

American Imperialism



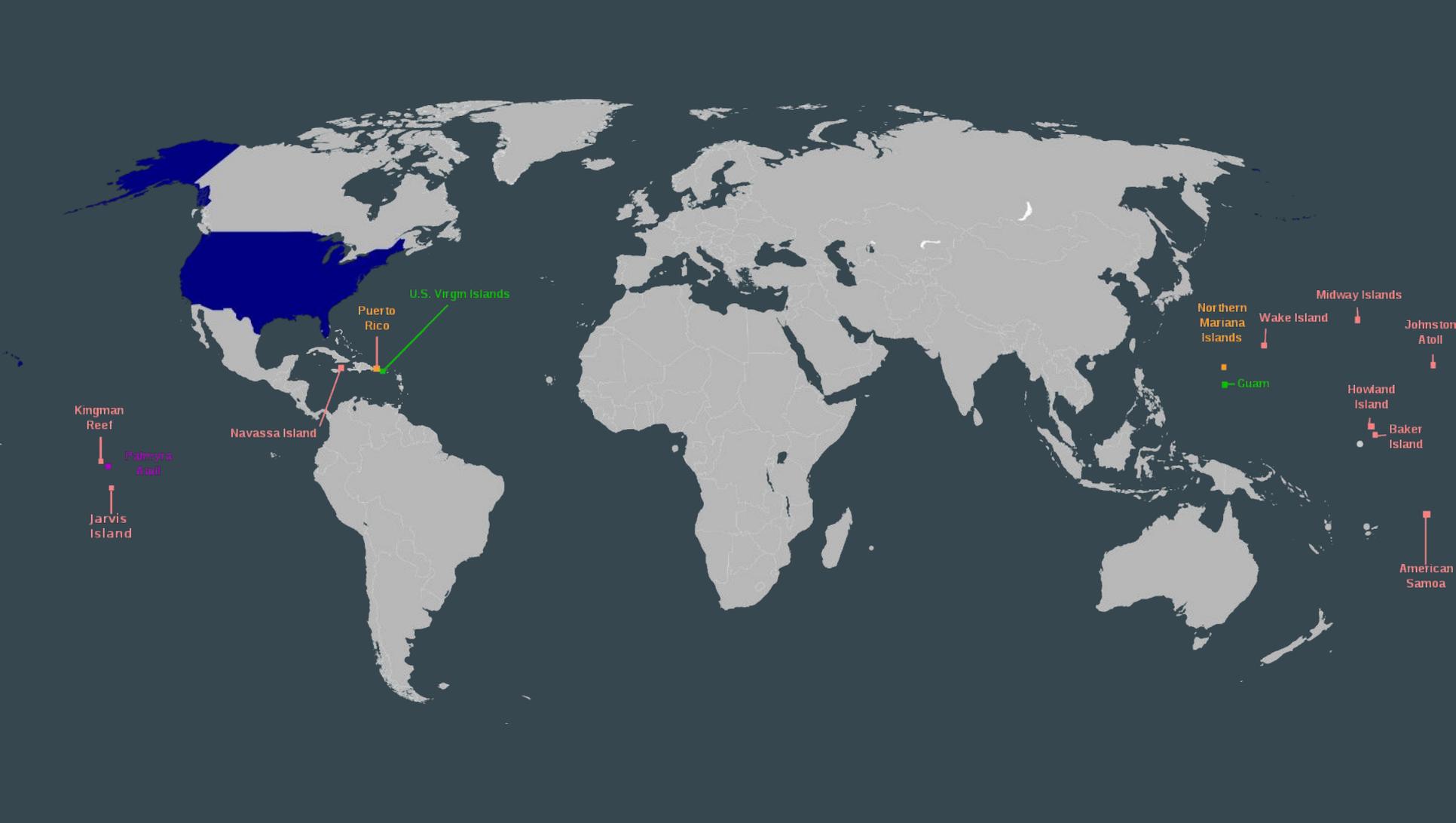
The United States pre- World War I

Today's Learning Goals

1. Understand the origins of American Imperial Expansion
2. Explain the influence of Captain Alfred T. Mahan on American expansionist views
3. Describe the process by which Hawaii was annexed by the United States
4. Create a study map of US territories pre-WWI

How many territories does the U.S.A. have?

Where are they?



Kingman Reef

Palmyra Atoll

Jarvis Island

Navassa Island

Puerto Rico

U.S. Virgin Islands

Northern Mariana Islands

Wake Island

Midway Islands

Johnston Atoll

Howland Island

Baker Island

American Samoa

Guam

What are they?

Currently, the United States has sixteen territories, five of which are permanently inhabited: [Puerto Rico](#), [Guam](#), [Northern Mariana Islands](#), the [U.S. Virgin Islands](#), and [American Samoa](#). They are classified as unincorporated territories. They are organised, self-governing territories with locally elected governors and territorial legislatures. Each also elects a non-voting [member](#) (or [resident commissioner](#)) to the [U.S. House of Representatives](#).^{[3][4]}

Eleven territories are small islands, atolls and reefs, spread across the Caribbean and Pacific, with no native or permanent populations. These are [Palmyra Atoll](#), [Baker Island](#), [Howland Island](#), [Jarvis Island](#), [Johnston Atoll](#), [Kingman Reef](#), [Midway Islands](#), [Bajo Nuevo Bank](#), [Navassa Island](#), [Serranilla Bank](#) and [Wake Island](#), which are claimed by the United States under the [Guano Islands Act](#) of 1856.

The status of some are disputed by [Colombia](#), [Haiti](#), [Honduras](#), [Jamaica](#), [Nicaragua](#), and the [Marshall Islands](#). The [Palmyra Atoll](#) is the only territory currently incorporated.

U.S. Territories Listed:

Permanently inhabited:

1. [Puerto Rico](#),
2. [Guam](#),
3. [Northern Mariana Islands](#),
4. [U.S. Virgin Islands](#),
5. [American Samoa](#).

No native or permanent populations

1. [Palmyra Atoll](#),
2. [Baker Island](#),
3. [Howland Island](#),
4. [Jarvis Island](#),
5. [Johnston Atoll](#)
6. [Kingman Reef](#)
7. [Midway Islands](#)
8. [Bajo Nuevo Bank](#)
9. [Navassa Island](#)
10. [Serranilla Bank](#)
11. [Wake Island](#),

How did we get them?

And why?

What is Imperialism?

im·pe·ri·al·ism

im'pirēə,lizəm/

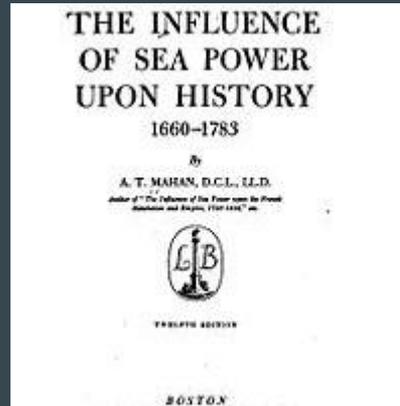
noun

1. a policy of extending a country's power and influence through diplomacy or military force.
2. "the struggle against imperialism"

How did the United States get involved?

Mahan's The Influence of Sea Power upon History: Securing International Markets in the 1890s

In 1890, Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan, a lecturer in naval history and the president of the United States Naval War College, published *The Influence of Sea Power upon History, 1660–1783*, a revolutionary analysis of the importance of naval power as a factor in the rise of the British Empire. Two years later, he completed a supplementary volume, *The Influence of Sea Power upon the French Revolution and Empire, 1793–1812*.



Mahan argued that British control of the seas, combined with a corresponding decline in the naval strength of its major European rivals, paved the way for Great Britain's emergence as the world's dominant military, political, and economic power. Mahan and some leading American politicians believed that these lessons could be applied to U.S. foreign policy, particularly in the quest to expand U.S. markets oversea.

Mahan's books complemented the work of one of his contemporaries, Professor Frederick Jackson Turner, who is best known for his seminal essay of 1893, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History." An American history professor at the University of Wisconsin, Turner postulated that westward migration across the North American continent and the country's population growth had finally led to the "closing" of the American frontier, with profound social and economic consequences. While Turner did not explicitly argue for a shift towards commercial expansion overseas, he did note that calls for a "vigorous foreign policy" were signs that Americans were increasingly looking outside the continental United States in order to satiate their desire for new economic opportunities and markets.

Mahan's emphasis upon the acquisition of naval bases was not completely new. Following the Civil War, Secretary of State William Seward had attempted to expand the U.S. commercial presence in Asia by [purchasing Alaska in 1867](#), and increasing American influence over Hawaii by concluding a reciprocity treaty that would bind the islands' economy to that of the United States. Seward also attempted to purchase suitable Caribbean naval bases. Finally, he attempted to ratify a treaty with the Colombian Government that would allow the United States to build an isthmian canal through the province of Panama. In the wake of the Civil War, however, Congress became preoccupied with Reconstruction in the South, and the Senate rejected all of Seward's efforts to create a network of American naval bases.

In the 1890s, Mahan's ideas resonated with leading politicians, including Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt, and Secretary of the Navy Herbert Tracy. After the outbreak of hostilities with Spain in May 1898, President William McKinley finally secured the [annexation of Hawaii](#) by means of joint resolution of Congress. Following the successful conclusion of the [Spanish-American War in 1898](#), the United States gained control of territories that could serve as the coaling stations and naval bases that Mahan had discussed, such as Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines. Five years later, the United States obtained a perpetual lease for a naval base at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Case Study: The former kingdom of Hawaii

By the time the United States got serious about looking beyond its own borders to conquer new lands, much of the world had already been claimed. Only a few distant territories in Africa and Asia and remote islands in the Pacific remained free from imperial grasp. Hawaii was one such plum. Led by a hereditary monarch, the inhabitants of the kingdom prevailed as an independent state. American expansionists looked with greed on the strategically located islands and waited patiently to plan their move.

Foothold in Hawaii

Interest in **HAWAII** began in America as early as the 1820s, when New England missionaries tried in earnest to spread their faith. Since the 1840s, keeping European powers out of Hawaii became a principal foreign policy goal. Americans acquired a true foothold in Hawaii as a result of the **SUGAR TRADE**. The United States government provided generous terms to Hawaiian sugar growers, and after the Civil War, profits began to swell. A turning point in U.S.-Hawaiian relations occurred in 1890, when Congress approved the **MCKINLEY TARIFF**, which raised import rates on foreign sugar. Hawaiian sugar planters were now being undersold in the American market, and as a result, a depression swept the islands. The sugar growers, mostly white Americans, knew that if Hawaii were to be **ANNEXED** by the United States, the tariff problem would naturally disappear. At the same time, the Hawaiian throne was passed to **QUEEN LILIUOKALANI**, who determined that the root of Hawaii's problems was foreign interference. A great showdown was about to unfold.

Annexing Hawaii

In January 1893, the planters staged an uprising to overthrow the Queen. At the same time, they appealed to the United States armed forces for protection. Without Presidential approval, marines stormed the islands, and the American minister to the islands raised the stars and stripes in HONOLULU. The Queen was forced to abdicate, and the matter was left for Washington politicians to settle. By this time, Grover Cleveland had been inaugurated President. Cleveland was an outspoken anti-imperialist and thought Americans had acted shamefully in Hawaii. He withdrew the annexation treaty from the Senate and ordered an investigation into potential wrongdoings. Cleveland aimed to restore Liliuokalani to her throne, but American public sentiment strongly favored annexation.

The matter was prolonged until after Cleveland left office. When war broke out with Spain in 1898, the military significance of Hawaiian naval bases as a way station to the SPANISH PHILIPPINES outweighed all other considerations. President William McKinley signed a joint resolution annexing the islands, much like the manner in which Texas joined the Union in 1845. Hawaii remained a territory until granted statehood as the fiftieth state in 1959.

The annexation of Hawaii overview:

- A. American Sugar plantations bring \$\$\$ to the island
- B. Gov. passes taxes on sugar imports
- C. Profits drop
- D. American sugar owners want Hawaii to join the USA
- E. Americans overthrow the Queen without presidential approval
- F. Eventually, the US annexed Hawaii because of war with Spain