

MARGARET KILAUANO AIPOALANI

The one thing that my mother did for me was to teach the hula without any kapu. I think she knew my generation couldn't handle it and she didn't want me getting hurt. She realized that the hula kapu was of her time and she wanted to put it away.

Kalalau was the original village where the Hawaiians first started out from. Some Hawaiians went out to Haena. Others came out of the village and ended up on this side of the island. I was born in Kekaha. I became interested in the hula when I was a young girl at age eight. I received olapa training as well as auwana. Kahiko is a new word for what I was taught to be olapa. I was trained by my mother, Kawehiwa Kaholoiki, who was taught by her father. Tutu Kaholoiki was a hula instructor in Kalalau. Kalalau was where the hula sprang from. The people of this village were the source of much of our Hawaiian culture.

When I was young, I was not really interested in what my mother was passing down to me. She would concentrate on the pa'i and the oli of the mele and then she would rise and dance as another woman would pa'i. Afterwards she would explain the mana'o of the chant through stories that had been passed down to her through her father.

Because of the rituals, I did not uniki but I was asked by some high school kids to help them and that's how I began to teach. I try to teach my students that hula olapa is a tremendously strict form. The movement of your feet and body are within strict boundaries and everything is dictated by the pa'i of the mele.

To me olapa is the chants and dance motions handed down from generation to generation. I can't revise or modernize my definition. I'm set with it and I have to stay the way I am. The olapa of today is a beautiful, theatrical show and it's fantastic what's going on, but I would not like to see the olapa of the future.

*Tutu vahine Keoli who connected to Henry Pa (ancestor)  
Henry Pa used to talk about Tutu Mika (from Wendell) -*

Margaret Kilauano Aipoalani

Margaret Aipoalani born and raised in Kekaha, Kauai, began to teach the hula in Hawaii in 1938. She currently is an employee of Kekaha Elementary School.

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