

Voiture Minimum

Le Corbusier and the Automobile

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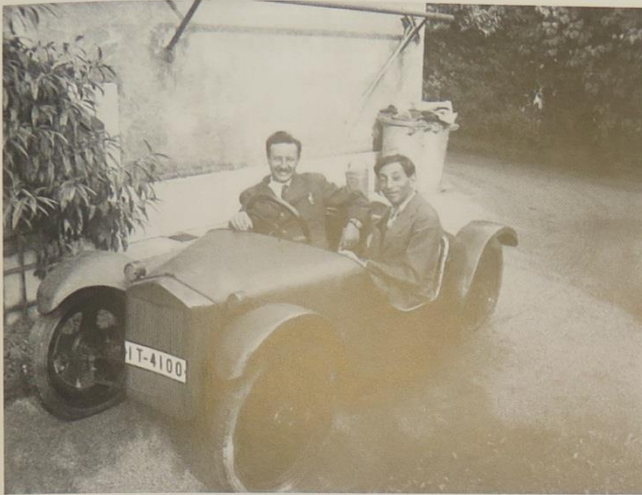
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**In dieser Publikation stiess ich wieder auf das leide Thema:
« In wie fern haben Konstrukteure und Erfinder
den Anderen über die Schulter geschaut...? »**

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The Hungarian engineers Paul Jaray, an aerodynamics specialist, and Josef Ganz in the 1931 Maikäfer, the technical foundation for the Standard Superior. (SCH)

**auch wenn Jaray beisass,
ist keine Aerodynamik zu erkennen;-)**

Das Wort «Volkswagen» :



deutschen Volkswagen
STANDARD „SUPERIOR“

Nur noch RM. 1590.- ab Werk

wurde allgemein für Reklame benutzt

Advertising for the 1933 Standard Superior, in which the term "deutschen Volkswagen" ("German people's car") appears. (SCH)

Josef Ganz (1898–1967)

The history of Volkswagen, one of the best selling cars of all time and popularly known in various countries as the Beetle, Escarabajo, Bug, Vocho, or Fusca, has a unique and surprising beginning that goes back to the pre-World War II era. This era was characterized by the mixture of specialized design and engineering, powerful economic and political factors, and even various episodes of industrial espionage. In 1933 Adolf Hitler personally inaugurated, as he did each year, the automobile show that exhibited the latest offerings from German manufacturers. At the show he was introduced to the experienced engineer Josef Ganz who since the twenties had studied the manufacture of minimalist automobiles and had been developing various prototypes. These included the 1931 model Maikäfer, which would be used as the mechanical foundation for his later vehicles.

Ganz was not just competent technically; he was also an automobile engineering theoretician and editor in chief of the specialized magazine *Motor-Kritik* in which he continually argued the need for a popular German automobile. Collaboration between Josef Ganz, responsible for the technical side, and another Hungarian engineer, the aforementioned aerodynamics specialist Paul Jaray, would give rise to an important automobile model when in 1933 they made adjustments to the Maikäfer to create an improved and aerodynamic version called the Standard Superior. It was marketed as a German *deutschen Volkswagen* (people's car).¹ Although Hitler did not drive he was very interested in automobiles in general and particularly in the models produced by the Mercedes-Benz brand. An avid reader of specialist magazines and an enthusiastic follower of motor racing, he considered himself to be an expert on the subject of automobile engineering.² His interest in this area

1/ In reality the terms "Volkswagen" and "Volksauto" were used interchangeably.

1-2/ Patton, *Bug*, pp. 7–8.

increased during his time in prison as a result of reading the memoirs of Henry Ford, entitled *My Life and Work*. This book, which made the industrial developments in America famous, was a best-seller in interwar Germany. It gave Hitler the idea of creating a German "popular automobile" for the Third Reich, a model similar to the popular Ford Model T in the United States.

Before the Second World War there was very little motorization in this Central European country, as can be seen from the fact that in 1932 there was one automobile for every one hundred people in Germany while the figure for the United States was one for every six people.² The appealing name "people's car" used for Ganz's creation perfectly matched Hitler's political ideas and as a result the government approached the engineer about the possibility of constructing a prototype for subsequent mass production. Shortly after his promising interview with the Führer, his Jewish family was arrested – his Konstruktionsbüro was raided. Other important engineers such as the aerodynamics specialist

Ganz's vielversprechendes Interview mit dem Führer auf das Thema Volkswagen fruchtete nicht, im Gegenteil Ganz wurde arrestiert – sein Konstruktionsbüro ausgeraubt. Bezeichnung Volkswagen wurde «reserviert»...

Ähnlich erging es Rumpler. In den Wirren landeten Unterlagen sogar bei Tatra. Auch dort war man dabei einen Wagen fürs Volk zu bauen.

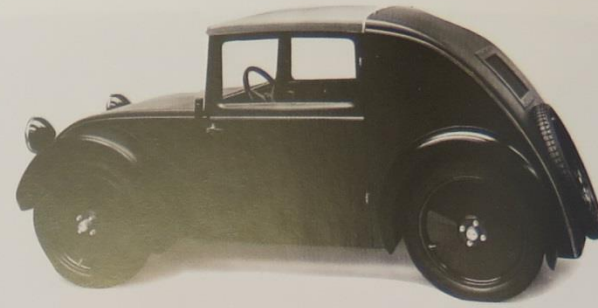
Hitler erreichte gerichtlich den Stopp dieser Bemühungen

Rumpler was similarly detained by the Gestapo. He was not the only technician in this situation and other important engineers such as the aerodynamics specialist Rumpler was similarly detained by the Gestapo. He was not the only technician in this situation and other important engineers such as the aerodynamics specialist...
 The staff of Ganz brought this ambitious project to an end and also had wider implications including the unlawful appropriation of his patents, later handed over to the Czechoslovakian brand Tatra. This was the same factory was working on an idea for a small automobile that would later lead to the launch of the model V570-2 ("The type of automobile that I want for my free ways" said Hitler). Once the war was over a combination of circumstances would give rise to a strange lawsuit by Tatra against Volkswagen trying to prevent Ganz from selling his own designs. The courts, however, ruled against the Czech brand and ordered that they cease manufacturing the Tatra V570-2.¹

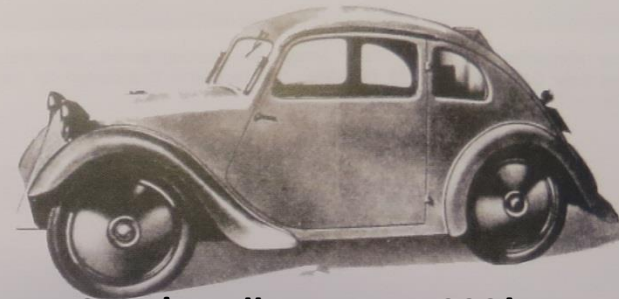
Mehr über Ganz's, Volkswagen und Porsche is auf:

www.ganz-volkswagen.org

¹ From the book "The Volkswagen: The Unknown Origins of the Volkswagen by Josef Ganz." *How the Nazis Discarded One of History's Greats* by the Dutch writer Paul Schilperoord (www.ganz-volkswagen.org).



An early version of the Standard Superior by Josef Ganz. (SCH)



Ganz's Volkswagen 1933!

1933 Standard Superior, the "first people's car" with wooden bodywork. It was produced until 1939. (SCH)



gleichzeitig mit Tatra

1933 Tatra V570-2, inspired by the previous model.

und die Story wiederholte sich mit dem Tatra T 97

Eventually, Ganz and lived in van in Australia. In Ferdinand Porsche free from the su his activities fo were "genuine."



Plans for an aerodynamic body

1/ José C