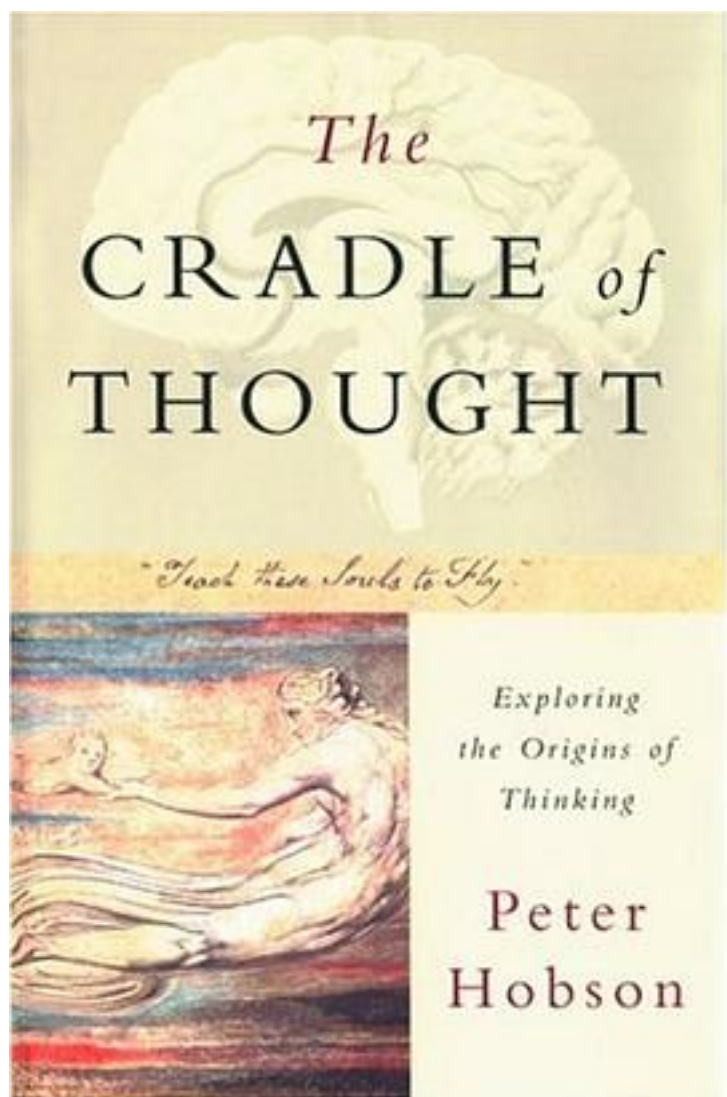


# The Cradle of Thought



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著者:HOBSON

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Imaginative and creative thought is what distinguishes humans from animals. It is what defines us as Homo sapiens. What it means to have thoughts, and what gives us the remarkable capacity to think, have been subjects of debate for centuries. In *The Cradle of Thought*, Peter Hobson presents a new and provocative theory about the nature and origins of uniquely human thinking. A prevailing opinion on the acquisition of thought and language is that babies are born with pre-programmed modules in the brain. But this is too narrow and too simplistic an explanation. Professor Hobson's radical view is that what gives us the capacity to think is the quality of a baby's exchanges with other people over the first 18 months of life. As part and parcel of an intellectual revolution in the second year, the child achieves new insight into the minds of itself and others. Human thought, language, and self-awareness are developed in the cradle of emotional engagement between infant and caregiver; social contact has vital significance for mental development. Professor Hobson draws on 20 years of clinical experience and academic research as a developmental psychologist, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst. He follows the thread of mental development over the first 18 months of a baby's life to describe and to explain the emergence of thinking; he shares startling insights into mental development gained from his studies of autism; and he shows how, from infancy to adulthood, disturbances of thinking may be rooted in troubled early relationships. Finally, he pinpoints tiny but momentous changes in the social relations of pre-human primates from which human thought sprang. In this fascinating and thought-provoking book, Peter Hobson shows how very early engagement with others fosters the child's growth out of the cradle of infancy and into the realm of human thought and culture.

作者介绍:

目录:

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评论

小于9个月的幼儿，接触到陌生的事物时，幼儿会依直觉反应；即使是对无害的玩具，当幼儿直觉感到惧怕时，他不会因旁人的态度而转变态度。在此初期发展阶段，幼儿并不真的“自由”，因为他受限于自身的任意性。然而，大约从9个月开始，幼儿反应会不同，当遇到不确定的对象物时，幼儿会将目光转向母亲或看护者，如果他们显示出鼓励或愉快的态度，幼儿会转变原先的反应方式。这个微小的转变，在发展心理学上有重大意义，这反映了幼儿与特定照护者之间建立起实质信任和情感联系，从而使得幼儿获得一种关键的观点认取能力。与初期不同，幼儿不再受限于自身单一观点。霍布森引用皮亚杰所说，若仅能有一个观点，那么这其实称不上“观点”所以称不上进行选择，也

就没有自由可言。而会因为情感上对他人已有的承认，察觉到不同的人对同一事物会有不同的反应方式。

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书评

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