Jewish Cuisine in Edinburgh

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INTRODUCTION

> 'As in any Jewish household, food was of prime importance. . . . There were the chickens and, of course, the eggs. The birds turned up at the table, meal after meal, but Mother, rather like an alchemist, succeeded in transforming them into all manner of dishes. . . . A special occasion would be the appearance of her marvellous borsch soup, made from beetroots. She used an old Eastern European recipe and I can still recall the taste today' (Denton and Wilson 1991, 18-19).

So writes Howard Denton in his autobiography *The Happy Land*. Denton's reminiscence is typical of many older Jews in the city of Edinburgh today, who look back with nostalgia and warmth on the food of their youth, remembering clearly a cuisine which was all their own and had little to do with the eating habits of the *goyim*, or non-Jews, amongst whom they lived. Things have changed and Jewish meals in Edinburgh can now often look very different to those dished up sixty years ago. Indeed, many other aspects of Jewish life in Scotland have been virtually transformed during the course of this century. It is the aim of this paper to give an overview of twentieth century culinary change and continuity within the Edinburgh Jewish community and to relate this to the general processes of cultural retention, adaptation and acculturation at work within the group.

Cuisine is a word with a considerable range of meanings and connotations. In academic terms, Rozin and Rozin have provided a succinct definition of cuisine as 'a culturally elaborated and transmitted body of food related practices' (1981, 243). Such a food related practice, be it an attitude or a mode of behaviour towards food and its selection, preparation and consumption, has been termed by some writers a foodway (Simoons 1967, 3). The particular pattern of foodways will be unique to any one culture group. Thus the terms 'cuisine' and 'foodways' are interchangeable. The study of a cuisine or set of foodways can produce some very useful insights for those interested in investigating the boundaries and nature of culture groups, and such insights can be used to complement, extend, verify or refute findings from other cultural indicators such as language, dress and belief.

Food, like the term cuisine, can mean different things to different people at different times. Aside from being the means of sustaining life, food can be used to express a vast array of cultural information. Perhaps one of its prime cultural

functions is as a means of expressing personal and group identity. Ek-Nilsson claims that attitudes towards certain dishes show where one belongs culturally and socially (1981, 79), and it seems reasonable to suppose that this function of food is especially important if identity is perceived by those concerned as being under threat. Not surprisingly, foodways can often have most significance for members of immigrant and other minority groups. Recording the amount of change in foodways over time has been used to indicate the degree to which immigrant groups have retained or shed their culture of origin, and the extent to which acculturation has taken place (Theophano 1991, 44) and there seems no reason, at first glance at least, why this may not be appropriate in relation to the Edinburgh Jewish community.

Of course it is never advisable to draw conclusions about a culture group on the basis of one indicator alone. A study may seek to focus on foodways but it should not look at them in isolation, for culture groups are complex, multi-faceted phenomena. Rarely are all aspects of their being reflected in just one indicator, even if that indicator is a particularly useful one such as foodways. Bringéus (1970, 45) and Spiro (1955, 1240-1252), among others, claim that foodways are often the last culture trait to remain significant for a group. Although this investigation is in no way exhaustive, and indeed should be regarded as a preliminary study, efforts will be made to try to present culinary findings in the light of other types of cultural evidence and to make use of appropriate comparative material from similar communities in other parts of the world. Much of the information used was given by members of the Edinburgh community itself. To them I express my sincerest thanks for generously and kindly allowing themselves to be interviewed and sharing some of their rich body of knowledge and thought.

The Edinburgh Jewish community seems an ideal group on which to focus a study of both foodways and cultural change. Its small and dwindling numbers have been thought by some to make the community especially vulnerable to acculturation (Berman 1989, 11) and it is also apparent, even to an outsider, that Jewish communities the world over possess a fascinating and unique relationship with their food. Before looking at Edinburgh Jewish cuisine, however, an outline should be given of the history of the Jewish community in Edinburgh and the nature of the general Jewish relationship with food.

THE EDINBURGH JEWISH COMMUNITY

Edinburgh is home to Scotland's oldest Jewish community. In contrast to England, where the first Jewish communities were formed in the twelfth century under William the Conqueror, the first Scottish congregation of Jews or *kehillah* was formed in the capital city in 1816 (Phillips 1979, 1), when twenty or so Jewish families came together to employ a permanent minister, the Rev. Moses Joel of

London, to tend to their spiritual needs (Smith 1986, 20-22). That there was an earlier Jewish presence in Edinburgh is attested in the eighteenth-century burgh records (Daiches 1929, 197) which note a number of Jewish men operating on a temporary basis in the city as merchants and traders, despite being denied full merchant status as a consequence of their religious beliefs. This exclusion from the full commercial life of the city discouraged the domiciling of Jewish families in Edinburgh as did the unsettled economy of the country and the highly developed native mercantile infrastructure (Daiches 1929, 196-7). It was not until Jews were granted the same trading privileges as their native counterparts and the country had grown less turbulent and more tolerant in the nineteenth century that organised Jewish communities were to be found in Scotland.

The members of the early Edinburgh community came to Scotland either from England or, as was more often the case, from Holland, Germany and the Baltic ports. Once trading opportunities were fully granted, Edinburgh became an attractive place in which to establish a Jewish community—it had excellent links via the port of Leith (Fig. 1) with the Continent, and with the Baltic in particular, and had a large, relatively wealthy class of people who needed the services of skilled

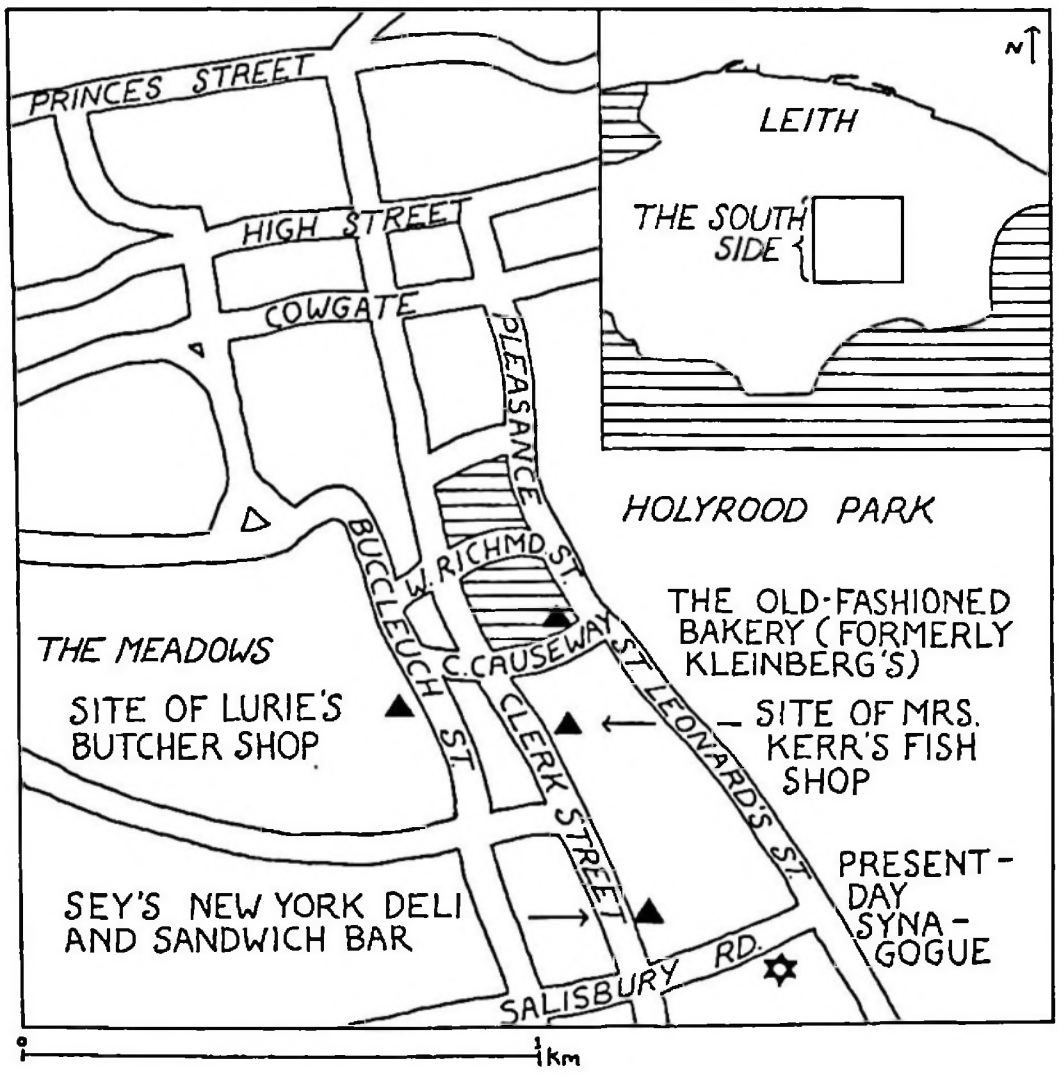

Fig. 1: The South Side of Edinburgh showing the location of the 'Happy Land' (shaded) and present-day synagogue with businesses serving the Jewish community past and present.

craftsmen. Such economic opportunities allowed the Jewish traders and artisans who settled in Edinburgh to achieve a greater degree of economic advancement than that obtainable in either English or continental settings, and this resulted in an early community which was characterised by modest affluence. The geographical focus for the community was the South Side of the city, especially the area known as the Happy Land, centred on the Pleasance and Richmond Street (Fig. 1). Here the community flourished and consolidated its position within wider society whilst remaining small in numbers (until the 1880s there were fewer than twenty Jewish families in Edinburgh). The picture is very much repeated in terms of Scotland's second Jewish community. A congregation of Jews was established in Glasgow in 1823, and although estimates of its size vary, it probably comprised between ten and twenty families. Situated on the north side of the River Clyde in the Garnethill area, this community also experienced a very slow rate of growth and a certain measure of prosperity and stability, coupled with easy relations with, yet cultural isolation from, the wider community. Both Scottish Jewish communities were very much integrated into wider Scottish society in economic terms whilst at the same time fully retaining their own Jewish cultural life. Both were also strictly Orthodox in belief. New forms of Judaism had been finding favour in England and on the Continent from the first decade of the nineteenth century but Scotland's communities were quite untouched by these innovations until the late nineteenth century and have indeed remained largely conservative in outlook to this day.

The Edinburgh and Glasgow communities were by far the largest Jewish communities in Scotland, but there was a number of other, smaller communities founded in Scotland in the period before the 1880s. A small congregation was established in Dundee in 1874 and a tiny community existed in Aberdeen also. However, neither of these flourished and today they have all but ceased to exist.

In the 1880s a new wave of Jewish settlers began to arrive in Scotland. Unlike the members of the early communities, these people often came to Scotland in a state of near destitution. They came from Eastern Europe—from parts of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Russia—and were in effect refugees, fleeing from religious persecution, conscription into the Tsar's army, and extreme poverty in their 'homelands' (Sachar 1988, 489-90). The US was seen as the 'Land of Opportunity' and arriving there was for many of these Yiddish-speaking East European Jews the ultimate goal. The cost of passage was high, however, and it was often necessary to stop en route to earn the required sum first. Britain, being relatively near, and prosperous at this time, proved the ideal stopping-off spot for such migrants, and central Scotland was especially attractive as a result of its abundant opportunities for unskilled workers in rapidly expanding industrial towns. Many of those who saw Scotland as a temporary base became permanent settlers, either because they found themselves trapped in a cycle of poverty which prevented them from amassing enough capital to cross the Atlantic, or because they did so well, working for others

at first and then setting up their own businesses, that they felt their aspirations of prosperity and financial security fulfilled and saw no reason for uprooting themselves and their families once more to set off for the States.

Not all Yiddish-speaking Jews came to Scotland by default, of course. The country was a desirable enough location in its own right, with ample employment opportunities and pre-existing Jewish communities to provide practical, emotional and spiritual support. Glasgow, the 'Second City of the British Empire', had a manufacturing base and thus attracted many more migrants than did Edinburgh with its administrative and professional slant, but in both cities the Jewish population expanded quite astonishingly at this time, with the Edinburgh community rising in size to over 250 families, and Glasgow becoming home to nearly 16,000 Jews. In Edinburgh the community grew to such an extent that one synagogue was no longer adequate and several new congregations were formed. New Jewish bakers', butchers' and grocers' shops opened up for the community's use, all of them with a distinctly East European flavour.

The South Side of Edinburgh came in the late nineteenth century to house both the pre-existing community and the Yiddish-speaking Jews, and the two groups quickly blended into one cohesive whole. However, the East European flavour dominated and continues to do so to the present day. Indeed, the Pleasance area became something of a Yiddish *ghetto*, operating along the same lines as the original ghettos of Eastern Europe with their strong internal bonds (Roth 1960, 204-5), but without the same element of persecution from the wider community.

Relations between Jews and wider Scottish society have always been on the whole surprisingly harmonious, given that there was little cultural contact between the two groups until the 1930s. In Glasgow the older community in Garnethill also established close links with the new Yiddish-speaking community, situated in the Gorbals area to the south of the River Clyde, and again the East European influence came to dominate in a quiet but pervasive way (Rodgers 1982, 113-21). The degree of harmony and homogeneity of belief and political adherence displayed within Scottish Jewish communities was generally in contrast to the state of affairs within English Jewish communities such as those of Liverpool and London and the large Jewish communities of US cities where infighting and vigorous, often violent, disputes were a common feature of life.

The arrival of large numbers of immigrants in Scotland ceased after the passing of the 1905 Aliens Act, but Scottish Jewish communities continued to grow in size as a result of natural increase until the 1930s. Since then there have been several significant changes in the nature of Scottish Jewry. A continual loss of population from communities is evident as the Scottish economy has weakened and young Jewish Scots, in the same manner as other young Scots, have moved south to England or have gone abroad, especially to North America, to seek employment and educational opportunities. Estimates vary and include only those who attend

synagogues, but today it seems the Edinburgh community contains around 400 members and Glasgow 3,000. It may be significant that, as early as 1932, a new synagogue was built at Salisbury Road (Fig. 1) to serve all Jewish religious needs in the city. The synagogue was the idea of Rabbi Salis Daiches, who was concerned with strengthening community cohesion by having all members worship under the same roof. However, it may be possible that dwindling numbers also played some role in prompting the formation of a single congregation. Over the course of the last sixty years the number of Jewish shops and other businesses has decreased considerably in both cities and there has been a continual movement out of the ghetto areas of the South Side and the Gorbals, and a geographical scattering of the communities as members have risen in socio-economic terms and have become more widely involved in tertiary education and in wider society in general. New Jewish institutions have been developed to cater for professionals and many young Jewish Scots are now highly educated, reside in suburban areas and live a life quite removed from that of their grandparents and, in some cases, even their parents.

It would be wrong to give the impression that the last sixty years of Scottish Jewish life have been characterised by nothing but decline, however. The 1930s saw the arrival of a small, third wave of Jewish immigrants in Scotland escaping Nazi persecution on the Continent. Nazism had the effect of clearing much of continental Europe of its large Jewish population and forcing those who were able to flee to the US or, as a second choice, Britain. The majority of those who came to the UK went to large English communities which housed non-Orthodox congregations and which presented healthy employment prospects. Those who did arrive and settle permanently in Scotland (some later moved on to the States) went mainly to Glasgow but a few joined the Edinburgh community, adding a new and quickly integrated dimension to Jewish life in the capital with their more radical views on Judaism.

Until the 1940s the Edinburgh community was almost exclusively Ashkenazi, that is, belonging to the Northern European Jewish tradition (the term 'Ashkenazi' coming from the Hebrew word for 'German'). After that date, however, small numbers of Jews from the other Jewish mainstream tradition, that of Sephardim, and other parts of the world, began to join the Edinburgh community, often attracted to the city by its universities and colleges. The Sephardim ('Sephardi' meaning in Hebrew 'Spanish') belong to a tradition established in the sixth century BC when the first Holy Temple was sacked in Jerusalem by the Babylonians and Jews were forced to flee to what is today Spain (Sephardi Sisterhood 1971, Intro. E). The tradition was subsequently carried to many parts of the Mediterranean, Near East and India after the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and Portugal in the fifteenth century. More recently Sephardi communities have been established in the US and England, and now a number of Sephardi Jews live in Edinburgh along with American and Israeli Jews of various traditions and religious persuasions. It has

been estimated by one informant that around eighty members of the present-day community are first-generation migrants and clearly these people together form a substantial minority. However, the dominant flavour of the Edinburgh, and indeed Scottish, Jewry remains Ashkenazi, and East European Ashkenazi at that, despite the fact that Scottish communities now have links with most other types of Jewish community to be found in the world.

JEWISH FOOD AND BELIEF

In most Jewish communities, Ashkenazi or not, there are very close and special links between food, belief, identity and community. It is belief, along with its associated practices, including food practices, which has primarily defined Jewish communities, and food has played a vital role in maintaining Jewish religious and secular identity and community life throughout the centuries. Judaism is very much a family and home-based religion and therefore it is not surprising that great emphasis has been put on that prime home-based activity of food preparation and consumption. Eating and religion are very closely tied together. A series of edicts relating to diet—collectively known as *Kashrut*—have been codified into Jewish Orthodox religious practice. Kashrut can be important in terms of secular identity for it helps Jews to be constantly aware of belonging to a distinct group and helps maintain close relations within the group. Jewish authors have explicitly discussed such matters in their writings. Fishman (1958, 104) claims '. . . the dietary laws . . . distinguish us from other peoples and prevent us from assimilating with them. So they have been vital for preserving the identity and purity of the Jewish race', whilst the authors of the Jewish students' handbook *Keeping Kosher on Campus* (Union J.S. 1991, 2) are of the view that 'somehow an awareness of others who operate within identical and very specific parameters creates a strong bond of kinship and fosters a sense of community'. Adherence to Kashrut is shared by all Orthodox communities. Carr and Oberman state in relation to the dietary laws that they are the foundation on which all Jewish cooking is built irrespective of the country in which the cook is living (1973). Kashrut is the important element, and theoretically speaking at least, other aspects of cuisine do not matter. Jewish cooking is therefore not like any single national cooking style (Carr and Oberman 1973, 6), and the exact configuration of foodways will vary from community to community. Orthodox Jews are free to pick up the traditions of wherever they are living as long as they adapt them to fulfil the requirements of the dietary laws. For that reason one finds that many of the foods traditionally eaten in the Jewish communities or *shtetls* of Poland, Lithuania and Russia were typically East European and were not confined solely to the Jewish community. Over the centuries of the *Diaspora*, or scattering of the Jewish people, Jewish communities have ceased to use Middle Eastern foods and have become accustomed to using instead the foods of their adoptive 'homelands'. This

is true not only for the Ashkenazim, as the Sephardim have a long tradition of making dishes from the various areas, such as the Mediterranean, in which they settled. Wherever Diaspora communities have been in the same location for an extended period of time we find the unselfconscious use of local culinary traditions in combination with Kashrut. In Eastern Europe things might not always have been pleasant, or even safe, but at least Jewish communities there were of long standing and were relatively stable and enabled Jewish cuisine to become in many respects almost identical to that of wider society.

The nature of Kashrut requires an albeit brief description if its full significance is to be appreciated. Essentially it comprises a list of prohibited and permitted foods, with instructions for the preparation and consumption of the latter. The laws are based on various edicts in the *Torah*, the first five books of Moses, known to Christians as part of the Old Testament. Much of Kashrut is concerned with meat consumption. The complex rules have been built up around flesh eating in particular because Judaism considers it a moral compromise for man to eat meat, to take the life of another living creature and as such meat consumption should not be an easy, unthinking matter. As is well known, certain mammals may not be consumed—notably the pig—but all other animals which cannot be said to be both cloven hoofed and to chew the cud are also considered unfit for consumption and are termed *trefah* or *treif* (literal meaning 'torn'). Even with those animals which do fulfil the requirements, care must be taken to ensure that they are slaughtered in the correct ritually sound way by a rabbinically trained butcher or *shochet*. An animal which has died of natural causes cannot be eaten. The ritual method of slaughter helps rid the animal's carcass of as much blood as possible, for there is a strong aversion to blood within the Jewish tradition. There are further requirements, such as the removal of certain veins (the process of removing these veins being known as *porging*) and certain types of fat, which must again be carried out under religious supervision. Meat which has been slaughtered in an appropriate way still cannot be eaten until it has been *kashered* or *koshered* (made fit for consumption) by being soaked and salted to remove any blood lingering in the flesh. In the normal course of events, until very recently at least, it was the housewife who undertook the duty of kashering the meat to be consumed in her home. Kashered meat may not be eaten with milk or cooked with any milk product. Fully Orthodox households will have two separate sets of kitchen utensils, crockery and cutlery, and even perhaps separate sinks so that meat and milk never come in contact with each other.

The laws surrounding the consumption of fowl are similar. Their flesh cannot be eaten with milk and only certain domesticated species may be consumed. Fish are a much easier form of flesh to consume as they require no special preparation or means of killing. The single requirement is that only species with fins and proper scales be eaten—for that reason shellfish are not kosher and are avoided with great care in the Orthodox diet. No insects, reptiles or any 'crawling thing' may be

consumed. There are few restrictions in connection with eggs, and there are no restrictions on the eating of fruit and vegetables which may be consumed freely at both meat and milk meals. The same generally applies to cereals and distilled alcoholic drinks, although certain types of grain and grain products must be avoided for one week of the year. Wine and grape juice must be made under rabbinical supervision and be declared kosher.

Wine plays a very significant role in Jewish festival, but food is just as important. During certain festivals particular foodstuffs are prohibited, whilst certain others are prescribed either by religious law or by religious tradition, or by secular tradition. In the latter case the exact foodstuffs eaten will vary from community to community. One of the mot important festivals in the Jewish year is the seven- or eight-day-long celebration of *Pesach* or Passover in spring (seven days in Israel, eight in Diaspora communities). This festival celebrates the liberation of the Jewish people from their captivity in Egypt and its fundamental focus is God's love for His people. It is not surprising therefore that Passover has a central role to play in Jewish religion and in Jewish custom and family life. The religious regulations relating to Passover are many and it will only be necessary to outline some of the more important food-related ones here.

The days of Passover see the eating of unleavened bread (a symbol of the haste with which the Jewish people left Egypt) and consequently all leaven must be removed from the homes before the week begins. The prohibition extends to the consumption of foods which might ferment easily, so that wheat and many other types of cereal cannot be eaten during this period.[1] Indeed, all food eaten during this festival should have been produced under rabbinical supervision so that there is no danger of accidental contamination. This obviously poses a great challenge to the women who have until very recently been solely responsible for food preparation in the home. The loss of staples such as bread and flour has been overcome by the substitution of *matzo* meal (a ground-up, unleavened wheat biscuit which because it is pre-baked does not ferment), used throughout the world in a variety of ingenious ways.

The most important event of the Passover week is known as the *Seder.* This is a service conducted at home on the first one (Israel) or two (Diaspora communities) nights of Pesach (Fishman 1958, 65) at which parents narrate the events of the Exodus to their children over a ritual meal of freedom (Daiches 1975, 35). Many of the foods eaten at the Seder meal have been laid down by rabbinical law since time immemorial. Three unbroken pieces of matzo must be laid out on the table alongside a special platter containing a roasted egg, a roasted lamb shank bone, horseradish root (bitter herbs) and chervil, parsley, or lettuce, a small amount of a wine, fruit and nut mixture called *charoset* and a small basin of vinegar or salt water. Each of these foodstuffs helps to remind the gathered family members of the deliverance of their forefathers from slavery. For example, charoset is a reminder of

the loam mixed with straw for Pharoah's buildings, or is sometimes interpreted as the mortar used by the Israelites (Bokser 1963, 112). In addition to the foods on the table, wine is present and each person is required to drink four glasses of it during the meal, young children sometimes having grape juice instead.

There are several other important festivals throughout the Jewish year at which the nature of the food eaten is dictated by religious law and custom. *Rosh Hashanah* or Jewish New Year can take place any time between the first week of September and the beginning of October. At this celebration sweet foods such as honey are eaten before the main meal to symbolise hopes for a sweet new year. Fish heads may sometimes be served also to symbolise being on top of life. *Hannukah*, the Festival of Lights, celebrates over an eight-day period, usually in December, an important victory of the Israelites over their oppressors as well as the rededication of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem and the lighting of oil lamps within it (Carr and Oberman 1973, 130; Shapira 1989). The celebratory meal on the last day of the festival includes doughnuts and other fried foods in remembrance of the holy oil used in the temple. *Shavvuoth*, Pentecost, is a two-day festival which takes place seven weeks after the second day of Pesach and sees the serving of milk foods and fruit. It has close associations with the wheat harvest and first fruits.

One of the most important of Jewish festivals takes place not annually, but rather every week. This is *Shabbat* or the Sabbath—a day of rest which begins at nightfall on Friday and ends at nightfall on Saturday. The evening on Friday is the highlight of the week, being a time when the family comes together to share a celebratory meal. A blessing with wine is said and an ample meal is eaten. Two twisted loaves of rich white egg bread (*challah* loaves) are present on the table and play an important part in the ritual aspect of the meal (Plate 1). They symbolise the double portion of manna which on Friday was provided for the Israelites in the wilderness to last them two days (Shulman 1988, 5). The loaves are presented side by side with a napkin over them. The man of the house blesses the bread and will cut off some of it, add salt to it (a reminder of God's statement to Adam—'By the sweat of your brow you shall eat bread') (Shulman 1988, 5) and divide it among the company.

JEWISH FOOD IN EDINBURGH

In the past, all these festivals, plus numerous others, would have been observed in Edinburgh in full accord with Judaic law and tradition. First generation Yiddish-speaking Jews in Scotland would have celebrated festivals to exactly the same extent as they did in their homelands. They would also have celebrated them in an identical manner in terms of secular custom, with the foodstuffs traditonally eaten in, say, Russia or Poland appearing on festive tables in the South Side. The same held true for non-religious celebrations and events such as betrothals, weddings and funerals, and indeed everyday fare was very much akin to that dished up in Eastern

Europe. Jewish life in Edinburgh from the 1880s to the 1930s was very much a reproduction of life in Eastern Europe, and this desire by migrants to recreate an old, familiar environment in as complete a way as possible in new and unfamiliar surrounds can be seen in relation to many other groups. Despite the fact that those living in the ghettos or shtetls of Eastern Europe had always been marginalised and often victimised by wider society, and that the Jewish people as a whole perceived themselves as wanderers still seeking the Promised Land, there was a sense of belonging and of stability in the old communities which made leaving and coming to Britain or the States a very traumatic experience for many. Such an experience no doubt helped to strengthen the notion of an Eastern European homeland and did much to temper people's memories of life there.

Foodways were very much part of the process of making the strange familiar and food in Scotland took on a new significance for Jews. Formerly, observance of Kashrut was instrumental in maintaining Jewish religious identity. In Scotland food continued to play this role for it remained strictly kosher, but in addition food strengthened secular Eastern European Jewish cultural identity by reminding immigrants of the way of life of the shtetl—a way of life they came to see as being as important in defining their own identity as Judaism itself. Indeed the culture of the shtetl came to be a symbol of Jewishness in western consciousness (Daxelmüller 1986, 104). Salomonsson, quoting Borda, states that 'national foods' are a means of identification for people in an alien setting (1984, 38) and this certainly seems to hold true for the Jews in Edinburgh. By their sheer strength of numbers, the customs and traditions of the former shtetl dwellers came to be known, and to a large extent adopted, by virtually all Jews in Scotland in the late nineteenth century. Foods such as pickled herring and ryebread became as much a symbol of Jewishness in Edinburgh as going to the synagogue, or keeping Passover. The symbolic value of eating such foods is attested in David Daiches' autobiography, *Two Worlds*, where he relates how his grandfather, who admittedly was resident in England, would have an aperitif of cognac, sliced pickled herring and dark ryebread before each and every one of his main meals (Daiches 1975, 89).

Much care was taken over food preparation by Jewish housewives in Edinburgh, as indeed in other Jewish communities throughout the world. The creation of a nutritious, inexpensive and interesting menu which was fully observant of Kashrut was a great challenge to the cook's skill and provided many women's main form of creative and religious expression at this time. Women's role in the public religious life of the synagogue was minor in comparison to men's, and their domain was very much within the home. Certainly some women must have found this prescribed role difficult, in conflict with their own desires and personalities, but the central position of Kashrut to Judaism ensured that women were regarded with great respect because of the domestic arena in which they worked. Many older members of the present-day community in particular speak with awe and admiration of their

mothers' cooking, which was a focus for family life and participation in religion. Many of the changes which have arisen in recent years in relation to food within the Edinburgh community stem in part from changes in women's roles and their attitudes and aspirations towards their lives, and especially towards their homes and religion.

The greatest culinary effort was made in relation to special meals, and the typical menu of a celebratory meal in Edinburgh at the turn of the century is impressive in its ingenuity. Traditions varied in detail from family to family of course. Evelyn Cowan states, in relation to the Glasgow community, that there was a great rivalry between the Litvak and the Polish Jews in terms of cooking (Cowan 1974, 74), and there seems no reason to believe that this should not have occurred in Edinburgh given the other shared characteristics of the communities. Nevertheless we can make some generalisations. The Pesach Seder would see a meal in which either chopped liver, chicken or fish would be an important element; all three were important in other celebratory meals and, for those wealthy enough to afford them, could also be used as everyday fare. Chopped liver would be akin to paté and chicken was usually served plainly roasted or in the form of soup. Celebratory fish could comprise thinly sliced smoked salmon, or less luxuriously (or for midweek meals), fried white fish. A favourite fish dish for the Seder and also for weddings, betrothals and bar mitvahs—confirmation ceremonies for boys—was *gefilte* fish (like many culinary terms a Yiddish word). This dish of minced fish flesh, vegetables and seasonings shaped into balls and sometimes stuffed back into the fish skin and poached in stock, has clear Eastern European origins and has come to be seen as the classic Ashkenazi dish, popular wherever Ashkenazi Jews now reside, including Israel. Certainly the recipe helps to impart flavour to bland species of fish. Scottish Jewish housewives were forced to substitute haddock and other white salt water fish for the pike or carp of Eastern Europe because such fresh water fish simply was not available in local fish shops. The community had no fish shop of its own to supply the traditional species and instead made do with what was available in Mrs Kerr's fish shop in South Clerk Street in the South Side which was for long heavily dependent on Jewish custom despite the fact that the shop was not owned and run by Jews. Even at this early stage therefore we see the beginnings of localisation of Jewish cuisine in Edinburgh with the substitution of ingredients. This is further borne out by the fact that often the gefilte fish balls were fried in Scottish homes rather than boiled as they would have been in Eastern Europe. Jewish housewives soon picked up on the Scottish love of fried food and incorporated that cooking technique to a greater extent than ever before into their own cusine. Such taking on board of minor aspects of the wider society's cuisine seems to accord with the general level of interaction between the two groups at this time, with contact being present but only at the formal level.

Throughout Pesach, excluding the Seder itself, food would generally comprise a

slightly richer version of the everyday diet, with matzo meal and crackers replacing the usual breads and flours, etc. Soups would normally be enriched during Pesach by the addition of thin strips of omelette or noodles termed *lochshen* or *lokshen* (sometimes used in ordinary meals) or by matzo meal balls, and many sweet treats were made with baking sometimes beginning a week before the festival started. Macaroons, sponge cakes, *imbers* (carrot and ginger sweets) and *eingemachts* (a beetroot preserve) would all be manufactured by the housewife at this time (Bullon 1990).

Rosh Hashanah in Edinburgh often saw the consumption of traditional East European honey cake and various apple dishes, such as strudel. At Shavvuoth a rich cheesecake would be served, or cream cheese *blintzes* or *glinches* (pancakes), or cheese tarts. *Teiglach* (nuts in a dough with a thick syrup) were also popular. Hannukah was characterised by the consumption of *latkes* (fried potato cakes).

Friday night saw the housewife pulling out all the stops in culinary terms with the meal comprising several courses. Often a chicken soup was served first or *borsht*, a beetroot soup sometimes served with sour cream if there was no meat included in the meal, and this would be eaten along with the challah loaves. A roast stuffed chicken, cabbage stuffed with meat, matzo meal, vegetables and seasoning (*holishkes*), eggs and onions, or fish in some form might follow. Potato salad was a favourite side dish, as were honeyed carrots (*zimmes*). Dessert would often have to be milk-free and was usually very sweet, with dishes like apricot whip, apple strudel, and almond biscuits being very popular. If one is to observe Shabbat in the full Orthodox manner there should be no lighting of fires from after dark on Friday to dusk on Saturday. This means that Saturday lunch and often the evening meal as well will have to be cold or else, if a hot meal is deemed necessary, a way has to be found round the restrictions. In Eastern Europe during the severe winters cold food, such as cold cuts of salt beef, tongue and chicken or cold fried fish and salads which typified the summer Shabbat menu were not really adequate. A hot meal was essential and one way of obtaining this was to put a slow cooking stew on the back of the stove and leave it there from Friday afternoon to lunchtime on Saturday. The meal was hot but allowed the housewife to avoid having to actually light a fire during the Sabbath. Often such stews were made with beans and cereals alongside a small amount of meat, and were filling fare. The best known of these stews was *cholent*, a hearty stew made most often with onions, carrots, potatoes, seasoning, a little fatty meat and haricot beans or barley (recipes varied from family to family). Sometimes a large dumpling was cooked in with it. Such bean stews were widely eaten in Eastern Europe and not just by Jewish communities, but the very slow cooked version was very much a Jewish speciality and in Edinburgh cholent continued to be a regular feature in the winter menu, despite the milder winters which made the consumption of cold food less of a hardship. The traditional accompaniment to the Shabbat stew was lokshen or noodle kugel—wheat noodles

with breadcrumbs, eggs, seasoning and animal fat which again was put on the stove on Friday afternoon and left to cook very gently until Saturday lunch. Dessert would be cold, often along the same lines as the Friday night sweets.

Aside from fish, fruit and vegetables, everyday basic foods (to a greater degree than even festive and celebratory fare) could often only be purchased from the specialist grocer, butcher and baker shops set up by the community to supply its own needs. A considerable number of these outlets existed in early twentieth-century Edinburgh. Until the last decade or so, when the community became too small to support them, several remained in operation, providing the community with East European staples, kosher meats and wines and, almost as importantly, a place where Jews, especially women, could meet informally and exchange news. Kleinberg's the bakers in Crosscauseway in the South Side was a renowned meeting place, where fresh kosher bread, cakes, pastries and biscuits could be purchased and neighbours would meet. The shop was also popular with non-Jews seeking fresh-baked goods on Sunday morning. Joshua 'Joe' Lurie's kosher meat shop in Buccleuch Street was another landmark and focus for informal community activity which sold kosher wines and margarine in addition to meat (it closed in the late 1980s). At the grocers, items such as ryeflour, matzo meal and pickled herring were bought as staples. Weekday foods and dishes included *sauerkraut* (or pickled cabbage) which was regularly consumed, and pickled cucumbers and beetroot as well as bean, cabbage or lochshen soups (often served with *kneidlach*, dumplings). *Chremslach* (matzo meal pancakes) were enjoyed not only during Pesach, and housewives who chose to do so could make their own numerous kinds of delicious homemade cakes and biscuits, as well as plainer but equally appetising *bagels* (parboiled white wheatflour rolls) (Figs 2 & 3). Omelettes and stuffed vegetables were good substitutes for meat dishes during the week. *Kreplach*, egg and flour dumplings filled with meat and onions, were a way of making a little meat go far in true universal peasant fashion. Indeed the relatively low level of meat consumption amongst the Edinburgh Jews is itself an important factor in differentiating the community in culinary terms from the rest of Scotland's urban population, who, even if they could scarcely be accused at the turn of the century of over consumption of meat, especially good quality meat, nevertheless consumed ample quantities of sausages and minced beef unless of the lowest economic means. While most of the wider Edinburgh community were well accustomed to a high fat, and relatively high protein, diet typical of urban areas across Western Europe in the later industrial period, the residents of the 'Happy Land' retained fully their East European peasant-style, time-consuming cuisine with large quantities of carbohydrates used in combination with small amounts of animal protein.

There were, however, a few small moves towards the adoption of the wider community's eating habits in the early years of the Edinburgh Jewry. Although families would generally never have considered 'eating out' in restaurants and cafés,

Fig. 2: *Challah* loaf used during the Friday evening *Shabbat* meal. Such loaves are usually around fifteen inches long and weigh at least two lbs. each. This example came from The Old Fashioned Bakery. (*Photo: Ian MacKenzie*)

Fig 3: *Bagels.* These white wheatflour rolls are becoming increasingly popular with the wider community. On display are (clockwise from top) a plain bagel, poppy-seed bagel, raisin bagel and a sesame seed bagel from Sey's New York Deli and Sandwich Bar. Bagels are usually three to four inches in diameter. (*Photo: Ian MacKenzie*)

Scottish-style foods did find their way in small quantities into Jewish homes. Kleinberg's the bakers made kosher drop scones and tea breads, as well as the Jewish strudels and honey cakes. David Daiches relates how winter teas in his childhood (in the 1920s) were a mixture of Scottish and Jewish traditions, where scones and jam were served alongside traditional Jewish specialities (Daiches 1975, 169). Daiches' father was the community's rabbi and the family had perhaps more contact with the wider Edinburgh society than did many others (they also lived outwith the Pleasance area), but most Jewish families would have sampled Scottish specialities from time to time, provided of course that they were in accordance with the dietary laws. If eating in the 'Happy Land' was very much determined by tradition this need not imply that housewives and bakers were not interested in experimentation and innovation, on a modest scale at least. The Jewish community in Edinburgh until the 1930s was aware of, and interested in, the wider community's food traditions but the important point to note is that Scottish-style foods were minor in importance at this time and were often seen as treats and fancies whilst the basic diet remained firmly East European.

This situation was to change, of course, and after the 1930s two new emphases were increasingly felt in Jewish cuisine in Edinburgh: the intrusion of non-ethnic foods and a decline in observance of Kashrut.

(1) Intrusion of Non-ethnic Foods

In the sixty years following 1930 the importance of East European food and dishes gradually diminished whilst the wider community's eating habits became less peripheral and versions of the dishes which were popular throughout urban Scotland increasingly found their way into Jewish homes. General Scottish eating habits have, of course, themselves changed dramatically throughout the period from the early 1940s to the present, primarily as a consequence of ease of travel, which has allowed people to sample, much more than ever before, other cultures and their cuisines. Foods and dishes which had come to be seen as traditional in Scottish urban contexts during the industrial period were first augmented in the 1960s and are now almost totally replaced by a form of international cuisine which can be found across Europe and North America. Children of Jewish immigrants in Edinburgh have tended to eat more of the wider community's food than their parents did and have less reliance on Eastern European specialities. More so their grandchildren, today's young adults, who are likely to make use of East European dishes only on occasion, and certainly not as the main component of their daily fare.

Significantly, it is in the realm of everyday diet that the changes have been felt most. Festivals and celebrations still see the consumption of the same dishes made by the first Yiddish-speaking Jews in Edinburgh by their descendants. Great

importance is placed on these by older people especially. This using of forebears' recipes for special occasions and times is seen among Jews from different traditions in the community. Sephardi housewives, for example, will make Mediterranean dishes of stuffed vegetables and rice for Friday evenings and for weddings, Pesach and the occasional week-day meal. Even the youngest adults in the present-day community will know about foods such as cholent and gefilte fish from eating these dishes on the Sabbath or during festival and from hearing their parents and grandparents reminiscing about them, although such dishes may not have the same significance for them as they do for their parents. Young people may even eat traditional foods fairly regularly if living with elderly parents or grandparents (older members of the community generally use the old recipes more on an everyday basis and have not taken up the new eating habits. The lunch club at the synagogue, which caters for old folk, serves very traditional foods and dishes such as lochshen pudding). Some young adults will know how to prepare the old dishes in the time-honoured fashion, but few will actually make foods such as chremsach and kreplach on a regular basis to eat on a weekday. Instead they will make dishes very similar to those of the wider community, international in nature and quick and easy to prepare. There is still plenty of knowledge of old Eastern European foods within the younger age-groups of the community but little everday experience of them, although as ever it must be remembered that the situation varies very much from person to person.

We can discern here a progression through the decades of this century, and more importantly through the generations (for one's dietary habits seem, in respect of ethnicity at least, to be often dependent on one's generational distance away from arrival from Eastern Europe and not on how long one has lived outside of Eastern Europe), from a diet almost identical to that of Eastern Europe with just the occasional substitution of ingredients and experimentation with cooking techniques, and infrequent treats of Scottish dishes (generally adopted by those born in Eastern Europe—now very old, if alive at all), through an intermediary stage where everyday cuisine is increasingly similar to that of the wider community but some traditional dishes are still made and festival foods remain very much East European and are valued as such (children and grandchildren of those born in Europe—old and middle-aged people), to the most recent situation whereby the everyday diet is virtually identical to that of the wider community and festival foods, although still traditional, have less significance for the individual (middle-aged and young adults). If one is to project this trend into the future, it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that the children of today's young adults may place even less emphasis on eating traditional foods at festivals, and indeed some may choose in the future to eat completely non-traditional foods on such occasions.

It is tempting to explain the above progression as a manifestation of acculturation; the gradual loss of a group's own cultural traits and the adoption of

those belonging to another, usually larger group. It certainly seems to be the case that often immigrant groups lose most of their unique cultural markers, including even foodways, after three generations or so. Each generation feels a greater familiarity with the wider community and a greater sense of social and often economic security, and they are able to identify more and more with the larger group and need rely less on their own group. Language becomes the language of the majority, the physical and mental ghetto ceases to exist, community members are employed in diverse occupations, rates of out-marriage increase and, finally, eating habits become those of the wider community. Significantly, when food does begin to change it is in the arena of the everyday that innovations are first felt while festivals and other special occasions, where group members assemble and the concept of group identity has most significance, retain links with the past for the longest time. The final stage of acculturation is where even festival foods become those of the wider community, and it would seem that the Edinburgh community is nearly at that stage now. Certainly, little Yiddish is spoken, and people live scattered throughout the city, working often in the professions, whilst increasingly marrying non-Jews and occasionally having, as one informant claims, 'purely gastronomic ties to the community', which are often only manifest on special occasions. The small and shrinking size of the community might be thought to make it particularly susceptible to influence from the wider community, and Benski (1981, 307-19) has outlined similar changes in regard to the much larger Glasgow Jewish community and sees these as being symptoms of the process of acculturation.

However, it is apparent to anyone in the least familiar with the Edinburgh Jewish community that the situation at present is exceedingly complicated, and cannot easily be attributed to one process. From discussions with community members, and scrutiny of comparative material, it seems that numerous factors and processes may be at work. A short paper like this cannot hope to investigate all of these factors and processes, but it can highlight a few of the more important ones.

Several points can be noted which help counter the idea of acculturation being the sole process responsible for change in Edinburgh Jewish cuisine and Edinburgh Jewish life in general. For a start, many of the changes which have taken place in the community have been paralleled by change in wider Scottish society. The increased use of Standard English, increased access to tertiary education, greater variety of employment options, increased rates of marriage with people from beyond one's own locale, and new eating habits, often as a result of new roles for women, are all realities for most urban Scots today. What the Jewish community is experiencing therefore may be more a case of modernisation than acculturation.

It must also be remembered that there is a perfectly reasonable precedent for a pattern of transformation within the context of secular Jewish culture, which as stated previously, need not imply any loss of Jewishness nor even indicate modernisation. This is the tendency to adopt the broad aspects of life in the host

country whilst at the same time maintaining Jewish religious belief to the full. In terms of food, this means eating the wider society's foods, but adapting them to fulfil Kashrut. It is now quite possible, and indeed natural, for Jews to eat Scottish food and be true to their religious traditions and identity whilst at the same time moving away from an East European secular cultural identity and set of eating habits. Judaism, or Jewish religious identity, was for long characterised by a lack of radical change and was largely independent of the attendant and changeable secular Jewish cultural identity. Such a bipartite sense of identity was simply a response to Diaspora conditions which forced Jews to live in environments where it was impossible to retain a Middle Eastern secular cultural identity, but where it was absolutely vital to maintain religious identity. Jewish foodways have reflected this dualism so that although foodways can experience change in new environments, the fundamental principle on which they are founded, Judaism and Kashrut in particular, remains.

Religion is the stock from which a new Scottish Jewish cultural identity can sprout. If one is able to discern full maintenance of Jewish religious identity in Scotland, and specifically, a trend towards the creation of a Scottish kosher diet, one can further reduce the case for acculturation. What then is the state of present-day dietary law observance in Scotland?

(2) Decline in Observance of Kashrut

The situation in relation to Kashrut in Scotland is far from straightforward at the present time and bears discussion. In broad terms, there has been a decline in the observance of Kashrut. This is not the case in relation to all of the community's members for there are still at least half-a-dozen or so fully observant families in the capital, whilst amongst the rest of the community observance varies in degree from person to person. There is a slight tendency for older members of the community to be more observant of Kashrut, but age is not the most significant factor, nor is generation; rather it is a matter of individual preference, for adults at least. Some people keep a fully kosher home but will eat non-kosher when eating out. Others do not keep a fully kosher home but will not eat meat and milk together, and the products of prohibited animals. Few will go so far as to eat pork and shellfish, but there are some who have no dietary restrictions whatsoever. These changes in the obervance of Kashrut have occurred alongside decline in various other forms of Orthodox religious observance, such as refraining from certain activities on the Sabbath and the keeping of minor festivals. Whilst Pesach and the Friday night meal are still generally observed, regular attendance at synagogue has gone down. Although there is no shame attached to being less fully observant, there is a feeling of regret within the community as a whole that the old ways are passing and that new generations will have little in the way of example to follow.

Does this then prove the case for acculturation? Secular change in Jewish communities as shown above, need not imply acculturation in the strict sense of loss of group identity as long as religious identity remains strong, but it would seem at first glance that even that is crumbling in Edinburgh today. This would leave us no choice but to accept the notion of acculturation. Yet if one looks at Jewish communities throughout the world one gets the sense that *change* in religiosity does not always necessarily equate with a *loss* of religiosity and that, despite declining rates of Orthodox observance, Judaism is generally in a healthy state and Jewish communities although changing are not on the brink of being swallowed up by wider communities. Rather they are in a phase of accelerated evolution with processes larger than acculturation at work.

Ashkenazi Jewish communities throughout the world seem to be experiencing, or have experienced, the same changes in religious observance, including the observance of the dietary laws, that the Edinburgh community has experienced[2] (Sephardi communities have witnessed much less change in religiosity—their form of Judaism has always been fairly flexible anyway) (Brook 1989, 142-6). Indeed, it would appear that Edinburgh Jews have retained full Orthodox observance for longer than many other Jewish communities in the world, including those of Israel. As noted before, British Jewish communities, and especially Scottish ones, have been typified by conservatism (Jakobovits 1981, 33). It does not seem acceptable to say that Ashkenazi communities are experiencing acculturation in religious terms, for although the number of fully observant Orthodox Jews is declining in most communities (and there are a few exceptions in the States where ultra-Orthodox congregations are actually growing) there is little evidence of these people being converted to any other faith, except in rare instances. Rather Orthodox Jews are being won over to other forms of Judaism such as Reform and Liberal Judaism, with some completely abandoning any form of religious belief.

Reform Judaism, as its name implies, is a reformed version of Orthodoxy. Roughly speaking, one can say that Reform Judaism has removed many of the laws which are seen as not having a productive role in the modern context and much of the change has been directed towards Kashrut. It is possible these days to be a devout religious Jew and not keep kosher. Some Reform Jews will, for instance, see it as being acceptable to mix meat and milk. There is undoubtedly a link between the growth of Reform Judaism in this century and the development of the women's movement, as Jewish women have sought to become fully involved in worshipping God in the public sphere and not just in domestic settings. Some congregations have gone further into the realms of Liberal Judaism, where there are borrowings from Christian religious musical tradition and no restrictions on diet. Finally, some Jews have abandoned religion altogether and see Jewish identity primarily in secular terms, with Zionism (the movement for the creation of a Jewish state) and radical politics being important elements in their identity. It is interesting to note that in

parts of the States, such as New York, where in addition to large religious Jewish communities there are also substantial numbers of radical or non-religious Jews, the consumption of East European foodstuffs and the use of Yiddish is strongest. Wherever religion is absent from the lives of Jews secular Jewish traditions often seem to have more importance. It is only the religiously secure Jew who can afford to dispense with secular Ashkenazi culture, which says much about the present-day Edinburgh community.

These new forms of Judaism and the new agnosticism practised by some Jews are a response to the modern world, and again we are dealing primarily with modernisation and not, it would seem, with the results of acculturation, although the effect of greater contact on a non-superficial level with wider society has hastened these changes and given them direction. In the pre-industrial ghettos of Eastern Europe Judaism became fossilised in Orthodoxy, a form of the religion essentially medieval in nature. For hundreds of years the natural development of Judaism was arrested by the highly artificial world of the ghetto where misunderstanding and frequent persecution restricted contacts with wider society to the level of the superficial. One might see new foods on sale in the market place and learn new languages so as to be able to discuss business with the native inhabitants, but there would rarely be occasion to discuss religion with them. There could be little questioning of Orthodoxy. Few would have wanted to question it anyway as it had evolved to suit the needs of the people almost perfectly, and vice-versa. There was then neither need nor means for change.

The first seeds of discontent were sown during the early industrial period when some began to perceive the difficulties of Orthodoxy in dealing with the new way of life. The first Reform congregations were set up in early nineteenth-century Germany (Brook 1989, 116). The move to locations in western Europe and North America saw for a while the recreation of the ghetto environment and the clinging to Orthodoxy by settlers yearning for the stability of the past. Many of those Jews who remained in Eastern Europe had no such need to preserve the past and allowed their beliefs to develop in line with contemporary life (Weinreich 1960, 331). When community members in places such as Edinburgh felt secure enough in their new environment they too began to question some aspects of Orthodoxy, and change was given added impetus and direction from closer contact with the wider population and greater understanding of other belief systems (Berman 1989, 11). The pointless horror of the Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel, which gave for the first time ever an alternative focus for Jewish identity, affected the position of Orthodoxy, and indeed of Judaism itself in the minds of some Jews. Today the unthinking observance of Orthodoxy is rarely possible or considered desirable. Judaism has been tested and possibly is all the stronger for that. Although the community still values its non-religious members and recognises that for some their Jewishness comes from secular factors, those who maintain religious traditions

do so with as much or perhaps even more vigour, although of a different kind, as their forebears did in Eastern Europe. The individual Jew in a community in any part of the world must now judge for himself or herself how relevant inherited religious beliefs and practices are to his or her life. Those who are religious have chosen to follow their faith and there are few who adhere to religion out of habit alone, as sometimes happened in ghetto days. In this respect members of Jewish communities must go through the same process which people everywhere in the Western world, with its mass communications and overwhelming choice of potentially obtainable lifestyles, must go through. Although many Jews still consider Orthodoxy the best way of relating to God, many others clearly have found the old Orthodox form of Judaism, with its numerous edicts and prohibitions created in biblical times and extended in the Middle Ages, largely irrelevant to the modern world. However, the majority of these people still see Judaism as a viable faith and have sought out their own religious path. Brook (1989, 171) claims that there are 'now as many versions of Judaism in Britain as there are Jews', and even more versions of Jewish identity for the Zionist and the Gastronomic Jew also figure significantly in the membership of communities. For those fortunate enough to live in large communities with several congregations it may be possible to find a congregation which suits one's own particular viewpoint. However, in a small community which has only one nominally Orthodox congregation such as Edinburgh, people must be tolerant of each other's views and degrees of observance.

CONCLUSION

It can be argued that the level of Orthodox observance in Edinburgh today seems to be largely a response to the modern world and owes little to the picking up of the ways of the city's wider community. Consequently, the decline in the observance of Kashrut in Edinburgh should not be seen as a product of acculturation except at the broadest level where modern Western culture has impinged on a largely pre-industrial way of life. Likewise the increasing frequency of Scottish-style meals in Edinburgh Jewish homes over the last sixty years may not indicate so much a loss of Jewishness as the continuance of a millennia-old Jewish tradition, and again a response to modern life. Cultural retention and adaptation may be more important processes than acculturation in relation to the changes in Jewish life, and specifically Jewish eating habits, which have taken place in Edinburgh over the last sixty years. One cannot dismiss the notion of acculturation completely out of hand, of course, and Weinreich (1960, 342) has stated, in relation to American Jewish ritual, that cultural change is generally a product of innovations which arise from within the group in combination with those that stem from without. Nevertheless it would be wrong to place too much emphasis on acculturation and to fully equate

cultural change within the Jewish community with cultural loss.

This study has focused on foodways which have proved a useful starting point for an investigation of cultural change within the Edinburgh Jewish community. However, the picture presented by cuisine has had to be looked at in the light of other cultural indicators (notably belief with which it has in this context an unusually close relationship) and more importantly in relation to the present situation within other communities. It would be easy to give a one-sided analysis of the material presented in this paper, attributing change to a single process, but comparative material brings to light further processes which must be considered. The importance of the comparative approach cannot be too strongly stressed in relation to the study of culture groups.

As a postscript, what of the future of Orthodoxy in Edinburgh? The real threat to Orthodoxy looks as if it will come from the shrinking size of the community which makes it increasingly difficult for those who wish to maintain full Orthodox observance of Kashrut. Although the kosher bakery (formerly Kleinberg's—now called The Old Fashioned Bakery) is still in operation, serving both members of the Jewish community and Edinburgh's large vegetarian population, other sources of kosher food are few and far between. There simply is not the population to maintain the necessary kosher infrastructure. Some of the big supermarkets operated by US or English companies stock a small kosher selection and it is possible to get kosher meat and even kosher milk (rabbinically guaranteed free from contamination) delivered from either Glasgow or Manchester, although these products are rather expensive. Most people wishing to keep kosher in Edinburgh eat a strictly vegetarian diet and refrain from eating out (there are no kosher restaurants in Edinburgh, although there are now a good few vegetarian eating places run by members of other groups). A new delicatessen was opened up at the community's request from Glasgow—Sey's New York Deli and Sandwich Bar—to sell kosher food. However, this has been little used by the community as, unlike the Glasgow branch of the firm, the shop sells non-kosher food also. It is possible to keep kosher in Edinburgh today, says one Orthodox informant, but it requires effort and forethought. Things are very much easier for those in Glasgow or in English communities, and especially for those in US cities such as New York where kosher food is widely available and many Jewish specialities have entered the everyday diet of the wider community.

The future of Orthodox Judaism in Edinburgh could be said to look bleak, for, as the young leave the community, the provision for Kashrut observance might decline until it becomes virtually impossible to keep kosher (unless one wants to be totally vegetarian) and those wishing to remain fully Orthodox find themselves having to move to another, larger community. Whether Orthodoxy will remain viable in any part of the world remains to be seen. Reform and other new forms of Judaism seem to be continually gaining popularity, although, as previously

mentioned, in some parts of the US new, extremely Orthodox communities are springing up as a backlash to the Reform movement. The future of the Edinburgh Jewish community as a whole does not seem too secure as it will have to contend in the future with shrinking numbers and shrinking synagogue attendance. There may come a day when the community is too small to employ a regular minister and may cease to exist as an organised community at all.

However, to draw such a conclusion may be to underestimate the resilience and ingenuity of a remarkable community which, in the last few years, has set up three new groups to look at contemporary Jewish issues (the Edinburgh Jewish Discussion Group, the Jewish Philosophy Group, and the Future Generations Committee), and whose members of the Literary Society recently voted in debate that there *was* a future for Orthodoxy in the capital.

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NOTES

1 Although traditions vary to some extent in relation to what can and cannot be eaten during Pesach, it is generally the case that five species of grain must be avoided throughout the festival. These are collectively termed *chametz* and comprise barley, wheat, rye, oats, and spelt. See *Introduction to Judaism, op. cit.* 63.

2 See (for US communities) Glazer, L., *American Judaism*, Chicago, 1957; 131. (For US and Israeli communities) Goldscheider, C. and Zuckerman, A. S., *The Transformation of the Jews*, London, 1984; 221-242. (For British communities) Brook, S., *The Club: The Jews of Modern Britain*, London, 1989.

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