

# A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase And The Destiny Of America

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and *Indian Sermons* makes both a worthy and an important contribution to a number of different subfields in early American studies and early modern history. It is an important contribution to our understanding of Indians, Englishmen, and the making of an Atlantic world.

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Peter J. Kastor, *The Nation's Crucible: The Louisiana Purchase and the Creation of America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2004. 336 pp. ISBN: 0-300-10119-8 (hbk.); Jon Kukla, *A Wilderness so Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003. x + 430 pp. ISBN: 0-375-40812-6.

As Peter Kastor points out in *The Nation's Crucible*, his very fine study of the purchase of the Louisiana Territory and the subsequent struggles over the governance and incorporation of that section of it that would become the state of Louisiana, historians too often see the purchase itself either as the culmination of a chapter in American diplomatic history or as a resounding answer to questions raised, then and now, over westward expansion and 'the struggle to preserve a vigorous republic' (11). Both Kastor and Jon Kukla, author of *A Wilderness so Immense*, stress that the context of the Louisiana Purchase stretches far beyond the Jefferson administration's desire to build an empire of liberty. Kukla emphasises the intricacies of the young republic's foreign policy in the Napoleonic era, ultimately concluding that America's engagement with foreign nations and the cosmopolitan population of Louisiana prepared the nation for its 'destiny' as a diverse and free nation. Kastor focuses predominantly on the period between the purchase in 1803 and the controversy over Missouri in 1820 and argues successfully that that period, which historians often overlook when telling the story of the territory that doubled the size of the United States, was crucial to the creation of a national polity with clearly defined and widely shared ideas about proper government and citizens' particular attachment to it.

Of the two books, Jon Kukla's *A Wilderness So Immense* is the more popular kind of historical narrative, one that thrives on the author's ability to maintain a sense of suspense about the success of the United States' dealings with obtuse and elusive officials representing Spain and France as well as with conniving and recalcitrant Americans. The main actors are the great and not-so-great men of history who roam, or seek access to, the halls of power. The main events are the official and unofficial meetings of these men, face to face and by correspondence, as they try to hammer out the relations between emerging nations such as the United States and Haiti on the one hand and the great European powers on the other as they pertain to control over the Port of New Orleans and the 'immense wilderness' fanning out northwestward from the city. Kukla's masterful recounting of these negotiations, treaties, and deals makes for a riveting read that, at the same time, places the Louisiana squarely in its proper international context. As a budding nation among the world's established powers, the United States still had to play by the rules of international diplomacy, proper letters of introduction and all, and contend with the peculiarities of Spanish and French government and the whims of rulers like Napoleon Bonaparte and Carlos IV (the latter allowed his wife's lover to dictate Spanish policy in Louisiana). Ultimately, it was international developments that landed the United States the territory of Louisiana: Napoleon's failure to quash the Saint Domingue slave rebellion and subsequently establish French control in Louisiana (the intended force never even set sail for the Gulf Coast), combined with the First Consul's need for money to wage a continental war, led him to propose to the American government their wholesale pur-

A WILDERNESS SO IMMENSE: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of Livingston and James Monroe on the American side; Talleyrand. A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America .. Political intrigue, globalization, and secessionist plots in early America. A wilderness so immense: the Louisiana Purchase and the destiny of America / Jon Kukla. Bookmark: [perspectivimmo.com](http://perspectivimmo.com); Edition. 1st ed. A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America. By Jon Kukla and Mr. Jefferson's Lost Cause: Land, Farmers, Slavery, and the In A Wilderness so Immense, historian Jon Kukla recounts the fascinating So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America. We encounter American leaders--Jefferson and Jay, Monroe and Pickering A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America. A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America by Jon Kukla. Review by: JOHN CAAIG HAMMOND. *Pennsylvania History*, Vol. In A Wilderness so Immense, historian Jon Kukla recounts the fascinating tale of the The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America. A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America is the story of what some have called the greatest real estate deal in history: the. A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America. Front Cover Lively account of America's first giant step toward empire." Kukla situates the purchase in the context of a fragile American union, impetuous western So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America. BOOK REVIEWS. A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana. Purchase and the Destiny of America. By. Jon Kukla. New York: Alfred A. Knopf., x, pp. Jefferson's America and Napoleon's France: An Exhibition for the Louisiana A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America. A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America acres and drastically changed America's geography, politics, and life forever. Dr. Kukla talked about his book [A Wilderness So Immense: The Louisiana Purchase and the Destiny of America], published by Knopf.

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