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What does a vision of a nation state sound like?

This paper examines the Swedish language and its relation to the Swedish nation state. I want to show how language together with the human voice is in between aesthetics and politics or theatre and society in two different examples.

1 King Gustav III (1746-1792) used the Swedish language as a powerful factor in the creation of a Swedish nation state. By founding a school for acting and introducing declamation, one of its major subjects, as the link between voice and language he was able to use the theatre as a forum for his politics. The king used the spoken Swedish language as a powerful tool, both politically and aesthetically.

2 The formation of (adult) educational associations by the working-class movement in the beginning of the 20th century is another illustrating example of how voice and language can be treated as powerful tools, as important political factors concerning for example class and social status. Articulate speech became at that time something sought after, not only within the theatre. In this paper, I hope to shed some light on things in between and to ask what in between sounds like today.