

Two of These Words Need More Os: Juvenal 9.109

Juvenal's narrator on the difficulty of concealing bedroom secrets (9.104-112):

claude fenestras,
 105 uela tegant rimas, iunge ostia, tolle lucernam,
 e medio fac eant omnes, prope nemo recumbat;
 quod tamen ad cantum galli facit ille secundi
 proximus ante diem caupo sciet, audiet et quae
 finxerunt pariter libarius, archimagiri,
 carptores. quod enim dubitant componere crimen 110
 in dominos, quotiens rumoribus ulciscuntur
 baltea?

105 tolle lucernam *Nisbet* : tollito lumen **P²GHL²** : tollite lumen **P¹AKOZ** : lumen **L**
 109 libarius *anonymus apud Plathnerum* : librarius **Ω**

One word has already been emended in 109. Ignotus' *libarius* ('pastry chef') for *librarius* ('scribe') is compelling: a pastry chef is just what we need to go with the *archimagiri* ('chief cooks') and *carptores* ('carvers').¹ So far, so good. I have questions about the words just before and after *libarius*, which I will consider in reverse order:

1. A rich man might have several cooks, but would anyone have had more than one *archimagirus*? It would take a thorough search of the literary and epigraphic sources to be absolutely sure, but the prefix seems to demand the singular, and that would scan perfectly well here. If Juvenal wrote the singular, was the number accommodated to the following plural? That seems unlikely, when there is a singular just before, and in the same line. Another cause seems more plausible. Given that ἀρχιμάγειρος is "only found in late Greek" (Courtney) and very rare in Latin, I think the correct singular would be *archimagiros* with an *O*. If Juvenal wrote that, and a scribe mistook it for an accusative plural, reading *-ōs* for *-ōs*, would he have corrected the case to produce the transmitted text?² I'm putting this one down as at least a *malim* in the apparatus of my web-text.

¹ As Braund notes in *Beyond Anger: A Study of Juvenal's Third Book of Satires* (Cambridge, 1988), 266 n 192, *carptores* for the usual *scissores* includes a pun, as it "inevitably evokes another meaning, 'to criticize, carp at, pull to pieces (usu. behind one's back)'".

² The same mistake, though not the same result, is found in the Oxford fragment, where Juvenal wrote *aliosque in carcere nervōs* (6.O.13) and our only manuscript (O) reads *aliosque* for the first word. A scribe must have thought the noun was accusative plural *nervōs* and altered the adjective to agree with it, thereby making the passage unintelligible.

2. Turning now to *pariter*, the problem is that ‘equally’ seems very bland. I believe Juvenal wrote *obiter*, ‘on the way’. The scene he sketches is something like a game of Telephone, with the story getting more garish as it passes from the *libarius* to the *archimagirus* (or *archimagiri*, if you like) to the *carptores*. It is not entirely like the modern game, because the slaves are not even trying to repeat the tale accurately, rather knowingly embroidering it with ever more lurid details as they pass it on. How the story Naevolus has already told the narrator could possibly be made more twisted or degrading or cruelly amusing, even by the most enthusiastic slanderers, is a good question, perhaps one of those things we’re better off not knowing. Nor is it obvious how the *libarius* heard what was up in Virro’s bedroom, or how the *carptores* got the news to the nearest inn. I suppose a lot of menials would be going in and out of a great man’s house and up and down the halls early in the morning. None of these uncertainties affect my main point, which is that *obiter* seems much better than *pariter*.