

AN INDEPENDENT EMPIRE

Diplomacy & War in the Making of the United States

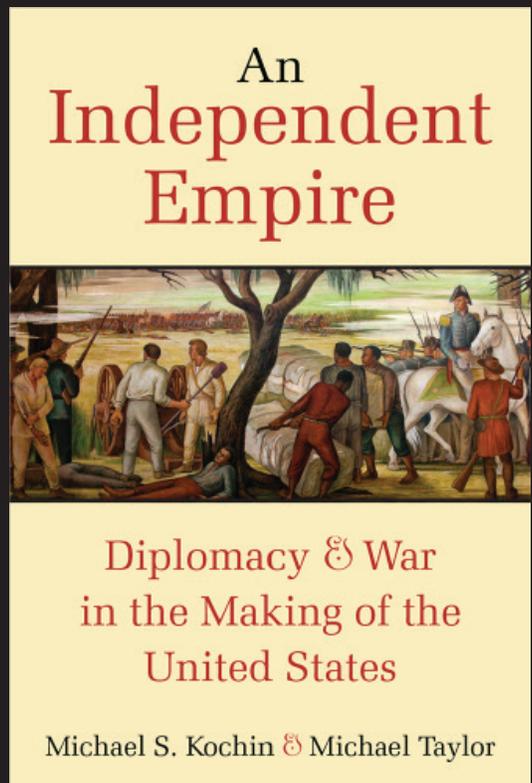
How the United States used methods of imperial diplomacy to recast itself into a global juggernaut

Michael S. Kochin is Professor Extraordinarius in the School of Political Science, Government, and International Relations at Tel Aviv University.

Michael Taylor is a Visiting Fellow at the British Library Eccles Centre for American Studies, 2019–21.

You are alone. You have no money to pay your bills. You dwell surrounded by enemies in a vast wilderness of mountains, rivers, forests, swamps, and desert. In 1781, at the moment of the British surrender at Yorktown, this was the United States of America. One false step and this ambitious experiment in republican government would fail. So how, not even fifty years later, had the United States become the paramount power in North America and the self-proclaimed guardian of the Western Hemisphere? There was nothing naturally 'great' about the new republic. Somehow, the Americans asked the right questions about foreign affairs, the military, taxes, and trade.

In this lively and well-written book, episodes in American history—such as the writing and ratification of the Constitution, Pinckney's Treaty with Spain, Henry Clay's advocacy of an American System, and the visionary Congress of Panama—are recast as elemental aspects of United States foreign and security policy. *An Independent Empire* tells the stories of the people who defined the early history of America's international relationships. Throughout the book are brief, entertaining vignettes of often-overlooked intellectuals, spies, diplomats, and warriors whose actions and decisions shaped the first fifty years of the United States. More than a dozen custom maps depict the growth of the early United States in extent and power.



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