**Translation of part of an interview of Jean-Luc Godard for the Cahiers du Cinéma n°194, October 1967.**

***Cahiers — Do you think, like your characters, that the Soviet communists « betrayed » (the ideals of communism) ?***

***Godard —***I made a film that I called « La Chinoise » (The Chinese) in which I developed the theses in the writings of Mao Tsé-toung or the *Cahiers Marxistes-Léninistes (CML[[1]](#footnote-1))*, which go against the French Communist Party*.* Again, the movement I followed is cinematographic, which explains why the *CML* accused the film of being “leftist”, and the *Humanité Nouvelle[[2]](#footnote-2)* accused it of being a “fascist provocation.” But I think that, if there’s some truth in these opinions, the problem is not that simple when it comes to cinema.

***Cahiers — How do you explain why Henri’s declaration, which is revisionist in the movie, got so much attention?***

***Godard —***I hadn’t anticipated that, but now, I understand very well. At a certain point, he is alone against four people, that’s it. If you film Guy Mollet[[3]](#footnote-3) against four people who attack everything he says, this imbecile and bastard Guy Mollet is going to look like a poor sheep.

***Cahiers — For all that, Henri is the only character in the movie to fully explain himself.***

***Godard —***No. He’s the only character that people think explained himself. The other characters don’t need to explain themselves; their beliefs are clearer. One also has to take into account that people tend to valorize the character that they prefer; so they don’t really listen and they never add up what has been said.

***Cahiers — Renoir was already questioning the influence of cinema: war, he noted, started right after he had filmed La Grande Illusion, a movie for peace...***

***Godard —*** Oh, for sure! Cinema does not have the slightest influence. We used to think that the arrival of a train at the station would scare people. It scared people once, but not twice. This is why I never understood, even ontologically, censorship. It is based on the idea that sound and image have some kind of repercussion on people’s behavior.

1. The *Cahiers Marxistes Léninistes* is a journal founded in 1965 by students of Louis Althusser at the École Normale in Paris. Its goal was to incarnate a political and intellectual Avant-Garde. But the Journal quickly swung into a crisis and then became Maoïst. It was known to tackle any subject (including literature) from a political angle. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *L’Humanité Nouvelle* was the newspaper of the French Communist Marxist-Leninist Party (PCMLF), a Maoïst party founded in 1967. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Guy Mollet was a French Socialist politician. He led the French Section of the Workers' International party from 1946 to 1969 and was Prime Minister from 1956 to 1957. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)