

**Brill, S. (2009) “Violence and Vulnerability in Aeschylus’ *Suppliants*”, in W. Wians (ed), *Logos and Mythos: Philosophical Essays in Greek Literature*, Albany: SUNY Press, 161-80.**

The suppliant dramas of Greek tragedy are deeply political, playing on an equivocation between power and powerlessness, strength and vulnerability, precisely by presenting the curious and fragile power that belongs to the suppliant. In this paper I trace Aeschylus’ *Suppliants*’ contribution to this inquiry into authority on both public and private levels by staging the tension between democratic rule by persuasion and tyrannical rule by force, as well as the complex play between vulnerability and violence at work in the desires that support these forms of rule. Aeschylus’ handling of supplication both offers a profound meditation on the ambivalent nature of power and provokes audiences to consider the specific role of myth in the legitimation of authority.