

OTHER NATIONS

the Winter War, "We have paid our debt to the West, to the last drop of blood.") Finland's parliamentary democracy is flourishing, and Helsinki's associate membership in the European Free Trade Community ties it closely to the Western economic system. (Only 15 percent of Finland's trade is with the Soviet Union.)

Jakobson contends that the Soviets have no desire to swallow up Finland; Moscow's prime goal in Europe since 1945 has been freezing the boundaries drawn up at the Yalta Conference and formally ratified by the West in 1975 (at an East-West conference in Helsinki). Finland's independence, he reasons, is part of a comfortable status quo. A greater threat to Finland's future are "the bright lights of the open society in the West," notably Sweden, which has drawn 200,000 Finnish emigrants since 1945.

A Woman's Place in Israel

"Ideology, Myth, and Reality: Sex Equality in Israel" by Selma Koss Brandow, in *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research* (vol. 6, no. 3, 1980), Plenum Publishing Corp., 227 West 17th St., New York, N.Y. 10011.

Israel, the land of proud women conscripts and the indomitable former Prime Minister, Golda Meir, fosters a peculiar blend of sexual equalities and inequalities, according to Brandow, a sociologist at Trenton State College.

Unmarried women between 18 and 26 years of age are required to serve in the Israel Defense Forces, as are all Israeli men. But half are rejected for military service because they lack an eighth grade education (men are given remedial instruction), because they have children, or because of religious or conscientious objections (an exemption not available to males). After finishing basic training, female "soldiers" are stationed at typewriters or assigned to civilian jobs. Some serve as support troops, but none enter combat units.

Israeli statutes that require equal pay for equal work contain no enforcement clauses. As a result, women receive an average of 47 percent less in wages than Israeli men for comparable duties. Three-fourths of employed women hold traditionally female jobs (e.g., teachers, nurses, clerical workers). Most Israeli women believe that pushing for greater equality could threaten national unity. "Jobs belong to the men," many told Brandow in interviews, and "women should be at home."

Brandow traces Israeli attitudes to a "cult of masculinity" springing from the Jewish state's frontier beginnings. Though Zionists officially favored sexual equality (indeed, affirmed it in the Israeli Declaration of Independence), they had for decades lionized such manly traits as strength, aggression, and stoicism. Jewish law, which defines a woman as her husband's possession, further confuses the situation by serving as the basis for many domestic statutes. Large influxes of Orthodox Jews from Europe and uneducated Jews from the Arab world have increased Israel's population of male chauvinists.

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Israel's wars have buttressed the emphasis on "macho" men and supportive women. The story of Golda Meir may remain a fluke, unrepresentative of most Israeli women's possibilities, says Brandow, until permanent peace comes.

Australia's Big Myth

"Towards Demythologizing the 'Australian Legend': Turner's Frontier Thesis and the Australian Experience" by Ronald Lawson, in *Journal of Social History* (Summer 1980), Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15213.

In 1893, historian Frederick Jackson Turner told Americans to look to the newly closed frontier for the origins of their national character. More recently, many Australian scholars have viewed the rugged "bushworkers" who manned the vast farms and sheep ranches of the arid Outback during the 19th century as the source of their country's own indigenous ethos—egalitarian, collectivist, and fiercely patriotic.

Yet Lawson, a Queens College, New York, historian, argues that almost from the outset, city folk had the greater influence on Australia's outlook. By the 1890s, he notes, Australia boasted a larger percentage of city-dwellers among its population than any other continent. Unlike the American West—where settlement began before the advent of modern communications—Australia's hinterland was speedily connected during the 1880s and '90s to Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, and other cities via telegraph, railway, and telephone.

City culture displayed little bushworker influence. Between 1881 and 1891, the population of Brisbane, for example, shot up 174 percent (to 101,554). Immigrants (mainly from the British Isles) accounted for most of the increase and encountered little discrimination from the native born. In fact, the city's civic leaders were mainly foreign born; *Who's Who*-like directories for the decade show that the proportion of native Australian entries increased from only 21 to 30 percent. Brisbane's theaters presented foreign productions. School children studied British texts.

Colonial Australia was far more than a scattering of ranches and field hands, Lawson writes. Like U.S. historians, Australian scholars are now shifting their attention from the frontier. If Australia has a strong egalitarian tradition, he suggests, it came as much from the fluid social structures of its cities as from the camaraderie of the bush.



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