

## Towards a High Definition of (Olympic) Sport

### Hacia una alta definición del deporte (olímpico)

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#### Abstract

The paper entertains the idea of *sport* as a heterogeneous concept and focuses not on the boundaries of its extension (a paramount consideration in case of the problem of definition understood in the traditional way), but rather of its internal structure. I start with Bernard Suits' definition of sport (offered in his paper *The Elements of Sport*), which is a plausible attempt to construct a homogenous definition of sport. According to this definition sports create a subset of games. However, in his later paper *The Tricky Triad*, Suits himself criticized this definition by introducing a new category of *judged sports* that are not games, and a *fortiori* cannot meet his former definition. This distinction not only overthrows the original definition, but also reveals a hidden heterogeneity in the domain of sport. I would like to supplement Suits' critique of his own definition by another objection, which draws the second dividing line in the domain of sport, namely the distinction between kinetic and non-kinetic, mainly performative activities. These two distinctions taken together allow me to construct a conceptual map of sport (and especially Olympic sport) that I call *The Olympic Sport Image* (OSI). It encompasses the following fields: athletic games, judged sports, mind sports and art sports. I would like to call the offered theory the "High Definition of Sport" (HDS), since it gives an insight into the structure of sport as a heterogeneous domain. To prove the usefulness of this model I am showing its applicability into the history of the programme of the Olympic Games (OG) and I'm comparing it with Suits' triadic model.

**Key words:** tricky triad, Suits, Olympic sport, definition.

#### Resumen

Este artículo presenta la idea de que el deporte es un concepto heterogéneo y se centra no en las fronteras de su extensión (una consideración de central importancia en el caso del problema de la definición entendido al modo tradicional), sino en su estructura interna. Comienzo con la definición de deporte de Suits (ofrecida en su artículo *The Elements of Sport*), que es un intento plausible de construir una definición homogénea del deporte. Según esta definición, el deporte crea un subconjunto de juegos. Sin embargo, en un artículo posterior, *The Tricky Triad*, Suits mismo critica esta definición introduciendo una nueva categoría de juegos juzgados que no son juegos y, por fuerza, no pueden encajar con su primera definición. Esta distinción no sólo elimina la primera definición, sino que también revela una heterogeneidad oculta en el dominio del deporte. Yo complementaré la crítica que Suits ofrece de su propia definición a través de otra objeción, la cual se basa en la segunda línea divisoria en el ámbito del deporte, a saber, la distinción entre kinético y antikinético, principalmente actividades performativas. Estas dos distinciones tomadas de modo conjunto me permiten elaborar un mapa conceptual del deporte (y especialmente del deporte olímpico) que denomino como la "Imagen del Deporte Olímpico" (IDO). Ésta incluye los siguientes campos: juegos atléticos, juegos juzgados, deportes mentales y deportes artísticos. Llamaría a esta teoría ofrecida aquí "Alta Definición del Deporte" (ADD), ya que proporciona una mirada dentro de la estructura del deporte como un ámbito heterogéneo. Para mostrar la utilidad de este modelo, mostraré su aplicación en la historia del programa de los Juegos Olímpicos (JJO) y lo compararé con el modelo triádico de Suits.

**Palabras clave:** triada engañosa, Suits, Juegos Olímpicos, definición.

## Introduction: Different Attitudes Towards Defining Sport

One might distinguish the two radically opposite attitudes towards defining sport: 1) a definition of sport is possible and desirable (Suits, 1988, 2) a definition of sport is neither possible nor desirable (Mc Fee, 2003, 22-24). There is also a spectrum of middle positions, but I will not discuss it here. The first one is related to search for formal, exhaustive definition (consisting of a set of necessary and sufficient conditions) and regards sport as being a closed concept (Wertz, 1995, 83); it is also called the narrow view of sport (Hsu, 2005, 46-48).

The second one denies there are such definitions of sport and holds that this is an “open” concept; it is also called the broad view of sport (Hsu, 2005, 48-49). Despite the fundamental differences between the two attitudes, there are some common points. Both of them focus on the existence of the “boundaries” of sport rather than on the homogeneity or heterogeneity of the concept.

There is a natural tendency to suppose that the closed view favours the homogenous view of sport (since there is something common to all sports), but it might be misleading. It is possible that albeit there is a set of features common to all sports, other features introduce such radical differences between sports that the domain in fact falls apart into very diverse sub-categories. It is thus possible to claim both narrow and heterogeneous views of sport. On the other hand, in case of the broad view of sport there is natural tendency to suppose that it contradicts the homogenous nature of sport, since disclosure of such homogeneity would be identical with discovery of the essence of sport, and thus rejecting the broad view. We might now summarize these considerations as follows: the homogenous view of sport implies the narrow view, and the broad view implies heterogenous view.

Heterogenous view does not imply either open or closed view of sport and could be held without appealing to any of them. Because the position I will take is a certain version of heterogenous view, I am not going to support any attitude and my position might be associated with each of them. The fact that my heterogenous view is derived from a critique of a certain form of a narrow view of sport (Suits' definition of sport) does not entail that my view favours the broad view of sport. I believe that despite this lack of associations my view still might be called a definition of sport, but with some reservations.

The problem with defining sport is somewhat similar to a difficulty we face when defining a vegetable.

Everyone knows what a vegetable is, and can offer many examples without any problems, however providing a satisfactory definition in a formula that covers all and only vegetables, is very difficult. Why is that? Now, when defining a “vegetable” we proceed to categories, which are more basic and primeval, biological or rather botanical, but not related to cooking or cuisine. It then turns out that the concept of a vegetable is somehow imposed on the basic botanical categories, and what is more, among the various categories (roots, leaves, stalks, fruit), only some subcategories are selected based on the criteria “foreign” to botanical order. It is impossible to define a vegetable using only the lower level, botanical notions such as “fruits”, “leaves” “roots” etc., since what a vegetable is, is dependent on our historical preferences and habits. The same is true for defining other concepts imposed on the already existing and more primeval categories. The definition of sport resembles the definition of a vegetable – it supervenes on some lower level notions and the main aim of the article is to reveal these notions.

To grasp the peculiarity of this position I suggest to call it, hopefully not too fanciful, the high definition of sport. To explain this term let me first explain what I understand by a rough high definition of sport. To that end imagine that a guest from Mars (perhaps an anthropologist of sport) one day knocks on my door and asks me “tell me, the Earthly philosopher of sport, what is this thing called sport?” One strategy to answer this question – quite natural in the era of televised sport might be to convince him to watch these TV stations (obviously in HD standard), which televised the most important sport events, e.g. the Olympic Games. Perhaps this strategy would require showing him some paradigm cases of advertisements and studio-talks, to avoid confusion with proper sport transmissions. I believe it would finally give him a picture (definition) of sport that is not very far from the pictures present in minds of an Earthly sports fan. Now the two further questions might appear: the first one would concern border cases (should MMA be called a proper sport? Should chess be included, and diving excluded from the OG's programme?) and the second one would concern the problem of relations between the elements of the vast set of televised events (do diving and running belong to the same category of sports?). The answer to the second question might be called a proper *high definition of sport*, since it would allow to capture the most important similarities and differences between different types of sport events. Obviously the two questions are interrelated, however it is possible to focus on one of them rather than on the other. In search for the high definition of sport I

will follow – to a certain stage – Suits’ investigations, and my proposition is inspired by Suits’ *Tricky Triad*. I will follow a certain remark of Suits referring to the scope of his investigations: “I shall confine my remarks (...) to sport as the kind of activity exemplified in the Olympic Games” (Suits, 1988b, 2). I will also use this Suits’ starting point hoping to show some of its consequences not analyzed by Suits. The programme of the Olympic Games might be treated as a paradigm of sport and The International Olympic Committee’s decisions are an important institutional factor in the evolution of the concept of sport. To use Wittgenstein’s idiom: the IOC is an important player of a language game with the word *sport*. However, my use of the OG’s programme is broader than Suits’ use: I’m going to present a kind of conceptual map of activities not only actually present in the programme of the Olympic Games, but also two other categories: 1) removed in the past from this programme and 2) suggested as its possible future part. My strategy is thus rather ontological and speculative, and I’m dealing with certain possibilities not necessary accomplished in the history of sport.

### Suits’ Definition of Sport and objections against it

I would like to discuss first Suits’ definition of sport from his article “The Elements of Sport” (Suits, 1988a). This definition consists of two parts: first Suits suggests a *genus proximum* for sport (game) and then offers a *differentia specifica*; both parts consist of four elements, so finally we get quite a complex set of eight conditions. Suits’ well-known definition of game-playing is as follows: “To play a game is to engage in activity directed towards bringing about a specific state of affairs (*prelusory goal*), using only means permitted by rules (*lusory means*), where the rules prohibit more efficient in favour of less efficient means (*constitutive rules*), and where such rules are accepted just because they make possible such activity (*lusory attitude*)” (Suits, 1988a, 14). The simplified, approximated version states that: “Playing a game is the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles” (Suits, 1988a, 14). In step two Suits claims, that sport is a subset of games, and each game, to be counted as sport, must satisfy four additional criteria: 1) it must be a game of skill 2) it must be a game of physical skill 3) it must have wide following 4) its following has a certain level of stability (Suits, 1988a, 14). The definition perfectly captures the most popular types of sport events: track and field, ball games, all kinds of races, martial sports etc. It

successfully describes the most general features of typical, paradigm types of sport, which fill the major part of programs of the most important sport festivals. The two last conditions resemble the requirements that must be met by a sport discipline to have a chance to be included into the OG’ programme and one might suppose they were also inspired by these requirements. However, the definition has not gone unchallenged, and perhaps the most notable attack on it was launched by Suits himself. Now, I would like to focus on the two presuppositions: 1) that all sports are games and 2) that all sports require physical skills. The first one has been challenged by Suits in his later article *The Tricky Triad*<sup>1</sup>, the second one is still rather widely accepted among the philosophers of sport, but – noteworthy – not by such an institution like the IOC.

In “The Grasshopper” Suits entertained a lot of possible objections against his definition of game-playing and most of them expressed the worry about the adequacy of this definition. Suits considered the two types of objections: error of exclusion and error of inclusion. In some cases, the definition was defended by showing that alleged counterexamples (e.g. foot races, mountain climbing) meet the definition and in fact are games (even if they might not be called “games” in ordinary language). In other cases (ring-ring-a-roses or astronomical interpretation of Sun, Earth and Moon) these activities turned out not to be games – even if they might be sometimes called “games” in ordinary language (Suits, 2014, 198-199, 210, 216). The same procedure might be applied to Suits’ definition of sport. According to the first type of objections the definition is too narrow – error of exclusion – because some activities that are sports at the same time are not games, and do not fit the definition. Suits criticized his definition in the following way: “I maintained that sports (...) were the same as games. Well, I was wrong. The Olympics (as well as the Commonwealth Games, and so on) contain two distinctive types of competitive event, what I have elsewhere called judged as opposed to refereed events” (Suits, 1988b, 2). The paradigm example of a sport that is not game (and does not fit the definition) is diving – one cannot find either a prelusory goal of diving or a constitutive rule that forbids some means

1 Suits’ self-criticism has not been widely accepted, and the majority of philosophers of sport hold a rather early view of Suits that sport is a proper subclass of games (Berman, 2015, 1). Klaus Meier claimed that both forms of sport (games and performances) indeed satisfy Suits’ own definition of games (Meier, 1988, 23) and Scott Kretchmar argued that Olympic diving is a “full-blooded game” and “Suits’ categories, games and performances, are really two species of games” (Kretchmar, 1989, 34).

to this end. Analysing different Olympic disciplines in respect to the winner selecting factor, Suits comes to the distinction between games – activities aimed at overcoming the artificially established barriers and performances – activities aimed at approximation to the proposed ideal. Not all sports are games – some of them are performances – and belong to another category of activities: “I submit that diving and gymnastic competitions are no more games than are other judged competitive events, such as beauty contests and pie-baking competitions” (Suits, 1988b, 3)<sup>2</sup>. Let us call sports that are not games the “judged sports”. If this later Suits’ critique is sound, then his previous definition of sport turns out to be fundamentally erroneous – it is not adequate because the very *genus proximum* of this definition is too narrow. However, the distinction between judged sports and refereed sports shows a very interesting heterogeneity in the domain of sport. Thus Suits’ abandoning of his former definition of sport might be seen as illuminative: it enables sharpening of the image of sport. The manner in which Suits perceives performances might be also seen as a successful confrontation of the real picture of the OG’s programme with the abstract definition.

Let us note that the similar problem was earlier attacked by David Best. He distinguished between *purposive sports*, in which “purpose can be specified independently of the manner of achieving it as long as it conforms to the limits set by the rules” (Best, 1978, 104) and *aesthetic sports* in which “the aim cannot be considered apart from the manner of achieving it” (Best, 1978, 104). The first group encompasses, among others, hockey, track and field events, tennis etc., the second group – gymnastics, diving, synchronized swimming and the like). As I was trying to show in another place, Suits’ and Best’s distinctions are coextensive. Due to the similarity of results of these philosophers let us call it Best-Suits distinction<sup>3</sup>. It will serve me as a first distinction in constructing the Olympic Sport Image. Both Best and Suits constructed their distinctions in the domain of sport understood as competitive athletic events, but because I will try to offer a more open concept of sport, I will remove the athletic aspect from the background of the distinction. What remains is the distinction between the two types of ludic competitive events. In

the first type of these events – games – participants aimed at overcoming certain artificial obstacles with maximal efficiency *within* the rules prohibiting the use of optimal means (constitutive rules). Since the success depends solely on efficiency in overcoming these obstacles (within the rules) these events might be labelled as praxiological. The nature of the obstacles and rules might define further distinctions between games, and the basic distinction can be made between athletic games and non-athletic games (I’ll go back to this problem in the next section). In the second type of events – performances – contestants aimed at approximation to the proposed *aesthetic* ideals (clearly seen in the case of “art gymnastics”) and their efforts belong rather to the artistic than praxiological domain. Just as in case of games, further distinctions between performances will depend on the nature of proposed ideals, and those performances requiring athletic skills might be distinguished from non-athletic performances. Such distilled distinction can still serve to draw a demarcation line in the domain of athletic events, but thanks to its generality it might also serve to draw an analogous distinction in a broader class of ludic competitive activities.

Now let us move to the second distinction, that is orthogonal to the first one. It deals with one of the conditions in Suits’ *differentia specifica* – requirements of physical skills. Suits’ opinion about sport status of chess is clear: “It is a plain fact that how chess pieces are moved has nothing whatever to do with dexterity or any other bodily skill. One can play chess (...) solely by issuing verbal commands as is the case when chess is played by mail” (Suits, 1988a, 15). Suits also claims that “The issue is wholly terminological” and explains that “<<Physical games>> designate a quite definite class of objects and the term <<sport>> is confined to this class (...) the question <<why do sports have to involve physical skills>> is not a well formulated question. The question should be <<What kind of skills do we find in the class of activities we call sport>>, and the answer is <<physical skills>>” (Suits, 1998a, 16). This Suits’ claim shows that in contrast to his analysis of games, his analysis of sport is in part dependent on culturally generated factors, such as language usage or social convention. If sport status of chess were just a terminological issue, how could the IOC, several institutions and philosophers of sport make such a simple mistake? The answer is that if a researcher limits his investigations to only one culture (or coherent group of ideas) such a specious impression might easily appear and conceal the real problem lying deeper than at the terminological level. In fact, according to Suits’ considerations chess plays a

2 Suits’ suggestive example of a non-game judged competitive event (pie-baking competition) might be replaced by examples from the domain of Olympic art competitions, which are more relevant to the OG’s programme (e.g. sculpture contest).

3 A comparison between Suits’ and Best’s distinctions might be found in McFee (2015, 207) and Kobiela (2016, 79-81).

function of a paradigmatic game that is *not* a sport. The other example is bridge, and we might now naturally generalise Suits' opinion to cover the entire domain of the so called "mind-sports". Now I would like to challenge Suits' thesis and claim that it is possible to hold a different view of sport that includes the so-called "mind sport", and perhaps also something else.

In contrast to the discussion about a judged sport, I'm not trying to show that Suits was wrong in excluding chess from the domain of sport, but I'm focusing on the very distinction between "mind" and "physical" activities, presupposing that this distinction is useful in analysing alternative – inclusive notion of sport, supported, among others, by the IOC.

What "mind" means in the context of "mind-sports" or "mind-games" could be explained by the use of theory of performatives. The essence of these games is taking series of decisions and transferring the information concerning these decisions. However, to have a real impact on the game (strictly speaking: the world of the game) the information must have a special sanction. In "mind" competitive ludic activities the players' actions take form of *performatives*, as a means of symbolic interference with the world of the game. The activity is based on ritual acts using some objects or strictly formalized statements (e. g. moving a pawn in chess, issuing a verbal command, etc.). Such objects as chess pawns or bridge cards are markers or media for conveying the information. On the other hand, in kinetic games ("physical" games) the players' actions, do not have a symbolic, but "literal" character – the actions take forms of the movements of players' bodies in real space-time. Obviously, players make decisions when engaged in playing kinetic games (e.g. lawn tennis). They are, however, not communicated in a special way (like in chess), but incarnated into the game by the players' bodily actions that do not have a symbolic, but causal influence on the world of the game. One cannot play a real game of tennis issuing verbal commands: "I'm now playing slice backhand low above the net into the left corner of the tennis court". The distinction itself clarifies the ways of taking part in different kinds of activities, and as such is neutral to the debate between the narrow and the broad views of sport<sup>4</sup>. But if one accepts the possibility of inclusion of "mind-sports" into the domain of sport – a natural matter in the context of Olympic sports – the distinction might reveal other hidden divisions in the domain of sport. It is aimed to further sharpen the image of sport.

4 The distinction between kinetic and performative games is presented in Kobiela 2014 (66-68).

## The Olympic Sport Image and the History of the Olympic Games in OSI's

Having made the distinctions between games and judged competitive events (performances) as well as kinetic and performative activities, we are in a position – by crossing them – to create the Olympic Sport Image. The idea of the Olympic Sport Image is linked with the High Definition of Sport in the following way: The overall image emerges from smaller elements (pixels), which differs between ano another in some features (colour, intensity etc). The higher definition of an image, the bigger the number of pixels and more detailed the picture.

**Table 1. The Olympic Sport Image (OSI) – a conceptual map of the ludic competitive events (agones)**

X	GAMES OVERCOMING ARTIFICIAL OBSTACLES	(NON-GAMES) APPROXIMATING AESTHETIC IDEALS
KINETIC (ATHLETIC)	PURPOSIVE SPORTS (D. Best) PHYSICAL OR ATHLETIC GAMES; REFEREED EVENTS (B. Suits)	AESTHETIC SPORTS (D. Best) PERFORMANCES; JUDGED EVENTS (B. Suits)
NON-KINETIC (MAINLY PERFORMATIVE)	MIND SPORTS MIND GAMES (CONCEPTUAL SPORTS) <sup>5</sup>	ART CONTESTS ART COMPETITIONS (ART SPORTS)

Within the upper left field (athletic games) we can find the paradigm of sport – games requiring physical effort e.g. running, as seen in Suits' definition of sport from *The Elements of Sport*. The upper right field (athletic non-games) lists aesthetic sports (in Best's terminology) or performances (in Suits' terminology) or judged sports – e.g. gymnastics<sup>6</sup>. The upper fields are not controversial – both their sport status and presence in the contemporary OG's programme are trivial facts<sup>7</sup>. A more complicated situation occurs with the lower row. The lower left field (non-athletic games; performative games or mind sports) includes

5 Both "Conceptual sports" and "Art sports" are my terminological propositions.

6 It should be noted here that the aesthetic within games (e.g. "the goal of the month" in soccer or "the prize for beauty" in chess) does not constitute a separate kind of activities.

7 One of the most important controversy connected with the distinction between refereed and judged sports is the problem of the scoring system – See e.g. Loland (2002, 92-93). In a fictitious – but very interesting from the OG's programme's perspective – sport blog entry, Ed Cohen notes: "The IOC announced that the judged events, which include the popular figure skating and gymnastics competitions, will be transferred to a new Olympic style festival to be called the Olympic Performance Games, or Performics for short. (...) IOC's intention was to draw a clearer distinction between «objectively measured athletic capacity» and art, «which can only be subjectively assessed.» (...) «The Performics will provide a suitable venue for competition in the artistic realm.»" (Cohen, 2010).

chess – the paradigm of mind-sports – and also such games as bridge, go, checkers etc. These games fill the programme of the *Mind Sports Olympiad*. The sport status of these games is controversial, but in the context of the OG the situation is clear: The International Olympic Committee officially recognizes chess as a sport. This fact opens a possibility of including this game into the OG's programme. The relevant efforts of chess organizations have had no effects so far, but I believe this situation at least lets me include chess into the OSI – as a “possible Olympic sport”. Finally, the lower right field (non-athletic non-games) covers art contests (art competitions), which I will call “art sports”<sup>8</sup>. In the Modern OG they encompassed sport-related architecture, literature, music, painting and sculpture. The historical name of these events – the Pentathlon of Muses – indicates their relation to both art and sport. The status of the lower right field might be seen as the inversion of the status of the lower-left field. The art contents used to constitute a part of the OG's programme (Parry & Girginov, 2005, 136-137), but – as one might object – it does not make them sports. However, it is important to note that the reason for removing them from the programme of the OG was *not* that they weren't sports (but that they were professional events, in contrast to the amateur nature of the OG). My claim is that the very decision of introducing them into the OG's programme is analogous to the decision of exhibiting an object in the museum on the ground of the institutional definition of art (Mumford, 2014, 181; McFee, 2014, 54). It might be thus seen not as a statement of fact (in case of the Olympics – the sport status of the art contests) but rather creation of a fact. But even if this “institutional definition of sport” will not be accepted as a proper response to the objection, I still believe the fact that the Olympic art contests naturally fit into this field of the diagram is noteworthy. The logic of the diagram suggests that if we accept the distinction between games and judged events, and we are to entertain the possibility of non-athletic sports like chess, then we should also entertain the possibility of an “art sport”<sup>9</sup>.

In the case of these art contests the situation is much more similar to a chess game (and other mind sports) than it might seem. The contestants in the Olympic art competitions present their artworks in a way very

similar to the way in which chess players perform their moves: both present a certain readymade product of their former activity – an analysis of a chess position that leads to a decision, or an analysis of an art problem that leads to creation of an artwork<sup>10</sup>. In both cases the activity takes a form of a certain declaration (performative): “this is my move/artwork created according to the rules of the game/contest”. Obviously, the natures of a chess analysis and an “art analysis” are different, but the similarities in the general structure of both types of activities are in my opinion sufficient to put them into the same category of “performative” events. Note that the presence of “physical” (kinetic) component in the creation of art is not necessary, since there exists conceptual art, and on the other hand, the absence of physical (kinetic) component in chess is not necessary either, since it is possible to play garden chess with very heavy pieces (“heavy chess”) requiring strength and stamina. Both possibilities do not deny the performative nature of chess and art contests.

But my final remark concerning Olympic art competitions regarded as ‘art sports’ is more of a general nature. It is now more evident than in de Coubertine's era that art and sport are closely related to each other. The process of aestheticization of sport is increasing, and if sport might be seen as art (Welsch, 2005, 144-155) then at least some kinds of art competitions might be seen as sport.

Obviously, each field holds space for further divisions (e.g. in art sports one can distinguish between sculpture; poetry etc.). enabling further sharpening of the image of sport. But in the historical context the more important division cuts all these activities into amateur and professional activities. Because this division is trivial (it might be marked, e.g. by cutting diagonally all fields, with upper part of each field representing “professional”, and lower representing “amateur” version), I will not present the relevant version of the OSI. Now we might have a look at the history of the Olympic Games through the prism of the OSI's.

At the beginning Ancient Olympic Games included only kinetic games. The first Olympic event (agon) was the *stade* – foot race. This kind of event serves Suits as a paradigm of game (Suits, 2014, 198). Only during the 14th Olympiad in 724 BC another event has been introduced – the *diaulos* or two-stade race. The slow process of adding new disciplines to the programme was limited in the area of kinetic games

8 Other activities that could be candidates for this field (but they are not related to the OG) are chess composition contests: they are of both performative and aesthetic nature.

9 On the other hand – the logic of the diagram also suggests that the acceptance of “art sports” (e.g. as part of the OG's programme) and the distinction between games and judged events leads to entertaining the possibility of recognizing mind games as an Olympic sport.

10 An “art problem” in case of Olympic art competitions might be formulated as follows: what particular artistic form (in a given art discipline) will provide the best expression of ideas related to sport.

776 BC - 392 BC			383 BC - 394 AD			1896 - 1908			1912 - 1948			1952 - 2016		
	Game	Non Game		Game	Non Game		Game	Non Game		Game	Non Game		Game	Non Game
Kinetic			Kinetic			Kinetic			Kinetic			Kinetic		
Non Kinetic			Non Kinetic			Non Kinetic			Non Kinetic			Non Kinetic		

Figure 1. The history of the Olympic Games in OSI's.

(races: foot races, hoplit races and horse races; fight sports: boxing, wrestling and pankration; pentathlon – mixed event consisting of the discus throw, the long jump, the javelin throw, running (the stade) and wrestling). Thus the first phase – 776-392 B.C. – might be represented in the OSI with the sole upper left field filled.

After 396 B.C. contests for heralds and trumpeters were added. These contests had a special function within the Games: they were held as the first event and the winning trumpeter has been starting consecutive events and the winning herald has been declaring the verdicts of the judges of these events (Parry & Girginov, 2005, 16). It might be said that these contests were subordinated to the consecutive, proper events, but their presence in the programme is interesting because they might be treated as an anticipation of modern Olympic art competitions. Thus the second phase of the development of the programme of Ancient OG might be represented in the OSI with the upper-left and lower-right fields filled (kinetic games and non-athletic performances). Later modifications of the programme of the Games didn't bring any essential changes.

From its beginnings in 1896, the Modern Olympic Games include - besides many games (understood) in Suits sense (e.g. track and field) - also gymnastics: a set of events clearly belonging to the group of judged sports. In the programme of Summer Olympics in 1904 also diving appears and in 1908 figure skating has been included. This part of the history of the OG (the first phase of Modern history of the OG and the third phase of the OG in general) might be then represented as the OSI with the two upper fields filled (kinetic games and performances).

The situation has changed in 1912 with the introduction of art competitions; the competitions were terminated in 1948<sup>11</sup>. The Olympics between

1912-1948 had the richest – in terms of diversity – programme, including both kinetic games, kinetic performances and art contests. It might be represented in the OSI with only lower-left field not filled. At this stage the structure of the development suggests itself the next phase – the maximally rich programme completely filling the OSI. The last step could consist in introducing mind sports – first of all chess – into the programme. However, the development of the Olympic Games' programme has been arrested, since the last empty field – mind games – remained empty and the art competition has been removed from the programme. What is interesting, the reason for excluding art contests from the OG's programme (their professional nature in the amateur Games) was soon to be outdated, but still influenced the current shape of the OG's programme. In this way the next and so far the last phase has been shaped<sup>12</sup>. Modern Olympic Games 1952-2016, similarly to Games between 1896 and 1908, include two kinds of events: kinetic games and kinetic performances. To summarize these considerations let us look at the sequence of the relevant OSI's (Figure 1).

Suits constructed this Venn's diagram based on the three distinctions: serious (non-play) in contrast to non-serious (play), athletic (sport) in contrast to nonathletic (non-sport), and event (game) in contrast to performance (non-game). Thus each field codes three information, e.g. the central field – no 5 – describes all activities that are amateur athletic

titions), but it does not have a form of an Olympic event. However, the tradition of art competitions as medal events has survived on a local level.

<sup>12</sup> A sport, to be included into the OG's programme, must meet several criteria set by the IOC. These criteria include, among others, the history of the sport, institutional factors (having an international organization), how the sport relates to the Olympic values, its popularity etc., (IOC, 2012). It does not provide a definition (in the classical sense) of an Olympic sport, but rather implies certain institutional understanding of sport. For the sport to be recognized by the IOC, it is necessary for the governing body of the sport to be recognized by the committee first. This situation opens a possibility to include, among others, chess and bridge, since their respective federations are recognized by the IOC.

<sup>11</sup> The programme of cultural events organized during the Olympic Games serves to link sport with arts (previously played by the art compe-

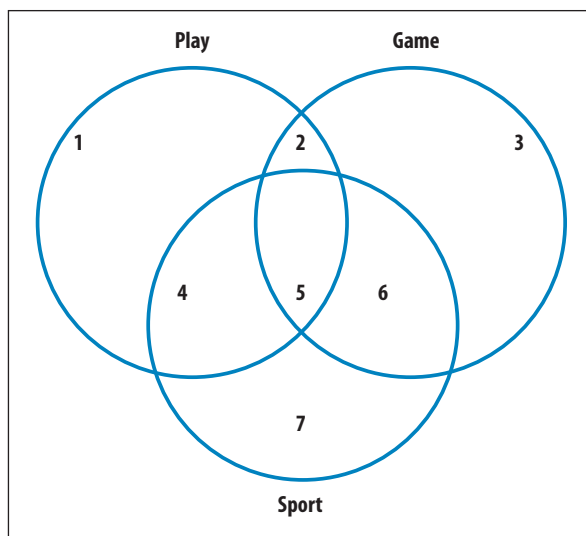


Figure 2. The Tricky Triad.

Table 2. The simplified OSI

A) KINETIC GAMES	B) KINETIC NON-GAMES
C) NON-KINETIC GAMES	D) NON-KINETIC NON-GAMES

games (field 5 lies inside both play, game and sport). Explanation of the numbers might be as follows: 1. Primitive play; 2, 3 – non-athletic games; 4, 7 – athletic performances; 5, 6 – athletic games. The distinction between 2, 4 and 5 in contrast to 3, 6, 7 lies in the fact that the first group has amateur character, and the second group has professional character. According to this diagram, Suits claims that the Olympics “would not provide us with good examples of games and performances as play, which is to say that such events would not fall within Areas 4 and 5 of our diagram, as one might suppose, but in Areas 6 and 7” (Suits, 1988b, 7, 8)<sup>13</sup>.

Let us now compare Suits’ diagram with the simplified version of the OSI.

The fields 5 and 6 corresponds to the field A, fields 4 and 7 – B, and the fields 2 and 3 – C. There is no correspondence between the field no 1 and D. Primitive play – “play and only play” – refers to type of activities “which is not concerned primarily with the exercise and enjoyment of skills but with the introduction of

new experiences” (Suits 1988, 2). Skills developed by the repetition of these experiences are not *valued for their own sake* in primitive play. Suits’ paradigm of this kind of play is baby playing with the water in its bath. The evaluation of skills for their own sakes marks the shift into sophisticated play (which make takes one of various forms – indicated by the fields 2, 4, 5). It should be clear now that besides the very general resemblance between art and primitive play, field D cannot be linked with Suits’ field 1. Olympic art competitions (architecture, literature, etc.) obviously required high level of skills, and thus cannot fall into the label of primitive play. Neither they can be incorporated into the fields 4 or 7, because they are overlapped by the circle “sport” – understood as *athletic* events. Although some art forms (e.g. ballet dancing) might be seen as a special kind of judged events, it does not apply into the arts presented in the Modern OG’s programme. If the constructed diagram is to be modelled on the real composition of the historical OG, it must contain separate field for art competitions. On this basis I recommend the OSI as a more adequate diagram of the Olympic events than the Tricky Triad. The OSI contains all relevant fields present in the Tricky Triad, but also additional field for the art competitions. But my aims are not limited in the domain of Olympic studies – I believe the OSI might be also useful in a wider context of the discussion of the nature of sport in general.

## Conclusion

Sport is not a natural kind, but a social kind, so we do not only discover what sport is, but rather also create it. What sport is, is thus partly dependent on our decisions. Of course, this creation is limited, at least by some traditions, legal regulations etc., but it still holds a place for human activity. Since the IOC is a very important organization in this area of social reality, its usage of the word “sport” is an important factor.

This is the reason why I emphasize the problem of the OG’s programme. Let us now go back to the vegetable metaphor used in the introduction. My thesis is that definition of sport supervenes on more fundamental categories, namely kinetic game, kinetic performance, mind-game and art competitions. Hence the OSI might be seen as an analogy to set of botanical categories, such as “fruit”, “leaf” etc. Whatever our notion of sport will be, it will be constructed out of these elementary components. The majority of philosophers of sport at the current stage of the debate

13 Klaus Meier presented another diagram (Euler diagram with only five fields) arguing that two of Suits’ categories didn’t have any real examples. This polemic is based on Meier’s believe that all sports are games (Meier, 1988, 27). Suits, in turn, has argued that there are good reasons to recommend his own diagram as the proper representation of the interrelated domain of sport, games and play (Suits, 1989, 10). My analysis – like Meier’s – also starts with the critique of Suits, but it goes in the opposite direction – presenting even more inclusive conceptual map.



concerning the nature of sport usually take the view of sport as a set of athletic games for granted. But the offered “high definition” of sport, being an extension of Suits’ analysis presented in The Tricky Triad, is aimed to show a more heterogeneous, and, I hope, sharper image of sport. The four elements of the OSI

are distinct but interrelated and united under the idea of Olympic sport. The OSI offers a kind of symmetry that might be attractive for a speculative philosopher, but at the same time is more true to the history of the OG’s and discussions concerning its programme than the diagram of Suits.

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