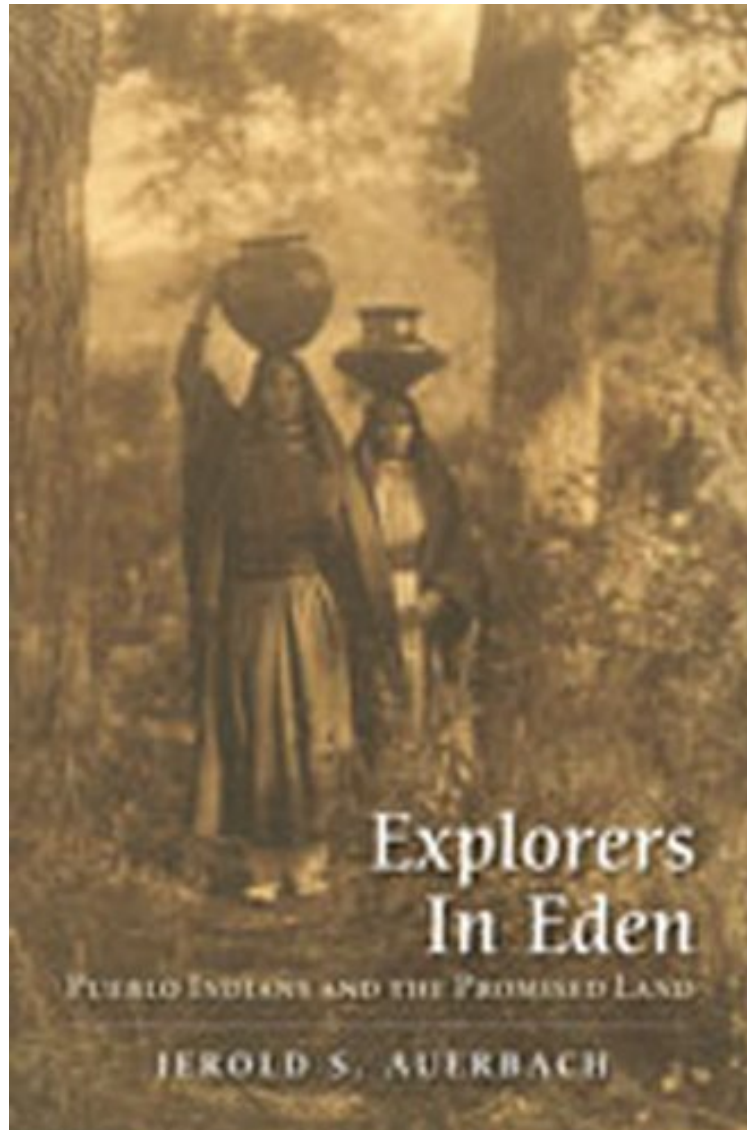


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Explorers in Eden: Pueblo Indians and the Promised Land

Jerold S. Auerbach

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Jerold S. Auerbach : Explorers in Eden: Pueblo Indians and the Promised Land before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Explorers in Eden: Pueblo Indians and the Promised Land:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Seeing Others Through Shaded LensesBy LouHiebIn "Explorers in Eden," Jerold S. Auerbach, professor of history at Wellesley College, provides an insightful and critical account of the complex relationships between "explorers"--anthropologists, artists, photographers, and entrepreneurs--and the Pueblo

Indians of New Mexico and Arizona from John Wesley Powell and Frank Hamilton Cushing at the end of the 19th century to the students of Franz Boas--Ruth Benedict, Ruth Bunzel, and Esther Schiff Goldfrank in the 1920s and 1930s. This followed by a chapter on the more recent feminist scholars who have found "inspirational models among their female predecessors, and grist for their gendered critique of American society" (p. 145). In an Epilogue Auerbach places himself among the "explorers." This is an important and provocative book. While there are other explorers Auerbach might have considered, what he has chosen to do he does with wit and grace and, above all, a clearer sense of these encounters in a larger historical framework than any student of the Pueblos has attempted before.

Beginning in the late nineteenth century, the pueblos of the Southwest frequently inspired Anglo-American visitors to express their sense of wonder and enchantment in biblical references. Frank Hamilton Cushing's first account of Zuni pueblo described a setting that looked like "The Pools of Palestine." Drawn to the Southwest, Mabel Dodge imagined "a garden of Eden, inhabited by an unfallen tribe of men and women." There she was attracted to Tony Luhan, a Taos Indian who looked "like a Biblical figure." When historian Jerold Auerbach first saw Edward S. Curtis's early twentieth-century photograph Taos Water Girls, he realized that "here, indeed, was the biblical Rebecca, relocated to New Mexico from ancient Haran, where Abraham's faithful servant had journeyed to find a suitable wife for Isaac. Rebecca with her water pitcher is as familiar a biblical icon as Noah and his ark or Moses with the stone tablets. Curtis had recast her as the archetypal Pueblo maiden." Explorers in Eden uncovers an intriguing array of diaries, letters, memoirs, photographs, paintings, postcards, advertisements, anthropological field studies, and scholarly monographs. They reveal how Anglo-Americans disenchanted with modern urban industrial society developed a deep and rich fascination with pueblo culture through their biblical associations.

"["Explorers in Eden"] is a fascinating study and compelling read." ["Explorers in Eden"] offers an interesting window through which to view Southwestern history." From the Inside Flap Explorers in Eden uncovers a vast array of diaries, letters, photographs, paintings, postcards, advertisements, and scholarly monographs, revealing how Anglo-Americans developed a fascination with pueblo culture they identified with biblical associations. About the Author Jerold S. Auerbach is professor of history at Wellesley College and the author, among other books, of Unequal Justice, Jacob's Voices, and Are We One? Jewish Identity in the United States and Israel.