参考译文：

戏剧的起源

In seeking to describe the origins of theater, one must rely primarily on speculation, since there is little concrete evidence on which to draw. The most widely accepted theory, championed by anthropologists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, envisions theater as emerging out of myth and ritual. The process perceived by these anthropologists may be summarized briefly. During the early stages of its development, a society becomes aware of forces that appear to influence or control its food supply and well-being. Having little understanding of natural causes, it attributes both desirable and undesirable occurrences to supernatural or magical forces, and it searches for means to win the favor of these forces. Perceiving an apparent connection between certain actions performed by the group and the result it desires, the group repeats, refines and formalizes those actions into fixed ceremonies, or rituals.

由于几乎没有具体材料可供研究，探寻戏剧的起源只能凭推测。19 世纪末 20 世纪初为人类学家们所拥护的一种理论得到了世人的广泛认同；这种观点认为戏剧起源于神话和宗教仪式，这些人类学家们推论过程可简要概括如下：在社会发展早期，人们相信有股力量可以影响甚至操控他们的食物供应和幸福生活。在对自然原因并不十分了解的情况下，他们把希望或不惜希望发生的事情都归咎于超自然的或魔幻的力量，并且试图寻找各种途径赢得这些力量的厚爱。当他们意识到自己的某些行为和期许的结果之间存在明显的联系以后，人们便开始重复并且完善这些行为，最终形成固定的典礼或宗教仪式。

Stories (myths) may then grow up around a ritual. Frequently the myths include representatives of those supernatural forces that the rites celebrate or hope to influence. Performers may wear costumes and masks to represent the mythical characters or supernatural forces in the rituals or in accompanying celebrations. As a people becomes more sophisticated, its conceptions of supernatural forces and causal relationships may change. As a result, it may abandon or modify some rites. But the myths that have grown up around the rites may continue as part of the group’s oral tradition and may even come to be acted out under conditions divorced from these rites. When this occurs, the first step has been taken toward theater as an autonomous activity, and thereafter entertainment and aesthetic values may gradually replace the former mystical and socially efficacious concerns.

故事（神话）在这种仪式中发展起来，这些故事中经常会有仪式庆祝或期望影响的超自然力量的典型。在这种仪式或伴随的庆典中，表演者们可能会穿上戏装和面具来扮演神秘的角色或超自然力量。当人们认识事物的能力进一步加强的时候，他们对超自然力量以及与其引发的事件间因果关系的认识就发生了改变；于是，他们会抛弃或者修改某些仪式。不过在这些仪式中发展起来的神话故事继续在人们的口头流传，甚至可能脱离了仪式而被演绎着。这时侯，戏剧做为一种自发的活动迈出了自己的第一步，接着，戏剧的娱乐和审美价值开始渐渐取代先前的带有神话色彩的、在社会上灵验的关注。

█Although origin in ritual has long been the most popular, it is by no means the only theory about how the theater came into being.█ Storytelling has been proposed as one alternative. █Under this theory, relating and listening to stories are seen as fundamental human pleasures.█ Thus, the recalling of an event (a hunt, battle, or other feat) is elaborated through the narrator’s pantomime and impersonation and eventually through each role being assumed by a different person.

尽管戏剧起源于宗教仪式的说法是目前最被大众认可的，但无论如何这都不是戏剧起源的唯一理论；另一种推测认为戏剧源于说书。在这个理论中，与故事产生联系和聆听故事被视为是人类基本的乐趣。因此，讲述人通过自己的手势和模仿把对一个事件的回忆（一次打猎、战役或是其它功勋伟业）表现的淋漓尽致，这种方式最终演变成为由不同的人来演绎不同的角色。

A closely related theory sees theater as evolving out of dances that are primarily pantomimic, rhythmical or gymnastic, or from imitations of animal noises and sounds. Admiration for the performer’s skill, virtuosity, and grace are seen as motivation for elaborating the activities into fully realized theatrical performances.

另外一种与之相关的理论认为，戏剧主要是从无声的、有节奏的舞蹈、体操，或模仿动物声音的过程逐渐演变而来。人们对表演者的演技、审美能力和优雅的欣赏被视为是表演者将他们的表演精心策划为戏剧的动力。

In addition to exploring the possible antecedents of theater, scholars have also theorized about the motives that led people to develop theater. Why did theater develop, and why was it valued after it ceased to fulfill the function of ritual? Most answers fall back on the theories about the human mind and basic human needs. One, set forth by Aristotle in the fourth century B.C., sees humans as naturally imitative—as taking pleasure in imitating persons, things, and actions and in seeing such imitations. Another, advanced in the twentieth century, suggests that humans have a gift for fantasy, through which they seek to reshape reality into more satisfying forms than those encountered in daily life. Thus, fantasy or fiction (of which drama is one form) permits people to objectify their anxieties and fears, confront them, and fulfill their hopes in fiction if not fact. The theater, then, is one tool whereby people define and understand their world or escape from unpleasant realities.

为了进一步探寻戏剧的起源，一些学派开始从人类发展戏剧的动机上建立理论。为什么戏剧会发展，为什么在戏剧完全脱离宗教仪式以后还有这么大的价值？大部分答案都回到那些关于人类心智和人类基本需求的理论中。首先，亚里士多德在公元前 4 世纪提出，人们天生好模仿，并从模仿他人、事物和动作以及观看模仿中获得乐趣。另外，20 世纪提出的先进理论认为人类擅长幻想，通过幻想将日常生活中的现实重塑成更加令人满意的形式。因此，人们通过幻想或虚构（戏剧的一个形式）把他们的焦虑和恐惧具体化，再通过这种方式面对焦虑和恐惧，并从虚构中满足他们现实中无法实现的愿望。所以，戏剧成为了一种帮助人们认识和理解这个世界，或是帮助人们逃避不满现实的工具。

But neither the human imitative instinct nor a penchant for fantasy by itself leads to an autonomous theater. Therefore, additional explanations are needed. One necessary condition seems to be a somewhat detached view of human problems. For example, one sign of this condition is the appearance of the comic vision, since comedy requires sufficient detachment to view some deviations from social norms as ridiculous rather than as serious threats to the welfare of the entire group. Another condition that contributes to the development of autonomous theater is the emergence of the aesthetic sense. For example, some early societies ceased to consider certain rites essential to their well-being and abandoned them, nevertheless, they retained as parts of their oral tradition the myths that had grown up around the rites and admired them for their artistic qualities rather than for their religious usefulness.

但是，无论是人类模仿的本能或是对幻想的嗜好本身都不能发展成为独立的戏剧，因此，我们需要更多解释。一个必要的条件可能是一种要脱离通常人们看待问题的视角。比如，这个条件的一个标志是喜剧构想的出现，因为喜剧要求足够的发散思维，我们需要将社会规范中的离经叛道的行为视作极其荒谬的事情，而不是对公众群体福利的严重威胁。另一个导致戏剧独立的条件是审美感觉的出现。例如，一些早期社会的人们认为有的仪式对他们的幸福生活来说不再是必需品，并且取消了那些仪式。虽然如此，人们还是保留了那些口头传述故事的传统并且热爱从这些仪式里发展起来的神话，出于它们的艺术性，而不是宗教原因。