

“The Ukrainian Crisis: Sharing our Pain”

Wally Fukunaga

A captivating public forum was offered on virtual platform by Sunrise Foundation on Sunday, May 3, 2022, 2:00 pm. A total of 75 had registered. The fifty or so who signed in, that included the four distinguished panelists, were strikingly diverse. They comprised an inter-cultural, inter-spiritual and inter-generational gathering. Their roots were from Europe, Africa, Asia, South Asia, the Pacific Basin, mainland USA and Hawai`i.

They passionately spoke on a wide range of experiential and intellectual perspectives on the dire situation in Ukraine. What was its historical background? What were its parallel occurrences on the world stage? What is taking place today in Ukraine? What ought to be our response? What must we do to help bring a stop to the devastation, depravation and despair wrought by Putin’s Russia? The rapid turn of events, among the latest being the genocide reported just the day before, resulted in a spectrum of dire analyses and calls for urgent action.

The audience was deeply moved by two renditions of the Ukrainian National Anthem - at the opening and the closing. The opening was a ukulele rendition performed by a UH student, and the closing was a YouTube recording by a Ukrainian chorus, with English subtitles. In between, inspirational solos of “Peace in the Valley” and “Panis Angelicus” were offered by local artists. A Blessing from a Christian minister, gave the event a transcendent spiritual conclusion.

It was altogether a profound experience.