

# Cybernetics and Philosophy in a translation of *Oedipus the King* and its performance

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## Abstract<sup>1</sup>

*Inspired by Professor Marlowe's presentation "Implicit Cybernetic Systems" in IMCIC 2021, the author of this study will approach Gilbert Murray's translation of Sophocles' Oedipus, King of Thebes and Max Reinhardt's theatrical performance of this translation (as Oedipus Rex)<sup>2</sup> in early 20<sup>th</sup>-century London, UK, through interacting cybernetic systems theory, exploring how early archaeological finds and Nietzsche's philosophy influenced the reception of this Greek tragedy by a wider English public of the period (Appendix B: Figure 1). Issues of reflection and "reflexion" will also be discussed, with "reflexion" being manifested in the correspondence between the translator and the protagonist of the performance. At the end, the author will advance an extension of the theory of the existing cybernetic systems, proposing that when a polysystem is **closed** there is a model that: (1) incorporates the human mind/nous (philosophy of knowledge) as an **overarching observer** of a wider system; and (2) takes into consideration how time span and the existence or absence of evidence so that cybernetics can be operative in Humanities, as a **Second-Order Closed Cybernetic Polysystem** in Appendix B: Figure and Figure 2. On the contrary, when the overarching observer/nous completes his/her study, s/he enters a **Second-Order Open Cybernetic Polysystem**, as in Figure 3, where s/he can communicate his/her knowledge and his/her field (ἐπιστήμη: epistēmē), and, eventually, influence the polysystem itself.*

*In this study, when required, parallelism between cybernetic and various inter-semiotic systems will be drawn, and some literary terms (such as "interdiscursivity") will be introduced in the text and in Appendix B - Figures 1, 2 and 3 to a new diagram so that cybernetic systems will further enhanced. So, the author's hope is that a cross-fertilization between Humanities and Sciences – that*

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<sup>2</sup> A storyline of this tragedy is in APPENDIX A for those who may not be aware of it.

*is, multi-disciplinarity – will be a crucial component in our understanding of the past and the present.*

**Keywords:** *Polysystem Theory, Descriptive Translation Studies, Second-Order Cybernetics, the Greek Theatre Movement, Nietzsche’s “ideal spectator” and “overman” interdiscursivity, intercultural communication, overarching observer/nous, Second-Order Closed Polysystem, Second-Order Open Polysystem.*

## **1. Introduction - Some necessary definitions: Even-Zohar’s Polysystem Theory and Toury’s Descriptive Translation Studies**

### **1.1. Even-Zohar’s Polysystem Theory**

In the 1970s, when working on Hebrew literature models, Even-Zohar suggested Polysystem theory, according to which a literary phenomenon is never isolated but it is rather a network of relations within a wider system (Even-Zohar, 2004, p. 28; Even-Zohar, 1990) or, as Shuttleworth and Cowie define it, “a heterogeneous, hierarchized conglomerate (or system) of systems which interact to bring about an ongoing, dynamic process of evolution within the polysystem as a whole” (quoted in Munday, 2008, p. 108). According to Even-Zohar (2004 p. 12), a polysystem is “the conception of a system as dynamic and heterogeneous” and grounds his polysystem theory in relation to literary and cultural aspects on three oppositions: (1) the opposition between “canonized and non-canonized products or models”; (2) the opposition between “the system’s centre and periphery”; and (3) the opposition between “primary and secondary activities” (2004 pp. 15-21; 1999).

Regarding Even-Zohar’s idea of a polysystem as a dynamic and heterogeneous system, on the one hand, a polysystem of literary works (including translated works) is **never static** because it is characterized by a **dynamic change**. On the other hand, a literary polysystem is **heterogeneous**, since it is not only limited to the canonized works but also includes non-canonized literature (e.g. children’s literature) and translated literature.

Moreover, Even-Zohar’s conception that there are three oppositions in literary and cultural aspects was a turning point in Translation Studies, since, according to Even-Zohar, translated literature – which is usually located in the periphery of the home system (i.e. Target System (TS)) – can change its position and occupy the center of a TS on the following three occasions: (1) when a literature is “young”; (2) when a literature is either “peripheral” or “weak”, or both; and (3) “when there are turning points, crisis, or literary vacuums in a literature” (Even-Zohar, 2004, pp. 200-2001; Even-Zohar, 1990). If the translated literature assumes the center, the distinction between a translated work and an original work becomes

“diffuse” (Even-Zohar, 2004, p. 203). In this case the translation involves primary and creative activity, and the translator tends to break the conventions of his/her literature repertoire, adopting different strategies, and his/her translation products can be regarded as “adequate”. By placing translated literature into a national polysystem, Even-Zohar’s polysystem theory elevated the position of translated works, since they attract more attention and increase their influence. Thus, polysystem theory can be considered **dynamic functionalism** which emphasizes “the complexity, openness and flexibility of cultural systems existing in a historical continuum” (Hermans, 1999, p. 106).

## **1.2. Toury’s Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS)**

It is exactly the dynamic features of polysystem theory that broke away from prescriptive translation studies which pursue “a perfect equivalent text”, and made Gideon Toury advance Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) (Toury, 1994). Based on Even-Zohar’s thesis - that when a translated work assumes a central position in the Target System (TS), the translator tends to produce a Target Text (TT) in terms of adequacy, whereas, when a translated work is in the periphery of the TS, then the TT seems to be a non-adequate translation (Even-Zohar, 2004, p. 203) - Gideon Toury broke away from Prescriptive Translation Studies (1) by re-defining an adequate and a non-adequate translation in the TS; and (2) by describing translation phenomena in order to find underlying factors that make a non-adequate translation acceptable in the TS (Toury, 2004 and 1994).

However, where Toury differentiated his position from Even-Zohar’s polysystem theory is in the translator’s subjective initiative or translation process, something that is totally ignored in polysystem theory. According to Toury, a translator may pursue different strategies when translating a work. His/Her decisions may advance or lag behind the literary development of the TS. The reasons vary from the translator’s aesthetic values to special requirement of his/her readership. As far as the subjective factor during the translation process is concerned, Toury places the translation process between two positions: at one end there are rules/norms governing the TS and at the other end there are the translator’s idiosyncrasies. The effect of norms depends on the translator’s position in the continuum between these two (Toury, 2004 and 1994).

## **2. A description of the European Polysystem between 1880 and 1914 (The Revival of Greek Drama)**

Having presented Even-Zohar’s Polysystem theory and Toury’s DTS briefly, in this section the author of this study will make an effort to

describe: (1) how systems or discourses (or interdiscursivity),<sup>3</sup> such as politics, archaeology, philology, anthropology and philosophy – which were present in a wider European polysystem between 1880 and 1914 – were interacting among themselves; and (2) how the dynamics of these systems/discourses forced Gilbert Murray, on the one hand, to make a new poetic translation of Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, and, on the other hand, to co-operate with the Austrian theatrical producer Max Reinhardt to put his translation on the stage of Covent Garden as *Oedipus Rex* in London in 1912, thus making Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* accessible to a wider British public.

## **2.1. British polysystem: The Greek Theatre Movement and Censorship**

Gilbert Murray's translation *Oedipus, King of Thebes* occupies a special position in the British TS, because of its use in the Reinhardt production of *Oedipus Rex* at Covent Garden on 15 January 1912. To understand the significance of Murray's *Oedipus, King of Thebes* for Great Britain we should consider the existence of two different and conflicting dynamics within the British TS at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, namely the emergence of the **Greek Theatre Movement**<sup>4</sup> and the **banishment** of *Oedipus Rex* from the British stage.

**2.1.1. The Greek Theatre Movement: German and British archaeology, philology and anthropology in interaction:** The Greek Theatre Movement<sup>5</sup> in England began in the 1880s with the rediscovery of Greek theater architecture by the German archaeologists Höpken and Dörpfel, whose archaeological discoveries altered the concept of classical Greek theatre (Arnott, 1962, p. 3). From 1880 to 1914 in England, a group of architects, stage designers, actors, producers and classical scholars - such as: Gilbert Murray, E.W. Godwin, Gordon Craig, William Poel, Sybil Thorndike and Granville Barker - were concerned primarily with a revival of Greek drama based on Höpken and Dörpfel's new archaeological theories of the classical theater, and used different means to have proscenium stages converted to resemble Greek theaters. That group of people also developed a method of production along the lines suggested by their inspired anthropologist Jane Ellen Harrison (1918), who claimed that, since ritual preceded myth, drama can find its origins in ritual.

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<sup>3</sup> Interdiscursivity can be defined as intermingle of various discourses.

<sup>4</sup> Within the present context, "theatre" is spelt according to the British spelling system, since it appears as such in bibliographical references.

<sup>5</sup> It is also known as Movement of the Non-Naturalist Theatre because its main proponents went against the grain of Ibsen's Naturalist Drama and Theater, whose main representative in England was Archer at that time.

**2.1.2. Censorship in the British Polysystem: The Banishment of *Oedipus the King* banished from the British stage:** Nevertheless, Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* – Aristotle's "canon" of Greek tragedy (1831) was banned from the British stage for several decades, thus frustrating many actors, dramatists and theatre people who wanted to produce this Sophoclean tragedy at the time (Fowler and Palmer, 1969, p. 275). It seemed that the main reason for the refusal of any production of *Oedipus the King* was the incestuous relationship of Oedipus and Jocasta.

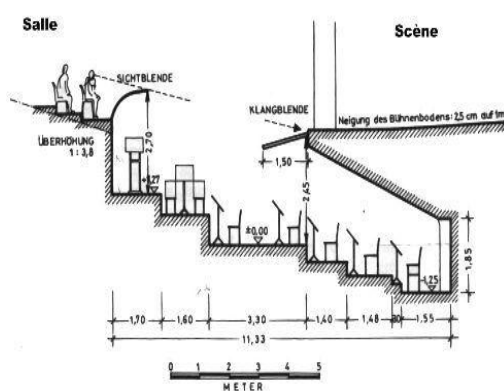
In spite of the official resistance to the staging of *Oedipus the King*, censorship was lifted in late 1911 and early 1912, and this play was performed at Covent Garden in 1912 for twenty-six performances (Fowler and Palmer, 1969, p. 275). These performances were none other than Reinhardt's production of *Oedipus Rex* in Murray's translation. The first of those productions opened in London on 15 January with Sir John Martin Harvey as Oedipus, Lillah McCarthy as Jocasta and Franklin Dyall as the Messenger (Smith and Toynebee, p. 161).

**2.1.3. Reinhardt's production of *Oedipus Rex*: British polysystem vis-à-vis German polysystem:** Reinhardt based his productions of *Oedipus Rex* on Höpken and Dörpfeld' theories of Greek theater design which had been developed from two conflicting archaeological views. Had there been, as Vitruvius (1960) claimed, a large raised stage separating actors from chorus and spectators, or had there simple been a long step against the scene wall, with all performers using the orchestra space, distinguished only by costume and mask (Arnott, 1962, pp. 3-4)? That archaeological controversy had affected changes in German theater, and **Richard Wagner** was first to apply these conflicting theories by having his theater designed based on the presumed architecture of the Greek theatre (Symons, 1968, p. 311). When Wagner's theater at Bayreuth was completed, as seen in **Picture 1**, it soon became the model for the Greek Theatre Movement.



**Picture 1.** The interior of Bayreuth Festspielhaus after the seating has been installed. (Nikolarea, 1994a, p. 111)

**2.1.4. Wagner’s reflexion on theatrical stage:** A theater in which spectators are united by a common vantage point was difficult to achieve in the older buildings, in which the stalls were separated from the stage by an orchestra pit. Wagner had called the pit a “mystic gulf”, and he had designed the Bayreuth orchestra pit, as illustrated in **Picture 2**, to fit below the stage level so that the music – “the loam of endless universal feeling” – would complement rather than obscure the performance. “In the Greek play,” he explained, “the chorus appeared in the orchestra, that is, in the midst of the audience, while the personages, masked and heightened, were seen in a ghostly illusion of grandeur on the stage” (Symons, 1968, pp. 307 and 311 respectively). But it was not until Max Reinhardt’s production of *Oedipus Rex* at Covent Garden in 1912 that large audiences in London could see that type of stage performance.



**Picture 2.** Cross-section of the orchestra pit in the Festielhaus (Nikolarea, 1994a, p. 112)

**2.1.5. Reinhardt’s production of *Oedipus Rex* at Covent Garden: Structure of the theater, performers and philosophy (Nietzsche’s theories):** Reinhardt’s productions of *Oedipus Rex* in various European cities - such as Munich, Berlin, Moscow, to name a few<sup>6</sup> - were highly influential or so controversial, depending on the critic’s perspective, because it was for the first time that the Continental and the British theatrical audiences saw controversial archaeological, philological and philosophical theories regarding Greek theatre and tragedy applied to specific productions. But in his staging of *Oedipus Rex* Reinhardt did something more: he altered the relation between performers and spectators in ways which were revolutionary for the time. To understand how Reinhardt’s production of *Oedipus Rex* changed the relation between the performers and spectators, we shall first compare one of the drawings of how the Covent Garden was in the early until late eighteenth century

<sup>6</sup> Reinhardt produced *Oedipus Rex* in Munich in 1910, in Vienna in October in 1910, in Budapest in October in 1910, in Berlin in November 1910, in Covent Garden, London, in 1912, in St. Petersburg, Moscow, Riga, Warsaw, Kiev, Odessa and Stockholm in winter 1912 (Styan, 1982, pp. 78-80).

(**Picture 3**) and one of the existing pictures from Reinhardt's production of *Oedipus Rex* at Covent Garden in 1912 (**Picture 4**). In **2.1.10.**, we shall present some of the contemporary British criticism (i.e. **positive** and **negative feedback**) of that production.

In **Picture 3** we see how Covent Garden was in the early until the late eighteenth England; that is, its proscenium stage, its small orchestra pit, the stalls reaching as far as its proscenium stage, its small orchestra pit, the stalls reaching as far as the proscenium stage and the audience in the boxes and the pit. Although this Picture is a drawing, we can still recognize the sharp separation between the actors and the audience created by the raised stage.

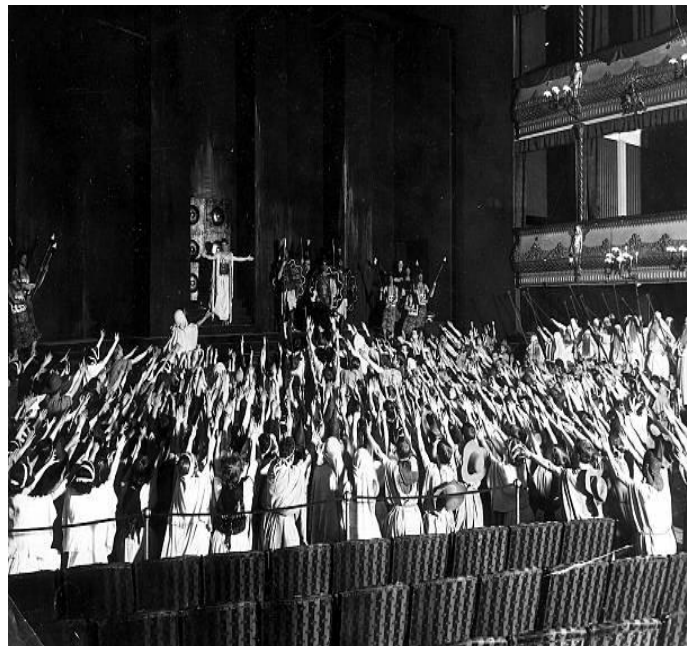


**Picture 3.** Covent Garden in 1815 (Clark and McGuire, 1989)

In contrast, in **Picture 4** – which is a picture from the actual rehearsals of the production at Covent Garden - the proscenium stage was modified drastically, as the proscenium stage and the orchestra pit were connected with long steps, thus allowing the actors and the chorus enough freedom to interact and move from the stage to the orchestra and vice versa. In the adaptation of the proscenium stage and the enlargement of the orchestra pit we can recognize the influence of the two German theories of Greek theater design, which had been developed from two conflicting archaeological views (Arnott, 1962). In other words, in his productions of *Oedipus Rex* Reinhardt used not only a large raised stage, as Vitruvius claimed (Vitruvius, 1960; Arnott, 1962, pp. 3-4; Nikolarea, 1994a, pp. 30-33), but also managed to achieve that this stage did not separate actors from the chorus and spectators. He was able to perform this task because he had, first, the first front stall removed, thus creating an orchestra pit for the chorus, and, then, he had the proscenium stage joined with the orchestra by long steps. In this way, the main characters of *Oedipus Rex* were not separated from the chorus and could easily move and mingle with the latter. By having the proscenium stage modified and the structure of the orchestra

pit changed, Reinhardt managed to give the spectators the impression that they were participating in the action unfolding before them. Moreover, by extending the acting area towards the audience, he drew the audience towards the actors on stage (Carter, 1964, p. 218).

Nonetheless, the most powerful connection between spectators and performers in those productions was not simply the modification of the physical structure of Covent Garden; it was the **presence of a large chorus**, as illustrated in **Picture 4**. The presence of such a large chorus was overwhelming, especially when seen against the lonely figure of Oedipus (performed by Sir John Martin-Harvey), as Carter claims (1964, pp. 218-219).



**Picture 4.** Reinhardt's production of *Oedipus Rex* at Covent Garden in 1912, with Sir John Martin-Harvey as Oedipus (Nikolarea, 1994a, p. 115).

#### **2.1.6. Reinhardt's production and Nietzsche's theories of Greek tragedy: The chorus ("ideal spectator") and the tragic hero (Oedipus):**

We cannot help but notice the resemblance between Reinhardt's production of *Oedipus Rex* and Nietzsche's concepts of "ideal spectator" and "tragic hero" of an ancient Greek performance. Although Friedrich Schiller and August Wilhelm Schlegel had first claimed that the chorus in classical Greek tragedy frequently serves as an "ideal spectator" (Nikolarea, 1994a, p. 40, footnote 94) – that is, it **reacts to** – so there is a **feedback** between the chorus and the protagonist - the events and characters as the dramatist might hope the audience would – it was Nietzsche's discussion of the "ideal spectator" that was the most influential upon the European polysystem in general, and the British TS or Polysystem in particular.



**2.1.7. The chorus – Nietzsche’s “ideal spectator” (“idealische Zuschauer”):** In one of his most influential books, *The Birth of Tragedy (Das Geburt der Tragödie)*, Nietzsche founded his approach to Greek art on the distinction of Dionysian and Apollonian elements and their constant strife for predominance. For him, as previously for Friedrich Schlegel, the music, wild enthusiasm and delirium represent the Dionysian world, sculpture and the aesthetic pleasure, dream and illusion belong to the world of Apollo. For many centuries, claims Nietzsche, only the Olympian, serene perfection of form had been admired; yet, this seeming Apollonian “naïve art” is very rare and always has to be founded in the overcoming of terrible suffering. It is because of this terrible suffering that the Greeks needed the Olympian gods to hide the dreadful foundation of all reality. Thus, he concludes that in the Greek art the Dionysian and Apollonian forces, after a continual struggle for mutual destruction, finally reached their reconciliation in Attic tragedy.

The starting point, however, of Nietzsche’s theory of Greek tragedy and its evolution is his basic assumption that the tragic chorus of satyrs, the servants of Dionysus, is the origin of tragedy (Nietzsche, 1954, pp 50 – 51; Nietzsche, 1956, p. 54). For Nietzsche, the chorus has primarily a religious function in which myth<sup>7</sup> and the cult of Dionysus are closely associated. He also believes that even in its most perfect form, tragedy always represents the sufferings of Dionysus himself under the mask of a great hero. It is Nietzsche’s “discovery” of the Dionysian quality of tragedy has largely responsible for the rejection of the neoclassical views on Greek tragedy<sup>8</sup> in general and *Oedipus the King* in particular, and has become the springboard for new approaches to and re-interpretations of Greek myths and tragedies in the twentieth century.

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<sup>7</sup> We can see how Nietzsche re-interprets the Aristotelian notion of *mythos* as a “legend”, a “story” or a “myth” and relates it to the chorus and the tragic hero. In his *Poetics* (1831), Aristotle considers the plot (*μῦθος: mythos*) the heart of a tragedy around which everything turns. In the course of his discussion, Aristotle takes over the word as used for a “legend”, a “story” or a “myth”, sharpens and defines it to the point where it becomes a technical term which is usually referred to as “plot”. The word *μῦθος: mythos*, when interpreted as plot in the *Poetics*, is inseparable from the character and action (*δράσις: drasis*) and closely related to such concepts as probability, necessity, credibility, hamartia (*ἁμαρτία*), an error which derived from ignorance of some material fact or circumstance, reversal (*περιπέτεια: peripeteia*) and discovery or recognition (*ἀναγνώρισις: anagnorisis*).

<sup>8</sup> The neo-classical views on Greek tragedy, whose epitome was *Oedipus the King* in Aristotle’s view, were the following: (1) Unity of action; (2) Unity of place; (3) Unity of time; (4) Poetic Justice (good rewarded, evil punished); (5) Unbroken scenes (where a second character was always introduced before the first exited); (6) Love a featured emotion of tragedy (which went against Aristotle’s notion of tragedy); and (7) the neoclassical approach to terror and pity that had to entertain the audience.

**2.1.8. The tragic hero for Nietzsche's *Übermensch* (: overman):** For our discussion, another important aspect of *The Birth of Tragedy* is Nietzsche's interpretation of the concept of **tragic hero** in Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*. Nietzsche asserts that there is an inherent conflict within the characters themselves, and sees a fundamental difference between the characters as they are represented by the tragedians, with an Apollonian mask, and the deeper, most frightful reality of the myth itself behind them. Thus, Nietzsche **challenges** his own contemporary literary status quo (**negative feedback**) by claiming that up to them the myths were not studied at all; the literary works were studied and imitated instead. For him, the image of Oedipus that Sophocles delineates for us is one side of his tragedy only, the moral and Apollonian aspect. It should never be forgotten, however, insists Nietzsche, that this superior serenity over the whole work is only meant to hide the monstrous, preceding events that have led to this situation:

*If this explanation has done the poet justice, it may yet be asked whether it has exhausted the implications of the myth; and how we see that the poet's entire conception was nothing more or less than the luminous afterimage which kind nature provides our eyes after a look into the abyss. Oedipus, his father's murderer, his mother's lover, solver of the Sphinx's riddle! What is the meaning of this triple fate? (1954, p. 61).*

This passage contains two important points; the first is Nietzsche's return to what happened before the opening scene of the Sophoclean tragedy in an effort to explain the characters and the process that led to the situation of the tragedy. The second point is Nietzsche's particular attitude towards *Oedipus*. He considers the Sphinx as the crucial point of the myth without even mentioning the Delphic oracle. For Nietzsche, the monstrosities of the parricide and of the incest could only be committed by a man of unnatural wisdom who was also able to solve the riddle of nature and to destroy a hybrid being like the Sphinx. The striking aspect of this approach to *Oedipus*, however, is the description of the victory over the Sphinx, a decisive moment in Oedipus' life, which cannot be found in Greek literature at all!<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, Nietzsche's particular attitude towards the character of Oedipus became the turning point for the shift in theatrical performances and dramatic criticism. On the one hand, **a revival of Greek tragedy** occurred. In that period, it was the character of **Oedipus** in *Oedipus the King*, among all Greek tragedies, who became **the supreme model of the tragic hero**. One of the reasons why Oedipus captured the imagination of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century was that Oedipus expressed all the ideals for which the people of that period were craving: the overcoming of ignorance, even if it meant that it could be achieved only through

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<sup>9</sup> Nietzsche's theories on Oedipus, *Übermensch* and Greek tragedy also influenced psychoanalysts, such as Freud (i.e. Oedipus complex), Jung (i.e. the bright and dark side of things).

suffering.<sup>10</sup> It is thus the **lonely figure of Oedipus** standing among the large chorus in the Reinhardt production (**Picture 4**) who became the symbol of that age.

**2.1.9. Murray and Martin-Harvey's interaction reveals reflexion and the influence of Nietzsche's *Übermensch* (: overman):**<sup>11</sup> Even for Gilbert Murray, a classical scholar, the translator of this Sophoclean tragedy and a poet, the character of Oedipus in *Oedipus the King* became the ultimate representation of a man who “stands above all men”, as it is revealed in the exchange of his letters with Sir John Martin-Harvey, who played the role of Oedipus. In a letter he wrote to Martin-Harvey, he made the following suggestions to him:

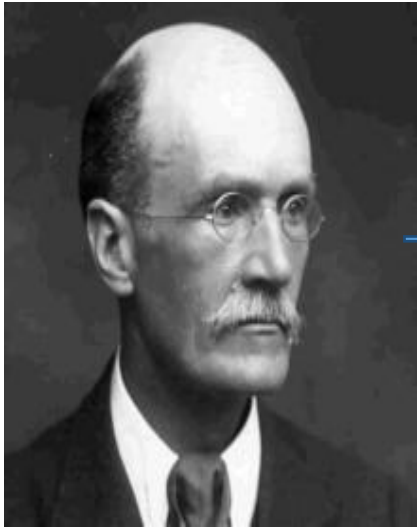
A careful reading of the exchange of these letters indicates the interplay of three different dynamics. First, there is a close relationship between the translator and the protagonist of that production which, in theatrical terms, can only be described in the most positive terms, because it signifies the active participation of the translator in the process of performing his own translation. At this point, we should also keep in mind that Murray was an experienced producer of Greek tragedies. Second, the above-mentioned excerpt from Murray's letter to Martin-Harvey shows that the former believed and interpreted *Oedipus the King* as “less realistic, more symbolic”. When contextualized, his letter signifies that Murray as a classical scholar, poet, translator and producer participated in the Greek Theatre Movement, which was also known as Movement of the Non-Naturalist Theatre. His emphasis on the “remoteness from realism” in *Oedipus* can be understood as **a revolt (negative feedback)** against the grain of the Naturalist theatre which was advocated by Ibsen and his followers in England, William Archer being one of them.

Finally, when Murray draws Martin-Harvey's attention to “the greatness of man (who) triumphs over all the sin and misery and suffering,” and to “a man who ... now stands above all common men” suggesting to him “to feel the man's greatness and the misery of him”, we can identify the radical shift of emphasis from the Aristotelian notion of plot (*mythos*) and action (*drasis*) to the Nietzschean interpretation of myth (*mythos*) and his concept of the *Übermensch* (*overman*) whose main proponent is Oedipus, the man who “stands above all common men”.

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<sup>10</sup> Of course, this Nietzschean concept of the tragic hero is indissolubly related to his notion of *Übermensch* (: *overman*) which will be discussed later in this sub-section.

<sup>11</sup> Nietzsche's concept of *Übermensch* has been wrongly translated as “superman”, with all the known consequences in the English world (i.e. the construct of the super-hero ‘Superman’). In this study and other ones, the author follows Kaufmann's rendering of “overman” (1968) rather than “superman” that was coined by G.B. Shaw.



I think your first entrance, blinded, should be less realistic, more symbolic; it is lyrical in the Greek, that means beauty and music and *remoteness from realism* ... Drop all the use of the mere physical horror ... or almost all. ... The greatness of the man triumphs over all the sin and misery and suffering ... But I want the impression to come earlier. I should like to feel, right from your first entrance blinded, “here is a man who has been through all suffering and come out at the other end; who has done judgement on himself to the uttermost and now stands above all common men. I want to feel the man’s greatness and the mystery of him. ... Now do I take you with me in all this? (Smith and Toynbee, 1960, p. 162; authors’ emphasis)

Martin-Harvey’s astonishingly co-operative attitude towards this constructive criticism is shown in his following letter to Murray:

I like all you say about the treatment of the playing – say as much more as you feel, I shall greatly appreciate it – my own feeling was throughout for more retinence in the movement – in the rush of the rehearsals I got rather carried off my feet – when you see it next you will find it improved I think – and along the lines you indicate (Smith and Toynbee, 1960, p. 162).



To understand the strong parallelism between Murray's statements about the character of Oedipus and Nietzsche's *Übermensch*, we should recall how Nietzsche perceives the *Übermensch*. He envisioned him as the human being (*Mensch*) who has organized the chaos of his passions, given style to his character and become creative. Aware of life's terrors, the *Übermensch* affirms life without resentment. With only few exceptions, Nietzsche uses the notion of the *Übermensch* in the singular and usually as a worldly antithesis to God. According to Nietzsche, there is no meaning in life except that which man gives his life, and the aims of most men have no surpassing dignity. To raise oneself above the senseless flux, one must cease to be human, all-too-human (*Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*). One must be hard against oneself; one must become creator instead of remaining a mere creature. It is in the aphorism 910 of *Der Wille zur Macht (The Will to Power)* in which Nietzsche epitomizes his concept of the *Übermensch* when he wishes to those he wishes well:

*Suffering, being forsaken ... profound self-contempt, the torture of mistrust of oneself, the misery of him who is overcome ...* (Nietzsche, 1952, p. 613; the translation from German into English is made by the author of this study).

The striking resemblance between Nietzsche's discussion of tragic character in *The Birth of Tragedy* and his notion of the *Übermensch*, and Murray's statements about the character of Oedipus in his letter to Martin-Harvey leaves no doubt about the influence of the former's work upon the latter and the latter's interpretation of this tragedy. We can certainly propose that Murray, when translating Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*, had not only read but also internalized at least Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* and *Der Wille zur Macht (The Will to Power)*.<sup>12</sup>

#### **2.1.10. British Polysystem: Positive and Negative Feedback to Murray's Translation and Reinhardt's Production of *Oedipus Rex*:**

##### **Positive Feedback – Some Reflexions**

**Gilbert Murray – the translator.** (1) Concerning Reinhardt's production of *Oedipus Rex* in his translation, Gilbert Murray wrote to *The Times* (23 January 1912) claiming that: "*Vast audiences came to hear the Oedipus – audiences at any rate far greater than Mr. Granville Barker and I have ever gathered, except perhaps once; they sit enthralled for two hours of sheer tragedy, and I do not think many of them will forget the experience*" (Smith and Toynebee, 1960, p. 161). (2) He defended his poetic translation of *Oedipus* (in which he had taken some liberties so this tragedy could

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<sup>12</sup> The same observation but from a different angle has been expressed by M.S. Silk and J.P. Stern (1981, pp. 143-145). In this excellent study, the authors show how Murray's theory that tragedy derived from the Greek cult of the dead was originated in Jane Ellen Harrison's anthropological theory of the ritual origin of drama, Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* and Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1981, pp. 143, 144 respectively).

understood by a wider public (i.e. readership and audience) the production against J.T. Sheppard's (1920) criticism of both the translation and production as "sensational and non-Greek"

**W.B. Yeats – an Irish poet and later an adapter of the same tragedy (18, pp. 122-136) – A Poet's Reflexion.** W.B. Yeats also praised Reinhardt's production in a letter postmarked 31 January 1912, as follows: *"I saw Oedipus last week -- not well acted but a most wonderful production. I quite surrender – Reinhardt is a great man. He used sounds in the most emotional way – a gong, a single flute, inarticulate cries & expressed that horror of the people at the death of Jocasta by making people run in and out of the palace in an aimless way. It was the most imaginative production of a play I have ever seen"* (Clark and McGuire, 1989, p.33).

**Huntly Carter – a critic of Reinhardt's production – A Critic's Reflexion.** (1) Carter describes the effect that the modified proscenium stage had on spectators as follows: *"... a space was cleared in front of the stage by removing rows of stalls, for the chorus and crowd to act in and mix with the spectators. The front row of the stalls was, in fact, in touch with the outer fringe of the crowd, while all the players made their entrances and exits through the audience at various points of the arena"* (Carter, 1964, p. 218). (2) Carter describes the impact of the large chorus (**Picture 4**), and particularly its supplication dance, upon its contemporary British audience as follows: *"Perhaps the most artistic effect was that attained by the crowd and Oedipus. Oedipus stood on the rostrum calm and self-possessed. Beneath him surged the infuriated mob, with outstretched arms, swelling up to him like a sea of angry emotions, and returning thence to the Leader of the Chorus in response to his call. There on one side Oedipus stood like an intellectual pinnacle islanded in the billowing ocean of human beings; and there on the other side the Leader stood like the Spirit of the Infinite swayed to and fro by elemental passions"* (Carter, 1964, pp. 218-219).

### **A Negative Feedback – A Reflexion**

**J.T. Sheppard, an important classical scholar.** J. T. Sheppard (1920) criticized both Murray's translation, as having taken too many liberties – thus, in his opinion, it was a non-adequate translation,<sup>13</sup> and Reinhardt's production as sensational and non-Greek.

As a response, he made his own translation, *The Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles*, in prose in 1920. In the Preface of this translation – which can also be viewed as **reflexion** (1920, pp ix-xiv), Sheppard explains that his translation was a **response to** Professor Murray's poetic translation of *Oedipus, King of Thebes* which had been produced by Max Reinhardt at Covent Garden in 1911 (1920, p. ix). Repelled by such a *"lavish, barbaric*

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<sup>13</sup> In Toury's terms, despite that J.T. Sheppard considered Murray's translation as non-adequate, it was Murray's translation that became the most acceptable translation of the time.

*(and) turbulent” production as that produced by Reinhardt, and by a translation as “highly charged with metaphor, and very often vague”, as that made by Murray, Sheppard ventured to give his reader “a faithful version” to enable him “to see by what sort of method Sophocles succeeded” (1920, p. x). He further stated that, although his translation did not have the poetic qualities that Professor Murray’s translation did, he hoped that his version, if read in the light of his commentary, would help the reader “see more clearly the qualities of Sophocles” (1920, p. x). Finally, he hoped that, through his linguistic approach to this drama, he would be able to prove that Sophocles “created in Oedipus a poem, whose meaning is indisputable and a drama in which every part contributes to the tragic beauty of the whole” (1920, p. xi).*

From a DTS and Polysystem Theory perspective, the aforementioned explanation of Sheppard’s response to Murray’s translation and Reinhardt’s production of *Oedipus* reveals another aspect within the British polysystem of the period. Apart from the average reader/public who did not know ancient Greek (a system itself), there was another system functioning at the same time (i.e. in **synchrony**): there were English-speaking scholars and students of classics with sufficient knowledge of Greek to read the original, compare it with the juxtaposed translation in prose, and benefit from the critical notes and commentaries. The original theatrical text was treated as if it were a philological document, and, therefore, the primary function of that translation was to be faithful to, and to elucidate the source text (ST), that is, *Oedipus*.

### **3. Translation Descriptive Studies (TDS), Polysystem Theory vis-à-vis Second-Order Cybernetics – A Brief Critical View**

Having described what happened before, during and soon after Reinhardt’s production of *Oedipus Rex* in Murray’s translation in the British Polysystem, we soon realize that – apart from various interacting systems (i.e. archaeology, philology, architecture et.) within this polysystem, the British Polysystem was interacting with and/or opposing to other polysystems, such as the German and Norwegian (i.e. Naturalist Theatre) ones within a wider European polysystem at a given time period (1880-1914), as illustrated in **Appendix B - Figure 1**.

#### **3.1. Advantages and disadvantages of TDS**

TDS, as developed by Gideon Toury, gives the descriptive methodology, as a tool, to **the observer (nous) or researcher** how to select, organize and interpret the data that move on the diachronic and synchronic axis at the same time – that is, an observer can observe and describe their changeability. However, there are two shortcomings:

- (1) It has not dealt – to the best of the author’s knowledge – with theater translations and their actual performances - and what kind of dynamics may or can be developed on a synchronic and a diachronic axis; and
- (2) although it has dealt with the translator’s choices and translation process, it has not dealt with **the observer** (*nous*) or **the researcher** of the translation process and practice.

### 3.2. Advantages and disadvantages of Polysystem Theory

Polysystem Theory, as developed by Itamar Even-Zohar, gives the observer (*nous*) or the researcher the opportunity to think of and explore how literature in general and translated literature in particular have developed as systems within the wider polysystem of the society of a given nation. Another strong point of Polysystem Theory is that it investigates how a literary system and / or a system of translated literature develops in the diachronic and synchronic axis – that is, how it changes. Nevertheless, it has three weak points:

- (1) It has not dealt with translation process and translator’s choices, something that DTS does.
- (2) It has not dealt – to the best of the author’s knowledge – with theater translations and their actual performances - and what kind of dynamics may or can be developed on the synchronic and a diachronic axis; and
- (3) it has not dealt with **the observer** (*nous*) or **the researcher**.

### 3.3. Advantages and disadvantages of Second-Order Cybernetics

Second-order Cybernetics in a Messier image, as presented by Professor Marlow (and his colleagues Laracy and Fitzpatrick) in IMCIC 2021, is a very good image, whose strongest point is **the “observer”**. Nevertheless, the image as illustrated has three weak representational points:

- (1) Although it presents “disciplines”, “theories”, “environmental changes”, it does not represent them as interacting systems within a wider (poly)system;
- (2) The “System” looks **static**, whereas it could have been a wider **dynamic** polysystem including all the other systems, that is, “disciplines”, “theories”, “environmental changes”; and
- (3) As it is, the image looks **static**, since it is not based on a diachronic and synchronic axis. Nevertheless, “discipline”, “theories”, “data”, “life”, “future work” do move in the synchronic and diachronic axis, whose changeability is *sui generis* (inherent).

## 4. Towards Second-Order Cybernetic (Poly)System for Humanities

From our discussion up to now, it has become conspicuous that, when we deal with translated literature and, especially, with translated drama and its theatrical performances in a TS, we enter the realm of **intercultural**



**communication** and **interdiscursivity**, which in principle: (1) are highly complex interacting and sometimes conflicting systems (or discourses) in a wider system, that is, a **polysystem**; and (2) they usually move between **diachrony** and **synchrony**. For example, our description of Reinhardt's production of *Oedipus Rex* in Murray's translation has illustrated, on the one hand, how a variety of systems and discourses, such as archaeology (i.e. archaeological discoveries by Höpken and Dörpfeld), philosophy (i.e. Nietzsche) and anthropology (i.e. Harrison), interacted with each other and influenced the translator (i.e. Murray), the protagonist (i.e. Martin-Harvey) and the theatrical producer (i.e. Max Reinhardt). On the other hand, it has shown how theatrical movements were in clash; for example, the case of the Greek Theatre Movement or Non-Naturalist Theatre Movement which was in conflict with Ibsen's Naturalism in Theater that was advocated primarily by Archer in the UK between 1880 and 1914; see Appendix B - Figure 1.

#### **4.1. Second-Order Closed and Open Cybernetic (Poly)Systems, an Observer (*Nous*) and Philosophy of Knowledge**

In Section 3 of the present study we have discussed the advantages and disadvantages of DTS, Polysystem Theory and Cybernetics. Now, we will try to illustrate how the Second-Order Cybernetics in a Messier image presented by Professor Marlow (and his colleagues Laracy and Fitzpatrick) in IMCI 2021 can be enhanced and used in Humanities - and, especially, in a translated dramatic text and its theatrical performance(s) – and become a **Second-Order Closed Cybernetic PolySystem** in Appendix B - Figure 2 and a **Second-Order Open Cybernetic PolySystem** in Appendix B - Figure 3, figures that are different but interrelated.

As we have discussed earlier, Second-Order Cybernetics seems **static** due to the fact that, although it includes “disciplines”, “theories”, “environmental changes” data”, “life”, “future work” etc., it does not present them as interacting (or even conflicting) systems or discourses but rather “events” that interact with the “observer” and the “system”. And this happens because, as we have already stressed: (1) these “disciplines”, “theories”, “environmental changes” data”, “life”, “future work” are not just “events” but rather interacting (or even conflicting) systems or discourses within a wider system (or a polysystem); and (2) Second-Order Cybernetics does not seem to move in the synchronic and diachronic axes that are changeable *sui generis* (inherent), and can create an event or a series of events at a specific place on a specific time - that is, a series of a **chronotope** that waits to be investigated and interpreted by an observer.

**4.1.1. An Overarching Observer (*Nous*) – Philosophy of Knowledge:** As we have discussed, the strongest point of Second-Order Cybernetics in a Messier image presented by Professor Marlow (and his colleagues Laracy and Fitzpatrick) in IMCI 2021 is **the concept of the “observer”**, a concept

that is totally lacking in DTS and Polysystem Theory. And it is the strongest point because, by including the “observer” in the diagram, Second-Order Cybernetics considers a person, a human intelligence HI or *nous* - the “observer” – who can research into data, gives his/her opinion on events, and possibly influence the course of events.

At this point, we should further elaborate how the concept of an “observer” (*nous*) or of “observers” (*noes*)<sup>14</sup> can be useful for Humanities in general and translated drama and its theatrical performance(s) in particular, and can transfigure the Second-Order Cybernetics into a Second-Order **Closed** Cybernetic Polysystem (Appendix B - Figure 2) and a Second-Order **Open** Cybernetic Polysystem (Appendix B - Figure 3).

**An observer is a researcher, an HI or a *nous*.** In her paper – entitled: “The Interface of Human (*Nous*) and Artificial (Computer) Intelligence in Inter-disciplinary Research, International Communication and Education” that the author of this study presented in IMCIC 2021 (Nikolarea, 2021), the author of this study claimed that, in philosophy, *nous* (*νοῦς* in Ancient Greek) or human intelligence is the intellectual power of humans that can perform complex cognitive tasks and reason (as a verb comes from *noein* (*νοεῖν*) – a verb in ancient Greek that cognates from *nous* and describes the process of *noesis* (*νόησις*)); that is of reasoning. *Nous* can also experience, perceive, think, become aware of a situation, acquire self-awareness, recognize patterns, innovate, plan, solve problems arise in a given socio-cultural environment (*milieu*), processes that are related to *epistēmē* (*ἐπιστήμη*), a term that in philosophy and classical rhetoric is the domain of true knowledge and usually refers to scientific knowledge.

If it is so, **an observer** (or a **researcher**) is a healthy *nous* - that is, s/he does not suffer from a neurodegenerative disease (such as dementia or Alzheimer’s disease) - trying to understand the universe of his/her own research and put an order to that, s/he first becomes aware of the specific universe, and then s/he sets some rules (principles), if s/he wants to understand and function in this universe. In other words, the observer/*nous*/researcher exercises his/her “reason” or “logic” (two other English translations of *nous*) in the specific natural, linguistic and cultural environment (which can be a conglomeration of many discourses), if s/he wants to comprehend where s/he stands in this universe. By doing this, observer/*nous*/researcher undergoes rigorous thinking processes; and it is these mental and intellectual rigorous thinking processes (*noesis* - *νόησις*) that generate “intellectual production” (i.e. PhD dissertations, articles, books) and/or *epistēmē* (*ἐπιστήμη*) or true knowledge. After these mental and intellectual rigorous thinking processes (*noesis* - *νόησις*), the observer/*nous*/researcher uses **a language** to communicate his/her *epistēmē*

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<sup>14</sup> In ancient Greek, *noes* is the plural of *nous*.

(ἐπιστήμη) and/or research to other observers/*noes*/researchers. And it is exactly this that usually occurs when the observer/*nous* – as a researcher – produces “intellectual production” (research – *episteme*, that is, both knowledge and science). The **mental** and **intellectual processes** that the observer/*nous*/researcher undergoes are **similar** in **Sciences and Humanities** (especially in drama translation/theatrical performances). The **difference** lies in the fact that in Humanities most of the research is carried out into events and polysystems that functioned in the past – therefore, the observed polysystems are **closed** (see **Figure 2**) – that is, the observer/*nous*/researcher cannot exercise any influence on them. S/He can only describe and interpret them and, eventually, draw certain conclusions. In most cases, the observer/*nous*/researcher looks over what happened **in retrospect**, what dynamics and/or discourses were generated at a specific geographical place or different geographical places, such as in the UK, Germany at a given period of time (1880 – 1914) (a **chronotope**), as it occurs in Appendix B: Figure 1.

When the observer/a *nous*/a researcher carries out research **in retrospect**, then by definition s/he must move in a **chronotope** or **chronotopes** – that is, s/he must examine a specific geographical place (*tope* from the Greek *topos*) or specific geographical places (*topes* from the Greek *topoi* – plural of *topos*) that move in the **synchronic axis** (or **synchrony**) but at the same time the observer/*nous*/researcher must move over time (*chronos*, in Greek) or on the **diachronic axis** (or **diachrony**), if s/he wants to understand how events, theories etc. change over time. Thus, the observer/ the *nous*/ the researcher is **outside of** the observed polysystem(s) which is/are **closed**, since what occurred is finished during the time the observer/*nous*/researcher carries out the research. If it is so, then the observer/*nous*/researcher becomes “**overarching**”, since s/he can see the “whole picture” or can have “a hawk’s eye”. We call the “overarching” observer/*nous*/researcher and the dynamics s/he develops with different interacting or conflictual systems or discourses a **Second-Order Closed Cybernetic Polysystem**, as illustrated in Appendix B - Figure 2. Having discussed why **an observer/a healthy nous**, when observing and describing a closed polysystem is always “**overarching**” and always **outside of** this Second-Order **Closed Cybernetic Polysystem**, we should turn into what is involved when the observer/*nous*/researcher tries to collect data, put them in order/ make sense out of them. First, the observer/*nous*/researcher should become aware of the specific universe, and then s/he sets some rules (principles), if s/he wants to investigate this universe. In other words, s/he exercises his/her “reason” or “logic” (two other English translations of *nous*) on natural, linguistic and cultural environments s/he observes, if s/he wants to comprehend and describe them. By doing this, the *nous* undergoes rigorous thinking processes; and it is these intellectual rigorous thinking processes (*noesis* - νόησις) – while s/he observes the polysystem(s) in order to collect and put in order the “appropriate” data, and interpret them - that the observer/*nous*

generates “intellectual production” (e.g. a Ph.D. Dissertation, a research paper, a book) and/or *epistēmē* (ἐπιστήμη) or true knowledge that can advance his/her field(s) of expertise. After these mental and intellectual rigorous thinking processes (*noesis* - νόησις), the observer/*nous*/researcher uses a language (usually English) to communicate his/her *epistēmē* (ἐπιστήμη)<sup>15</sup> and/or research to a wider public.

Now, if we try to apply the aforementioned to the research that the observer/*nous*/researcher does in Humanities and, especially in drama translation and its possible theatrical performance(s), then we encounter **intercultural communication** being in process, a process that is an **inter-disciplinary** and/or a **multi-disciplinary research** by definition.

Taking as an example Murray’s translation of Sophocles’ *Oedipus the King*, a tragedy that was performed in Athens in the fifth century BCE, we soon realize that, on the one hand, **Murray**, as a **translator**, tried (and achieved, according to his contemporaries) to communicate an ancient Greek “text” (Source Text (ST)), which was performed in Athens of the fifth century BCE (Source System (SS)) in a **contemporary (poetic) language** that could be understood by a wider, contemporary English public (Target System (TS)) – something that went against the **dramatic conventions** of the time – that is, a literal translation in prose juxtaposed with the ancient Greek text. This can be deduced from J.T. Sheppard’s **negative feedback** to Murray’s translation. Furthermore, being influenced by Harrison’s anthropological theories of the ritual origin of drama and Nietzsche’s theories of *Übermensch* or *overman* coming out of *The Birth of Tragedy* and *The Will to Power*, Murray was able to advise Martin-Harvey who performed the role of Oedipus how to enhance his acting.

On the other hand, Max Reinhardt - the theatrical producer who used Murray’s translation experimenting with his contemporary theories of the architecture ancient Greek theater and Nietzsche’s theory of tragic hero (*overman*) - transformed the architecture of Covent Garden and changed radically the relationship of the performers (that of the protagonists and the Chorus) with the audience. Those were two changes that went against the **theatrical conventions** of the time – that is, having the proscenium stage and the orchestra pit connected with long steps, thus allowing the actors and the chorus enough freedom to interact and move from the stage to the orchestra and vice versa as well as to move among the audience; those were two theatrical practices that were totally unknown up to that moment.

Having said that, when the observer (the *nous*) or the researcher wants to carry out research into this complex situation of **intercultural communication**, s/he gets into **inter-disciplinary** and/or **multi-**

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<sup>15</sup> Both in Ancient and Modern Greek *epistēmē* - ἐπιστήμη is not only the body of scientific knowledge acquired but also the scientific field (or discipline) that one serves.

**disciplinary** research which demands the observer/*nous*/researcher must have developed certain linguistic and computer skills and that s/he must follow certain steps in order to complete his/her research.

First, the observer/*nous*/researcher should have, at least, **very good reading skills in different languages**:

- in the source language (SL) of the original text (e.g. ancient Greek);
- in the target language (TL) of the translation (e.g. English); and
- in any other language in which other influential works were written (e.g. German / Nietzsche)

His/her very good knowledge of different languages enables the observer (a *nous*) or researcher to scrutinize any data s/he finds and to exercise his/her own judgement as to which data are the most appropriate for his/her own research.

Second, the observer/*nous*/researcher may encounter problems with the **availability of data**; that is, when s/he deals with older texts and performances, s/he may not be able to get hold on books, pictures or other materials either because they are not available through interlibrary loans or because these data are not digitized --- or, if they are digitized, they are too expensive to get hold on them. Another aspect of availability of data is that data may be digitized, but the observer (a *nous*) or researcher may not know how to search, especially, when s/he does not have a strong multilingual background. At this point, we can see that three interrelated factors play a crucial role in the development and the completion of such kind of a research: (1) **linguistic skills** in various languages combined with intercultural competence; (2) **computer / IT skills**; and (3) **other *noes*** (e.g. supervisors, colleagues) can help him/her. Thus, it become conspicuous that in such a kind of research the observer (the *nous*) or the researcher always depends not only on his/her own linguistic skills but also on Artificial Intelligence (AI) that can provide him/her with the knowledge s/he needs and other *noes* who can advise him/her what kind of data are appropriate for his/her research. However, only can the observer/*nous*/researcher put in order and interpret the available data – digitized or not. No AI can make sense out of various and disperse data and interpret them or draw certain conclusions and, finally make a **synthesis** of all the collected, observed and described material.

Third, the observer/*nous*/researcher should **collect** and **organize** his/her data, after s/he has completed his/her research. In order to perform these tasks, the observer /*nous*/researcher should learn not only how to use the various AI tools (Nikolarea, 2021), but also s/he should have developed:

- a. very advanced analytical skills;
- b. comparative and contrastive skills;

- c. very advanced synthetic skills; and
- d. an understanding of the mechanisms of the polysystem(s) s/he has studied

Finally, the observer/*nous*/researcher should **interpret** his/her data. This is one of the most difficult intellectual processes, because s/he may **see certain “strange” things or events** occurring in the polysystem(s) s/he examines that cannot be understood or interpreted just from the available data. Then, the observer/*nous*/researcher should ask a critical question, such as: “What triggered that event? Was there any other influential factor from a different system?” Trying to find the answers to this set of questions, the observer (the *nous*) or the researcher may realize that other systems or discourses, such as archaeology (e.g. Höpken and Dörpfel), anthropology (e.g. Harrison), philology (e.g. Murray) and philosophy (e.g. Nietzsche) may be present, interacting among themselves and influencing translators, performers and theatrical performers. It is what in literary terms is called **inter-discursivity**, in semiotics of theater **inter-semiotic transference** (from a written text into a theatrical performance), **inter-systemic communication** or, otherwise, a **polysystem of intercultural communication** and/or a **polysystem of inter-disciplinary** and/or **multidisciplinary research**.

**4.1.2. Towards a Second-Order Open Cybernetic Polysystem:** Having presented the complex and multifaceted levels of research in drama translation and its theatrical performance(s) in **retrospect** (Appendix B - Figure 2), we have come to realize that the observer/*nous*/researcher – with the aid of other *noes*, computers/research engine machines, interlibrary loans – should take the following steps in order not to control the **closed** polysystems s/he studies but just to organize them, to interpret them and then to produce an intellectual product (a Ph.D. dissertation, a book, a paper). It is after the overarching the observer/*nous*/researcher has put an order, interpreted the data that s/he tries to communicate his/her inter-disciplinary and/or multi-disciplinary research his/her **intellectual product** in either printed or digitized form globally.

Once the intellectual product is ready, there is a (market)/disciplinary **feedback (criticism/reviewing)** in 3 forms:

1. **Negative (rejected for publication)**. There can be various reasons – one can be a linguistic one; that is the wrong use of the language of communication. There are, however, other reasons, especially when the intellectual product goes against the grain/beliefs of certain critics – who reject the product due to their bias.
2. **Constructive**, when there is constructive criticism and the critics/reviewers make suggestions so that the writing of the intellectual product is enhanced and understood by a wider readership / public.

3. **Positive (accepted for publication)**, when the intellectual product is accepted for publication with minor or no changes.

After his/her intellectual product is published in printed and/or digitized form, **only then** the overarching observer/*nous*/researcher gets into a new cybernetic polysystem, where s/he can interact with other observers/*noes*/researchers and advance his/her own scientific field (*epistēmē* - ἐπιστήμη) by producing new knowledge (*epistēmē* - ἐπιστήμη), as shown in **Figure 3**, below.

Once the observer/*nous* gets into the new polysystem, **s/he stops being overarching** and **becomes a *nous* that produces various discourses** – moves between different disciplines (becomes inter-disciplinary and/or multi-disciplinary) and can influence the course of scientific knowledge and discipline(s) (*epistēmē* - ἐπιστήμη).

At this final stage, the observer/*nous*/researcher is **quite similar** in **Sciences** and **Humanities** because s/he produces knowledge (*epistēmē* - ἐπιστήμη), and, in this case Professor Marlow's Second-Order Cybernetics can also be used but *transfigured* from the **Second-Order Closed Cybernetic Polysystem** of Appendix B - Figure 2 into the **Second-Order Open Cybernetic Polysystem** of Appendix B - Figure 3, where the observer/*nous*/researcher can influence the interacting and/or conflicting systems by producing scientific knowledge (*epistēmē* - ἐπιστήμη).

## 5. Conclusions

In this study, the author has tried to advance an extension of the theory of the existing cybernetic systems that can be applied to Humanities in general and drama translation and its theatrical performances in particular. Examining how Murray's translation of Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* was put on stage by Max Reinhardt in early twentieth century, the author of this study has been able to show how a **creative synthesis** of Even-Zohar's Polysystem Theory, Toury's Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) and Professor Marlowe's Second-Order Cybernetic System can lead to two different models. First, it can lead to a **Second-Order Closed Cybernetic PolySystem** that is **closed**, since it incorporates the human mind/*nous* (philosophy of knowledge) as an **overarching observer** of a wider system and considers how time span and the existence or absence of evidence so that cybernetics can be operative in Humanities (Appendix B - Figure 1, Appendix B - Figure 2). Second, it can lead to a **Second-Order Open Cybernetic PolySystem** that is **open**, when the observer/*nous*/researcher **stops** being overarching since s/he completes his/her study and enters a polysystem, in which s/he can communicate his/her knowledge and his/her

field (*ἐπιστήμη: epistēmē*), and, eventually, influence the polysystem itself (Appendix B – Figure 3).

## 5. Acknowledgements and a Dedication

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## APPENDIX A

### **The storyline of Sophocles' *Oedipus the King***

*Oedipus the King* (Gr: *Oidipous Tyrannos*; Lat: *Oedipus Rex*) is a tragedy by the ancient Greek playwright Sophocles, first performed in about 429 BCE. It was the second of Sophocles' three Theban plays to be produced, but it comes first in the internal chronology (followed by *Oedipus at Colonus* and then *Antigone*).

Over the centuries, *Oedipus the King* has come to be regarded by Aristotle and in the Western Literary Criticism as the Greek tragedy par excellence and certainly as the summit of Sophocles' achievements.

#### **The storyline**

As the play opens, a **priest** and the Chorus of Theban elders are calling on King **Oedipus** to aid them with the plague which has been sent by Apollo to ravage the city. Oedipus has already sent Creon, his brother-in-law, to consult the oracle at Delphi on the matter, and when **Creon** returns at that very moment, he reports that the plague will only end when the murderer of their former king, Laius, is caught and brought to justice. Oedipus vows to find the murderer and curses him for the plague that he has caused.

Oedipus also summons the blind prophet **Tiresias**, who claims to know the answers to Oedipus' questions, but refuses to speak, lamenting his ability to see the truth when the truth brings nothing but pain. He advises Oedipus to abandon his search but, when the enraged Oedipus accuses Tiresias of complicity in the murder, Tiresias is provoked into telling the king the truth that Oedipus himself is the murderer. Oedipus dismisses this as nonsense, accusing the prophet of being corrupted by the ambitious Creon in an attempt to undermine him, and Tiresias leaves, putting forth one last riddle: that the murderer of Laius will turn out to be both father and brother to his own children, and the son of his own wife.

Oedipus demands that Creon be executed, convinced that he is conspiring against him, and only the intervention of the Chorus persuades him to let Creon live. **Jocasta**, Oedipus' wife, tells him he should take no notice of prophets and oracles anyway because, many years ago, she and Laius

received an oracle which never came true. This prophecy said that Laius would be killed by his own son but, as everyone knows, Laius was actually killed by bandits at a crossroads on the way to Delphi. The mention of crossroads causes Oedipus to give pause, and he suddenly becomes worried that Tiresias' accusations may actually have been true.

When a **messenger from Corinth** arrives with news of the death of King **Polybus**, Oedipus shocks everyone with his apparent happiness at the news, as he sees this as proof that he can never kill his father, although he still fears that he may somehow commit incest with his mother. The messenger, eager to ease Oedipus' mind, tells him not to worry because Queen Merope of Corinth was not in fact his real mother anyway.

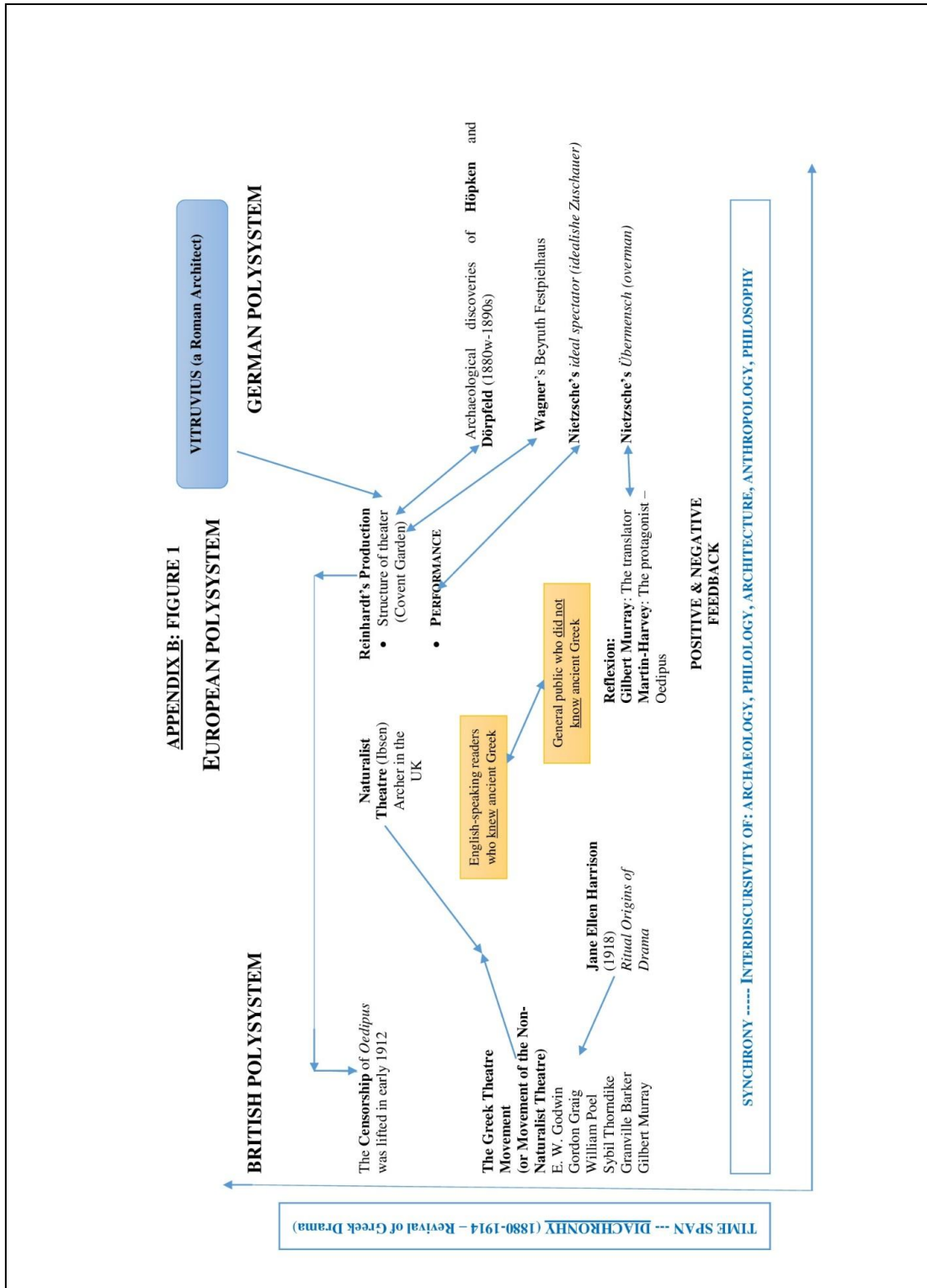
The messenger tells Oedipus that a shepherd who had been given a boy child from the Laius Kingdom to throw it from the Mount of Kithairon gave it to him, who brought it to Corinth and gave up to King Polybus for adoption. He also claims that this **shepherd** is still in the Palace of Thebes, and he is the very same shepherd who witnessed the murder of Laius. By now, Jocasta is beginning to realize the truth, and desperately begs Oedipus to stop asking questions. But Oedipus presses Jocasta to call upon the shepherd. When the old shepherd appears, he doesn't want to reveal what he did in the past, but Oedipus have him tortured by other servants, until **the very old shepherd confesses that the child he gave away was Laius' own son**, and that **Jocasta** had given the baby to him to secretly be exposed upon the mountainside, in fear of the prophecy that Jocasta said had never come true: that the child would kill its father. The shepherd also reveals – as the only witness – that it was Oedipus who killed King Laius and his custody.

With the shepherd's confession, the truth is revealed: **Oedipus is Jocasta's son and the assassin of King Laius; he is the *miasma* (: pollution) that brought the plague to the city!**

When Oedipus fully realizes the truth, he curses himself and his tragic destiny and stumbles off, as the Chorus laments how even a great man can be felled by fate. A servant enters and explains that Jocasta, when she suspected the truth, ran to the palace bedroom and hanged herself there. Oedipus entered the Palace looking for a sword so that he might kill himself and came upon Jocasta's body. In final despair, Oedipus took two long gold pins from her dress, and plunged them into his own eyes.

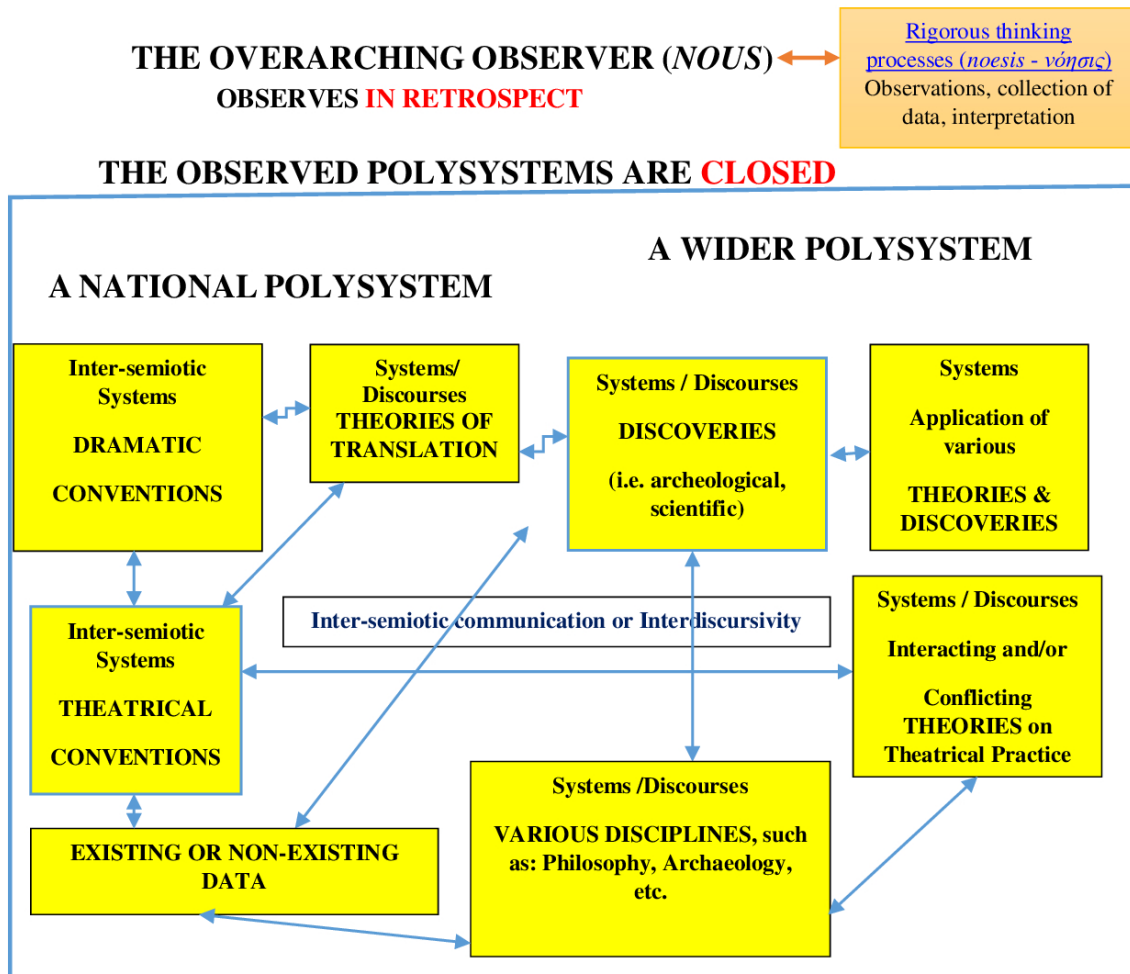
Now, **blind Oedipus begs to be exiled as soon as possible**, and asks Creon to look after his two daughters, Antigone and Ismene, lamenting that they should have been born into such a cursed family. Creon counsels that Oedipus should be kept in the palace until oracles can be consulted regarding what is best to be done, and the play ends as the **Chorus** wails: *'Count no man happy till he dies, free of pain at last'*.

# APPENDIX B – FIGURE 1



APPENDIX B – FIGURE 2

FIGURE 2  
A SECOND-ORDER **CLOSED** CYBERNETIC POLYSYSTEM



## APPENDIX B – FIGURE 3

FIGURE 3:

**INITIALLY**

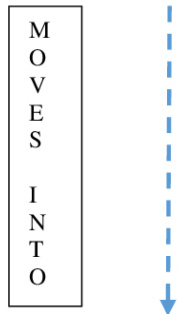
AN OVERARCHING OBSERVER (*NOUS*)

OBSERVES **IN RETROSPECT**

THE OBSERVED POLYSYSTEMS ARE **CLOSED**

As in Figure 2

AN OVERARCHING OBSERVER (*NOUS*)



AN **OPEN** POLYSYSTEM

AND BECOMES JUST AN OBSERVER (*NOUS*)

If an intellectual product of the observer is published, then the observer/the *nous* stops being “overarching” and becomes just an observer/*nous* who can influence the polysystem by producing/advancing **scientific knowledge** (*epistēmē* - ἐπιστήμη)

