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The Shamanism Magazine

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We hope you enjoy reading the article. Nicholas Breeze Wood (editor)

Healing *the* Lost Souls *of* Stalingrad

Klaus Paasche

The spirits said: "Go to Russia and conduct healing work on the battlefields of the Second World War." This message came to me on a cold winters day in January 2012, while I was walking along a trail, deep in the wilderness.

I was shocked at the size of the task, and so over the next few days I connected with my spirit helpers to verify if the message had really come 'from the light' and was really something I should pay heed to. My main spirit helper confirmed to me that the task was real, and that I should go and perform healing work for the German and Russian soldiers who had died in the Battle of Stalingrad, saying to me: "You need to help the trapped souls in and around the city who are calling you"



Left: Barmaley Fountain in Volgograd (Stalingrad). Known as the 'Children's Khorovod' or the 'Children's Round Dance.' Erected in 1939, it was inspired by a children's poem by Russian writer Korney Chukovsky. Photographer Emmanuel Yevzerikhin took this iconic image of it on August 23, 1942, just after a heavy German air raid

Below: Russian troops fly the Soviet flag from shattered rooftops during the battle of Stalingrad

The Battle of Stalingrad was a majorly decisive battle of World War Two, where the invading German Nazi forces fought the troops of the Soviet Union for control of the city - which is now called Volgograd. The battle took place between August 23, 1942 and February 2, 1943, and it was among the bloodiest battles in the history of warfare, with an estimated combined casualty total mounting to upwards of two million souls.

PLANNING THE TRIP

As I became used to the idea of going to do this work, I realised that the message from my spirits was not actually a total surprise to me. I already had an inkling for some time that I would go there eventually. I began to wonder about how the spirits had prepared me. I had grown up in Germany and studied Russian for several years; was this all part of a long term plan to prepare me for this work?

But despite this lack of surprise, I must admit that I felt overwhelmed by what seemed like the enormous task looming in front of me. I didn't know a single person in Russia who could help me in the healing work, and the feeling of being out of my depth was not helped by my shamanic

teacher in America told me that she didn't know anybody in Russia who could help me either.

So I journeyed to my spirit helpers to ask for advice and help. and they assured me that I could do the work on my own, because I had prepared for it with work I had done the previous year. The previous work my spirits were referring to was when I had gone to visit the site of the death camp at Auschwitz to perform psychopomp work there the year before.

My main spirit helper also told me that I would be safe doing the work in Russia as long as I called upon her and all my spiritual helpers, her words to me were: "Regardless of what will happen on your journey, you just have trust in us and you will be safe".

My first challenge began when making my travel arrangements and applying for a Russian visa. To my relief, and a certain amount of surprise, it became apparent to me that my spirit helpers were standing by their commitment to help me, as I discovered that a friend of mine knew someone in Moscow willing to organise my entire trip to Russia. And after only two months of planning and preparation, I received my visa with only minor complications.

PREPARING FOR CEREMONY

With the practical travel arrangements in place, my major focus now switched to planning the ceremonies I would perform in Russia.

Since I had no information about the battlefields in Volgograd, I talked to the German embassy in Washington and was told that Germany had built a cemetery for their soldiers about 30 miles outside of the city, but that there was no public transport to the cemetery.

Since I was under the impression the actual psychopomp work needed to be done at the cemetery site, or the battlefields, I journeyed to my spirits and asked for help. My spirit helper told me, I didn't have to go to the cemetery, but instead I could do the ceremony somewhere in a city park. With this information I trusted my spirits would help me to find the park and the specific place for the ceremony within it, while I was in Volgograd. I was absolutely convinced that I would be guided and protected.

Because I was instructed to do psychopomp work for both German and Russian soldiers, I had to take a class to refresh my Russian conversational skills, and again, being looked after, my teacher Olga offered to help me with translating the on-site prayers into Russian.

My spirits suggested that I performed the ceremony around the summer solstice in June of 2012, so I arranged the dates of my journey, first stopping off at the home of my sister who lived in Berlin, then travelling onto Moscow, then St. Petersburg and lastly to Volgograd. I felt that my preparations were complete, that I was protected and ready to go.

TESTS TO MY RESOLVE

I planned to leave for my trip on June 3rd, but because I wanted to see my daughter and my grandchildren in Connecticut, I went to visit them a few weeks before this date.

I spent several days with my grandchildren, running through the forest and playing with them in tall grasses, but when I returned to Maryland I began to feel a little unwell, and went to see my doctor, only to discover that I had contracted Lyme disease, presumably from an insect bite in the long grass.



My partner panicked, and my doctor advised me very seriously to cancel my trip to Russia and take a course of 90 antibiotic pills. I confess I didn't take the situation very seriously and ended up being very sick with tremendous muscle pain.

It was a very difficult situation. Was this a warning from the spirits not to go, or was this the work of 'hostile forces' that wanted to keep me from doing the healing work? I remembered being confronted with a similar test in the past, so, wisely or foolishly, I decided to stick to my plans to go, and continued with my preparations and travel planning as scheduled.

On the day of my departure I felt sick, had a huge golf ball size swollen spot on my neck, and severe muscle pain, and when I arrived in Berlin, discovered that my luggage hadn't come with me. I was tempted to take the next flight home. But, I remembered the promise of my spirit helpers, and decided to stay on course.

Maybe it was because of my decision to stay, that my healing began to unfold and my lost luggage arrived the next day. Everything was looking better after I had spent three days with my sister in Berlin, and at that point, I decided to stop taking my antibiotics. I immediately felt my spirits were with me and everything would go well.

ONWARDS TO RUSSIA

I arrived in Moscow's airport on a rainy afternoon. An internet friend of mine, whom I hadn't physically met before, was waiting for me at the exit, holding my name sign upside down with a beautiful bright smile on her face. She was standing there for me like an angel, ready to serve a higher purpose.

I spent several days in Moscow as a tourist, taking the opportunity to practice my Russian in restaurants and grocery stores, and after this I left the city by taking the Red Arrow train to St. Petersburg which lay some 400 miles away. I shared my compartment with a father and his 10-year-old daughter. He spoke little English and I spoke little Russian, but we had a great time together.

Olga, who had greeted me at the airport in Moscow when I first

arrived in Russia, told me that she had a friend called Natascha in St. Petersburg and she asked Natascha if she would meet me at the railway station. To my surprise, the train arrived on time and there was Olga's friend, holding a piece of paper with my name on it.

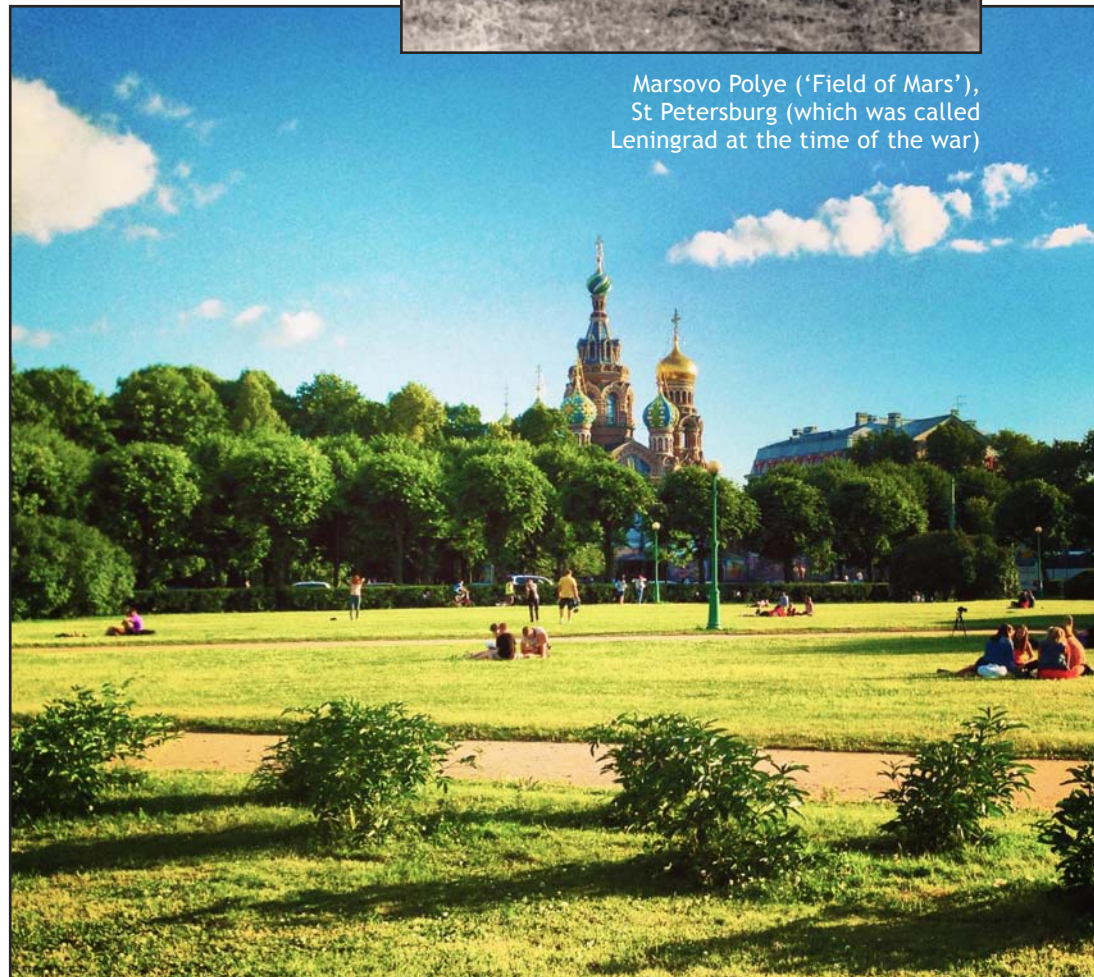
Natascha drove me to the hotel I had booked, and up in my room she opened up her heart to me and told me her life story. As she was crying and laughing, I wondered if this was the purpose of my visit to St. Petersburg. Natascha began to share from her heart, feeling confident and safe with me, so I just listened intently. I became aware of a connection with her.

During my exploration of the city, I visited the Winter Palace and Marsovo Polye (the 'Field of Mars'), a large park next door to the palace, and while sitting on a bench by the 'eternal flame' which has burned since 1957 in the centre of the park, I received a message from my spirit helpers to do some healing work right there.

Exhausted, war-weary German troops support each other on the outskirts of Stalingrad



Marsovo Polye ('Field of Mars'), St Petersburg (which was called Leningrad at the time of the war)



The enormous 52 meter high Родина-мать зовёт! (*The Motherland Calls!*) statue, part of the Mamayev Hill Monument, Volgograd

Over the next few days I did some research to find out more about the history of the Field of Mars; I learned that although the park dates back to the C18th, I had in fact been sitting on a mass grave site connected to an event in 1917, when unarmed Russian peasants had gathered around the Winter Palace with a petition for Czar Nicolas II. The peasants had asked for improvements to their living conditions, but the Czar, without even talking to the peasants, had ordered the guard to clear the area, and more than 100 people had been killed and buried in a mass grave there.

A HEALING IN THE PARK

I called my new friend Natascha to ask her to support me during a healing ceremony the next day at Field of Mars. She promised to help me, and to meet with me the next day in the park close to the eternal flame.

While I waited I became acutely aware that the park was a tourist attraction and served as a social space and general meeting-up area for many local people. I began to get worried that the local police might interfere with the ceremony, or even arrest me, and also began to worry that people in the area might get curious and want to take pictures of me during the ceremony - something I was anxious to avoid.

While I was contemplating this, two young women approached me and one of them introduced herself as Natascha's daughter. She told me that Natascha had to work, and so she and her friend would support my ceremony instead. I was overwhelmed again by the kindness of the Russian people. These two young women, both in their twenties, who have never seen me before, had stepped forward to offer their support.

After we introduced ourselves (I noticed both girls spoke English well) I found a spot that would give us some protection from onlookers, and after settling down with them by a bush, I began to prepare for the ceremony.

As I did this I realised that the light around us was dimming, and dark clouds were gathering above us. Suddenly heavy rain began to pour down, and a wind blew through the park. In just a few minutes all the people who had been gathered in the park were gone and we had the place to ourselves. I wondered at that moment if there was a connection between the healing work and the spirits of the weather?

While the two women and I were huddling under a bush more wet than dry, the strong wind blew my Russian prayer notes away. This felt so much like the spirits saying to me "you don't need them, you can memorise your prayers," that I continued to prepare the circle for the healing.

I remembered my main spirit helper's words, "Protect yourself with Divine light, use tobacco around your group of human helpers, call upon your spiritual helpers and ask for protection".

I did as I had been told, I sang my power song and played my drum, I filled my sacred pipe with tobacco and began the prayers in Russian and German. My two helpers supported me by holding crystals and medicine stones, and made prayers in Russian.

While I was smoking the pipe, I asked the Creator to build a 'bridge of light' for the lost souls who had

gathered in that place. Once this bridge was built, these souls would, in groups or singly, complete the transition to the higher dimension by crossing it from this realm to the next. Some souls were ready to leave immediately, some hesitated and needed to be encouraged, and others asked to be guided by family members who were already in the other dimension. And, of course there were - as there always are - some who were not yet ready to move on.

ONWARDS TO STALINGRAD

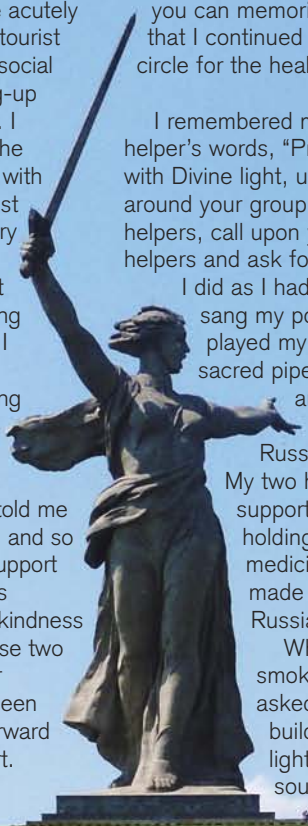
After a week in St. Petersburg, it was time for me to get on to the main focus of my trip to Russia, to work with the dead of the battle of Stalingrad. I flew the thousand miles south to Volgograd, and was picked up by the caretaker of the cemetery dedicated to the German soldiers who lost their lives during the battle.

While we were driving to my hotel, he asked me why I made the reservation at the Hotel Touristic. He told me that it was the oldest hotel in town, built during the time of the communists, and added that it was falling apart.

I told him that I didn't book it myself, but that it had been booked for me by the person who had helped me with my reservations, and that they had recommended this place. When I arrived at the hotel and checked in however, I understood why the caretaker had made his comments. No one on the hotel staff spoke English, the toilet cistern leaked; and the windows were broken... I could go on and add to the list of woe, but I remembered my spirits saying, "We will be with you, protect and guide you." I was glad they were.

Surviving the first night, with the hotel still standing, I ate my breakfast and wondered where to have the ceremony.

The River Volga flowed next to the hotel, which, despite being admired by many Russian writers



and poets, now had its banks covered with trash, so I felt that was out of the question. The hotel didn't have a map of the city, so I had no idea where the parks were for me to use one of those, and my Russian was not good enough to explain to the hotel manager why I was even there and what I wanted. So, in trust, I simply decided to let my spirit helpers guide me to an appropriate place as I wandered about the city. I grabbed a bottle of water and set off.

After walking for about twenty minutes, I saw a huge sculpture called Mamayev Hill Monument. It had been erected in 1967 and commemorates the battle of Stalingrad. I decided I had to visit it, and so climbed several hundred steps and arrived at the top of the hill to see the statue close up.

While searching for the right spot that would protect me from the sight of curious people and guards, I spotted a place with trees which seemed to be calling to me. They seemed to be saying: "Come to us. We have been waiting for you. We will protect you for the entire time." I felt extremely grateful for being able to serve the spirits, and this place seemed an ideal venue.

At sunrise the next morning I felt excited and thrilled; but also a little fearful of the unknown that lay ahead of me. After six months of preparations, the day had finally come for me to proceed with the ceremonies.

My backpack was ready to go with my complete portable altar, my drum, rattle, tobacco, crystals and other sacred items. I was instructed by my main spirit helper to also pick up four stones on my way up to the sacred place, as these stones would represent the four sacred directions.

I remember that day vividly; it was a very hot day, and carrying around 20 kilos of extra weight on my back and a jug of water in my hand didn't help as I climbed the stairs up to the monument - the sun was burning down on me and there were no clouds in sight.

I arrived at my chosen spot and began the preparations for ceremony. Following the instructions from my spirit helpers, I placed the stones in the four

directions and buried a crystal in the center of the circle and sealed and protected the circle I was performing the ceremony in with a strong prayer of protection, and with a line of tobacco around the perimeter.

After smudging the site, the direction maker stones, the altar and myself, I invited my spirit helpers and asked again for protection. I remembered my main spirit helper's warning that I needed to strongly trust in my spirits and they would keep me safe.

Next, I sang my power song, played my drum and filled my sacred pipe with tobacco. While I smoked the pipe, I again asked the Creator to make a bridge of light to the other dimension, and began the prayers in Russian and German.

It was wonderful for me to 'see' souls come in groups to the light: German and Russian soldiers, together with those who had been caught up in the battle, women with their children, and children by themselves who had no families, and young men holding old people, who could not walk by themselves any more.

The souls of the children - as I had seen in my experiences at Auschwitz - struggled with their situation the most. They all looked for their parents and families, and were very confused and afraid, looking for help and protection. Often I had to go to the other dimension myself in a shamanic

journey - to the world of light - to find their mothers or fathers, and get them to come down and take their child back with them.

I continued the work until all the souls who wanted to go had left the earth, and then I asked the final question; "Is there still someone who is willing to leave?" All in all, it was a joyful experience to 'see' that once the first soul was willing to move along the ray of light, then other souls became unafraid and followed.

I felt that some souls were not ready to leave their current place of misery, and so I repeated the ceremony on three consecutive days, so these souls would have an opportunity to leave too if they wanted to take it. I closed the ceremony each day by thanking my

Below: Russian children hiding in the Stalingrad ruins during the battle

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spirit helpers, my ancestors and the spirit of Mother Earth for their support and protection.

Even though the sky was completely blue with no clouds, I felt a gentle mist and rain drops falling upon me following each ceremony.

After the ceremony on the second day something else happened regarding weather which reminded me of my experience after my ceremony in St. Petersburg. When I had finished the ceremony, I went down the hill away from the statue, for an early dinner at a nearby restaurant; while I was eating my Russian fish soup, sitting outside the restaurant on some decking enjoying the afternoon, a black cloud moved rapidly in my direction. Minutes later rain came down in buckets, and again I wondered if there was a connection between the ceremonies I was doing and the rain.

AN IMPROMPTU DEPOSESSION

Something else happened at the end of the second day too. While I was preparing to go to bed, I began to visualise and fantasise what it would be like to jump off the balcony from my room - which

was on the 8th floor - falling all the way down to the pavement in front of the hotel. I saw myself lying there, with people standing around me shocked and confused. An inner voice told me how wonderful the 'free flight' through the air would be.

Because I had never ever been suicidal in my life and had no mental health issues, I was aware that this voice was not me, but instead was likely to be coming from another spirit or entity that was trying to control me. Because of my training in shamanism, I realised that I had been possessed by a lost soul during my psychopomp ceremony.

And so, with the support of my spirit helpers, I was able to connect with that lost soul to let it know that it didn't belong here with me, but instead it needed to move on to the other dimension. With my spirit helpers advice we agreed that I would take time the next day to do ceremony to help the lost soul leave my body and go to the light; but just to be safe and eliminate any doubts I might have, I blocked the door to the balcony before I went to bed.

The next morning I helped the

lost soul, trapped within me, to leave me and go join its companions on their journey to the other dimension. I finished the ceremony by again asking: "Is there still any soul who wants to leave? Even then I saw souls on the sideline who were not ready to go, so I promised them that I would leave the bridge of light open to the higher dimension and journey to this place again from my home.

I left Volgograd with a feeling of inner peace and happiness. I did my best in the healing work that the spirits had asked me to do - easing the pain and suffering of the souls of fallen soldiers in Stalingrad. At the same time, I thought of the millions of souls of fallen soldiers that are still trapped in the middle world.

The journey to Russia had been a test in trusting my spirit helpers and surrendering to whatever the outcome would be. I remain strong in that trust, but of course I know that I might be tested in the future. When will I be called again?

I was overwhelmed by the kindness and generosity of the people whom I met; they trusted me even though I was a complete stranger, and stood by their word - even when difficult situations occurred. My spirits had been right, regardless of what had happen on my journey, I had trust in them and I was safe.

Klaus Paasche was born in what is now Poland, and went to high school in East Germany. He escaped to West Germany at the age of 19 and eventually settled in New York in the USA. His life long interest in spirituality eventually lead him to work with Native American teachers and others. His interest in Shamanism began in 2007 after he met a student of Sandra Ingerman.

His interest in psychopomp started during a pipe ceremony with his Mohawk teacher in Canada. During that ceremony souls spoke to him and urged him to go to Auschwitz and do the healing ceremony in the concentration camp.

alphaklaus@verizon.net

Below: the fully restored Barmaley Fountain in Volgograd today

