

***Iphigenia among the Taurians* 725-901:
A Study on the Recognition Scene in the Attic Tragedy.**

Mattia De Poli

Introduction.

Reading commentaries on Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*, Euripides' *Electra*, or Sophocles' *Electra*,¹ one can be quite sure about the presence of a recognition scene in those tragedies. The only challenge could be to find the line where we can mark the beginning or the end of these scenes,² but there is no doubt that it is a part of the drama, and a meaningful one. Massimo Di Marco³ speaks of a "recognition scene" only for these three tragedies, while referring to other ones he usually prefers the single word "recognition". Now the point is whether

¹ For Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*, see VALGIMIGLI 1925: 104-112; GARVIE 1986: 86-88, who considers the "recognition" – but it would be better to speak of a recognition scene – just like the "kommos" at 306-478 (122-125); CONACHER 1987: 106; UNTERSTEINER 2002: 209. Also MATTHIESSEN 1964: 108-111, focuses on the *Erkennungsszene* in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*. For Euripides' *Electra*, see AÉLION 1983, 1: 113-118; CROPP 1988: 134-142. On the recognition as a theme developed throughout this tragedy see BASTA DONZELLI 1978: 73-92. For Sophocles' *Electra*, see e.g. KAMERBEEK 1974: 14-17; KELLS 1973: 193, 198; MARCH 2001: 209, 212; LLOYD 2005: 56-57; FINGLASS 2007: 437-438, 455-457, 468-471. For a more detailed analysis of the recognition scene in Sophocles' *Electra* see also MATTHIESSEN 1964: 114-119.

² I suggest to find out recognition scenes in these lines (eventually including the so-called "recognition duo" or "recognition duet"): Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers* 164-245 (so also GARVIE 1986: 86); Euripides, *Electra* 487-595 (see CROPP 1988: 134, splitting it into "recognition" at 487-523 and "celebration" at 585-595); Sophocles, *Electra* 1174-1287 (see MARCH 2001: 209, 212). Scholars are not always clear in fixing the beginning or the end of the recognition scene; and, when they are, sometimes they don't agree with each other. According to MATTHIESSEN 1964: 108, the recognition scene in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* begins at 166; according to UNTERSTEINER 2002: 209, it goes down to 305. KELLS 1973: 193, shows the beginning of the recognition scene in Sophocles' *Electra* at 1176, while FINGLASS 2007: 455, fixes it at 1171; KAMERBEEK 1974, 149-162, considers 1098-1231 as a single scene, followed by an *amoibaion* (1232-1287).

³ DI MARCO 2009: 126, 246.

“recognition” and “recognition scene” have the same meaning or not, because, if they have not, it might be a surprise reading of a recognition scene also in Euripides’ *Iphigenia among the Taurians*.

Actually, some scholars don’t mention any “recognition scene” in this play, although they are well aware of the great dramatic function of the “recognition” in the plot. Henri Grégoire deals with the “reconnaissance” just in the chapter “Succès de l’Iphigénie: le témoignage d’Aristote”⁴ and again here and there in the footnotes⁵ without any relevant addiction. More recently, Poulheria Kyriakou focuses several times in her commentary on the process of “recognition”, that starts at 467 and seems to go on until 826: she says indeed that «a longer amoibaion (827-99) [...] follows the recognition», that is «the siblings’ recognition duet».⁶

In the early part of the 20th century Maurice Platnauer and Hans Strohm wrote something different in their commentaries on *Iphigenia among the Taurians*. The former links the recognition between Iphigenia and Orestes to a specific part of the drama, that he calls «recognition scene».⁷ Moreover, showing the structure of this tragedy, he singles out 725-1088 as the second scene within the third episode and notes: «This is the main scene of the play and contains the ἀναγνώριστις».⁸ About ten years later, Strohm mentions the presence of an «Erkennungsszene» in *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, because it reaches the first emotional peak («Höhepunkt») of this drama, but he says nothing more about it.⁹ Such idea was finally better developed by Vittorio D’Agostino and Kjeld Matthiessen: the former wrote a paper,¹⁰ the latter a chapter in one of his works, and both focuses on the recognition scene in *Iphigenia among the Taurians*.¹¹

Finally, when Ester Cerbo analyses the evolution of some features of the recognition scene in the Euripidean plays, she adds two others, *Helen* and *Ion*.¹²

⁴ GRÉGOIRE 1925: 106-109.

⁵ GRÉGOIRE 1925: 141 note 2, 145 note 1.

⁶ KYRIAKOU 2006: 160, 277; cf. 161, 196-197, 247-248, 267-270, 276-278, 281-282. See also ALBINI 1987: xxiii, 104 on 753 ff.

⁷ PLATNAUER 1938: 121, on 725: «Dramatically they [i.e. the guards] must not be present during the recognition scene». See also vi: «their [i.e. Orestes and Pylades’] recognition of Iphigenia (surely one of the most effective of such scenes in the whole range of Greek drama)»; and xv.

⁸ PLATNAUER 1938: xviii, who divides the third episode (658-1088) into two scenes: the dialogue between Orestes and Pylades (658-724) and the dialogue among Orestes, Pylades and Iphigenia (725-1088).

⁹ STROHM 1949: 23.

¹⁰ D’AGOSTINO 1952.

¹¹ MATTHIESSEN 1964: 129-131.

¹² CERBO 1989 includes *Phoenician Women*, but I believe that the situation in that tragedy is different: Jocasta and Polyneikes don’t need to recognise each other, they just meet after a long time and the mother tries to hug her son. Cerbo is right considering the mother’s monody as an evolution of the usual reunion duo, but the first and most important part of any recognition scene is missed in this play.

And she is right, so the list of ancient Attic tragedies containing a recognition scene seems to be longer than Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*, Euripides' *Electra* and Sophocles' *Electra*. But the very question whether "recognition" and "recognition scene" have the same meaning or not is still unanswered.

The "recognition".

Every time we read of "recognition" or ἀναγνώρισις, we must be aware that the writer is quite probably referring to what Aristotle wrote on this subject in his *Poetics*, even when he doesn't mention the ancient philosopher. The meaning of the word is evident: «recognition, as the very name indicates, is a change from ignorance to knowledge» (Aristotle, *Poetics* 1452a 29-30 [chapter 11]: ἀναγνώρισις δέ, ὡσπερ καὶ τοῦνομα σημαίνει, ἐξ ἀγνοίας εἰς γνῶσιν μεταβολή),¹³ i.e. a process from unawareness to awareness. Knowledge and awareness imply also a change in the mind and feelings as well as in the general situation, «leading to friendship or to enmity, and involving matters which bear on prosperity or adversity» (1452a 30-31 [chapter 11]: ἢ εἰς φιλίαν ἢ εἰς ἐχθραν, τῶν πρὸς εὐτυχίαν ἢ δυστυχίαν ὠρισμένων).

This process has something in common with «reversal», since they both produce «pity» or «fear» (1452a 38-1452b 3 [chapter 11]: ἡ γὰρ τοιαύτη ἀναγνώρισις καὶ περιπέτεια ἢ ἔλεον ἔξει ἢ φόβον (οἴων πράξεων ἢ τραγωδία μίμησις ὑπόκειται), ἐπειδὴ καὶ τὸ ἀτυχεῖν καὶ τὸ εὐτυχεῖν ἐπὶ τῶν τοιούτων συμβήσεται. Cf. also 1453b 11-14 [chapter 14]), so they are very meaningful for tragic effect (1450a 33-35 [chapter 6]). Although we can find recognition as well as reversal also in Greek lyric or epic poetry and novel,¹⁴ Aristotle mostly focuses on tragedy¹⁵ and argues that Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* is the finest work because recognition and reversal occur simultaneously.

Finally, the recognition is somebody's recognition (simple recognition), the identity of the other being already clear, or it can involve the one and the other (double recognition): for the latter situation Aristotle finds an example right in Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, because «Iphigenia was recognised by Orestes through the sending of the letter, but for Iphigenia to recognise his relationship to herself required a further recognition» (1452b 5-8 [chapter 11]).¹⁶

¹³ An accurate investigation on the ἀναγνώρισις according to Aristotle's *Poetics* is in PHILLIPART 1925. For an English translation of the text, see HALLIWELL 1995, quoted here and further on.

¹⁴ Recognition is a narrative element e.g. in Homer's *Odyssey*, Stesichorus' *Oresteia* and Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*.

¹⁵ According to LANZA 1987: 69, recognition is a structural element in tragedy. MATTHIESSEN 1964: 93-143, argues that the recognition is central in some dramatic plots: 1) return home (*nostos*), 2) recognition (*anagnorisis*), 3) intrigue or device (*mechanema*). Recognition shifted from tragedy first to Greek comedy (especially the so-called "new comedy") and then to Latin comedy: see RICOTTILLI 2014.

¹⁶ Recognition implies a previous condition of ignorance, so we must distinguish it from reunion

The recognition scene.

According to Aristotle, Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* is the masterpiece as for the recognition in a tragedy, but no modern commentary finds out a recognition scene within it. Probably because in that drama the recognition is a process displayed throughout the plot. But what about Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians*? In this play as well as in other ones, like Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*, Euripides' *Electra* and Sophocles' *Electra*, the recognition is limited to a part of the drama, the so-called "recognition scene".

It is not one of the parts listed by Aristotle's *Poetics* – prologue, episode, exodos and choral song, i.e. parodos and stasimon (1452b 14-27 [chapter 12]) – and its boundaries are flexible. The recognition scene is often shorter than an episode, because one single episode consists at least of both the recognition and the planning of a revenge, a device or an escape.¹⁷ Also a choral song – an infraepisodic one – has a place in the recognition scene of Euripides' *Electra*.

Again, the modern concept of dramatic "scene", based on «the sequence of exit and entry» of the actors,¹⁸ doesn't fit that situation: both in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* and in Euripides' *Electra* Orestes comes out of hiding or arrives on the stage after the beginning of the recognition scene and – what is most important – its end is not marked by the exit or the entry of any actor, since the following planning scene involves the same characters of the recognition scene. The difference is only in the argument of the speeches and dialogues: here the identity of one or two characters of the play and the relationship to each other, there the way to take revenge on someone else or to trick someone else in order to reach safety.

So the recognition scene lies on a semantic ground, just like the suppliant or the messenger ones, but it has some formal evidences such as words, objects and gestures, that are very important. It is safe that the *anagnorisis* as well as the *peripeteia* is a dramatic element of great relevance but, when this process is limited within a part of the play, its effect is even stronger, so the tragedians had to build up a recognition scene very carefully.

when two people meet again after a long time such as Polyneikes and Jocasta in the prologue of Euripides' *Phoenician Women*. Recognition and reunion display similarly on the tragic scene (e.g. recognition / reunion duo or duet expressing surprise and joy), but there is no need to prove one's own identity. See above, note 12.

¹⁷ For revenge, cf. Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers* 84-584 (1st episode) and Sophocles, *Electra* 1098-1383 (3rd episode); for device, cf. Euripides, *Ion* 1250-1623 (exodus); for escape, cf. Euripides, *Iphigenia among the Taurians* 456-1088 (2nd episode).

¹⁸ TAPLIN 1977: 49-60.

The recognition scene within a tragedy.

The recognition scene hasn't a fixed position within a tragedy but takes different places, depending on the plot and the relevance of the recognition to it. So we find it as a part of the first episode in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* (164-245),¹⁹ of the second episode in Euripides' *Electra* (487-595), of the third episode in Sophocles' *Electra* (1174-1287)²⁰ or even of the exodus in Euripides' *Ion* (1369-1511).

Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* has a particular structure and the recognition scene is just a part of the "huge" second episode (and a part of the scene 4):

Verses	Part	Scenes	Characters	
1-122	Prologue	scene 1 (1-66)	Iphigenia	
		scene 2 (67-122)	Orestes, Pylades	
123-235	Parodos	---	Chorus, Iphigenia (amoibaion)	
236-391	1 st episode	scene 1 (236-343)	Herdsmen, Iphigenia, Chorus Leader	
		scene 2 (344-391)	Iphigenia	
392-455	1 st stasimon	---	Chorus	
456-1088	2 nd episode*	scene 1 (456-642)	Chorus Leader, Iphigenia, Orestes, [Pylades and Servants]	
		scene 2 (643-657)	Chorus, Orestes, Pylades (amoibaion), [Servants]	
		scene 3 (658-724)	Orestes, Pylades, [Servants]	
		scene 4 (725-1088)	recognition scene: (725-901)	Iphigenia, Orestes, Pylades, Chorus Leader
			planning scene: (902-1088)	Pylades, Orestes, Iphigenia, Chorus Leader
1089-1152	2 nd stasimon	---	Chorus	

¹⁹ According to GARVIE 1986 and CITTI 2006, the first stasimon doesn't correspond with the *kommos* (306-478) but with a choral song (585-651): it is implicit that the first episode goes on from 84 until 584, including an infraepisodic choral song (152-163) and a *kommos*. I agree with them, being this first episode a "monstre" episode or – quoting TAPLIN 1977: 338 – «one huge act» from 84 to 584.

²⁰ This recognition scene is a part of the third episode, if only we consider 516-1057 as one episode, the second of this tragedy. On the matter, see MARCH 2001: 173; KAMERBEEK 1974: 114. If we split these lines into two groups, the recognition scene is a part of the fourth episode.

* FERRARI 1988: 16, finds one only act from 456 until 1088, framed by Iphigenia inviting first the servants (470-471, and again 725-726) and later the couple of foreigners (1079-1081) to enter the temple.

1153-1233	3 rd episode	---	Toaos, Iphigenia
1234-1283	3 rd stasimon	---	Chorus
1284-1499	exodos	scene 1 (1284-1306)	Messenger, Chorus Leader
		scene 2 (1307-1434)	Toaos, Messenger, Chorus Leader
		scene 3 (1435-1499)	Athena, Toaos, Chorus

Here the beginning of the recognition scene as well as of the scene 4 corresponds with the entry of Iphigenia (725) who takes a tablet to Orestes and Pylades on the stage, that starts the process of knowledge and awareness.²¹ Objects have a similar function in the recognition scenes of both *Libation Bearers* and *Ion*: in the Aeschylean tragedy Electra steps out on the stage and sees a lock of Orestes' hair upon the Agamemnon's grave, while in the Euripidean drama Pythia, Apollo's priestess, leaves the stage after giving Ion the basket where his mother abandoned him as a newborn and which still contains some evidences of his identity. In Euripides' *Electra* the rational criticism against the material evidences of Orestes' identity used by Aeschylus involves the whole process of recognition, so here the scene starts with the entry of a person, an Old man who is necessary to the success of the meeting between brother and sister.

Then, before the end of the scene 4, the end of the recognition scene in *Iphigenia among the Taurians* is marked by a sentence of the Chorus Leader at 900-901: ἐν τοῖσι θαυμαστοῖσι καὶ μύθων πέρα / τάδ' εἶδον αὐτῆ κοῦ κλύουσ' ἀπ' ἀγγέλων.²² these words are a confirmation of the new awareness of Electra and Orestes about their identity, while the following lines of Pylades (902-908) invite them to stop embracing (χειρῶν περιβολὰς) and crying (οἴκτων) and find a way to leave from that barbarous country in order to «see salvation's glorious face» (τὸ κλεινὸν ὄμμα τῆς σωτηρίας). Again in *Ion* a two lines sentence spoken by the Chorus Leader marks the end of the recognition scene (1510-1511): μηδεὶς δοκεῖτω μηδὲν ἀνθρώπων ποτὲ / ἄελπτον εἶναι πρὸς τὰ τυγχάνοντα νῦν.²³ Elsewhere Orestes himself tells his sister Electra to preserve her joyful embraces for a later time (Euripides, *Electra* 596-597: εἶέν· φίλας μὲν ἡδονὰς ἀσπασμάτων / ἔχω, χρόνῳ δὲ καὶ αὐτὰ δώσομεν) or to let go all superfluous words (Sophocles, *Electra* 1288 τὰ μὲν περισσεύοντα τῶν λόγων ἄφερες) in order to focus on the plan for their father's revenge and not fail the moment (1292 καιρόν).

²¹ About the function of the tablet promoting the process towards the recognition, see FERRARI 1988: 15. See also further, note 32.

²² «This is miraculous and beyond words! And I have seen it with my eyes, not heard it by report», KOVACS 1999: 245.

²³ «In the light of what has just happened let no one think anything impossible», KOVACS 1999: 501.

The recognition scene in Iphigenia among the Taurians: the structure.

This recognition scene consists of two different sections. The first one is a sequence of iambic trimeters, the usual spoken verses of the Greek tragedy:

a) Orestes recognises Iphigenia (725-797)

725-752	<i>Stichomythia</i>	Pylades and Iphigenia take an oath
753-787	Dialogue	Iphigenia reveals the message written on the tablet
788-797	Dialogue	Pylades gives the tablet to Orestes

b) Iphigenia recognises Orestes (798-826)

798-804	Dialogue	Iphigenia refuses to recognise Orestes
805-826	<i>Stichomythia</i>	Orestes provides proofs of his own identity

It is divided into two parts, the first corresponding to Orestes' recognition of Iphigenia and the second to Iphigenia's recognition of Orestes. Even if the whole section has a circular structure with a *stichomythia* at the beginning and another one at the end, at first tension is addressed out of the stage because Iphigenia insists asking one of the strangers to bring her message to Argos, but later it is concentrated on the stage because Orestes has already recognised his sister and wants her to recognise back him.

The second section consists of a lyric-epirrhematic *amoibaion* and a monody: Orestes mostly goes on with the iambic trimeters, spoken or semi-lyric (chanted delivery),²⁴ while Iphigenia sings her lyric verses:

c) joy and new concerns (827-901)

827-849	<i>amoibaion</i> : a mixture of dochmiacs, iambics and cretics	Iphigenia and Orestes express their joy
850-867	<i>amoibaion</i> : regular sequences of dochmiacs, iambics and cretics	Orestes and Iphigenia cry their past misfortune
868-899	Iphigenia's monody: mostly dochmiacs or other meters	Iphigenia is worried by the future events
900-901	a couple of iambic trimeters	Chorus Leader shows his surprise

²⁴ The manuscript attributes three lyric verse (832[-833], 865, 867) to Orestes, but modern editors usually give them to Iphigenia: see KYRIAKOU 2006: 279-280. GRÉGOIRE 1925: 145, saves just 832[-833] to Orestes: see DE POLI, in this book (chapter 8); WILLINK 1989: 46-47; BELARDINELLI 2003. On the other hand some iambic trimeters are also in Iphigenia's lines (828, 843, 845) and they could be semi-lyric. About the delivery of acatalectic iambic trimeters, see DALE 1968: 86.

In the *amoihaion* the difference between metrical variety and metrical regularity with an increasing of dochmiac sequences reflects a change in the mood, joyful and mournful, of the characters: at first they are happy because they have recognised each other and met again; then they remember the unlucky events happened to their family and themselves. Finally a concerned Iphigenia sings a monody expressing her anxiety about their future: she is particularly worried about Orestes' salvation and she can't find an escape. Indeed, at this moment it is all up to her, but she feels an aporetic state: such a preoccupation is quite usual in the recognition scenes of the other tragedies, but here it is well expressed by a solo song in order to underline her loneliness.

Although lyric lines are often hard to number, in the recognition scene of Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* the spoken section and the lyric one have almost the same length: the first, corresponding to a double recognition, takes about 100 lines (725-826), while the second takes about 75 lines (827-899).

Every recognition scene has a spoken section, but sometimes it has no lyric section: the recognition scene in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* has none, consisting of less than a hundred iambic trimeters (164-245); in Euripides' *Electra* the lyric section is just made of a short choral song that concludes the recognition scene (585-595). Anyway, that pair is elsewhere quite usual:

Author	Tragedy	Spoken section	Comment of the Chorus Leader	Lyric section	Conclusion of the Chorus Leader
Aeschylus	<i>Libation Bearers</i>	164-245	---	---	---
Euripides	<i>Electra</i>	487-584	---	585-595 (choral song)	---
	<i>Ion</i>	1369-1444	---	1445-1509 (Ione – Creusa)	1510-1511
	<i>Iphigenia among the Taurians</i>	725-826	---	827-899 (Iphigenia – Orestes)	900-901
Sophocles	<i>Electra</i>	1174-1229	1230-1231	1232-1287 (Electra – Orestes)	---

The recognition scene in Iphigenia among the Taurians: the main features.

Dealing with the constitutive elements of the recognition scene in Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, we will focus on these aspects: gestures like embraces, terms of *philia* and the sequence “surprise – incredulity – joy – tears – angst for the future”.

Usually actor's movements on the stage are just hypotheses supported by some words and allusions of the text. Embrace is the most important action of any recognition scene, because it underlines the goal of this part of the plot. Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* have no explicit allusion to such a gesture, but Electra and Orestes probably hug each other at line 233. Elsewhere one of the two main characters says ἔχω σε, «I embrace you», and often the other one answers something similar:

Author	Tragedy	Character	Words suggesting embrace	Answers
Euripides	<i>Electra</i>	Electra	579 ἔχω σ'	579 κάξ ἐμοῦ γ' ἔχημι (Orestes)
	<i>Ion</i>	Creusa	1440 ἐν χερσίν σ' ἔχω cf. 1452 μῶν οὐκ ἔχειν μ' ἔχουσα;	1443 ἐν χερσίν σέθεν (Ion)
Sophocles	<i>Electra</i>	Electra	1226 ἔχω σε χερσίν; cf. 1285 νῦν δ' ἔχω σε	1226 ὡς τὰ λοιπ' ἔχοις ἄει. (Orestes)

In Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* the situation is alike:

Author	Tragedy	Character	Words suggesting embrace	Answers
Euripides	<i>Iphigenia among the Taurians</i>	Iphigenia	829 ἔχω σ', Ὀρέστα	831 καίγώ σε (Orestes)

Two characters on the stage usually pronounce these words referring to the hug in the spoken section of the recognition scene, before the emotional burst, but here Iphigenia and Orestes embrace at the beginning of lyric-epirrhematic *amoiibaion*.

In fact an attempt was earlier made by Orestes, as suggested by his words within an iambic trimeter (796 περιβαλὼν βραχίονι), but Iphigenia²⁵ avoided it because she didn't know the identity of the stranger yet. A similar situation is also in *Ion*: Creusa is soon aware that Ion is her son (1404-1405), while he still needs some evidences about his relationship to her.

We really don't know how long these embraces take on the stage, but later Iphigenia shows that she is worried about the possibility of leaving her beloved brother she has met after a long time (843-844 δέδοικα δ' ἐκ χερῶν με μὴ πρὸς

²⁵ 798-799 are assigned to the Chorus Leader in the manuscripts, followed by WAY 1912; MURRAY 1925; GRÉGOIRE 1925; PLATNAUER 1938; STROHM 1949; SANSONE 1981; FERRARI 1988; MUSSO 2001. But some modern editors and scholars, following Monk, prefer to give them to Iphigenia: D'AGOSTINO 1952: p. 36; ALBINI 1987; DIGGLE 1981; KOVACS 1999; and possibly KYRIAKOU 2006: 264.

αἰθέρα ἀμπτάμενος φύγη), so we may suppose that a kind of physical contact, a hug with arms or, at least, with hands, between the two characters can still last during the recognition scene.

Recognition restores a relationship of *philia* between sister and brother, mother or father and son. In the part of the tragedy before the recognition scene they often address each other using words that underline reciprocal unfamiliarity:

Speaking character	Addressed character	Words of unfamiliarity	Lines	Parallels in other tragedies
Orestes	Iphigenia	(ὦ) γύναι	483, 496, 498, 542, 546 (cf. 724)	Sophocles, <i>Electra</i> 1106 (Orestes to Electra) Euripides, <i>Ion</i> 237 (Ion to Creusa)
		ὦ ξένη	597 (cf. 665)	
		ὦ νεᾶνι	619 (cf. 660)	
Iphigenia	Orestes (and Pylades)	(ὦ ταλαίπωροι) ξένοι	479, 612 (cf. 468)	
		(ὦ) ξέν'	509, 547*	Sophocles, <i>Electra</i> 1112 (Electra to Orestes) Euripides, <i>Electra</i> 247, 259, 265, 283 (Electra to Orestes) Euripides, <i>Ion</i> 339 (Creusa to Ion)
		ὦ τάλας, ὅστις ποτ' εἶ	628	

In Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* the female character attests her unfamiliarity to the strangers Orestes and Pylades again at the beginning of the recognition scene (728 ξένοι) and generally, in this tragedy as well as

* DIGGLE1981: 266, is the only editor who prints μένε instead of ξένε at 547, but no explanation is given about it. FERRARI 1988: 131 note 46, considers μένε as a typographical mistake there.

in the other ones, nothing changes until someone gives the evidences of his/her own identity. At that moment the commonest word is the superlative adjective φίλτατε/φιλτάτη/φίλτατον, often joined with a noun referring to their relationship:

Speaking character	Addressed character	Words of <i>philia</i>	Lines	Parallels in other tragedies
Orestes	Iphigenia	ὦ φιλτάτη μοι σύγγον'	795	Sophocles, <i>Electra</i> 1224 φίλτατον (Electra to Orestes)
		ὦ σύγγον'	851	Euripides, <i>Ion</i> 1437 ὦ φιλτάτη μοι μητέρα / 1443 ὦ φίλη μοι μητέρα / 1451, 1468, 1477, 1497 μητέρα (Ion to Creusa)
Iphigenia	Orestes	[ξέν']	[798]	[Aeschylus, <i>Libation Bearers</i> 220 ὦ ξέν' (Electra to Orestes)]
		ὦ φίλτατ'	815, 828	Aeschylus, <i>Libation Bearers</i> 235 ὦ φίλτατον μέλημα δώμασιν πατρός (Electra to Orestes) Sophocles, <i>Electra</i> 1224 ὦ φίλτατον φῶς, cf. 1281 ὦ φίλ' (Electra to Orestes)
		<ὦ> σύγγον'	858, 870	Euripides, <i>Ion</i> 1439 (ὦ) τέκνον, 1458, 1470, 1476, 1497, 1509 ὦ παῖ (Creusa to Ion)
		cf. 833 τὸ σὸν νοτίζει βλέφαρον, ὡσαύτως δ' ἐμόν*		Euripides, <i>Ion</i> 1462 τοῦμόν λέγουσα καὶ τὸ σὸν κοινῶς λέγεις (Ion to Creusa)

In *Iphigenia among the Taurians* the shift from *xenia* to *philia* results more complicate because of the double recognition: when Orestes makes the first attempt to hug Iphigenia in his arms after recognising her, he also addresses her some usual words of *philia* (795 ὦ φιλτάτη μοι σύγγον'), but she immediately rejects him as a stranger (798 ξέν'),²⁶ emphasising again the gap between him and Artemis' priestess. Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* offer a parallel to this situation, when Orestes tries to persuade Electra about his identity, but she can't understand his words yet (220).

²⁶ See note 25. Even if 798-799 are to be assigned to the Chorus Leader, Iphigenia seems to be suspicious about the stranger's identity at 803-804.

* About the attribution of this line, see note 24. We can assign it both to Orestes and to Iphigenia: the rhetorical effect produced by the two possessive adjectives is safe.

Surprisingly, tenderness emerges in Iphigenia's words to Orestes before he gives the main evidence to prove that he is her brother: he just remember the contest between Atreus and Thiestes, that a young Iphigenia embroidered on a cloth, and immediately she addresses him some words of *philia* (815 ὃ φίλτατ'). In Euripides' *Electra* the main character addresses the same words to the stranger-Orestes when he announces that her brother is still alive (229), even if she doesn't know that he is in front of her.

Iphigenia adds that the stranger-Orestes' words about her past and youth set him closer to her heart, they touch her (815 χρίμπτηι *vel* κάμπτεις),²⁷ so we may suppose that also the actors on the stage get closer to each other, a first step towards their embrace, but this is just an hypothesis.

Later, when the process of recognition is finally over, Iphigenia repeats the adjective φίλος, both in the positive and in the superlative form, three times within few lines, as if she would like to remove her previous suspicions. Now Orestes and Iphigenia can state their relationship without doubts: 851 (Orestes to Iphigenia) and 858 (Iphigenia to Orestes). The *sympatheia* between the two brothers is attested by their common tears and underlined by the two possessive adjective set as a frame to the iambic trimeter at 833, like those in *Ion* 1462 expressing Creusa and Ion's common happiness.

These recognition scenes stress the tragic irony at maximum, so the characters can't go on with their ignorance and the revelation of their true identities is now necessary (744 ff.; cf. 611-612). Anyway, when by chance one of the characters recognises the other as a relative, it is hard to keep *surprise* under control and this emotion is often expressed by the rhetorical question «what to say?». While Iphigenia is saying that her written message is addressed to her brother Orestes at Argos (774-779), he understands that she is his sister and immediately cries: τί λέξω; (777). The same reaction is also in Sophocles' *Electra*, after Orestes hears a young woman he can hardly recognise as his sister calling him while she is holding the funerary vase containing the supposed ashes of his corpse (1174). On the other hand, also Iphigenia is surprised when she recognises Orestes, so she can't find any word: τί φῶ; (839).

Speaking character	Rhetorical question	Lines	Parallels in other tragedies
Orestes	τί λέξω;	777	Sophocles, <i>Electra</i> 1174
Iphigenia	τί φήεις;	808	cf. Euripides, <i>Electra</i> 570 πῶς εἶπας; (<i>Electra</i>) cf. Sophocles, <i>Electra</i> 1220 πῶς εἶπας; (<i>Electra</i>)

²⁷ I would prefer the manuscript reading κάμπτεις to Wecklein's χρίμπτηι; the meaning is anyway quite similar.

Surprise is the first step on the way to *joy* and *happiness*, that are joined with sung verses and called with different names by Orestes – *τέρψις* (797) – and Iphigenia – *χαρά* (833), *χάρις* (847). But they both describe their emotion using also the word *ἡδονή* (Orestes at 794, Iphigenia at 842).

Speaking character	Terms of joy	Lines	Parallels in other tragedies
Orestes	τέρψις	797	Sophocles, <i>Electra</i> 1278 (<i>Electra</i>)
	ἡδονή *	794	
Iphigenia	χαρά	833	Euripides, <i>Ion</i> 1448 ἀδόκητος ἡδονή (<i>Creusa</i>), 1461 μακαριωτάτας ... ἡδονάς (<i>Creusa</i>)
	ἄτοπος ἡδονή *	842	
	χάρις	847	

According to Iphigenia, this «pleasure» is «strange, extraordinary» (842 ἄτοπον ἡδονάν), the adjective expressing an idea implicit in Orestes' question: «where in the world do we find ourselves?» (777 ποῦ ποτ' ὄνθ' ἠύρημεθα;). He is conscious that their reunion is an unexpected situation since his first attempt to embrace Iphigenia (796 ἀπίστω ... βραχίονι): it is like a miracle (797 πυθόμενος θαυμάστ' ἐμοί). On the other hand, she believes it is even stranger (839 θαυμάτων πέρα ... τάδ' ἀπέβα) and the Chorus Leader's closing sentence underlines this aspect (900 ἐν τοῖσι θαυμαστοῖσι καὶ μύθων πέρα). Orestes says that he feels shocked (795 ἐκπεπληγμένος). Iphigenia is not explicit as her brother, but her different reactions – tears mixed to joy (833 κατὰ δὲ δάκρυ, κατὰ δὲ γόος ἅμα χαρᾶι) – attest that she feels so, too.

Speaking character	Terms of surprise	Lines	Parallels in other tragedies
Orestes	ἐκπεπληγμένος ἀπίστω ... βραχίονι πυθόμενος θαυμάστ' ἐμοί	795	cf. Euripides, <i>Electra</i> 580 οὐδ' ἐγὼ γὰρ ἦλπισα (<i>Orestes</i>)
		796	
		797	
Iphigenia	θαυμάτων πέρα ... τάδ' ἀπέβα	839	cf. Euripides, <i>Electra</i> 570 ἀνεπίστον λόγον, 579 ἀέλπτως (<i>Electra</i>) cf. Euripides, <i>Ion</i> 1395 φάσμα τῶν ἀνεπίστων, 1441 ἄελπτον εὔρημ' (<i>Creusa</i>) cf. Sophocles, <i>Electra</i> 1262-1263 ἀφράστως ἀέλπτως τ' (<i>Electra</i>)
Chorus	ἐν τοῖσι θαυμαστοῖσι καὶ μύθων πέρα	900	

Happiness is linked to their present situation and Iphigenia knows that (838 εὐτυχοῦσά μου ψυχά). Orestes hopes that they will be happy also in the future (841 τὸ λοιπὸν εὐτυχοῦμεν ἀλλήλων μέτα), since they were unlucky in the past, and, although they were well-born, he remembers their previous misfortunes: the attempt to sacrifice Iphigenia at Aulis and Orestes' mortal danger in Taurian land (850-851 γένει μὲν εὐτυχοῦμεν, ἐς δὲ συμφοράς, ὧ σὺγγον', ἡμῶν δυστυχῆς ἔφου βίος).

Fortune can easily change and happiness slides towards *fear*, so Iphigenia now feels worried about their future, mainly Orestes' future (843 δέδοικα): he has come unexpected and is in her arms at the present time, but he could vanish again, soon and definitively. Her monody (874-899) deals with this argument, wandering how she can help Orestes and save both her brother and herself, the last heirs of Atreus.²⁸

Speaking character	Terms of fear	Lines	Parallels in other tragedies
Iphigenia	δέδοικα	843	Eurpides, <i>Ion</i> 1452 ἔτι φόβωι τρέμω (Creusa)

The recognition scene in Iphigenia among the Taurians: characters and objects.

Beside Iphigenia and Orestes, the recognition scene involves two other characters: Pylades and the Chorus of Greek captive women, which are both in a loyal relationship to them.²⁹ True strangers has been already sent away, out of the stage: a first group of servants, who lead the two prisoners in front of Iphigenia, has entered the temple (470-471); other servants, who watched them when she went to take the tablet, was soon invited by her to enter the temple and help preparing the rite of sacrifice (725-726).

In this double recognition scene Pylades has an important role. First, taking Orestes' place (745, and mainly 753), he is the director of the dialogue with Iphigenia and invites her to say the addressee and the content of her written message, so Orestes can recognise his sister after hearing her name and his own. On the contrary, the Chorus plays a marginal role because the Chorus Leader just attests the recognition between Iphigenia and Orestes with a couple of iambic trimeters at the end of the scene.³⁰ It is anyway a complex situation,

²⁸ Electra is often left at the margin in this tragedy.

²⁹ See D'AGOSTINO 1952: 29: «alla scena del riconoscimento non assisteranno se non persone fidate, come sono le donne del coro». A detailed analysis of the characters of this tragedy is in KYRIAKOU 2006: 30-37.

³⁰ About the attribution of 798-799, see note 25. If they are to be assigned to the Chorus Leader, he has a role in the recognition scene as an impediment.

certainly more complicated than in other tragedies, since it involves three speaking characters (ie three actors) and the Chorus/Chorus Leader, like in Euripides' *Electra* (without any silent character):

Author	Tragedy	Speaking characters	Silent Character
Aeschylus	<i>Libation Bearers</i>	Electra, Orestes, Chorus	---
Sophocles	<i>Electra</i>	Electra, Orestes, Chorus	Pylades
Euripides	<i>Electra</i>	Electra, Old man, Orestes, Chorus	Pylades
	<i>Ion</i>	Creusa, Ion, Chorus	---
	<i>Iphigenia among the Taurians</i>	Iphigenia, Orestes, Pylades, Chorus	---

The involvement of another character on the stage makes the recognition scene more spectacular, but such an effect is produced also by some objects used as evidences of one's identity. They are clearly of great relevance to the recognition of Orestes in Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers*:

Evidences	a curl, some footprints, a cloth made by Electra
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but Euripides criticises them as implausible and introduces one more in his *Electra*:³¹

Implausible evidences	a curl, some footprints, a cloth made by Electra
Plausible evidence	a scar on Orestes' face

In Sophocles' *Electra*, in a previous scene, Chrysothemis finds a curl on Agamemnon's grave and supposes it is Orestes' hair, but Electra claims that it proves nothing about Orestes; later he arrives as a messenger and gives her an urn that is supposed to contain Orestes' ashes, but it is just a false evidence of a false message, because Orestes is still alive; finally his ring with Agamemnon's seal is the crucial evidence:

Potential evidence	a curl
Misleading evidence	an urn containing Orestes' ashes
Crucial evidence	a ring with Agamemnon's seal

Objects have a great potential and Euripides seems to be aware of it although his sceptical attitude towards them, so in *Ion*'s recognition scene he introduces

³¹ All these evidences are introduced by the Old man, who is crucial to the recognition of Orestes.

the basket where Creusa abandoned her new-born son: it contains clothes, whose an unfinished one is embroidered with the Gorgon's figure, a golden necklace with serpents and a crown made of olive branches. After a long time all those things are still uncorrupted and it looks like a miracle.

Anyway, they have no voice and every time they need someone speaking instead of them. So it happens also in *Iphigenia among the Taurians*, when Orestes recognises Iphigenia: she takes the tablet with the written message addressed to her brother at Argos on the stage, but it has no effect until Pylades asks her to read it aloud.³² Later, when Iphigenia recognises Orestes, objects have a more important function but they are not visible on the stage: Orestes just remembers clothes embroidered by his sister with the contest between Atreus and Thiestes, some holy water, a curl and Pelops' spear in Iphigenia's room at Argos, and it is enough.

Concrete object	a tablet
Evoked objects (memories)	some clothes embroidered by Iphigenia with the contest between Atreus and Thiestes, some holy water, a curl and Pelops' spear

Conclusions.

Now I believe that any doubt about the presence of a recognition scene in Euripides' *Iphigenia among the Taurians* has vanished. A part of this tragedy (725-901) has some features in common with Aeschylus' *Libation Bearers* (164-245), Euripides' *Electra* (487-595) and Sophocles' *Electra* (1174-1287), where scholars usually single out other tragic recognition scenes. Some peculiarities are coherent with Euripides' criticism towards objects and evidences, but he was able to build up a situation of great impact anyway: characters, gestures, words make it even more spectacular. So we can also understand why the recognition scene had a wide spread in Attic tragedy and comedy between the end of the 5th century and the whole 4th century BC until the so-called "new comedy". Sure, the ἀναγνώρισις is first attested in Homer's *Odyssey* and this poem was a clear model down to the 4th century AD, e.g. to Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, but classic drama – and, as far as we know, mainly Euripides' tragedies – played an important role in developing all its potentiality.

³² About the dramatic function of the tablet with the written message, see SUSANETTI 2007: 194.