“Emperor Hung Wu Ti wanted to know the cause of poverty. In his effort to eliminate it, he encouraged the people to cooperate, and to eliminate idleness. But the rich and the poor were not yet evenly burdened. The rich evaded the tax collector, and succeeded in escaping many charges. This, of course, caused the poor to shoulder a heavy burden.”\textsuperscript{30} These lines from Confucius were undoubtedly read by Étienne de Silhouette (1709-1767) at some point in his scholastic life, for he was a Sinophile and Confucius’ writings were the North star of his life’s journey. His economic perspective was heavily influenced by Gournay.\textsuperscript{31} Like him, he would question monopolies and the exclusive of the \textit{Compagnie des Indes}, and encourage state support of industry. Quesnay was an ardent student of Silhouette’s economic writings, particularly his 1731 work, \textit{Idée générale du gouvernement et de la morale des Chinois}.

During the Seven Years’ War (1756-1763), with France once more at war and mired in further financial woes, Madame Pompadour sought out Silhouette in the Paris salons. In 1759, he took the position of \textit{Contrôleur-Général} which was celebrated at court as a victory by members of the Gournay circle and the Physiocrats. Why then, is he not remembered in French history? Why was his audacious economic program hardly noted by historians? André Maurois devoted three lines to Silhouette’s career in his 700-plus page \textit{A History of France}, commenting only, “In 1759 a certain Monsieur de Silhouette became controller-general of finances. He was held to be a thinker, and Voltaire wrote, ‘I say that God has sent Monsieur de Silhouette to our assistance’. This divine messenger suggested a number of taxes, ‘even on the air one breathes’, aroused an outcry and disappeared after four months in office leaving his name to the French language to designate a passing shadow. ‘The eagle has changed into a goose’, Voltaire philosophically remarked.”\textsuperscript{32} Ironically, a more accurate sense of the events was captured in an English art journal exploring the origins of an eighteenth-century art form that uses scissors and black paper to create a shadow likeness. The article titled “The Art of Silhouetting” begins in a gossipy tone with the story of

\textsuperscript{30}Maverick, 104.
\textsuperscript{31}Arnaud Orain, “Soutenir la guerre et réformer la fiscalité: Silhouette et Forbonnais au Contrôle général des finances (1759),” in French Historical Studies, Vol.36, No.3 (Summer 2013),417. “Dans deux operations distinctes, le contrôleur general et l'économiste vont ainsi tenter du trouver les fonds nécessaires à la poursuite du conflit et finalement échouer face à l'hostilité que leurs projets vont soulever. Souvent passé sous silence, ce ministère a été jugé sévèrement par les rares historiens qui y ont fait allusion. Pourtant, les tentatives de Silhouette et Forbonnais relèvent moins de l'improvisation que d'une volonté de mis en œuvre des idées qu'ils ont préalablement développées au sein du cercle Gournay.”