

ZEUS EXOPSIOS (?)

ONE is grateful to Professor Vanderpool for his careful re-examination and publication of the curious boundary marker of a Zeus-shrine, Agora I 5983.¹ He has made it clear that in the last letter of the inscription all that can be seen to have been deliberately cut by human hand is a Y. Thus the fourth line, which gives apparently an uncompleted epithet of Zeus, appears as ΕΞΟΥ. But one may still doubt whether the completion of the word as Exopsios, an acceptable epithet of Zeus, ought to be rejected out of hand, unless a convincing alternative is proposed.

The stone was left incomplete, for some unknown reason. The cutter stopped abruptly in the middle of his work; and it is not impossible that he left not only the inscription but even a particular letter unfinished (though in the case of Y one would expect him to cut the vertical stroke first). Alternatively, if the mark on the stone between the arms of the Y is a flaw or pock-mark and not the upper part of the vertical of a Y, then the cutter may have been prevented by it from completing the stroke, or else he may have thought of it as roughly incorporated in the letter.

No convincing restoration of ἐξου has been put forward. The possibility that it is in fact ἐξ οὐ has been considered,² but no plausible completion of the relative clause has been found, and in any case there is hardly space for it on this stone. Vanderpool tentatively suggests Exousios, with reference to the power or authority of Zeus. Unfortunately ἐξούσιος is used elsewhere, by Philo, meaning “deprived of one’s property”;³ and in any case ἐξουσία seems somehow inappropriate for Zeus, too formal and limited for his supreme power.

Exopsios was first suggested by A. B. Cook himself,⁴ and is surely not only possible but appropriate if the shrine was so situated and so arranged that the god “looked out” over the city. The word is not found elsewhere; but there are parallels

¹ *Hesperia*, XXXV, 1966, pp. 274-275; cf. XXVI, 1957, pp. 90-91.

² Cf. the relative clause on the boundary stone Agora I 5476, *Hesperia*, XII, 1943, p. 237. Vanderpool and I have discussed this idea and both rejected it.

³ II, 528 (*in Flaccum*, 76-77); cf. *Etym. Magn.*, s.v. ἐκπτωτος, where ἐξούσιος is compared with ἐκβιος.

⁴ See *Hesperia*, XXVI, 1957, p. 90.

⁵ Pausanias, I, 32, 2.

⁶ See A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, II, ii, Cambridge, 1925, pp. 1121 ff.

⁷ διώπτης, ἐπωπετής, ἐπωπεύς, ἐπόπτης, κατοπτής, πανόπτης, παντεπόπτης; see Cook’s indices, and *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*, V, 1964, pp. 177, 179. Note also ἐξορᾶν, ἐξιδεῖν, which are used of a penetrating view over an extensive scene; in *Iliad*, XX, 342, Achilles, scanning the landscape for Aeneas after the mist has cleared, μέγ’ ἐξιδεν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν; cf. Euripides, *Heraclidae*, 675 (view of the Argive host from a discreet distance); *Helen*, 1269 (a ship barely visible from land); Sophocles, *Philoctetes*, 851 (metaphorical).

for its form in *προόψιος*, an epithet of Apollo in his shrine on Hymettos,⁵ and *ἐπόψιος*, applied to Zeus himself.⁶ Several other epithets and cult-titles, compounded with various prepositions, express the penetrating, far-reaching and all-embracing vision of Zeus;⁷ and if it is not epigraphically quite impossible I believe that—with a mark of interrogation—one can add *Exopsios* to them.

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