

ᚱ ᚢᚦᚦ ᚱ ᚱᚰᚱᚱᚱ ᚱ ᚦᚱ ᚱᚱ

The Principles of Stáv

Stáv is a 1500 year old tradition of mind/body/spirit training handed down from generation to generation by the Hafskjold family in Norway.

Stáv is the study of reality, learning to see and seek to understand the nature of Orlog, the primal-law of the universe.

Stáv literally means: 'knowledge of the rune staves' the runes being archetypal symbols which have been used in Northern Europe for thousands of years. The runes have many forms and uses, the Hafskjold-Stáv teachings are a living tradition of using the runes in everyday life.

Stáv provides a means by which you can find health and wholeness in your body through daily practice of the Stances, simple, yet powerful exercises derived from the runes. Learn to focus your mind and see through the distracting illusions that so often confuse and discourage us. Follow your own path to fulfilment by becoming aware of your Wyrð (destiny) and live true to yourself, your true purpose and real values.

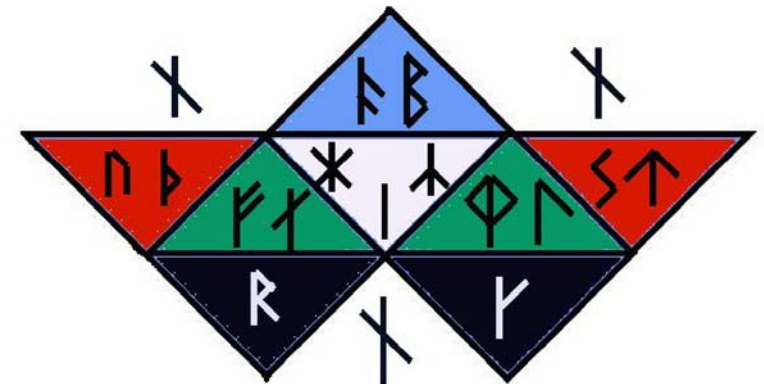
This Booklet will provide you with a brief and easily comprehended explanation of the terminology and concepts used in the Hafskjold-Stáv tradition. An invaluable guide for anyone embarking on a Study of Stáv.

\$6

ᚱ ᚢᚦᚦ ᚱ ᚱᚰᚱᚱᚱ ᚱ ᚦᚱ ᚱᚱ

ᚱ ᚢᚦᚦ ᚱ ᚱᚰᚱᚱᚱ ᚱ ᚦᚱ ᚱᚱ

The Principles Of Stáv



An Introduction to the Principles and Concepts of the Hafskjold-Stáv Tradition

by David Stone

based on the teachings of

Ivar Hafskjold

ᚱ ᚢᚦᚦ ᚱ ᚱᚰᚱᚱᚱ ᚱ ᚦᚱ ᚱᚱ



Contents

1. Introduction	Page 1
2. Philosophies	Page 3
3. Runes	Page 22
4. Classes	Page 25
5. Stáv Structure	Page 28
6. Energies	Page 31
7. Festivals	Page 32
8. Index	Page 36
What next?	inside back cover

The Principles of Stáv By David Stone

First Edition Published July 1999 by:

Stáv Marketing and Publishing Ltd.

Now published by Stav Books Kidlington, UK

Distributed in the USA by Ice and Fire USA

<http://www.iceandfire.us>

Copyright David Stone 1999

<http://www.iceandfire.org>



Stáv Training in the USA

Courses are held throughout the year and details of current and forthcoming events can be obtained from the websites (see details inside front cover) or by sending a SAE to Ice and Fire; PO Box 2179; Fairfax VA 22031 or phone 703 447 7310

Other Publications from Stáv Books

Books on Stáv

Book: Stáv the Fighting System of Northern Europe The martial aspect of Stáv. By Graham Butcher \$9 plus \$.50 P&H

Booklet: This is Stáv A comprehensive introduction to the Hafskjold-Stáv tradition by Graham Butcher

Booklet: The Principles of Stáv The terminology and concepts of Stáv explained by David Stone

Booklet: The Festivals of Stáv An Introduction to the festivals and natural cycles important in the Stáv tradition by David Stone

Booklet: A Book of Runes a guide to the meanings, associations and mythological connections of the runes by Graham Butcher

Booklet: Stáv for Health and Well Being The health benefits of practising Stáv by David Stone and Graham Butcher

Ordering

All booklets \$6.50 each including P&H or order all 5 for \$25 inclusive.

Please make checks payable to: Michelle Tracey and send to: PO Box 2179; Fairfax VA 22031



The Principles of Stáv

Index

All Thing	35	Line	4
Apprentice	29	Lokk Seid	15
Aspects	3	Master	28
Baldersvaki	34	Megin	31
Bind Rune	25	Member	29
Chief Instructor	28	Mott	31
Classes	25	Myrk Galdre	13
Festivals	32	Ond	32
Futhork	23	Örlög	7
Fylgia	27	Practitioner	29
Galdre	12	Summer Day	34
Galdre Stances	14	Summer Thing	34
Ginning	11	Tein Seid	15
Grand Master	28	Trell	26
Haminja	9	Utsette	18
Hafskjold	1	Valknut	18
Heimbu	28	Vardlock	16
Herse	27	Ve	28
Horg	29	Web	3
Hov	28	Winter Day	33
Jarl	27	Winter Thing	34
Kenning	10	Wyrð	7
Konge	27	Yule	33

The Principles of Stáv

1. Introduction

Stáv

The word Stáv (pronounced STARV) is Norwegian and basically means stave or staff. This refers to the walking/fighting staff used in the martial arts, but more importantly it refers to the Runes. The Stáv system uses the Runes of the Younger Futhork, each Rune being a 'stave' The Runes are very much a key of Stáv, so the name can be interpreted as Knowledge, or Wisdom, of the Runes. The system of Stáv is a North European Mind-Body-Spirit system - comparable to the Oriental systems of Zen and Taoism - which has been followed for at least the last thousand years. Stáv includes a deep philosophical system, divination and magical practises, health and healing systems, a complete martial art system and a wide range of craft skills. However, it is much more than this: no aspect works in isolation from the rest. Stáv is a way of life, a philosophy in action, it is something that needs to be done rather than just thought about.

Stáv teaches principles rather than techniques: once these principles have been grasped it is possible to apply them to any circumstances and situations to resolve them satisfactorily.

At it's simplest - and most complex - Stáv teaches the ability to see Reality. Reality of ourselves and Reality of the World. Once we can see that Reality, we can learn to use it to our advantage and take full control of our lives.

Hafskjold

Hafskjold is the name of the noble Norwegian family that has kept the secret and practice of Stáv alive down the centuries. The family can trace it's descent back 44 generations, but family tradition takes the line, and the practise of Stáv, back at least 1500 years.

The Hafskjold family, like many North European families, developed it's own Mind-Body-Spirit system from the general cultural philosophies. Unlike most (indeed, at the time of writing, it is the only known one) it was powerful enough to withstand the pressure of the Medieval Church

The Principles of Stáv

which tried to stamp out what it saw as a Pagan practice.

Ivar Hafskjold is the current head of the Hafskjold family, and heir to the Stáv system. He learned it from his family, then spent fourteen years in Japan, applying and testing the principles against the Oriental Masters. In 1992 he came to Britain to teach the system. This was because, as the last of his heir to the complete system, if anything were to happen to him, Stáv would survive and could be taught to his children.

His four apprentices, Graham Butcher, Karl; David Watkinson, Herse; Ronayne Marten-Loderus, Jarl; Shaun Brassfield-Thorpe, Konge, have been granted the title of Master, and now teach Stáv independently, widening the knowledge of the system.

The Stances

The Stances are a stretching and breathing exercise system based on the Runes of the Younger Futhork. Every Rune is composed of a stem with lines radiating from it. Therefore it is possible to create the shape of each Rune by using the body with the arms and legs. This is done gently and deliberately in combination with breathing techniques, and has a threefold benefit for the practitioner: it is a form of gentle exercise that tones and relaxes the BODY; it centres and relaxes the MIND; it draws the essence of each Rune into the SPIRIT. In addition to these, performing the stances encourages and enhances the flow of Megin through the body.

The stances are performed in groups of two. The first starts facing North and presents each Rune to the East, the second set starts facing East and presents each Rune to the North. North is important in Nordic tradition as that is where the gods were believed to live. East is the direction of the sunrise, so both directions represent great guiding forces. Traditionally, the first set of Stances is performed at sunrise and the second at sunset, but they can also be done at the beginning and end of martial arts training, a healing session etc, to create a special set-aside time in between the two.

Performing the double set of Stances each day creates great benefits in all aspects of life and opens the practitioner to a more thorough understanding of the workings of Stáv.

The Principles of Stáv

See also Galdre Stances.

Aspects

The term Aspects refers to all the many and varied workings within Stáv. Most particularly it refers to the main focus of each of the Classes: crafts for the Karl, martial art for the Herse and healing for the Jarl (the Jarl is also the magic user of the system, but this is not a practise that everyone would want to get involved in). These are generalisations only - there are many more aspects within the Stáv system, and members of any Class can work on the ones they feel most naturally drawn to.

As a living, working system, Stáv includes literally all aspects of life, from the highest of spiritual aspirations, to the most mundane. They are not limited to traditional old Nordic aspects, either - although these are important to maintain. Since Stáv is an evolving system, nowadays the principles of Stáv can also be applied to aspects such as car maintenance and computer operating!

2. Philosophies

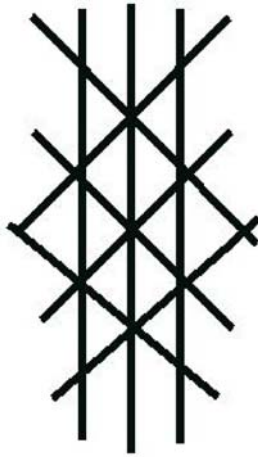
The Web

Philosophies of the Web

The fundamental principle of Stáv is the ability to see the Reality of any person, thing, concept or situation. To see the Reality is to see the world with no illusions, no barriers: you're not worrying about what was or trying to guess what may become. Rather you are focusing on the truth of what is, in all it's stark Reality. The Web is a graphical representation of that Reality.

It is depicted as nine lines but in truth it has an infinite number of lines and exists in all dimensions. These lines can be overlaid on a physical object to find it's innermost supportive structure. They can also be applied to concepts and situations to find the inner truth about them. Once this truth is known, the situation is understood and can be altered to fit your requirements. All these will be discussed in more detail later

The Principles of Stáv



on.

Some interpretation of the Graphical Web

The lines can be regarded as both supports and weaknesses. The supports can be seen as the supportive structure mentioned above, the weaknesses refer to the inner nature. Once the lines of anything are known, it is possible to work with them or around them, to exploit them or destroy them.

In their combinations of the magical numbers of three and nine, the lines can also be seen as the transition points between the Physical, Mental and Spiritual realms that the mind-body-spirit system of Stáv works with. Regarding it in this way, it can be seen that while each realm has it's own independent Reality, it is also firmly part of the whole structure. This reminds us that all true development has to include working on all three levels, none of them should be left out. The number nine also relates to the Nine Worlds of Nordic Mythology.

The number seven also has it's place within the Web, in that the Web can be made up of nine lines, or seven Hagl Runes. The Hagl Rune itself is made up of seven: the six points and the centre, as well as being the seventh Rune in the Younger Futhork. The number seven, and the Hagl Rune, is of significance in Hafskjold Stáv because the family claims

The Principles of Stáv

Thing is Old Nordic for a counsel or meeting. Normally it is pre-arranged, and is of some significance - not just a get together.

All-Thing:

This is an important, usually annual, counsel meeting. Traditionally it's to discuss changes in laws and to hear petitions and complaints. In Stáv, the All-Thing is the annual meeting in Beverley, Ivar's home town, around the time of Summer Thing. Interestingly, the tradition of All-Thing continues to this day in the Isle of Man where they hold an annual open air parliament on Tynwald Hill - an artificial mound on the site of the original meeting place of the Nordic settlers. New and amended laws are read out, and every citizen of the island has the right to present a petition. Tynwald comes from the Nordic 'Thing Voll' - Counsel Hill.

The Principles of Stáv

Summer Day

This festival equates to Mayday in the modern calendar and Beltane in the Celtic. In Norway it was the beginning of Summer, after the snows had melted around the time of the Equinox, and the main growing period. A time of joy and fertility.

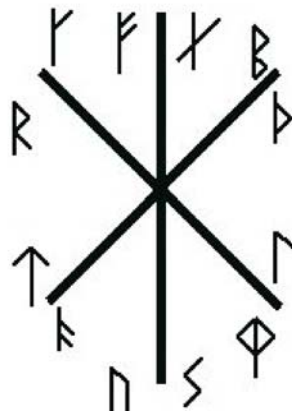
Baldersvaki

The term Baldersvaki means Baldur's Wake. This festival is the Summer Solstice, the longest day and shortest night. It's the busiest time of the year in all walks of life and is the peak growing period. At the same time, though, the year has reached its peak and begins to descend back towards Winter.

Summer Thing

This festival equates to Lammas or Lughnassad in the Celtic calendar, but doesn't seem to have an equivalent in the modern. It is the beginning of the harvest which traditionally lasts a month and culminates in the Harvest Feast. The whole period is a time of celebration of the bounty of the Earth, and a time of preparation for the coming Winter.

Thing



The Principles of Stáv

descent from Heimdall, whose Rune is Hagl.

There are twelve triangles within the Web, which can be seen as the twelve enclosures of the gods. There are ten triangles contained within the three uprights of the Web which can be equated with the five classes within Stáv. Again, this demonstrates how they are simultaneously separate and part of the whole. The lines and crossing points are the transitions between them all, and can form a 'ladder' or path leading the practitioner through each one to learn the unique lessons they have to offer.

Personal Webs

Each of us has a personal Web, unique to ourselves. These exist on physical, mental and spiritual levels. The physical Web, as has been mentioned, relates to our structure, our build, height, size etc.

The mental Web is our mind, our way of thinking and perceiving the world around us. It also forms the bridge between the physical Web of the Seen World and the spiritual Web of the Unseen.

The spiritual Web is a much more subtle, magical concept. It is related to intuition and spreads out all around us like a spiders web, picking up information on all matters that concern us. This can vary from Divine Inspiration - suddenly grasping an entire concept in a flash of enlightenment - to a sixth sense that something is happening behind you. This last can sometimes be demonstrated through martial arts by carrying the Jarl principle to further extremes than normal. The mental, and especially the spiritual Webs are key elements in understanding the magical aspects of Stáv.

The Web in Mythology

The most obvious web in Nordic mythology is the one being woven by the Norns. This is the Web of Reality in its most literal form, being the woven history of all Creation and its pathway for the future. The concept of the Norns and their Web will be explained in more detail in 'Örlög and Wyrð' below.

Perhaps a less obvious representation of the Web is that of Yggdrasil the World Tree. The very fact that the Web is the supportive structure of the

The Principles of Stáv

Universe is demonstration enough, but there are two other facets of this allegory. The first is that Odin hung himself on Yggdrasil and saw the Runes in it's roots. All the Runes can be found within the Web, and so the Runes can be regarded as being at the root of the Web: the Runes form the Web, the Web forms the Runes. The second is that two humans survive Ragnarok - and are thus able to continue human existence and knowledge - by hiding in Yggdrasil. This appears to be symbolic of how the Old Knowledge was encoded within the Web (ie, Yggdrasil) and could therefore be preserved. This is the basis of Stáv: all knowledge and wisdom in and of Stáv is encoded within the Web and the Runes.

This leads on to an interesting possibility. Ragnarok, as well as being the end of the world, could also be any ending where old knowledge risks being lost and needs to be retained. This can include cultural or religious upheavals where the old ways were altered or destroyed. It can also symbolise death, in which the knowledge accrued in one lifetime is forgotten and needs to be regained in future lives.

No doubt there are many other ways in which the Web is buried in the Nordic mythology, and other alternative views to be learned through them. It will be interesting to see the results of research done in this area.

Örlög, Wyrd and Hamingja

Örlög

Örlög is described in Nordic mythology as being the external law of the Universe. It seems at times to be a kind of 'Primal Goddess', an entity without beginning or ending, older and superior even than the gods and giants. The decrees of Örlög could not be set aside, and it was the pattern set by Örlög that the Norns wove, themselves bound by powers beyond their control.

'LOG', derived from Old Norwegian LAGU, means 'law', only it is a much broader, more binding, concept than our modern word. It also encompassed the concept of 'lore', knowledge and wisdom of the past, for use in the present. The term 'OR-LOG' means something along the lines of

The Principles of Stáv

Winter Day	approx 1st November
Yule	approx 2nd Jan
Winter Thing	approx 1st February
Summer Day	approx 1st May
Baldersvaki	approx 21st June
Summer Thing	approx 1st August

Winter Day

This festival equates to Hallowe'en in the modern calendar and Samhain in the Celtic. It was the first festival of Winter, a time for divination when magic was strongest and the veil between Midgard and Hel was thinnest. It is traditionally the end/beginning of the year.

Yule

The word 'Yule' has no satisfactory translation, but is generally taken to be from 'jol', wheel, and refers to the turning wheel of the year.

This festival is the Winter Solstice, the shortest day and longest night. Like Winter Day, it was considered to be an ending/beginning, as the Sun died and was reborn. It traditionally lasted twelve days, at the end of which it was just perceptible that the days were getting longer. This is the origin of our twelve days of Christmas, although in the wealthier households Yule could go on for weeks!

Winter Thing

This festival equates to Candlemas in the modern calendar and Imbolc in the Celtic, and was the last festival of Winter. In Norway, it is still thick winter at this time, but in the temperate zones spring is just showing it's earliest signs with snowdrops blooming and lambs being born.

The Principles of Stáv

bear in mind that Chi has been defined from Chinese philosophies and beliefs, also that Chi has undergone many centuries of research and observation. A similar process of research into Megin as defined by North European philosophy is needed, by examining it's functions within folklore and mythology (where it may be heavily disguised), it's use within the sacred sites and ley lines of European Geomancy, and it's function within the human body in healing and martial arts.

Ond

Ond is another (and, potentially, greater) form of magical energy. It can be interpreted as Breath of Life, but beyond that it is difficult to describe. However, it can be equated to the Chinese concept of Shen. This relates to pure Spirit, the state of being which all things ultimately come from and return to.

Ond may be indirectly referred to in the Nordic creation myth: when the first humans are formed, Odin is said to have breathed the Spirit of Life into them. This is has also been translated that Odin 'gave them souls'. This seems to be referring to Odin empowering them with Ond and thereby giving them life.

Ond can also be regarded as Thought. It is the level of Being that we crudely give human form and call 'God'.

7. Festivals

The traditional year was divided into Summer and Winter, each of which had three festivals. These related to the ebb and flow of the season, and the agricultural activities of the year. The festivals were a time to step back from the rigours of a hard life, to have fun and to reflect on what changes to make.

The six traditional Stáv Festivals are:

The Principles of Stáv

First Law, Primal Law, Ultimate Law (The Law, as in the Law or Word of God). Also, it could be seen as First Principle or Primal Layer. To sum up, and to greatly understate it, Örlög is the ultimate purpose, or great plan, of Creation.

Wyrð

In Nordic mythology, Wyrð was a primal goddess and was the mother of the Norns. Her only appearance in surviving mythology seems to be her declaration that Vidar, son of Odin, will survive Ragnarok.

The word Wyrð is Old English and means 'destiny'. From the same root comes Urd, one of the Norns, and the Germanic words Werth, Warth and Wurth, which mean 'become'. The root word means 'to turn' or 'to become' and relates to that which has become (past and present), and that which will become (future). The term Wyrð has been translated as 'Fate', but has a different meaning to the Greco-Roman concept of fate, as will be shown.

An interesting aspect of Wyrð is that it can be pronounced as 'Weird' or 'Word' and both of these reveal meaning within the concept of Wyrð. 'Weird' can mean fate or destiny, and the Fates (similar entities to the Norns) are sometimes called the Weird Sisters. Weird also means supernatural, unearthly, uncanny. This last is derived from un kenny - 'beyond our ken' or 'beyond our ability to know'. So the very word defies our ability to comprehend it.

'Word' can have very significant meaning within the concept of Wyrð. In the Gospel according to St. John (1:1), it is written that 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.' Not a Nordic source, granted, but a mystery tradition that links the Word (Wyrð) with the Creative Powers of the Cosmos, as the concept of Wyrð is. The entire world was created with words in the Judeao/Christian tradition, and even in Nordic traditions a great deal of score was set by words, both as sources of wisdom (and thus power), and as mysteries with spells and blessings being spoken.

Örlög and Wyrð

The Principles of Stáv

The definitions given above for Örlög and Wyrð indicate that they are aspects of the same thing, that thing being 'Destiny', the predetermined pathway that Creation follows. That can be somewhat misleading, however. It does not mean 'predetermined' in the sense of 'unavoidable'. Many people regard Destiny as being either an excuse for doing nothing and assuming Destiny will 'find' them; or an excuse for doing anything they want and 'blaming' it on Destiny. The twin concepts of Örlög and Wyrð have no place for either of these attitudes.

Instead, they are the natural course of one's life. Everybody is born with certain abilities: strengths in some areas, weaknesses in others. One's own Wyrð is the way these abilities will lead you through life. Problems, confusion, stress and depression arise when we try (whether through our own actions or external pressure) to work against it. This can be regarded as the Reality of our Life. Therefore Wyrð is related to the Web of Reality. The difference between Wyrð and the Web is that we can leave the path of our Wyrð, but the Web (the Reality) of our new situation will always remain with us, and will constantly be attempting to pull us back on course.

One of the principles of Stáv is to seek one's own Örlög and endeavour to work with it. This means learning to live with the Reality of yourself, using your strengths and accepting your weaknesses, while at the same time attempting to use them as strengths by working with them and not against them. This shows that, while living against your Örlög creates problems, living in accordance with your Örlög will not necessarily be easy, although it will be regarded as challenging rather than problematical.

The concepts of Örlög and Wyrð do not end here, however. All things have their own Örlög, their own Path of Reality. This includes concepts and situations. It also includes Creation itself. All individual Orlogs are facets of the Universal Örlög, and all are part of the great Web of Fate being woven by the Norns.

Hamingja

In the Hafskjold-Stáv tradition, the Hamingja was the force that was believed to run through the family. The lifestyle and conduct of the family

The Principles of Stáv

and spiritual worlds. Such items include, but are not limited to: candles; something which represents your class, folgie or patron deity; a blowing horn; a Hammer of Þór; a Runic inscription; a seasonal decoration at the festivals. Items can also be placed on the Horg as part of a ritual to bless them or consecrate them to specific tasks.

Any item placed on the Horg should be done so with care and thought, keeping in mind the purpose of the Horg and the symbolism of the item. Remember to keep the Horg uncluttered and clean.

6. Energies

Mott

Mott is the term for physical energy and strength. It is the kinetic power we use in everyday life for moving our bodies and other items. Our Mott is determined by how physically strong we are.

Mott is also the term for our physical body as a whole - our blood, bones, muscles etc. In the Healing Bind Rune, Mott represents the need for looking after our bodies, as well as the physical process for healing it when it goes wrong - through manipulation, massage, first aid, surgery etc. the physical means of healing.

On a much broader concept, Mott can represent all physical matter, the matter that makes up the entire visible Universe, but the term is rarely used in this way.

Megin

Megin is the 'Life Force' that flows through our bodies and keeps us healthy. A blockage or reduction of Megin can manifest as pain or illness. The Megin is kept up to level, and its movement clear, through regularly doing the Stances. Megin is also the principle magical energy within the Stáv system. This is a subtle (ie virtually imperceptible within the physical realms) energy field that permeates all things and holds all things together. Megin is the power source which provides the working force behind all acts of magic. Megin can be equated to the Chinese subtle energy, Chi. Indeed, so little is known of Megin that a broader understanding of it can be gained by studying the writings on Chi. However,

The Principles of Stáv

A member is anyone who has joined the Stáv Association and are paying, or having paid on their behalf, the annual subscription to Heimbu. This includes Master, Practitioners, trainees and apprentices, and also includes people who have joined but are not formally training in Stáv.

Horg

A Horg is essentially an altar. It is a focal point for meditation, prayers and deep contemplation, as well as a physical reminder of the more sacred side of life. It can be a tree, rock, well etc. that has special significance to you, or even a whole room set aside for meditation and contemplation. Usually, though, it is a more conventional altar set up specifically as a focal point.

Anybody can set up a Horg if they chose, while Practitioners and Masters really should have one as they are considered Priests of Stáv. Horgs can be set up by individuals for their own use, and they can also be set up as central Horgs within Ves and Hovs for their communities. A Horg should be set up so that when facing it you are facing North. It is unimportant what is used for the Horg: it can be a small table, or even a shelf. A small cupboard is particularly good, as you can keep things for the Horg inside it. What is important, though, is that the top surface be used only as a Horg: don't allow it to become a 'convenient surface' and let it get cluttered up with other things. The less the Horg contains the more closely your mind will be able to focus on it.

Two things every Horg should contain are a bowl and a twig or small branch of the tree relating to your class. The bowl is traditionally made of wood - although pottery or metal are fine - and can be used for holding consecrated water or mead for blessings, or for placing small offerings into, in gratitude and acknowledgement of the greater powers that all things ultimately come from.

Other items are largely up to the individual whether or not to put them on the Horg. A general guide is that anything you place on the Horg has significance to you, and helps make the connection between the physical

The Principles of Stáv

affected the Hamingja for good or ill. This can be regarded on a purely physical level, in which the Hamingja can be considered to be the family reputation. The actions of any member can affect the reputation of the entire family and can last through several generations. On a more esoteric level, the Hamingja can be seen as a many faceted 'soul', each facet of which was the separate soul of an individual person, and yet part of the joint soul of the entire family. It can be seen from this that the 'reputation' could affect the entire future of the family and the actions of one family member could create good, or bad, luck for many generations to come.

Each family was seen as coming from one of the deities, and so each individual was an extension of that deity. This is demonstrated in 'The List of Rig'. Also, the Anglo Saxon Chronicle lists many genealogies going back to Odin. Later, when Christianity became the leading religion, Odin was seen as being descended from Adam (for instance, the Parker Chronicle, AD853). The main purpose of this aspect of Hamingja was to attempt to lead a worthy life to eventually lead the family soul back to that deity.

After death, the individual soul would go to Hel - this was not a place of punishment, as in the Christian tradition, but a place of rest between incarnations. (In this, the figure of Hel as being half corpse and half beautiful woman represents the triple Goddess in the aspect of transforming from Crone to Maiden, embodying the concept of death and rebirth). Alternatively, the soul would go to Aesgard to reside in the hall of their family's deity: in other words, they would become one with their patron deity. This was a final destination, the soul would not be reborn again. This could be due to that particular individual having reached a level comparable to the Buddhist concept of Enlightenment, or to the entire Hamingja (family soul) being deemed worthy. There is a hall in Aesgard with a golden roof for these worthy dead.

In the Hafskjold tradition, a person could only be reincarnated back into their own family line - they remained part of their Hamingja. If the family line died out, and therefore the Hamingja came to an end, none of the souls could be reborn. They would either remain in Hel, or become ghosts. (Another belief was that when the family line died, the entire Hamingja went to Aesgard, but this seems a little too easy: entry into Aesgard should require more than simply being the last of your line.)

The Principles of Stáv

This explains the fierce loyalty to the family and the severe vengeance that could be instigated by the murder of a family member. Since their conduct also affected their Hamingja, it also explains the strong code of honour that the Nordic people lived by.

Hamingja also explains why it was such a great thing to die in battle: the individual soul would go straight to Aesgard and side step any further incarnations, thus negating the risk of permanent residence in Hel. Also there was the added kudos of becoming a warrior for the Gods.

Kenning and Ginning

Kenning

Like the dialect word 'ken', kenning basically means 'knowing', 'to know', and shares a root with the words 'canny' (especially uncanny), and 'cunning'.

The concept of kenning, however, goes much deeper and relates to wisdom - a very intense understanding, and the ability to apply the knowledge, rather than merely 'knowing' something. This is the level of knowledge needed for Stáv: anyone can 'know' what the Web is, or what Örlög is, but kenning is to truly understand it, up to your own ability. Another point with kenning is that this level of understanding can only be attained personally - through observation, thought and practise. It can not be gained simply by being told what something means.

The basic meaning of the concept of kenning is 'knowing Reality'.

Ginning

Ginning shares a root with our words 'conjuring' and 'juggling'. Juggling in this instance being the older form of the word, meaning to create illusions, to surprise and bamboozle. (The older Tarot decks call the Magician card the Juggler).

The basic concept of ginning is the creation of illusions. This includes 'stage' magic and sleight of hand, but it is more normally regarded as having more significance than just a form of entertainment. Ginning is

The Principles of Stáv

These are titles given to Ivar Hafskjold as head of Hafskjold Stáv. They are 'honorary' titles in the sense that they are not traditional, but they are, nevertheless, quite genuine and used with respect.

Master

A Master is someone who has a deep understanding of all the aspects of Stáv and, more importantly, can and does apply the principles of Stáv to all areas of life. They can work and teach in any aspect of Stáv, although they will usually specialise in one.

Only a Master can make someone else a Master, and then only after that person has spent time working at Heimbu to gain the approval of the Grand Master.

Practitioner

A Practitioner is someone who has a deep understanding of Stáv and has a good working knowledge of all aspects, but is only fully working in their own aspect.

A practitioner can teach their own students, but they can only teach a member of their own Class to practitioner level - ie, a Karl Practitioner can only teach another Karl up to Practitioner level, although they can still teach a member of any other Class.

Trainee

A trainee is someone who is studying Stáv regularly under a recognised teacher, but is not yet a Practitioner.

Apprentice

An apprentice is the same as a trainee, but who is studying directly under a Master in the traditional manner - ie one to one, not just a member of a Stáv group or class which has a Master as the teacher.

Member

The Principles of Stáv

situation, but in a focused way, not a bullying one. Meets conflict by confronting it through it's weaknesses. The Konge also understands the other classes and can apply any where they are needed.

Folgie / Fylgja

A Folgie is a person's animal guide, similar to the American Indian totemic animal. It is a spiritual / psychological ally that can help you learn aspects of yourself and other things while in meditation. The nature of the Folgie also determines which Class you belong to, each animal representing an aspect of one of the five Classes. The Folgie is discovered through a guided meditation.

5. The Structure of Stáv

Heimbu

Heimbu means Home Place, but can be considered to be the Spiritual Home of Stáv, it's point of origin. Heimbu represents the centre of the tradition and has the ultimate authority over all branches of Hafskjold Stáv. Presently, Heimbu is Ivar Hafskjold's home in Beverley. It may move physically, but spiritually it remains constant.

Hov

Hov means Temple, but is the 'jurisdiction' of a Stáv Master. It can be considered a branch of Hafskjold Stáv, as Heimbu is the centre. It could be considered a 'diocese', but with the head of it able to work on their own interpretation of Stáv.

Ve

Ve means Holy Place. It can be likened to a 'parish' within the 'diocese' of a Hov. Ves are run by Practitioners and are still working largely to the Stáv interpretation of their Master.

Grand Master / Chief Instructor

The Principles of Stáv

essentially making people see, think and believe what you want them to, and can be demonstrated in the martial aspects of Stáv where it is possible to take a 'hidden' step without your opponent seeing it, and by leaving your weapon on the line which hides the fact you've moved.

On a deeper level, ginning can be seen as the ability of creating your own Reality. At it's very crudest, this can be done through telling a lie (as long as it's believed) or, more subtly, by suggestion and repetition (such as propaganda, and techniques used in advertising). These can both create a Reality that can become more widely accepted than the 'real' one. This process continues into more subtle areas until it reaches the spiritual, or magical, realm, which involves the actual creation of Reality - God-like powers. An interesting possibility is that Ginnungagap, the Void between Nilfheim and Muspellheim, in which Midgard exists, can be interpreted as Ginning Gap. This leads to it being the Gap, or Void, of Illusion. This touches on various philosophical beliefs that the entire physical world is an illusion, a dream that we all believe to be 'real'. As with all dreams, once we become aware that we are dreaming, we can change what's happening to suit ourselves. Perhaps this awareness (kenning) is the true secret behind ginning.

Galdre and Seid

The Principles of Galdre

The literal meaning of Galdre is 'to crow', or 'crowing'. More generally, it means to speak or vocalise, and the concept of Galdre is to communicate.

It is more than just communication, though. At it's highest level, Galdre is the perfect expression, into the physical world, of ideas, emotions, understanding and awareness. It is bringing what is on the Mental realm into the Physical realm in a form other people can understand and react to. This can include all art forms - painting, drawing, sculpting, writing, music etc. - and it includes logical thought and academic ability. These can appear to be two entirely opposite activities, but they are both Galdre as they both express what is inner to the outer. Within the modern Stáv tradition, Galdre has generally been seen as the logical, academic side

The Principles of Stáv

of Stáv (although it must never be forgotten that this is only part of it's entirety). In this, it deals with the use of study and observation of empirical evidence, combined with logical deductions based on these. Anything that requires some form of logical reasoning to make it work has elements of Galdre practise within it.

In this way it is possible to make predictions of the future outcome of events. By having knowledge of what has been and what is, what is becoming can be deduced and plans made to enhance, prevent or alter it.

We use this principle in everyday life without even realising it. Anything from 'The bus is usually punctual (that which has been), the time is 7.30 (that which is) so if I don't go now I'll miss it (that which is becoming)' to studying racing form (that which has been) and combining it with the conditions of the horse, jockey and track on the day (that which is) to predict it's chances (that which is becoming).

Galdre is seen as a masculine tradition (for an explanation of this, see Seid and Galdre, below) and as an Aesir tradition. This is the method most closely associated with Odin (although he also learned and used Seid) and he used it for learning of the future. He gave his eye to gain the knowledge of all that had been from Mimir's Well. With his own wanderings and the information brought to him by his two ravens, he was continually kept updated on all that was currently happening. With this knowledge he was able to deduce the future, right up to Ragnarok and Beyond.

Incidentally, Odin's Ravens were called Hugin and Munin, which mean Mind and Memory, the two requirements to making Galdre work.

Ljos Galdre

This is Light, or more accurately Open, Galdre: Galdre work that is carried out openly. It can include Rune casting, counselling, making talismans for people, public rituals. (Rituals are Galdre because they get across the spirit of the event in a form others can understand and get involved in).

The Principles of Stáv

control of one's Class - and thus of one's own nature).

Trell

The basic Trell mind set is to back away from confrontation and conflict, whether these are physical or mental. However, the Trell can also be the flip side of the Konge, so can also have the Konge mind set. Someone who is a Trell can have some difficulty that needs to be overcome, but once they have overcome it they have great potential. Therefore to be a Trell should be regarded as a challenge, not a condemnation.

Karl

The Karl usually has a business mind and is able to see the best profit or advantage from situations. Generally down to Earth and practical, the Karl mind set is to ignore confrontation until affected by it, then meet it with determination.

Herse

The Herse usually has a mind that can focus on their intent, which they will then work towards. It is not necessarily a business mind, though, as their temperament can be too fiery to remain patient with the subtleties. The Herse mind set is to go out to face conflict and challenge it. A Herse's greatest strength is authority, and they are able to take command of the situation.

Jarl

The Jarl usually has a more lateral mind that can grasp subtle concepts and ideas, but may lack the discipline to apply it in a practical way. The Jarl mind set is to shift without meeting confrontation, so it either passes them or becomes irrelevant.

Konge

The Konge mind set is basically that they are in absolute control of any

The Principles of Stáv

drawn together to form a single figure. This can be done in any way, but within the Hafskjold Stáv tradition it is normally - though not always - based on Hagl, with Six other Runes on the end of the stems. Instead of six it can also be done with three groups of two Runes or, less commonly, two groups of three Runes.

Another good way of making a Bind Rune is to draw them downwards, all sharing the same central stem.

4. The Classes

The Class system in Stáv is based on the traditional Nordic social scale. Nevertheless, it is not a grading system, or a measure of worth. Rather it is a means of learning to see the Reality of our self, our character. Once we know our Class, we can begin to see and understand our strengths and weaknesses and work with them to reach our full potential. The Classes also represent a state of mind, or Mind Set. Most people have one predominantly, but everyone can access the others when they need to.

The Classes are:

Trell (or THRALL):	Serf
Karl (or CHURL):	Freeman
Herse (pron. HASHUR):	Warrior
Jarl (pron. YARL):	Priest
Konge (pron. KONGYUR):	King

Despite being listed like this, the Classes are actually cyclical, not linear. Each Class leads into the next, and the Trell and Konge are like two sides of the same coin: a Trell who realises he has nothing to lose and uses this to his advantage has become a Konge; a Konge who worries if he's doing the right thing has become a Trell.

Within each Class is a further division of the five Classes, from Trell (ignoring one's class and trying to be what one is not) to Konge (in full

The Principles of Stáv

Myrk Galdre

This is Murky, Hidden Galdre - Occult Galdre in it's most literal form. It is any Galdre work that is carried out secretly, or in private, with absolutely no intention of revealing the actual work. It can include carving Runes to be hidden as charms, and performing secret rituals. (The act of making a wish and not telling anyone what it was is a form of Myrk Galdre). Myrk Galdre is almost entirely the magical side of Galdre as the communication is only between the practitioner and the Inner realms: even if people know the work has been done, they know nothing of the details.

It could also include such things as private study and writing that has been decided will never be publicised or even mentioned.

On the whole, Myrk Galdre is beginning to border on the practise of Seid.

Galdre Stances

The Galdre Stances make use of the Galdre term to Crow or vocalise in utilising various chants to accompany each Rune in the sequence.

The Karl level Galdre chant intones the name of each Rune to drawn down the powers of that Rune.

The Herse level Galdre chant also intones the name of the Runes, but adds a series of very forceful shouts based on the Runes phonetic property. This raises the level of Megin in the body and enhances the flow of adrenaline.

The Jarl level Galdre chant intones the name of each deity associated with the Runes to invoke the powers of the Deities into the practitioner. It also creates a deep meditative state, which can border on a trance state.

The Principles of Seid

As Galdre is concerned with communicating out into the physical world, Seid is concerned with gaining inner understanding. This is knowledge gained for one's self, irrespective of whether it gets communicated. Seid equates to the spiritual, intuitive side of life. It represents the 'illogical' of life, the side that admits there is more going on than we can know

The Principles of Stáv

through the use of our five senses and the intellect. Seid represents the sixth sense, the intuition, also our spirituality and the spirituality of all things.

Seid is seen as being feminine (see below) and as a Vanir tradition. It is most closely associated with Freya, who taught it to the Aesir. Odin made as much use of Seid as he did Galdre, as represented by his wanderings (spiritual journeying), disguises (shape shifting) and his shamanic trances.

The word Seid means 'to seethe'. This is thought to relate to the 'shuddering' that the body sometimes experiences during the Seid trance (see Lokk Seid and Vardlock). Another possibility is the, now largely forgotten, practise of boiling articles during Seid practise. This may be the origin of the witches brew, and it's possible that one use of it was that the sound of bubbling water aids with the transition into the trance state.

Tein Seid

This can be loosely interpreted as 'Knowledge of Plants', and is primarily concerned with the use of herbs. This can be in any form, from traditional North European herbalism to aromatherapy and incense. The word 'herb' can be taken to mean any plant or part of plant, including trees. In true Seid form, the knowledge belongs to the practitioner and does not need to be communicated in order for it to work. It also refers to the more magical uses of plants, not just healing, and also the more mundane uses such as cooking. Tein Seid is beginning to border on the practise of Galdre.

Tein

Tein means twig, stick, branch, and can be taken to mean wand. The tein can be a magic wand in the magical aspects of Stáv (especially Galdre ritual magic), a sparring tein for use as a weapon in the martial aspects, and as a massage tein in certain health and healing aspects.

Lokk Seid

Lokk Seid is the purely magical aspect of Seid, involving the use of a

The Principles of Stáv

The Younger Futhork is the name given to the changes made to the Elder Futhork around the eighth century. This was largely due to changes in language, but unlike the Anglo Saxon Futhork, the number of Runes in the Younger was reduced to 16, with several of them having multiple phonetic equivalents.

The Younger was in use across Northern Europe from the eighth century right through the Middle Ages up to the present day. Obviously it's use diminished greatly in many areas, but in areas where the Runes were still used, it was the Younger Futhork they used.

Why the number of Runes was reduced so drastically is not known, but a theory is that it was to bring it back into line with the 18 Rune spells described in the Havamal. This is all the more possible when it is considered that the Rune Nød represents the three Norns and can, therefore, have three meanings.

Aett

The Aett, also referred to as Aettir, are the groups into which the Runes are gathered. One meaning of the word is 'eight', and in the 24 Rune Elder Futhork the Runes divided neatly into three groups of eight. However, it must have been the fact of three groups that was important, not the eight, because when the Younger Futhork was developed, instead of breaking it into two groups of eight it was divided into one Aett of six and two of five each. The Anglo Saxon futhork was also divided into three. In this, it might be that another meaning of the word Aett is significant, that of 'family' or 'set'. Either way, the term 'Aett' is not referred to as such until the 17th century, although the break down into the three groups is as old as each of the futhorks.

The Aetts are named after the deity associated with each one, namely Frey, Heimdall and Týr, which represent the classes Karl, Jarl and Herse respectively. These are also the starting positions for the Galdre stances, depending on which level is being done.

Bind Rune

A Bind Rune is a combination of two or more Runes that have been

The Principles of Stáv

families.

Regardless of their origins, though, the Runic futhorks became integrated into the cultures that adopted them. The names of the symbols, together with their meanings, were adapted to fit the secular and spiritual systems of the people using them. From this came the different forms of Runic sequences.

There are three main futhorks that have been isolated and identified: the Elder, the Anglo Saxon and the Younger, which is the sequence used in the Hafskjold-Stáv tradition. What they would have been called by the people who used them is unknown, but probably just 'futhork' as we say 'alphabet'.

The Elder Futhork is so named, obviously, because it's the oldest known sequence of Runes, with no known beginning date. It consists of 24 Runes and was used in northern Germany and Scandinavia.

The Anglo Saxon Futhork dates from around the fifth century AD and originated from Frisia (modern Netherlands and north west Germany). At this time the Angles and Saxons from these areas were raiding and settling in Britain, and so took this Futhork with them. Several Rune forms were changed, and up to nine extra Runes (which varied according to locality) were added due to changes in the language and the need for extra sounds and meanings.

ƒ	Fé	ſ	Ur	þ	Þór
ᚠ	Ås	ᚢ	Rei	ƿ	Kreft
ᚨ	Hagl	ᚦ	Nød	l	ls
ᚫ	Ar	ᚨ	Sól	↑	Týr
ᚷ	Björk	ᚫ	Mann	ᚠ	Laug
ᚹ	Yr				

The Principles of Stáv

deep trance state. During this trance the practitioner (females are Seidkona, Seid Wife, men are Seidmadhr, Seid Man) journeys in spirit form, within this world and others, to obtain information (maybe by speaking with spirits or visiting the Well of Urd), to heal people, to make oracles, or to effect changes within the physical world. In the trance state, one sees visions as vividly as dreams. In other words, the practitioner is in the Reality of the vision, it is as real as the waking world and it is possible to interact within it through normal or magical means. It is similar to lucid dreaming, when one becomes aware of dreaming and is able to guide it the way one wishes it to go.

This trance can be very difficult for some people to achieve - indeed, the Volvas (seers) of The Northern Tradition were regarded as highly trained, professional people (usually women) and were honoured where ever they went. However, there is a wider implication that makes Lökk Seid harder to achieve: It requires the acceptance that there are things on the spiritual level which are outside our physical control, but which can affect our physical and mental selves. The Seid practitioner must defer control of the situation to these entities, but must retain responsibility for the outcome of what he/she asks them to do. All this can be a difficult thing for some people to accept, especially if they are more inclined towards Galdre. Anyone who is not prepared to take on this burden should not attempt Seid magic.

Vardlock

Vardlock literally means 'Watch Guard' and can be interpreted as 'one who calls the Guardian Spirits'. It is the method of achieving the trance state of Seid. One of the best ways of achieving this, and the traditional method within Hafskjold Stáv, is for several people to sit in a fairly close group and begin a powerful vocal chant. There is no set chant, it's a complex rhythm, chanted loudly and without break. This can take a long time, but sooner or later, one of the group who is more open to the ability will pass into the trance.

There is a description of this in the Saga of Erik the Red, in which the women sing 'a song called Vardhlokur', or 'Warlock Songs', to allow a seeress to attain her trance. It is interesting that the seeress was unable to work without the song - she couldn't do it on her own.

The Principles of Stáv

It must be stressed that this is not something that should be played with. The shamanistic trance state of Seid is very powerful and can cause severe psychological distress if undertaken lightly. Always practise this type of work with an experienced Stáv Practitioner or Master until you are able to lead such a group yourself.

Galdre and Seid

Seid and Galdre can be seen as two poles balancing each other. Or, in true Stáv form, as a cycle in which the two principles are both separate and yet blurring into each other. Either way, they form one perfect whole.

The important difference between Galdre and Seid is that Galdre is bringing things from the Mental realm into the Physical (and vice versa) where, on the whole, anyone can use it; while Seid is bringing things from the Spiritual realm into the Mental (and vice versa) where the practitioner can use it: In both Tein Seid and Lökk Seid, the knowledge is the practitioner's own, and doesn't need to be communicated, only used. In Ljoss Galdre, the knowledge has to be communicated in order for it to have any use, and even Myrk Galdre requires bringing the knowledge into the physical world - drawing Runes or performing rituals - so it is communicated, even if not to the client.

Myrk Galdre and Lökk Seid are almost entirely (if not completely) magical practises; Ljoss Galdre and Tein Seid have magical and mundane aspects to them.

There is a natural leaning towards either Galdre or Seid within everybody, but at the same time everybody can - and does - use both to one degree or other.

Seid is referred to as Feminine, Galdre as Masculine, but this should not be taken literally. In most, if not all, ancient traditions, the terms 'masculine' and 'feminine' do not refer to the crudities of animal sexuality, but to the inner nature of the powers. Masculine is seen as being outgoing and dynamic, while feminine is seen as receptive and passive. There is a general leaning of men towards masculine practises and of women towards feminine practises, but these are generalisations only. Both can practise either.

The Principles of Stáv


3. The Runes

The Runes used in Stáv are of the Younger Futhork, an alphabet used before the introduction of the Latin alphabet. Runes are not merely letters, however. Each one has a literal and symbolic meaning and can be used for divination and working magic as well as for writing.

Every Rune can be taken from the Web of Reality, and therefore each one can be seen as being different aspects of Reality. This is the main concept behind their more magical and divinatory uses: the fact they make up Reality means they can be used as signposts, or keys, to read what Reality actually is, or even to re-write it as something we want. There is no single meaning of the word RUNE, but the various possibilities all have a similar theme. In Early English, it referred to a mystery or secret, and survived in the (now archaic) term 'to rown' or whisper. Old Germanic had the word 'runa' which, again, meant mystery or secret. In Old Norse it is derived from 'runar', a magical sign - sign as in 'portent', as well as 'symbol'.

When Runes were first used is unknown and un-knowable. Pre Runic symbols (ie, from before the known Runic alphabets) have been found carved into rock and stones, dating to Neolithic times and maybe even earlier. Some bear resemblance to Runes of known alphabets, others seem to represent concepts now attributed to other symbols, while others are totally unique.

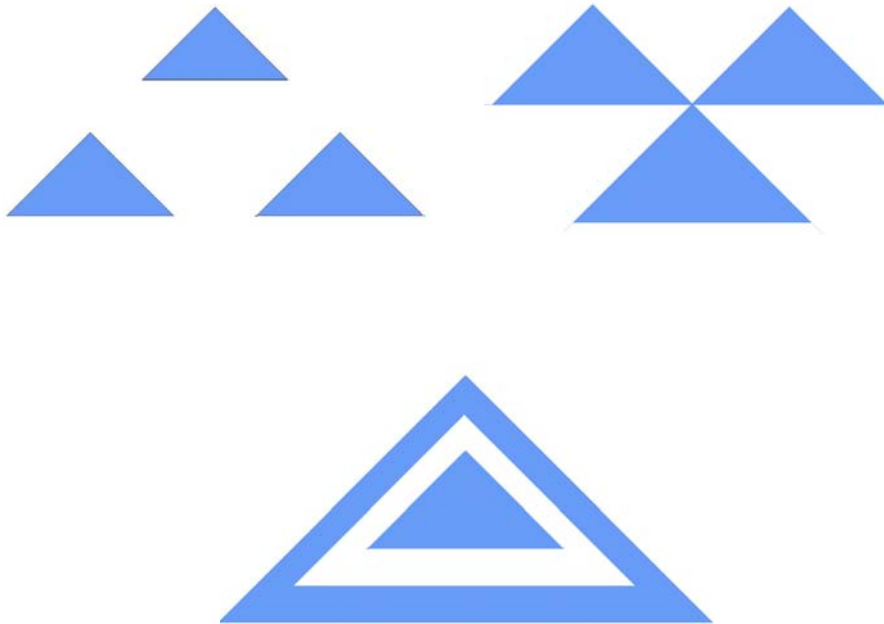
Futhork

The word futhork, like the word alphabet (alpha beta), is derived from the first few Runes of the sequence:  Fe, Ur, Thor, As, Rei, Kreft, which spell out FUTHORK. Where and when the Runic sequences were derived is also uncertain, but historical and archaeological evidence indicates they are related to the northern Italian alphabet from before the first century AD (at which time the early Italic was replaced by the Latin alphabet). This Italic (as well as the Latin) alphabet was in turn derived from the Etruscan alphabet, itself a branch of western Greek alphabet

The Principles of Stáv

use of Runes and Vardlock and the magical side of herbalism. The mental realm can be seen as the merger of physical with spiritual, thus making the Karl synonymous with the mental realm.

These three can be viewed and studied separately, but it must be remembered that they are part of the wholeness of Reality and as such are one - as symbolised by the Valknut. The Konge as king and wizard ('wise one', as distinct from magician) must be able to apply all aspects. Thus the Konge is represented by the whole Valknut or, in the interlocking form, the centre where all three triangles merge. The Trel, as slave and reversed Konge, has no place within the Valknut and is therefore outside it. Due to the cyclic nature of Stáv, though, the Trel has the potential to use any or all of the aspects of the Valknut. Most notably, the application of the Valknut as the trinity has been applied to the healing aspects of Stáv, but in fact, all aspects relating to the classes can be represented through the Valknut. As shown above, there are the three aspects of trinity, combined with the two extremes.



The Principles of Stáv

Utsette

Utsette means, literally, 'sitting out' and refers to the custom, followed in most cultures, of going out into the wilderness to escape, albeit temporarily, from the everyday world. In Northern tradition this is usually into the hills or forests, away from the influence of mankind.

At one extreme, Utsette can simply be a retreat, to rest and rejuvenate. It is distinct from a normal 'weekend away' or stroll along the river by the deliberate attempt to become isolated from everyday life. In this, Utsette can be seen as a state of mind just as much, if not more so, than a location of body. At the other extreme, Utsette can be an endurance method of achieving Lokk Seid. This is comparable to the vision quest of North American Indians or the Oriental tradition of fasting on a mountain. In this, the practitioner endures physical discomfort, food, water and perhaps sleep deprivation in an attempt to release their mind into the Seid trance of Lokk Seid. Usually this is done for very specific purposes, with one thought or question held clearly in mind. See the warning under Vardlock before attempting this.

The Valknut

The Valknut is depicted on several memorial stones, found throughout Northern Europe, as three interlocking triangles.

It is related to the triskele image, the best known example of which is the Three Legs of Mann, from the Isle of Man, an island with strong Nordic connections.

The Knot of the Slain

This is the literal translation of Valknut, as with Valkyrie: Choosers (or Carriers) of the Slain; Valhalla: Hall of the Slain; Valaskjalf: Shelf of the Slain. It is said to have been a symbol worn by devoted followers of Odin, signifying their willingness to die at any moment in his service and form part of his army of Einherjar. In this case, the Knot perhaps signifies their bond to Odin. They were giving up their own Örlög and Hamingja and tying themselves into service to Odin forever, rather than reincarnating.

The Principles of Stáv

These warriors went into battle with the view, not of dying as such, but of inflicting as much damage as possible on the enemy ranks, at the expense of their own safety and line of retreat. If they lived it meant they had won victory, and so was good. If they died, they went to Valhalla, which was better. Eventually, of course, this attitude would result in death, which was their ultimate goal.

The Knot of the Slain is also thought to symbolise the power of Odin to bind and un-bind: he could bind an opponent's (or an army's) mind so they became helpless in battle. This is one of the Rune spells listed in the Havamal: 'I know a third one which is very useful to me, which fetters my enemy; the edges of my foes I can blunt, neither weapon nor club will bite for them.' Also, from the Heimskringla: 'Odin knew how to act so that his foes in battle became blind or deaf or panic-stricken and their weapons pierced no more than wands.' The Valknut symbol was sometimes painted or tattooed on the forehead of warriors, where it was called the Helm of Terror, intended to invoke these responses in their enemies. 'Terror', in this instance, is referring to one of Odin's many names: Ygg, 'the Terrible One.'

Odin was also known to release the bonds of fear in warriors with his gift of battle madness.

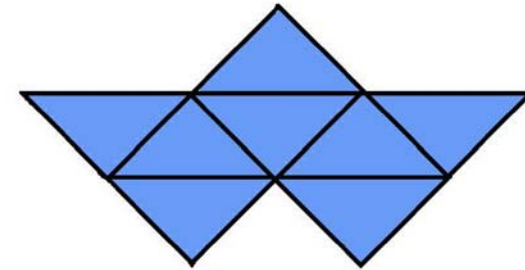
The Concept of Trinity

The most usual interpretation of the Valknut symbol within the Stáv system is the embodiment of the principle of the Trinity. Contrary to popular belief, the Trinity is not exclusive to Christianity, rather it describes three individual aspects that combine to form one Whole. The most obvious trinity within the Nordic tradition is that of the three Norns. Another possible one is Odin, Loki and Honir. They only appear together in two stories (the Theft of Idun's Apples, and Otter's Ransom), but it is inferred that they often travelled together. In some traditions it is these three who created the first man and woman.

Other trinities include the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost; The Maiden, the Mother and the Crone; Physical, Mental and Spiritual.

It is possible that the concept of trinity was demonstrated specifically by three triangles, not necessarily interlocked:

The Principles of Stáv



These patterns are ancient and have been found engraved and painted on stones and in caves all over the world, and can be seen as representing the Trinity. Nevertheless, the actual graphic of the Trinity is relatively unimportant: it is the concept of the three threes forming a whole that is important. In this, the Trinity represents the magical connections of three, three threes, and nine.

Perhaps this became confused with the knotwork of three interlocking triangles which was used as the Valknut image. In this case, the concept of trinity has nothing to do with the name 'Valknut', but is a separate area of study in it's own right.

The Valknut and the Classes

Paradoxically, the principle of Trinity can be applied to the five classes of Stáv, as combined with the three states of physical, mental and spiritual:

The Herse is concerned with the physical realm, as warrior and surgeon, also the mental realm in his ability to take control of a situation by use of authority - it is a physical aspect of the mental realm.

The Jarl is concerned with the spiritual realm, as priest and magician, also the mental realm as counsellor and guide - it is a spiritual aspect of the mental realm. The Karl is concerned with both the physical and spiritual realms. Physical in the use of herbs to heal the body and his dealings with the physical practicalities of everyday life; spiritual in the