

An Analytical Study on Regional Expansion of Vintage Motorcars in 19th and 20th Century Sri Lanka

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Abstract

The latter 19th century was a time that saw considerable change in Sri Lanka. The agriculture-based economy introduced by the British from 1815 changed to one that was based on import and export. Infrastructure facilities, communication systems, and modes of transportation changed accordingly with development achieved in the field of transportation being most outstanding. The existing transportation system was more or less traditional and it was restricted mainly to walking, riding on animals, carts, *dolawa* (palanquin), etc. However, in the latter part of the 19th century, the motorcar, a product of modern technology started to find its roots in the island. Different social stratus of populations across the island embraced the motorcar. It is understood that the motorcar became quite popular even within varying regional circumstances. A system had been introduced in the registration of motor vehicles from 1928 onwards, where a letter from A to Z was allocated to each of the 26 districts. This research will present as to how the vehicles imported to Sri Lanka were regionally distributed, based on 400 vintage motorcars imported during the latter part of the 19th century.

Keywords: Vintage motorcars, industrial archaeology, transportation

Objectives of the study

The 19th century can be identified as an era that initiated a number of changes in the history of Sri Lanka. In this era, the plantation economy introduced by the British through imperialism paved a way for an industrial capitalistic economy in Sri Lanka. The country started moving to a new phase using the opportunities of the economic revolution. Long prior to British rule a social system based on caste had been established in Sri Lanka. The transportation mode called car arrived in Sri Lanka into such a social milieu. There are facts in primary sources that traditional transportation modes like going on animal backs, horse carts, bullock carts, etc. had been used earlier. Thus, a modern industrial unit like the car arrived and gradually established in a hierarchical society based on caste and class. Here, the main objective of this research article is to provide analytical and exploratory details regarding how the car, which is a modern industrial unit, arrived in the society arranged in a conventional model of the caste system in Sri Lanka and became established and expanded gradually across various regions of the island.

Research problem

How did the motorcar being a modern industrial unit, establish itself in the conventional and stratified Sri Lankan society in the latter 19th century and what are the patterns of its regional expansion as a mode of transport in the country, taking into consideration factors such as caste, class, religion, and professions?

Limitation of the research, and methods

The limitation of the research is confined to the era motorcars are considered as classical. A classical car is a car which is produced before 1940 and registered under a single letter. Thus the research was carried out using a set of 400 registered vintage cars. Research was started and mainly for the observation and investigation to collect primary data. Two methods were used to carry out the investigation. (1.) Information was obtained through the interviews with the owners of classic cars and with the chairmen of the three classic car clubs: The Classic Car Club, Italian Car Club, and Sri Lanka Benz Club. (2.) Questionnaire methods were utilized with vintage car owners and the old members of vintage car clubs at motorcar rallies. Apart from this, data were obtained through mail as well. Data were obtained by posting questionnaires to the addresses of the classic car owners living in distant areas. Moreover, data were obtained through newspaper advertisements about the research and via reporters as well.

Background

Sources such as archives and old car enthusiasts reveal that as a British colony, Sri Lanka has been importing various motor vehicles since 1889. Even though a large number of the motorcars imported to Sri Lanka since 1889 have been destroyed at present, information on remaining motorcars could be collected following some surveys carried out over several years. Typically termed 'old motorcars', there's an international classification system (Milburn 1956: 1) for these cars as follows:

- 1) Veteran
- 2) Edwardian
- 3) Vintage
- 4) Post Vintage

Motorcars belonging to all of these 4 categories do not remain today in Sri Lanka. Therefore a classification of Sri Lanka has been introduced and it divides motorcars into two categories:

Vintage - motorcars manufactured before 1940

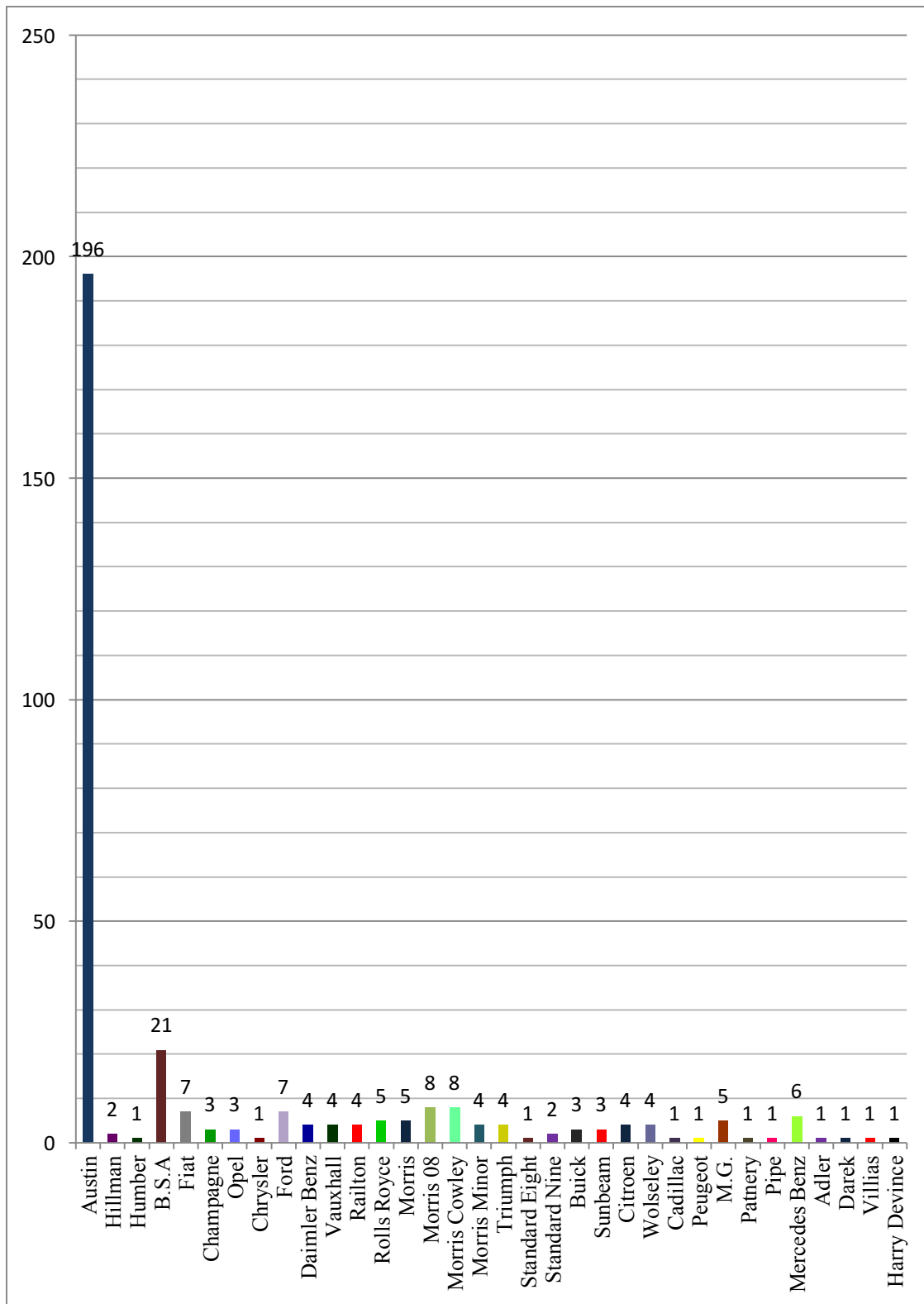
Classic - motorcars manufactured after 1940

There are two major codes that help to distinguish Vintage motorcars from Classic motorcars. A Vintage motor car has a registration number beginning with a single letter of the English alphabet from A to Z. It is easy to recognize an old motor car with a single letter. A Classic motor car consists of a pair of letters such as CE and CY. After 1940 motorcars were registered under two letters until the registration under the Sinhala letter “Sri” was started and they can be identified as Classic motorcars. Cars that belong to both of these types still remain in Sri Lanka and this survey was completely based on old motorcars with a single letter belonging to Vintage category. This presents information obtained following a seven-year research that involved the study of reports and newspaper archives, producing questionnaires to and conducting interviews with owners of old motorcars and veterans in the field and obtaining details of the motorcars registered with The Vintage Car Owners Club. This information is summarized and presented in the form of tables. Here the details have been analyzed in a chart containing 4 major titles as the type, number, manufactured year and the owner for 400 motorcars.

Details obtained by analysis of these 400 cars are as follows.

	Type of motorcar	Number
01	Austin	196
02	Hillman	02
03	Humber	01
04	B.S.A	21
05	Fiat	07
06	Champagne	03
07	Opel	03
08	Chrysler	01
09	Ford	07
10	Daimler Benz	04
11	Vauxhall	04
12	Rolls Royce	04
13	Morris	05
14	Morris 08	05

15	Morris Cowley	08
16	Morris Minor	08
17	Triumph	04
18	Standard Eight	04
19	Standard Nine	01
20	Buick	02
21	Sunbeam	03
22	Citroen	03
23	Wellesley	04
24	Cadillac	04
25	Peugeot	01
26	M.G.	01
27	Pantry	05
28	Pipe	01
29	Mercedes Benz	01
30	Adler	06
31	Derek	01
32	Willies	01
33	Pipe	01
34	Harry Deviance	01

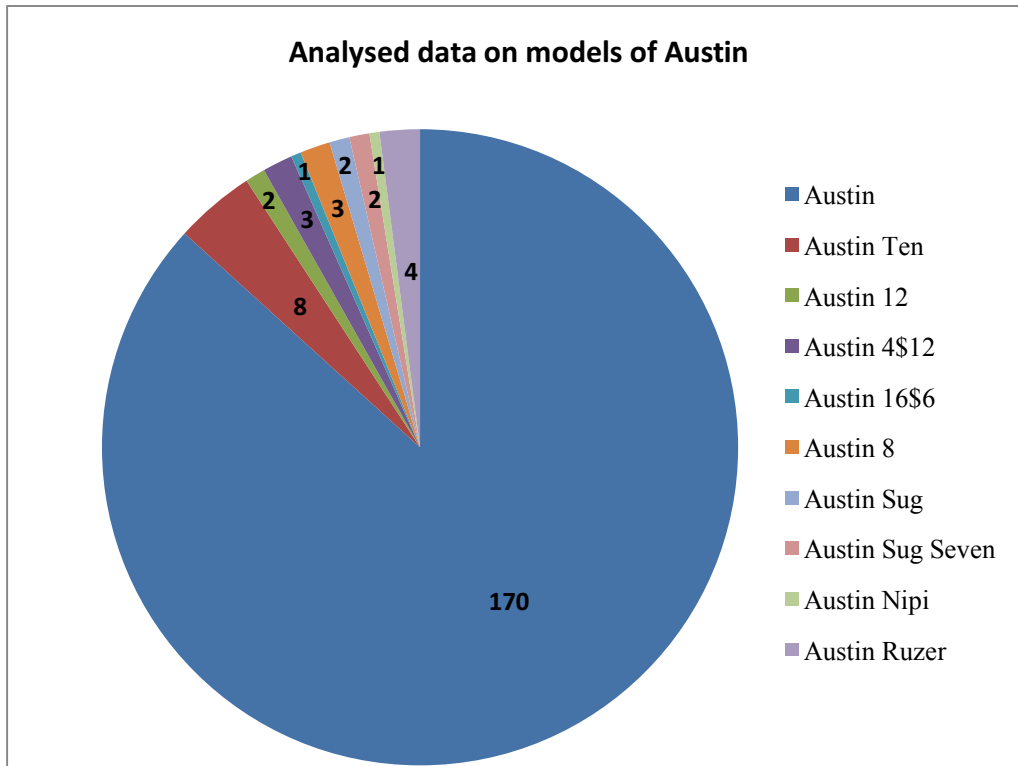


According to the analyzed chart, it is revealed that there are 34 types among the 400 motorcars and that the type of motorcar most commonly spread in Sri Lanka was the Austin and the largest number of remaining old motorcars today, 196, are of the Austin type. Therefore it can be concluded that most of the old motorcars remaining in Sri Lanka are Austin as per the research results. Seven motorcars can be found from each type of Fiat, Ford, and Chevrolet. Among the Morris car category 8 Morris Eight motorcars and 8 Morris Cowley motorcars remain. It should be taken into consideration that two types of very expensive motorcars

namely Mercedes Bens and Rolls Royce still remain in Sri Lanka at least in small numbers as 6 and 5 from each respectively. Apart from that 1, 3 or 4 motorcars remain in all the other types of motorcars. Research problems arise when it is found out that only one motorcar remains uniquely in each type such as Adler, Derek, Willies, Humber, and Standard Coventry.

This survey was carried out entirely in an industrial archaeological perspective and analysis of data should also be done based on the theories of industrial archaeology. By the 19th century many of the fields that should be covered in archaeology such as discovery of ancient civilizations, letters and language systems, excavations and exploration methods had been studied to a considerably adequate degree. By the 20th century, archaeology - especially American archaeology - included the connection of anthropology as well. With its gradual development a theoretical basis was created for archaeological definitions in the 1970s. As a result of it, a logical theory should be used for defining industrial archaeology.

According to the results obtained by analyzing the collected data, most of the old motorcars remaining in Sri Lanka are the Austin type. The Austin, a production of England, is a small motorcar with an aesthetic finish and consists of a number of models. As a percentage, 196 remaining Austin motorcars make up 49% of the remaining 400 old motorcars. In this regard it is a remarkable fact that even though around 400 motorcars have been imported to Sri Lanka from various countries since 1889, Austin is the type of motorcars that remain mostly today. It leads to the conclusion that the society had largely embraced the Austin type and it had gradually established in the country more than the other motorcar types. Another important fact was also revealed from this survey; spare parts for the Austin motorcar are available in any part of Sri Lanka in any workshop, shop, or house. In some houses even elderly women were seen using the part with rods of an Austin motorcar for pounding betel leaves. Austin cars having the most spread in Sri Lanka is the reason for it. This vast spread led this type of motorcar to remain at large later on. Austin motorcar models such as Austin 7, Austin 8, Austin 10, Austin 4/12, Austin 16/6, Austin Big, Austin Big 7, Austin Hippy, Austin Ruby, and Austin Princess arrived in Sri Lanka.



This shows that 10 models of Austin motorcar have arrived in Sri Lanka. Accordingly we should examine the facts which affected the Austin motorcar type to arrive in Sri Lanka more than the other types.

Socio-economic Impact

When examining the social economic impact with respect to contributing factors for the Austin's wide spread in Sri Lanka, it is worthwhile to examine the state of the economy of late 19th century Sri Lanka under the British rule. Particularly the introduction of commercial estate agriculture affected social and economic changes in hill country and other areas of Sri Lanka as well(Wijedasa,2001). According to Beckford, countries which existed as colonies benefitted by estate agriculture in numerous ways. The highways, railways, ports, postal and telecommunication services, water and power supply, schools and hospitals seen today in former colonies were results of plantation industry (Beckford,1972). Therefore we can assume that the change and modernization made to both social and economic conditions of Sri Lanka by the British colonization was a main reason for receiving transport methods, largely British products. Particularly the Austin type in addition to the road system created parallel to the estate economy. From the very beginning of the 19th century England surpassed the pioneer countries to manufacture motorcars, like Germany in the field of manufacture of cars and commercial opportunities of colonizers were mostly centered around England. Likewise, import of cars from England was easier than from other countries. An Austin motorcar could be imported without conditions, within a short period of time at a price ordinary people could afford. That's why a car could be imported to Sri Lanka within several months from manufacture. We can assume it since many Austin cars indicate a similar year as the registered year and the manufactured year.

Furthermore, the new capitalistic class and the aristocratic class born as a result of the era of British colonization represented a minor population of the country and the majority in this era

were ordinary people. Austin motorcars could be purchased at a price that people of any class could afford. Mostly the capitalistic class had used small motor cars like Austin as the second vehicle of their houses. Among the efforts of people in this era to shape themselves into the western lifestyle, import of motor cars was one largely encouraged and accordingly there might be a large demand socially for the Austin car.

Moreover, easily available spare parts manufactured in Britain could also have affected this large demand. Spare parts for motorcars imported from England were mostly available in Sri Lanka, but the difficulty in finding spare parts was one reason for certain motorcar types specially Fiat an Italian product to be spread in a limited amount in the country. Such a problem didn't arise regarding Austin motorcars.

Geographical factors

In addition to that, the Austin motorcar was suitable for any geographical region in Sri Lanka. It had been created to conveniently travel on the rough roads that existed in the country in the earlier periods. Furthermore, The Austin motorcar could travel in any geographical conditions in Sri Lanka such as hilly areas, plains, and coastal areas. This fact is proved when we look at the areas that the 196 Austin motorcars had been spread based on the analyzed data since it includes flat areas like Colombo, Colombo municipal council area and Kalutara, hilly areas like Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, Matale, and Ratnapura and coastal areas like Galle, Matara, and Hambantota. Particularly it seems that in hilly areas where it was very difficult to travel by other motorcars, this Austin car was popular within the estate economy. Motorcars manufactured in Britain had low cylinder capacity and could travel short distances. Since the highways in Sri Lanka also did not extend over many miles continuously, what suited mostly for Sri Lanka were the cars manufactured in England, a factor contributing to its large spread. The condition of the motorcars manufactured in America was different since they manufactured big cars with high cylinder capacity and could travel long distances continuously. Generally the Austin car type being a vehicle suitable for any geographical pattern resulted in showcasing a high percentage among all the motorcar types.

The impact of technical systems and engineering technology

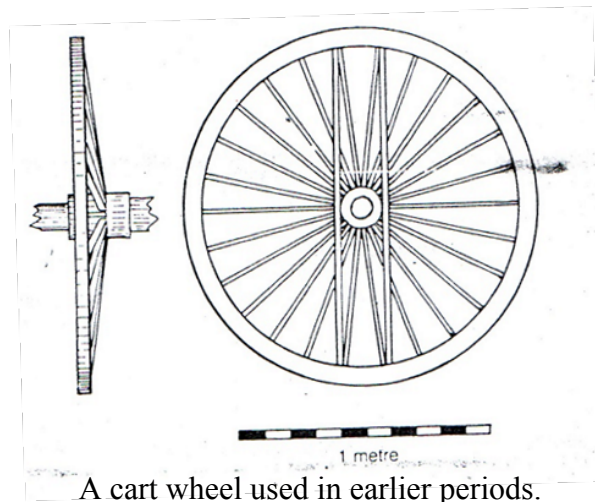
The engineering technology, durability and strength of the motorcars which came to Sri Lanka were the stimulating factors which increased and decreased the spreading rate of those vehicles. Mainly, motorcars manufactured by England were smaller in size and had a compact nature when comparing to American products. An aesthetic finish can also be seen in these cars better than big robust motorcars difficult to handle. They are the main reasons for motorcars manufactured in America like Chevrolet spread in a small amount.

Moreover the nature of the brake system is also a factor which decides the spread of a vehicle. The brake system of vehicles manufactured in England for the first time was created with the support of cables. Most of the time there were three front gears. The speed had to be changed by them. According to the road condition of the country, motorcars which change the speed by changing gears within a close period were more suitable for Sri Lanka. Likewise the radiator of the motorcars manufactured in the early period in England was created in a Thermos system without a water pump. Through that system boiled water ran up and cooled water ran down. The engine was replaced by the water pump after that, but it is remarkable that America and Germany had been using water pump for their motorcars even from the early days of car manufacture. Anyway it doesn't seem that the condition of the engine had much impact for Sri Lanka in that era. In addition to that motorcars manufactured in England earlier didn't have an oil pump as well. It was designed in a way that when oil was put into the engine oil would

come to the top from the bottom. It is a simple engineering method. Afterwards an oil pump was fixed to the engine. Thereafter water and oil were used for every system such as brake system.

5.6 Tyros

Solid tyros which did not need putting air were used in earlier manufactured motorcars. Thereafter came wood wheels but in order to increase the efficiency of the wheel air tyros and tyros with spokes were also used. When we consider the tyros of motorcars in Sri Lanka it seems that efforts were taken to select the type of tyros depending on the road condition.



A cart wheel used in earlier periods.

5.7 Suspension system

In the early days, much attention was not paid on the suspension system of motorcars but due to various difficulties like roughness on the roads the need of a suspension system was felt. As a result, spring blades came into use. Thereafter this system was modified by coil spring, tocsin bar and hydraulic suspension system. Oscillation of the vehicle when travelling on rough roads could be reduced by it. A customer when purchasing a motorcar examines the capability to travel luxuriously without vibrating. The Austin Morris motorcar vibrates less due to the function of its suspension system, a factor contributing to its rapid spread. Meanwhile, in countries like Sri Lanka and England travelling has to be done even at night. Since the motorcar had been produced before the invention of the bulb, electricity was generated by battery less Magneto power electricity generating system and bulbs were lit by it. The engine had to be turned round by hand with a lever fixed to the rank in order to start the engine. And carbide lamps were fixed to the motorcar instead of electric bulbs. Later the power generated from batteries was utilized for electric systems. It was in this era that the electric horn also came into use. Before that something like a rubber balloon was there to produce sound by the pressure generated when it is squeezed. Therefore it was termed 'bulb horn'.

Both wood and metals were mostly used to create the outer parts of vehicles. Parts like lamps were made of metals like brass. Tanned leather was used for seats. Petrol can, air pump, grease pump needed in getting the vehicle serviced and tools used for every function like repairing

punctures should be carried in the vehicle and spaces required for them were provided separately inside and outside of the vehicle. Most of the time two spare wheels were there allocated for long journeys. These conditions affected the increase and decrease of spreading rate of motorcars.

Results and Discussion

Regional expansion

When motorcars arrived to Sri Lanka at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century was gradually established across the country, factors such as social class and caste had a direct impact. Likewise in the 20th century with the commencement of registration of motorcars established as an industrial unit in the country, a pattern could also be seen in how it was spread regionally. Even though a motorcar with a steam engine had been imported to Sri Lanka in 1889 for the first time it had not been registered, but with the increase of import, motorcar registration was commenced in 1928. The country was divided into 26 districts giving them a letter of the alphabet from A to Z and motorcars were registered depending on the district that the importer of the vehicle belonged to. By the year 1928 a large number of motorcars had been imported to Sri Lanka since 1889 but any written information regarding them is not available. A certain idea on the spread of motorcars can be presented analytically related to the methodology of motorcar registration started from 1928.

In the latter part of the 19th century and the early part of the 20th century the society of this country obviously had embraced British customs and formalities. When people form their routine according to European life style, even transport activities are also definitely carried out according to that structure. Likewise by that time the motorcar technology had been doing a great revolution in the world as well. From one motorcar model a number of sub types having minor differences from each other were issued to the market (Milbern, 1959). It is a theory that, these technological changes or development create various needs in man's mind. Accordingly man's compulsory needs are fulfilled by the very technology which created those needs. As a result of it, by the year 1930 around 400 motor vehicle types had arrived to Sri Lanka as manifested by the classification of motor vehicles of Sri Lanka done in 1930. According to this archive report various models of motorcars, busses, lorries, tractors, trains, and motorbikes included in this classification "of motor vehicles by countries of origin, make and kind in use Ceylon on December 31, 1930" (published through the courtesy of the Director of Statistics, Colombo). Accordingly it seems that, parallel to the British colonization era and in the post colonized era the unit called transport was gradually structured inside man and expanded with a diversification by 1930.

When we examine how motor vehicles imported to Sri Lanka were spread in various regions in the country obviously a district wise division can be seen. As per the division of districts in 1928 a single letter of the alphabet was given to each district as following

Motor Vehicles Imported into Ceylon were Allotted the Letters of the English Alphabet by Districts prior to 1940 Irrespective of the Type of Vehicle or the Fuel Used. The Maximum Number for a Letter was 9999.

ALPHABET

DISTRICT

A	ColomboDistrict
B	Kalutara
C	ColomboMunicipalCouncil
D	KandyDistrict
E	Matale
F	NuwaraEliya
G	KandyMunicipalCouncil
H	Jaffna
I	Mullaitivu
J	Mannar
K	Galle
L	Matara
M	Hambantota
N	Galle Municipal Council
O	Batticalo
P	Trincomalee
Q	Kurunegala
R	Puttalam
S	Chilaw
T	Anuradhapura
U	Badulla
V	Ratnapura
W	Kegalle
X (after C completed 9999)	Colombo MunicipalCouncil
Z	All Island

(Source: Website of The Vintage Car Owners Club)

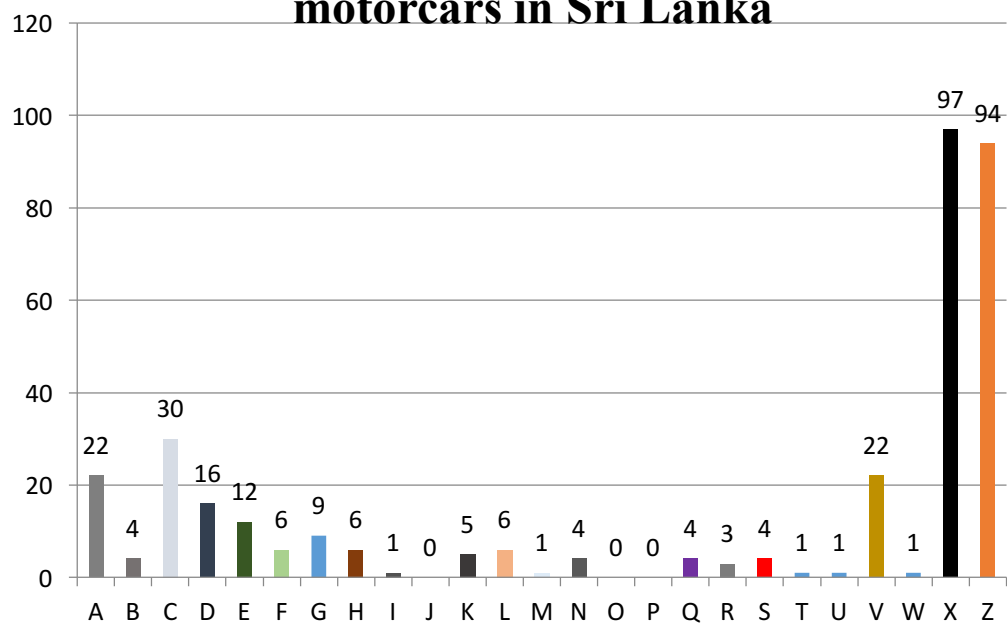
According to this chart each letter of the alphabet from A to Z had been given to each district in the registration of motor vehicles. And each letter was given the numbers from 1 to 9999. As per this table the letter given to Colombo district was A. The following table presents the analyzed data regarding the 400 motor vehicles obtained from this survey.

District		Number of vehicles
Colombo	A	22
Kalutara	B	04
Colombo Urban Council	C	30

Kandy	D	16
Matale	E	12
Nuwara Eliya	F	06
Kandy Urban Council	G	09
Jaffna	H	06
Mulativ	I	01
Mannar	J	00
Galle	K	05
Matara	L	06
Hambantota	M	01
Galle Municipality	N	04
Batticalo	O	00
Trincomalee	P	00
Kurunegala	Q	04
Puttlam	R	03

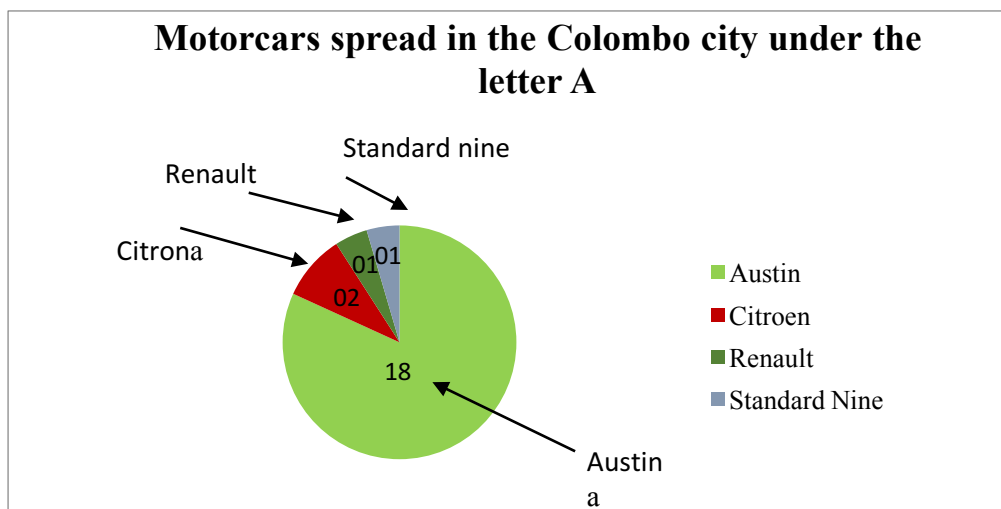
Chilaw	S	04
Anuradhapura	T	01
Badulla	U	01
Ratnapura	V	22
Kegalle	W	01
Colombo Urban Council	X	97
All Island	Z	94

The chart showing the regional spread of motorcars in Sri Lanka



This chart which analyses data regarding the old motorcars remaining today leads to the conclusion that motorcars had spread all over the country except Batticalo and Trincomalee, but depending on the unavailability of motorcars at present we cannot come to the conclusion that motorcars had not spread over those two areas, Batticalo and Trincomalee. We can assume that due to the factors such as terrorist acts and war activities prevailed in those areas, damages done deliberately to the ownership and separating motorcars into parts with the intention of obtaining spare parts, motorcars belonged to those two areas are not available at present. Anyway the analyzed data shows that motorcars had spread in other areas.

When examining the spread of motorcars regionally it is remarkable that a large number of motorcars had spread within Colombo and Colombo Municipality. Out of the motorcars imported to Colombo district in the 19th and 20th centuries 22 motorcars under the letter A and 30 under Colombo Urban Council area are remaining today. After 9999 motorcars were registered under the letter C, Colombo urban council area again had been given the letter X.



97 motorcars are manifested under letter X. Accordingly this huge spread of motor vehicles centered around “Colombo” should be examined logically. By 19th and 20th centuries all offices, departments, quarters, courts, hospitals and shops run under British government were centered within Colombo area. In addition to that the capitalistic class people also had migrated to Colombo building huge mansions. Many unprecedented needs were created within the Sri Lankan society and the British colonizers’ society structured in this manner. That was the main reason for the large number of motorcars representing this area.

Furthermore, road developments had also been done largely in Colombo City (Munasinghe 2000). Likewise the concept that the existence of cities depends on transport is also a contributing factor. No durability will be in cities without transport (Clark and Haswell 1970). When considering the types of motorcars spread in Colombo City the highway system must have had directly being supportive to them. Since main roads had been built in Colombo, various types of motorcars had spread in that area. 22 motorcars in Colombo District under A and 30 in Colombo Municipality under C were among the remaining old motor vehicles analyzed here. When examining the types of motorcars used depending on these factors Austin, Fiat, Peugeot, Rolls Royce, and Renault were among the 22 motorcars found in Colombo District. In Colombo District also mostly the Austin type has remained. Among the 30 motorcars in Colombo municipality under C, Fiat, Sunbeam, Austin, Norton, Morris Cowley, Buick, Vauxhall, Rolls Royce, and Citron motorcars were found remaining.

According to this data chart an obvious argument can be brought up. That is, within Colombo municipality expensive motorcars as well as somewhat rare, not frequently seen motorcars could be found. This leads to an obvious conclusion, the theory that the development of technology makes human needs complex. Motorcars with simple technology, suit to any geographical condition of Sri Lanka and made of easily available materials as well as motorcars which are expensive and import is very difficult being found in this area indicates that technology makes variety of creations, makes human needs complex and induce man to purchase kinds of things that he can afford.

In addition to that there was another remarkable visible characteristic within the municipal area in Colombo district; a group of people who expended the wealth and competitive strength of their colonized capitalistic class through various aspects had been centered in the Colombo area. They were not hesitant to spend a large portion of their wealth on new fashions and ornaments and latest architecture (Jayawardana, 2006). The wealthy people living in Colombo spent money particularly on building mansions like palaces containing bogus Italian decorations, huge gardens and attractive architectural features. What all these people wanted was to imitate the British. Among such mansions constructed in this era “Oliver Palace” of J. Peiris, “Dein Cort” of Bastian Fernando, “Hill Castle” of S. C. Obesekara and “Victoria Palace” of R. E .S. de Silva can be mentioned (*ibid.*). It is obvious that the assembly of these physical factors was just a stimulation making the motorcar an essential mode of transport. Among the architectural features of these mansions, there was a part of the mansion, similar to the large *portipo* driveway used for parking the motorcars in *walawwa* style (wealthy residence). Within this social atmosphere full of stimulating factors, motorcars had become an essential part of life. The main reason for the spread of expensive and very difficult to import motorcars like Rolls Royce in this area was the wealthy people living within the Colombo area.

The local capitalistic class emerged with the plantation industry imitated the traditions of the British rulers. The life styles and attitudes of the British officers, estate planters, and missionaries provided a template of values and mostly conventional. The local capitalistic class emerged absorbed into this narrow British tradition (Beckford,1973). This colonial British class was defined in the book – *Persistent Poverty: Underdevelopment in Plantation Economics of the Third World* by George Beckford. The use of motorcars in urban areas where the rich absorbed new colonial ideas was centered. Particularly, very expensive motorcars like Rolls Royce were found only in Colombo as a result of the culture created by a particular social group in a single area.

In addition, by the latter part of the 19th century, efforts were taken to add some British cultural features into the local society. Practices such as rearing dogs, establishing horse races, and participating in competitions were started imitating the British nobility (Wright,1907). Later this shifted from horses to motorcars. Accordingly we can come to the conclusion that the pattern of spread of motorcars within Colombo had been directly affected by the attitudes of people who were living there representing various classes of society, but not by the environmental factors.

In addition to these, we can indicate some other particular facts as superficial forces regarding the spread of motorcars in Colombo namely the diversification. When we look at the brand names of motorcars we can see a more diversified classification of motorcars than the motorcars spread in Colombo such as Rolls Royce and Cimon. The chart shows that while three expensive Rolls Royce motorcars had been spread in this area motorcars at normal prices such as Ford, Fiat, and Austin were also there. The reason for this use of diversified motorcars could be as we can assume the suppliers of services for British colonizers, politicians and

various prominent persons living in Colombo as well as common people particularly the normal middle class people living spread within the urban area. The politically powerful persons in Colombo such as James Peiris, Victor Koraya and E. A. Kure were famous as noticeable personalities in the area (Roberts 1979).

Moreover the quantity of the uncultivated lands possessed by the members of the legislative council by 1920 was remarkably large (Roberts,1979). The income from coconut estates had been spent on importing motorcars and purchase of more property. The tendency of the prominent people in this city boundary to seek marriage ties with rich families in the same area also had caused to bring the import of motorcars to a higher position. The concept of dowry led many rich people to import motorcars for their daughters. It was revealed that one of the Rolls Royce motorcars possessed by the Pereis family was a motorcar received as a dowry. James Peris, the son-in-law of Jakob de Mell was a person selected for the legislative council of Colombo (Jayawardana,2006). Upon marriage, James Peris received a beautiful mansion, a coconut estate, and a Rolls Royce motorcar as a dowry from Jakob de Mell (Jayantha, Vice-President of the Vintage Car Owners Club, pers. comm. 2010).

The motorcar companies in Colombo also increased the spread of motorcars within the city. Particularly Colombo Colonial Company and Ford Motor Company of India had been established in the city. When studying the old newspapers in archives, it was revealed that a leaflet had been distributed in order to popularize the Ford motorcar in Colombo. The Ford Motor Company of India located in Union Place, Colombo, and the advertising they carried out to popularize the Ford motorcar was very attractive: There's no other car like this. Popular Ford motorcar having the speed of 8 horses.

It seems that this language style encourages people to buy motorcars. Furthermore motorcar companies such as British Car Ltd., Tukes Company, and Rolland's Company, and motorcar repair shops mostly had been centered in Colombo. These facts also might have caused the increase of the use of motorcars in the city. In addition to that, since all the government offices, schools, houses of the people representing the highest layers of the capitalistic class, government hospitals, and courts had been centered in the Colombo transport system gradually became an essential service. Therefore after 9999 motorcars were registered under the letter C given to the Colombo for the registration of motorcars, the letter X had been again given to the Colombo Municipality. It was found during this survey that 97 motorcars out of the motorcars registered under the letter X are still available. Among them there were Austin, Citron, Morris Minor, Rolls Royce, Morris Cowley, M. G. Sporch, Morris Eyam, Hilmon, Ford, Fiat, Chevrolet, Austin Big, Austin Ruby, and Woolsey motorcar types. Accordingly both C and X were issued for the Colombo Municipality and this English letter was a major status symbol given to identify the district where the motorcar belonged.



Kalutara District – 4 motorcars

Accordingly it is obvious that people representing the highest layer of the new capitalistic class had lived close to the Kalutara District. That is why expensive motorcars such as Peugeot and Rolls Royce could be purchased. Particularly even mansions like the Richmond Castle had been located in this area. This newly developed capitalistic class invested their money by purchasing lands close to urban areas, particularly coconut estates in the Kalutara region. The income earned from estates could be spent for purchasing expensive motorcars to drive in the city. Therefore the most prestigious motorcars in the world like Rolls Royce as well as motorcars used by common people like Austin were spread in this area.

When we look at the spread of motorcars to Kandy, Nuwara Eliya, and Matale of the Central Province had been given the letters D, F, G and E respectively. When analyzing data according to this study it was confirmed that 16 motorcars in Kandy, 12 in Matale, 8 in Nuwara Eliya and 9 in Kandy urban council area are remaining today. Particularly it seems that in geographically difficult areas such as Nuwara Eliya and Matale, jeeps and light trucks were more spread than cars. Since transportation is difficult on roads running on mountains and hills obviously motor vehicles which can endure any geographical conditions had been used in all these four areas. Vehicles such as Fiat, Chrysler, Austin, Morris Cowley, Standard Coventry, Morris, Morris Minor, Champagne, M. G., Daimler Benz, Villias, Triumph, and Morris Eight spread in all these four districts.

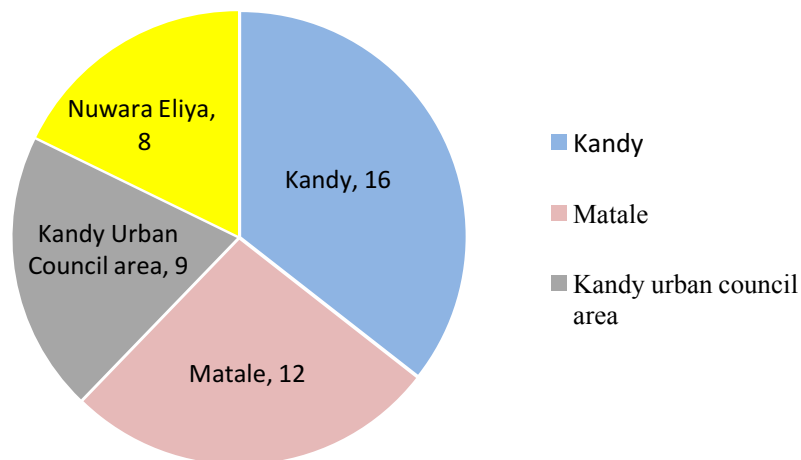


Chart showing the spread of motor vehicles in the Central Province.

Motor Vehicle	Kandy, D	Matale, E	Nuwara Eliya, F	Kandy Urban Council area, G
Austin	8	4	7	4
Morris Minor	1	1	1	
Morris Eight				2
Daimler Benz		1		
Champagne		1		
M. G.		1		

This chart shows that Austin type had been spread in all four areas namely Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Eliya, and Kandy Urban Council area in the Central Province. Vehicles such as Champagne, M. G. and Daimler Benz had not been spread in every area in the Central Province. Except Morris Eight type, all the other types namely Austin, Morris Minor, Daimler Benz, Champagne, and M. G. spread in the Matale area. The main reason could be a capitalistic class engaged in estate cultivation around the Matale area in the Central Province.

Another pattern of motor vehicles different from that of the Central Province can be seen in the North Eastern area of Sri Lanka. Very little data are available on the spread of motor vehicles within the three areas namely Jaffna, Mulathiv, and Mannar. Although 6 motorcars under the letter H symbolizing Jaffna and 1 motorcar under the letter I symbolizing Mulathiv were found, no motorcar registered in Mannar under the letter J was found. Accordingly based on the remaining factors we can see a low spread of motor vehicles over the northern area of Sri Lanka. A wide spread of BSA motor bikes is visible in Jaffna, but among the motorcars spread in Jaffna were all the three types namely Standard Nine, Austin, and Champagne. The only motorcar remaining in Mulathiv is a big American product called “Shavele” registered as I 33 and a wealthy businessman in Mulathiv had possessed it.

The study of the spread of motorcars in the districts of Galle, Matara, Hambantota, and Galle Municipality showed 5 motor vehicles in Galle, 6 in Matara, 1 in Hambantota, and 4 in the Galle Municipality. Motor vehicle types such as Austin, Ford, Fiat, Triumph, M. G., Morris Cowley and Vaux Hall had been spread there, but no expensive motorcar types were found in the southern region. Based on the remaining factors we can assume how the use of motorcars that can endure all the environmental and climatic conditions of Sri Lanka such as Austin and Morris were spread towards the south.

Motor vehicles registered under the letters O and P in Trincomalee and Batticalo respectively were not found remaining at present but for Kurunegala area under the letter Q 4 motorcars were found comprising of Austin, Chrysler, Albion, and Wolseley. In Puttlam and Chilaw representing the North Western Province, 3 and 4 motorcars were found respectively. The Renault type was there registered under the letter R symbolizing Puttlam and both Austin Ruby and Austin Seven were among the limited number of motorcars found in Chilaw. One motorcar registered under the letter T indicating Anuradhapura area was found and motorcar type termed Fiat Tipo registered under the letter U in Badulla District had been possessed by B. Ponnambalam. It is remarkable to see 22 motorcars with the letter V in the Ratnapura area. Under the letter W representing Kegalle a motorcar called W 963 was found.

During the final phase of this divisional registration, the issuing the letter Z for the whole island had been started. All the above mentioned motor vehicles had been registered under the letter Z as well.

Conclusion

According to the findings of this study, it can be concluded that despite its novelty, the motor car was spread among all regions of Sri Lanka during the latter part of the 19th century and early 20th century

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