

A "Bread and Water" Question

Post by "Joshua" of September 1, 2024 at 9:30 AM

Pages 70-72 at [Don](#) 's 'Commentary to the Letter to Menoikeus', [here](#). Like rice in Asia, pasta in Italy, wheat bread in France and Britain, and corn tortillas in Latin America, barley bread or porridge was a staple of the ancient Greek diet.

In fact, when the ancient city of Alexandria was first laid out by teams of surveyors following the architect and city planner [Dinocrates of Rhodes](#), they marked out the streets and avenues of the new city's plan with lines of barley flour criss-crossing the sand; Greeks preferred to use ground chalk for this work, but none was available in that part of Egypt. Barley flour could be taken from the baggage train of Alexander's armies, since that was what the soldiers themselves ate. This was not asceticism, just a normal diet for most people at the time.

The Greek word for this, μάζα (maza), seems to me to be connected to the Spanish word for corn flour, masa harina.