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## The reversed Car

In 1959 two vehicles were built under the name 'Projet 900' at Renault, which had a very unusual design: It was simply the visual "wrongness" of the usual appearance of a car – the part that the viewer saw as the rear end was at the front and the look of front end, which was generally equipped with a long bonnet, was to be found at the rear end. Responsible for this reversed creation was 53-year-old Renault engineer Fernand Picard, who already designed the type 4CV and the shape of the model Dauphine.

Fernand Picard had two bodies of the Renault 900 done by commissioned body makers. One design was made by the Italian designers at Ghia and another one by the Frenchman Andre Daniel. A third design; made by Robert Barthaud; did not progressed beyond the theoretical stage. Both vehicles had in common that a V8 engine served as a drive, but in one version it was installed close to the rear axle whereas the other version had its engine fitted at the front. It is not known what exactly was tested with the

two experimental vehicles, but it is known that extensive tests have taken place at the Renault site in Lardy. Only some keywords became publicly known. The tests seem to have placed great importance on safety aspects. However, these tests did not lead to the desired result. Above all weak points it was probably the installation of the front seats directly above the front wheels, which caused the most safety concerns. Overall, the whole construction could not convey a feeling of great safety to the driver. Another problem that could not be avoided was the trunk, which was only accessible through the two rear doors. In order to ease the loading of luggage, the back seat could be moved, but even this "trick" was very cumbersome.

Ultimately, it must have been the multitude of apparently intractable difficulties that brought the whole concept to a standstill. But this was only the technical point of view. But there would also have been the extraordinary look, which – to put it mildly – still needs getting used to today.

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