

## **Vintage cars a luxury in British Raj: a case study of different museum and private collections**

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### **Abstract**

Transport is a part of our day to day lives, and in seeing cars, everyone feels a connection and pride in owning it. In India the first car ran on roads in 1897. Prior to independence in the 1940s India had no automobile industry to speak of. Cars were brought into the country in a knocked down condition from England. They were reassembled to serve the minuscule market provided by the British ruling class and some Indian elites. The presence of such vehicles led to the birth of an indigenous spare parts industry mostly concentrated in the south of the country. Road Transport in India grew rapidly after 1947 owing to rapid growth in urbanization and per capita income and to the vehicle production moving there. Museums and Private collections in India have different hues and designs of yesteryears car from British Raj period. 'Vintage cars' are the cars according to National Green Tribunal, any car manufactured between 1920 and 1939 is known as vintage car and those between 1940 and 1979 as classic cars. Collectors in India have pre- and post-world war cars, which were manufactured before and after World War 2. These collections mostly hail from "Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh. These were prosperous towns and many Zamindars and rich merchants owned such beautiful pieces. There are so many stories linked to these cars that are why people come to the museum. They can love art and yet not be able to relate personally, to a statue or a painting, but they can easily relate to their family car and the adventures you have had in it. They are part of the heritage of India, and should be displayed and learnt about. This paper is based on the case study of the luxury of cars used by rich people and local rajas, banyas during British Raj.

**Key Words:** *Vintage cars, Raja, Zamindar, Museum, Art, Collection, Wheels*

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