

# The Genevan School: How Piaget Redefined Child Intelligence

Authored by  
**mohammad looti**

June 16, 2026

## RECOMMENDED CITATION

mohammad looti (2026). *The Genevan School: How Piaget Redefined Child Intelligence*. PSYCHOLOGICAL SCALES. Retrieved from <https://scales.arabpsychology.com/?p=37981>

## Second Generation Francophone Psychology

In 1918, Jean Piaget (1896-1980) turned away from his early training in Natural History and began post-doctoral work in psychoanalysis in Zurich. In 1919, he moved to Paris to work at the Binet-Simon Lab. However, Binet had died in 1911 and Simon lived and worked in Rouen. His supervision therefore came (indirectly) from Pierre Janet, Binet's old rival and a professor at the Collège de France.

The job in Paris was relatively simple: to use the statistical techniques he had learned as a natural historian, studying molluscs, to standardize Cyril Burt's intelligence test for use with French children. Yet without direct supervision, he soon found a remedy to this boring work: exploring why children made the mistakes they did. Applying his early training in psychoanalytic interviewing, Piaget began to intervene directly with the children: Why did you do that? (etc.) It was from this that the ideas formalized in his later stage theory first emerged.

In 1921, Piaget moved to Geneva to work with Edouard Claparède at the Rousseau Institute. In 1936, Piaget received his first honorary doctorate from Harvard. In 1955, the International Center for Genetic Epistemology was founded: an interdisciplinary collaboration of theoreticians and scientists, devoted to the study of topics related to Piaget's theory. In 1969, Piaget received the "distinguished scientific contributions" award from the American Psychological Association.