

I. Introduction

PGM I 222 (ἀμαύρωσις ἀναγκαία, “An indispensable spell of invisibility”)

PGM I 247 (ἀμαύρωσις δοκιμη, “A tested spell for invisibility”)

PGM VII 619 (ἐκ τοῦ Διαδήματος Μουσέως, “From *The Diadem of Moses*”)

Lucian, *Lover of Lies* 36

αὐτὸς δὲ ἀπολιπὼν με λαθὼν οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅποι ἀφανῆς ᾤχετο ἀπιῶν, “And after departing from me unnoticed, he went away not being perceived, but to where I do not know.”

Pliny, *Natural History* 37.60.165

magorum impudentiae vel manifestissimum in hac quoque exemplum est, quoniam admixta herba heliotropio, quibusdam additis precationibus, gerentem conspici negent, “In this also is even the most blatant example of the shamelessness of the *magi*, since when heliotrope plant is added together with heliotrope stone, with certain prayers spoken, they say that the one wearing it is not seen.”

LiDonnici (1995, 235)

“...it is legitimate to ask who really was supposed to be impressed by the rhetorical frame that surround some of these spells when they appear in formularies, and whether the function of some of the truly amazing and far-fetched applications in a formulary might not reflect the traffic in more practical spells and their ingredients, and work to enhance the value of the others, justifying higher cost for the directions or the substances needed for, e.g., the basic fever amulet or erotic binding spell.”

Dieleman (2012/2013, 190)

“It goes without saying that none of these spells were ever successful in turning anybody truly invisible or that anybody ever escaped from prison through use of such spells.”

Ammianus Marcellinus 30.1.17

et leniendi causa flagitii sui vel fraudis, quam meliore consilio pertulerunt, apud imperatoris aures (rumorum omnium tenacissimas) incessabant falsis criminibus Papam, intentiones Circeas, in vertendis debilitandisque corporibus, miris modis eum callere fingentes: addentesque quod huius modi artibus, offusa sibi caligine, mutata sua suorumque forma transgressus, tristes sollicitudines (si huic irrisioni superfuert) excitabit,

“And for the sake of explaining away their own conduct or the deceit, which they suffered because of a better strategem, within earshot of the emperor (holding very fast to every rumor) they began to assail Papa with false charges, alleging that in wonderous ways he was skilled in the incantations of Circe, in transforming and weakening bodies, and adding that having crossed their lines by arts of this kind, after darkness was poured out over himself, and his form and the forms of his own men were altered, he would stir up sad cares (if he will have survived this mockery).”

II. Johnston on Narrative and Belief

(a) Episodic or serial narrative

- Poseidon sheds a mist over Achilles’ eyes and saves Aeneas (*Il.* 20.321-325)

- Hermes puts the Achaean guards to sleep and King Priam travels safely (*Il.* 24.334-339 and 443-447)
- Proteus shape-shifts to escape from Menelaus (*Od.* 4.455-458)
- Athena hides Odysseus in a mist as he travels among the Phaeacians (*Od.* 7.14-15) and later diverts the attention of Penelope as Eurycleia sees Odysseus' scar (*Od.* 19.476-479)

(b) Plurimediality

- Perseus and the Pseudo-Hesiodic *Scutum* (226-227)
- As early as the late 6th century B.C., the three nymphs are depicted on Greek vases as bringing Perseus equipment to defeat Medusa, including the cap of Hades.
- Eurycleia, Odysseus, and Penelope (*Od.* 19.476-479); fragmentary Alexandrian painting? (Hanfmann 1984, 242-255); carnelian gemstone (*LIMC*, s.v. Odysseus, nos. 214)

(c) *Deixis*

- Oedipus (Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, lines 1586-1596)

“This (=the death of Oedipus) has already happened, and it was something that was outstandingly wondrous. As for how he started to depart from this world, you yourself know that full well, since you were here: he did not have any of his dear ones as guide, but rather he himself was leading the way for us all. Then, when he arrived at the Threshold for Descending (1590-1592), with its bronze foundations rooted in the earth deep below he stopped still at one place where paths were leading in many directions, near the Hollow Crater (1593), which was where Theseus and Perithoos had made their faithful covenant lasting forever – it is marked there. Midway he [=Oedipus] stood there between that place and the Thorikios Petros (1595), between the Hollow Pear Tree (1596) and the Stone Tomb (1596). Next, he sat down and loosened his filthy clothing. And then he called out to his daughters, ordering them to bring from flowing streams water for ritual washing and libations – to bring him the water from wherever they brought it. And the two daughters went to the place of Demeter, the one who has the beautiful greenness. The place was a Hill (1600-1601), and they went to it...” (tr. Gregory Nagy, *The Ancient Greek Hero in 24 Hours*, 2013, 502-503)

- Herakles and Jesus of Nazareth

(d) Crossovers

- Cap of Hades (Hom., *Il.* 5; Ar., *Ach.* 385-390; S., *Inachus*, fr. 269c)
- Rituals for invisibility

III. Further Lines of Inquiry

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