ABSTRACT

Title: Aeschylus' *Supplices*: Introduction and Commentary on vv. 1–523
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Aeschylus' (525–456 B.C.) drama the *Suppliant women* (Greek *Hikétides*, Lat. *Supplices*) is all certain to be the first in a trilogy of tragedies with appurtenant comic epilogue, 'satyr-play'. The other two tragedies and the satyr-play have been lost except for a few lines preserved in quotations and, possibly, papyri. The dissertation contains an introduction to the entire drama, a translation and commentary on the first half of the text (verses 1-523), and an excursus. The Introduction deals with the date of the theatrical production, the literary theme, the mythological background, the hypothetical reconstruction of the trilogy, and the contemporary Athenian theatre. The Commentary constitutes the major part of the work, being primarily philological, but also literary and historical, dealing with matters of scenic production and the nature of the chorus, where some new hypotheses are proposed, and with Greek mythology, religion, politics, and history in general as these become issues of particular passages of the text.

The constitution of the text is a major concern. The *Supplices* is based on virtually only one manuscript: the Florentine *Laurentianus graecus* 32.9 ("Codex Mediceus") from the 10th century. There are five apographa from the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance, but there is no evidence to suggest that any one of these has independent authority. The text is often in need of reconstruction by emendation. The approach has been moderately conservative. About thirty new conjectures of varying probability are proposed and discussed; the reading of the extant manuscripts is defended in fourteen places against a majority of recent editors.

The Excursus deals with a general problem of textual criticism in versified texts, the displacements of verses. The conclusion is that there has been an abuse of this conjectural measure in several editions.

Key words: *Aeschylus, Hiketides, Supplices, Suppliants, Suppliant women, tragedy, Greek drama, Greek theatre, textual criticism*