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| La Règle du Jeu |
| The Rules of the Game |
| *La Règle du Jeu* (*The Rules of the Game*) is a 1939 humanist film by Jean Renoir satirizing the French aristocracy. Premiered at the brink of the Second World War, the film’s subject matter angered audiences, despite a gentle tone and a lack of any direct reference to politics or world events, and was subsequently banned with cuts ordered. The Inspiration for what Renoir called a ‘more classical, more poetic’ film (Durgnat 192) came to the director while working on his naturalist film *La Bête Humaine* [*The Human Beast*] (1938), however, his characteristic realism remained intact in *La Règle du Jeu*. Renoir took an improvisatory approach to the film, beginning with a script inspired by French writers, including de Musset and Marivaux, and then revising it constantly based on the performances of his actors. The film is known for its pioneering use of deep focus, which had become technically difficult after the start of the sound era, and influenced the modernist directors of the Nouvelle Vague. François Truffaut, in particular, called it ‘the greatest film in the history of cinema’ (De Baecque and Toubiana 35). While the original negative of *La Règle du Jeu* was destroyed during the war, the film was later reconstructed in 1956, and has continued to influence generations of filmmakers. |
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| Further reading:  (Baecque and Toubiana)  (Bazin)  (Durgnat)  (Renoir, My Life and My Films)  (Renoir, Renoir on Renoir: Interviews, Essays, and Remarks) |