

Jean-Luc Godard, revolutionary filmmaker

written by Rasika Ruwanpathirana
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Jean-Luc Godard tests a microphone while filming at a Palestinian refugee camp in Jordan, 1970. The footage was later used in the film 'Ici et ailleurs.'

We are saddened to receive the news of the death of the pioneering filmmaker, critic, and political activist [Jean-Luc Godard](#) on Sept. 13.

His films broke ground as part of the French New Wave. Most importantly, Godard was interested in left politics and made films with revolutionary politics, together with a group of like-minded filmmakers. He became interested in Maoism as he was becoming radicalized during the 1960s, and made several films on that subject, including “La Chinoise.”

In 1970, Godard was invited to make a film about the Palestinian revolution against the Zionist Israeli state. He visited Palestinian refugee camps in Jordan to collect footage.

Later that year, the Jordanian royal army murdered most of the Palestinian refugees in those camps, in the massacre known as “Black September.” By the time the film was in the editing stage, most of the people on film were killed.

It is said that Godard was devastated and had a breakdown after these tragic events and was unable to finish the film. Later, the footage was used in the film “Ici et ailleurs” (“Here and Elsewhere”), completed in collaboration with Anne-Marie Miéville in 1975.

There’s a lot that can be said about Godard’s contributions to the world of independent cinema. However, we take this time to celebrate his contribution to revolutionary ideals in cinema. He was unapologetically anti-imperialist and defended the Palestinian revolution with mind and body.

The writer is a filmmaker and Amazon worker.

