viii, 9, 44, 45 and 72, revealed the text was identical in all copies. This indicates that all copies were either produced as multiple impressions from standing type or, more likely, that they were all printed as a single impression (also see Williams and Callery 2008). The title-pages seem to have been printed on the same paper stock as the text. This contrasts with a variant title-page of an early botanical book published in French in which each title-page had a different watermark and horizontal chain lines (Guédès 1974). The original title-page of Lottinger's book was definitely printed at the same time as the rest of the text, because it is conjugate with the last leaf in the first quire. By contrast, the second and third title-pages, as well as the dedication and list of errata that appear in several copies, were printed separately and added to the book. Their addition normally, though not always, affects only the first quire. The introduction of paratextual material – title-pages, dedication and errata – and its relationship to the rest of the book provide a great deal of insight into the book's production and circulation, and it is to this material that we now turn.

### Three title-pages

Although this study included 19 copies of Lottinger's *Le coucou*, 20 title-pages were examined because one copy (**6**) includes two title-pages (O and S). Including this book, eight copies include the original title-page (O: Figure 1), three copies include the second title-page (S: Figure 2), and nine copies include the third title-page (T: Figure 3).

### Original title-page

*LE COUCOU. | DISCOURS | APOLOGÉTIQUE | OU | MÉMOIRE | SUR | LE COUCOU. | Ouvrage uniquement fondé sur les faits, qui | étant pour la plûpart aussi extraordinaires | que peu connus, rendent très-intéressante | l'histoire de cet Oiseau singulier.* [Par M. A. J. LOTTINGER, Docteur | Médecin. P. D. L. V. de S.] [Decorative stamp, 18 × 15 mm] | A NANCY, | Chez J. B. HIACINTHE LECLERC, | Imprimeur de l'Intendance 1775. [Double rule 69 mm, top band double thickness] | *Avec Approbation & Permission.*

### Second title-page

*LE COUCOU. | DISCOURS | APOLOGÉTIQUE | OU | MÉMOIRE | SUR | LE COUCOU. | Ouvrage uniquement fondé sur les faits, qui étant pour la | plûpart aussi extraordinaires que peu connus, rendent | très-intéressante l'histoire de cet Oiseau singulier.* [Par M. A. J. LOTTINGER, Docteur | Médecin. P. D. L. V. de S.] [Stamp of one flower with a face inside, 8 × 8 mm] | A NANCY, | Chez J. B. HIACINTHE LECLERC, | Imprimeur de l'Intendance 1775. | *Et se trouve* | Chez NICHOLAS GERVOIS, Libraire, rue Saint-| George, N.º 185. [Double rule 55 mm, top band double thickness] | *Avec Approbation & Permission.*

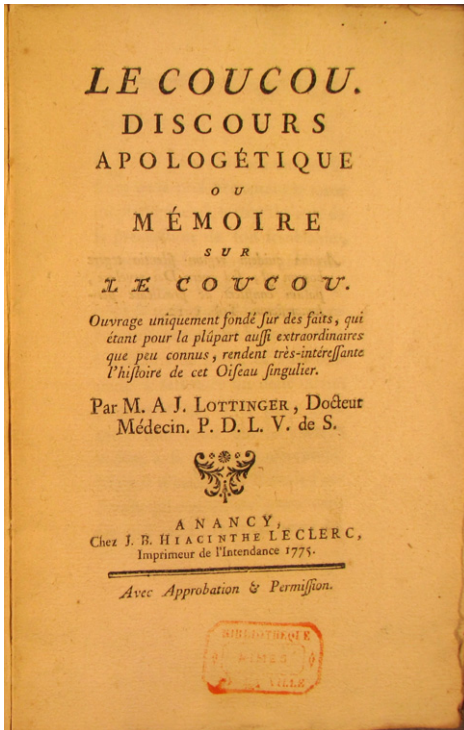


Figure 1. Original title-page of Lottinger's *Le coucou* ... (actual page size 150 × 79 mm). (Reproduced from copy 8: 3850 Théologie, Table 1; © Ville de Nîmes, Bibliothèque carré d'art, France.)

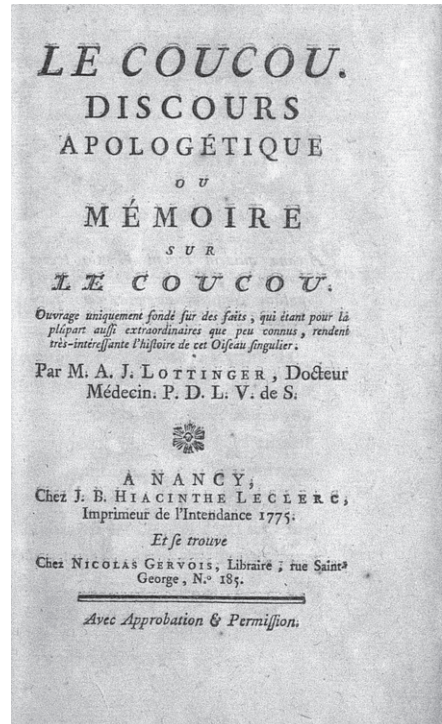


Figure 2. Second title-page of Lottinger's *Le coucou* ... (actual page size 142 × 77 mm). (Reproduced from copy 10: Fa C 861(5), Table 1; © Bibliothèque d'étude et du patrimoine, Toulouse, France.)

### Third title-page

*LE COUCOU.* | DISCOURS | APOLOGÉTIQUE, | *ou* | MÉMOIRE | *sur* | LE COUCOU D'EUROPE. | *Ouvrage uniquement fondé sur les faits aussi extraordinaires que peu connus, & dans lequel on trouvera nombre d'observations, & quelques réflexions sur les individus qui se chargent de couvrir l'auf de cet Oiseau singulier.* | Par M. A. J. LOTTINGER, Docteur | Médecin. P. D. L. V. de S. | [Double rule 73 mm] *PREMIERE PARTIE.* | [Double rule 71 mm] | [Stamp of two flowers, 11 × 5 mm] | A NANCY, | Chez J. B. HIACINTHE LECLERC, | Imprimeur de l'Intendance. 1775. | Et se vend | Chez NICOLAS GERVOIS, Libraire, rue St. George. | [Double rule 77 mm, top band double thickness] | *Avec Approbation & Permission.*

### Variants between title-pages

1. O, S] no comma after Apologetique.  
T] comma.
2. O, S] no "D'Europe".  
T] "D'EUROPE".
3. O, S] "*qui étant pour la plupart*" between "faits" and "aussi".  
T] this phrase is omitted. Though O and S include the same phrase here, the typeface is of a different size: O has 4 lines and S has 3 lines.

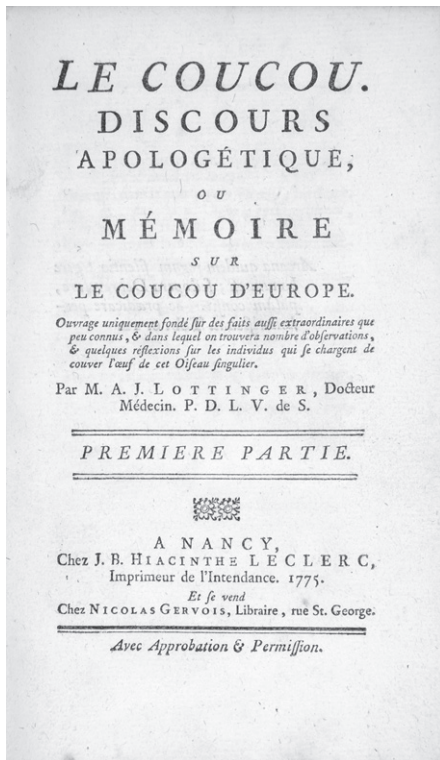


Figure 3. Third title-page of Lottinger's *Le coucou* ... (actual page size 149 × 79 mm). (Reproduced from copy 18: QL 696 C83 L67, Table 1; reproduced with permission of Elizabeth Dafoe Library, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada.)

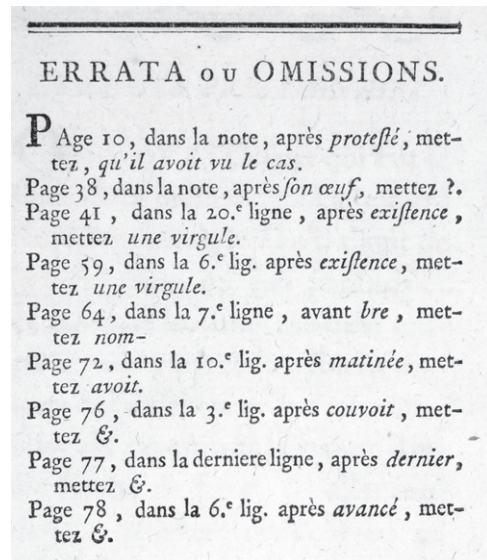


Figure 4. List of errors and omissions (extracted detail) included in copies of Lottinger's 1775 book that bear the third title-page. (Reproduced from copy 18: QL 696 C83 L67, Table 1; reproduced with permission of Elizabeth Dafoe Library, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Canada.)

4. O, S] “*rendent très-intéressante | l’histoire*”.

T] has “& dans lequel on trouvera nombre d’observations, | & quelques réflexions sur les individus qui se chargent de | couvrir l’œuf ...”.

5. O] A J. LOTTINGER (with no full stop after A).

S, T] A. J. LOTTINGER (full stop after A).

6. O, S] decoration and phrase omitted.

T] [Double rule 73 mm] *PREMIERE PARTIE.* | [Double rule 71 mm] |.

7. O] single decorative stamp.

T, S] different single stamp of two flowers, 11 × 5mm.

8. O, S] no full stop after “l’Intendance”.

T] full stop after “l’Intendance”.

9. O] no bookseller identified.

S] “*Et se trouve | Chez NICHOLAS GERVOIS, Libraire, rue Saint-| George, N.º 185.*”

T] “*Et se vend | Chez NICHOLAS GERVOIS, Libraire, rue St. George.*”

All three title-pages indicate that they were printed in 1775. The differences between them reveal that each page was set differently and used for slightly different purposes. The single most important change between the original title-page and second title-page is the addition of the name of a bookseller. It is somewhat surprising that no bookseller's name appears on the original title-page, for this information was commonly included in eighteenth-century books (McKerrow 1927). One might conjecture that the second title-page was printed because the name of the bookseller had been omitted on the original title-page. However, the survival of so many books with the original title-page makes it unlikely the first title-page was erroneous, for such an error could easily be rectified (see Gaskell 1959). Our hypothesis is that the original title-page was correct and that the lack of a specific bookseller indicates that copies bearing this title-page were meant to be distributed and sold outside Nancy. The bookseller's name on the second title-page suggests that part of the print run was set aside for local sales. This hypothesis is supported in part by the fact that a dedication to Lottinger's brother was printed with the second title-page but not the first. Given the extra work involved in detaching the original title-page from the text and tipping in the second (with or without the dedication), it seems likely the number of books distributed elsewhere was much larger than the portion set aside for sale in Nancy.

### Dedication

Lottinger's first book was dedicated to one of his five brothers, "J. E. de Lottinger son Frere, Conseiller de L. M. I. et R. au conseil Suprême de la Lombardie Autrichienne, et Intendant général des Postes [J. E. Lottinger his brother, Councillor of L. M. I. and R. to the Supreme council of Austrian Lombardy and Quartermaster general of the Post]" (Lottinger 1775: dedication).<sup>7</sup> In the dedication, Lottinger revealed what a special place his observations on cuckoos and their hosts held among the opportunities he was afforded to observe nature:

Mes Observations sur le Coucou & sur les individus, qui, nonobstant la destruction le leurs oeufs, couvent celui de cet oiseau, étant, mon Frere, de toutes celles que j'ai faites sur les espèces que l'on voit en Lorraine, les plus intéressantes, & en même tems [*sic*] celles qui m'ont coûté le plus de peine & de mouvemens, je vous les offre de préférence . . .

[My observations on the cuckoo and on the individuals, that, despite the destruction of their eggs, incubate this bird's egg, it is, my brother, of all the ones I made on the species that we see in Lorraine, the most interesting, and at the same time those that cost me the most pain and movements, I preferentially offer them to you . . . .]

The two-page dedication is present in three copies, all with different title-pages (Table 1): **1** includes the original title-page, **17** includes the third title-page, and **6** includes both the original and second title-pages.

Surprisingly, the material evidence furnished by these three copies reveals that the dedication was printed on the same sheet as the second title-page and that it was inserted in copies including the other title-pages after they had already been produced. The dedication was clearly added as a singleton to a completed quire in the Oxford copy (**1**), which includes the original title-page. This book is now bound very tightly, yet it is clear that all of the leaves in the first quire bear holes from stab stitching except the leaf upon which the dedication appears.<sup>8</sup> The presence of these stab holes is clear evidence that the first quire was initially an eight-leaf gathering, and the book may even have circulated before the dedication was added to it, either by a bookseller or even its owner. The initial collation formula for the

book with this gathering was therefore A–E<sup>8</sup> [\$4 signed], like most other copies that include the original title-page. After the addition of the dedication, the quire was made up of nine leaves; the book's collation is A<sup>8</sup> (A<sup>1</sup>+ $\chi^1$ ), B–E<sup>8</sup> [\$4 signed]. The Norwich copy (6) includes the second title-page in addition to the original title-page and the dedication. This copy confirms two important points. First, that the original title-page was printed with the rest of the first quire, for it is conjugate with the final leaf in the quire. Second, it confirms that the second title-page was printed on the same sheet as the dedication, for these two leaves (the fourth and fifth in the quire) form a single bifolium that has been added to a quire that originally consisted of eight leaves. As in the Oxford copy (1), which also includes the original title-page, the original collation formula for this book was A–E<sup>8</sup> [\$4 signed]. Now that the second title-page and dedication have been interpolated this quire consists of ten leaves and can be represented as A<sup>8</sup> (A<sup>3</sup>+ $\chi^2$ ), B–E<sup>8</sup> [\$4 signed]. One of two copies in Nancy, 17 includes the third title-page and has also had the dedication added to the first quire as a singleton. We will return to this copy shortly.

Given that the second title-page was printed on the same sheet and at the same time as the dedication, it is puzzling that neither copy of the book (9 and 10) containing only the second title-page includes the dedication. This puzzle can be explained if we consider that it would be expedient to print the second title-page and dedication on the same sheet if both were going to be needed at some point, for it would cut the use of the press in half. While it seems likely that some copies with the dedication were made for local distribution, it also may be that Lottinger or some of his readers wanted dedications to appear in copies found elsewhere. Therefore, copies of the dedication were removed from the second title-page to be appended to other copies. It is certain that the second title-page and the dedication were printed on the same sheet. Unlike the original title-page, the second title-page and dedication were printed separately from the first quire and the rest of the book, though they were designed to circulate with it. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the second title-page was printed to serve a different purpose than the original title-page, not to correct errors. This becomes even clearer when we consider that the purpose for printing the third title-page, which was produced slightly later in 1775, was almost certainly concerned with the correction of errors – though not errors in the title-page itself.

### Errata and omissions

All copies of the book that include the third title-page also include a list of “errata ou omissions” (Figure 4, p. 258). Like the second title-page and dedication discussed above, the third title-page and list of errata are conjugate, revealing that they were printed at the same time and on the same sheet. For example, the collation formula for the book now held at the University of Manitoba (18) is  $\pi^2$ , A<sup>8</sup> (–A1), B–E<sup>8</sup> [\$4 signed]. As we have seen, the first leaf of the first quire is where the original title-page initially appeared. In this copy, it has been removed and replaced by a single bifolium that includes the third title-page and list of errata. While they were clearly printed as a single bifolium, the third title-page and the list of errata also could be bound separately into books, just like the dedication and the second title-page.

One example provides evidence of both practices. The list of errata also appears in 17, which is hardly surprising given that this copy includes the third title-page. What is surprising is that the list of errata appears not at the beginning of 17 but at the end, where it has been tipped in unnumbered following “Permission Simple”. This was probably done to accommodate a copy of the dedication, which had been separated from the second title-page



and incorporated as a singleton following the title-page. Copy **17** is the only one to include the third title-page, the dedication and the list of errata. It also has the most unusual collation formula:  $\pi^2$ , A<sup>8</sup> (-A<sup>1</sup>), B-E,<sup>8</sup> [\$4 signed], F<sup>1</sup>.

The list of errata includes nine corrections to nine pages (Figure 4). The errors were not corrected in a subsequent printing, which confirms that all copies were printed as part of a single print run, for if the type was still set then corrections could be made easily. Instead of re-printing the book, then, it seems that Lottinger's printer has cleverly used the physical flexibility of the book to correct and update copies later in 1775, either because Lottinger had detected them himself or because the person who translated the text into German that year had discovered them. The Norwich copy (**6**) is again interesting in this regard, for five of the nine corrections suggested by the errata have been made by hand in ink. While these corrections could be closely related to the list of errata, either having been the basis for it or based upon it, the lack of complete correspondence makes the relationship ambiguous. While the creation and insertion of a new title-page with a list of errata provides an inexpensive way of correcting the text, it also depends on access to copies of the book. It is likely that the third title-page and list of errata were added to already-printed books that were close at hand, because they were being stored or sold locally, and this is why the name of the bookseller appears on the third title-page as well as the second. While some of these copies may have been meant for sale elsewhere, it would not have made financial sense to print yet another version of the title-page simply to remove the bookseller's name from a small number of books.

### Production and circulation

Taken together, the printing of three title-pages as well as the inclusion of the dedication and list of errors or omissions provide a great deal of insight into the production and circulation of the book. The printing was done by J. B. Hyacinthe Leclerc of Nancy (also see Mellot and Queval 2004), and was probably overseen, and possibly financed, by Lottinger himself. Hyacinthe Leclerc had some experience making use of the book's physical flexibility to produce texts that could have their front matter, including title-pages and dedications, easily updated so as to be distributed in different markets, to be corrected, or even to give the appearance of being a new edition. Like *Le coucou*, his edition of *Jenni, ou le désintéressement: drame de société en doux actes et en prose*, by "M. le Chev. D. g. N", printed in Nancy in 1771, has no bookseller's name on the first edition. However, it seems to have been designed to allow alternative front matter to be used to introduce the contents in the quires that follow. Its collation formula is  $\pi^2$ , A-C<sup>8</sup> [\$4 signed]. The first two leaves contain the title-page, *dramatis personae* and "Avertissement de L'Éditeur", with the text proper starting on the first leaf of the quire with the signature A. This approach to front matter was the rule rather than the exception during the eighteenth century, so it is not surprising that Hyacinthe Leclerc employed it to ensure that he need only set or even print Lottinger's book once while providing varying kinds of material to tailor the book to potential sellers or buyers whose interests might differ from one another.

It seems likely that Lottinger worked closely with his printer, despite living in a neighbouring village. He would have had a vested interest in the inclusion of a dedication to his brother as well as in the list of errata. He also apparently held up printing to incorporate results of an experiment conducted between May and mid-June of the year of publication. These results were included in the last seven pages (pp 72–78) in all copies, but only 12 of 46 nest manipulations that were conducted were described, suggesting that time ran out.

Addition of “Premiere Partie” to the third title-page was probably meant to complement “Seconde Partie”, which appears on page 45 of all copies.

The cost of the book, how many copies were printed, or how long the book remained in print are not known; as we have shown, only one edition was published, though three separate title pages were produced to accompany it.

The book was not widely cited, apart from attention it received in local papers and publications in France, and in Germany, after it was translated the following year<sup>9</sup> (reviewed in Leverkühn 1891).<sup>10</sup> Naturalists outside France generally referred to experiments described in one or both of Lottinger's books. Brewster (1830) noted Lottinger's observations of the cuckoo's selection of foster-species. Alfred Newton (Yarrell and Newton 1882), who edited the first and second volumes of the posthumous fourth edition of William Yarrell's *History of British birds* (1876–1882), inserted a note acknowledging Lottinger's observations of cuckoo eviction, made independently a few years before Edward Jenner's (1788) observations of this behaviour were published (see Guigueno and Sealy 2011). Leverkühn (1891) assessed Lottinger's work from a copy bearing the original title-page and from additional information in the German translation. He stated that “Lottinger's original papers remain so unknown that they deserve, after a century, to be recognized and valued” (Leverkühn 1891: 56).<sup>11</sup> Leverkühn apparently gained ideas for some of his own egg-manipulation experiments from Lottinger's book. Citing the German translation, Schulze-Hagen *et al.* (2009: 5) acknowledged Lottinger as the first to report that “cuckoo eggs were sometimes ejected by the host parents”. Haffer (2007: S136) must have highly regarded Lottinger's contributions because while praising the details provided on many aspects of the biology of birds by Zorn (1742), he noted that “data on the brood parasitism of the European Cuckoo are very detailed and represent the best available account prior to Lottinger's (1775) famous booklet”. Others cited Lottinger's book by the title on the original or second title-page (Jourdain 1925; Friedmann 1929; Muller 1999; Haffer 2007)<sup>12</sup>, whereas Sealy (2009) cited the title on the third title-page.

Lottinger continued to think about cuckoos and their fosterers for the rest of his life: he conducted further experiments and published a second book in 1795. He was also interested in bird migration and, with several other naturalists in Europe, he made his extensive observations available to Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707–1788), for use in *Histoire naturelle des oiseaux* (1770–1783). Lottinger may have become more widely known for his work had he studied more independently rather than having been primarily Buffon's correspondent, working in his shadow (Stresemann 1975; Farber 1997). Was Lottinger's work on cuckoos simply not known, or was it ignored? In one particularly important experiment, Lottinger invoked divine decree to explain an unexpected result, which was not unlike many naturalists of his day. But like evolutionary trends, Colgan (1983: 187) noted, “trends in science are most obvious over relatively long intervals.” This does not detract from the intuitiveness of Lottinger's experiments, however, and versions of them are used by researchers today.

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Librarians affiliated with the libraries listed in Table 1 confirmed their holdings of copies of Lottinger's book and facilitated visits to examine them. Digital images of the title-pages were provided by Evelyne Bret (Ville de Nîmes, Bibliothèque carré d'art), Emilie Montersino (Bibliothèque d'étude et du patrimoine, Toulouse), and Mathilda Peyrou and Eric Bacarro (Médiathèque Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Chambéry). The late Dr Bernadette G. Callery (Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh), Nicole Heyd (Bibliothèque de Université de

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Antoine Joseph Lottinger, born on 11 February 1725 in eastern Blâmont, Muerthe-Et-Moiselle, France, was one of eleven children (Boehm 2003). The year of his death has been recorded as between 1793 and 1804 (Therret 1991), but most sources give it as 1793 or 1794, thus preceding publication of his second book.

<sup>2</sup> Lottinger spent most of his working life as a physician in the villages of Hesse and Sarrebourg (where he was mayor), not far from his birthplace. His experiments were conducted in his spare time in a nearby forest.

<sup>3</sup> Not all of Lottinger's protocols were appropriate, but his experiments might have ushered in an era of experimentation had more naturalists been aware of them and, as Heinroth (1922) lamented, if there had been less reticence towards experimentation among those who conducted the early field-studies of birds.

<sup>4</sup> Translation from the original French was made by M. F. Guigueno.

<sup>5</sup> C. Aguttes, 2004 "Auction, Hôtel des Ventes de Neuilly, 164 bis, avenue Charles de Gaulle. 92200 Neuilly sur seine, Paris, France, 17 Juin" (URL [http:// www.bibliore.com/cat-vent\\_aguttes17-6-043](http://www.bibliore.com/cat-vent_aguttes17-6-043), accessed on 15 July 2011).

<sup>6</sup> We provide the following sample measurements (nearest 1 mm) in support of this point: **8** (original title-page described above) was 193 × 113 mm (shape ratio 1.71), with means (± SD) of 198 ± 6.0 × 118.6 ± 6.5 mm (*n* = 7 copies); **10** (second title-page) was 193 × 114 mm (shape ratio 1.69), means 191 × 113.5 mm (*n* = 2); and **18** (third-title page) was 191 × 114 mm (shape ratio 1.68), means (± SD) 189.6 ± 5.1 × 116.9 ± 2.0 mm (*n* = 8). Leaves in **3**, possibly in its original binding, had the greatest height – 209 mm.

<sup>7</sup> Jean Estiene Lottinger was born on 11 October 1727, also in Blâmont.

<sup>8</sup> We are grateful to Dr Francesca Galligan for helping us to determine this in the first instance, and for allowing us subsequently to confirm her findings.

<sup>9</sup> For the German translation (Lottinger 1776) the title was not translated literally from any of the title-pages of the French issues. The German title translates as "The cuckoo, or a report on the natural history of this wonderful bird . . . based on personal experiences" (translated by C. M. McLaren.)

<sup>10</sup> Lottinger's work was noted by some authors of early French treatises on cuckoos and brood parasitism (for example, des Murs 1879) but not by others (for example, Sardinha 1877), or most modern treatises on brood parasitism or history of ornithology.

<sup>11</sup> Translated by E. Carter.

<sup>12</sup> Catalogues listed the book under the original title (for example, Desessarts 1800; Quérard 1833).

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