

The Travels of the *Magna Carta*

This paper explores the geographical and temporal travels of the Magna Carta, examining the historical migration of the Magna Carta from Britain to its colonies as well as the endurance of the Magna Carta as in the constitutional development of jurisdictions in the common law world.

The spatial expansion of the reach of the Magna Carta will be discussed through two channels. First is the consequential decision to promulgate written constitutions for newly independent states. Secondly, there was the drafting of new constitutions being influenced directly by the Magna Carta or indirectly through the Charter's influence on international and regional human rights instruments. In this way, the 'civilising mission' of the British Empire has outlived decolonisation.

The temporal endurance of the Magna Carta will be examined through the lasting influence of the Charter on both the text of existing constitutional instruments and the interpretation of those constitutional documents. The articles of the Magna Carta are reflected in the preambles to constitutions and bills of rights and the reflection of Magna Carta protections in constitutional rights provisions. Moreover, the paper makes the case that the Magna Carta's impact resounds through its contribution to common law principles such as the rule of law, which are used in interpreting and filling gaps in constitutions.

Se-shauna Wheatle