

Halachos of Daily Living

Is

a knish considered *pas* (bread)?

There are two ways to

make knishes. Most home-made recipes for knishes involve folding meat or vegetables into a pocket of dough and then baking the knish. Because the dough

is baked, this type of pastry is called *pas haba'ah*

*b'kisnin* (bread

with a filling), and is subject to the laws of *pas palter* (non-Jewish bread)

and *pas Yisroel* (Jewish

bread). *Pas haba'ah b'kisnin* is a form of bread

that is usually served as dessert. As such, the *bracha* is normally *borei minai mezonos*,

but if one is *kovaya seuda* (eats a substantial

amount which constitutes a meal), the *bracha* is *hamotzi*.

However, there is another

method which is commonly followed for retail knishes. Instead of baking the dough, the knish is deep fried in oil. Because the dough is fried in oil and not baked, *halachically*, this type of knish is

not considered *pas* (bread). Even if one were to eat an

entire meal of these knishes, they would require only *mezonos*,

and not *hamotzi*. Therefore, these

knishes are not included in the laws of *pas palter/pas Yisroel*,

but rather the prohibition of *bishul akum* (foods cooked by a

non-Jew without Jewish involvement) would apply. *Bishul akum* applies only to food that might be served at a

fancy dinner. Since knishes are served at fancy dinners, the prohibition

of *bishul akum* would apply. For this reason, all OU

fried knishes are *bishul Yisroel*, with a Jew involved in

the frying process.