

My first approach to this question is a differentiation of the term “world affairs” in a political and a non-political sphere, as both spheres are influenced by Christianity in different manners.

On the political level, I begin with the blunt statement, that international relations involving diverse nations are at first sight not significantly influenced by Christianity, as religious motives are not part of day-to-day politics. Historically, this was different. Several crusades between the 11th and 13th century and the efforts of many colonial powers to export Christianity seem sufficient proof of this, but today the spreading of Christian ideology does not seem to be an end in itself. World affairs are, slightly exaggerated, affairs between democratic and capitalistic societies or societies that have chosen this, even though the targets have not been met yet, path (or risk being classified as part of an axis of evil). But in this regard it might be important to add that the typical separation between church and state in western and capitalistic societies cannot be seen as a given for all nations or cultures of our world, just as capitalism. As Max Weber points out, the roots of true capitalism can be found in Calvinist traditions, which developed in the North American colonies, as an answer to the unsure quest for salvation, thrown up by the Reformation.

Today, capitalism is by no means connected to Christianity or Calvinist beliefs anymore, but merely adapted worldwide as the system of choice. But for non-capitalistic, non-westernized (or not yet) societies this connection might still exist, or if not, the makeup of a secularized western society rooted in Christianity seems like a threat. If fear of an secularized, western system, with the system being the known result of Christian belief, exists, I would claim it possible to state that this fear of an individualistic western society is somewhat related to the individualistic way of life Calvinistic beliefs developed in North America. Thus, the export of westernized societies incorporates the results of religious evolution.

In addition to this, many of the world’s biggest NGOs are essentially Christian organizations, whose political influence cannot be denied. Yearly, these organizations spend large sums of money for relief-programmes or the development of fair-trade relations, essentially based on Christian principles.

It is also impossible to deny an important role of Christianity in world affairs when we consider that the only superpower in the world, both in economical and military terms, is largely made up of Christian fundamentalists, who have elected a leader that assumes that he has been chosen by god to lead his country in these difficult times, thus rates absolute faith higher than rational analysis.

On the non-political level, Christianity plays an enormous role in world affairs. Two billion people officially belong to Jesus. Christianity is the largest denomination on our planet, which means that all interactions among Christians or them and non-Christians are influenced by their beliefs, which are essentially based on the Ten Commandments and the preaching of Jesus. With this, Christianity creates a worldwide community that surpasses all borders man has ever erected. In a very wide sense, these two billion could be seen as one nation, and in many cases believers from one country might have more in common with other believers in an economically completely different country than with their next-door neighbour, who would be, based on statistic probability, Muslim or Hindu. As many churches have developed global networks with other churches of similar denominations, organize cultural exchanges for their members or means of development for partner churches in underdeveloped areas, they could be classified as NGOs as well, even though their political ambitions are not as marked. Obviously this statement holds truth for churches of all denominations, not just Christian institutions, but as the most-believed religion in the world, Christianity’s influence on world affairs is enormous and, if we follow the predictions laid out by Jeff Haynes, growing rapidly. According to his writings, humans, especially in the underdeveloped world, turn increasingly towards religion. The root for this can be seen, just as an article in Friday’s New Zealand Herald portrayed, in uneasiness about global changes and therefore a wish to return to what seemed more stable times. This development goes hand in hand with an increasing secularization of world affairs on a political level, which leaves people wondering where their moral values find representation in more and more secularized world affairs.

In order to draw a conclusion, I want to state that even though world affairs are not exclusively Christian, they are largely influenced by Christianity. Every third human being is Christian and the world’s most powerful nations tend to be the same, which influences their actions or has through means of religious evolution lead to their state of being.