

The Legend of the Old Saku-Arayat

By Adela Ruff

Aim: To show that the Philippines is rich in folklores. To realize how parents of old guarded their daughters as jealously as they did their wealth.

THE Sinukuan Mountain lies in Arayat. Once, so the legend goes, there lived a wise old man on the top of this mountain. People called him Saku. There were two things that were precious to him. These were a *forbidden fruit* and his beautiful daughters. These were his prized treasures.

People came and went to visit him. They wanted to see the forbidden fruit and the other fruits that were exact reproductions of the *forbidden* one. Sometimes they asked for some of the delicious ones that were in his orchard. With the old Saku's permission, the visitors were allowed to get the delicious and varied fruits. So the forbidden fruit was never really seen nor stolen. No one knew which one it was — among the many reproductions that were there.

People also came to catch a glimpse of the beautiful women who were his daughters. He loved his daughters. He knew that the world outside was a cruel one. So he guarded them against beasts and men alike.

The old Saku had his palace hidden within the mountains. It was hidden in one of the huge caves within the bowels of the mountains.

Because he was rich and because he wanted his daughters to be happy and contented, he built his palace out of gold, silver, and precious stones of rubies, diamonds, jades, topaz and amethysts.

But the beautiful daughters were not happy. Something was missing in their young lives. And the old man was afraid to lose them.

To guard his daughters from ambitious and designing men, the old Saku had the portals of his palace carefully guarded and hidden in mystery. Death awaited all who dared to enter without his patriarchal consent. And no one dared.

Fortune awaits the young. Good fortune. Bad fortune. All these lie in wait for all kinds of men. One day, the old Saku was surprised.

He was so shocked that he was speechless. For he was amazed to find a young man crossing the portals of his palace — way down beneath the mountain. And the young man looked at all the wonders in the interior of the palace without a word, a cry, or

even a word of wonder. It was as if he were used to seeing all the splendors usually found in palaces. Not even the beauty of the young daughters of Saku surprised him.

To the young man, it was as if he were in a dream. It was a fabulous palace — found only in fairy tales. But old Saku did not know this. It was a miracle!

And old Saku said: "Full many moons I have waited for brave men who dare to enter these mysterious portals. Now, you are here; the first successful one of them all. What would you have?"

And the young man made reply: "This beautiful woman I would have for my wife." And he stretched his arms to the youngest of Saku's daughters.

Now as in all good fairy tales, the old Saku gave his youngest daughter to him in marriage. That is why the mountain is called Mt. Sinukuan: A Place of Surrender.

STUDY HELPS

1. What picture words do you get from this story?
Example:
 - a. a huge mountain
 - b. a wise old man on top of the mountain
 - c. a garden or an orchard
 - d. trees loaded with fruit, etc.
2. Was the wise old man selfish? generous? Prove your answers.
3. Why did he think the world was cruel? Do you agree with him?
4. Is it possible to build a palace out of gold and precious gems? What stories have you read that tell of similar tales about palaces of gold, marble and silver?
5. Cross references on and oral reading of:
 - a. Fairy tales — Arabian Nights
 - (1) Ali-Baba and the Forty Thieves
 - (2) Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp
 - (3) Sleeping Beauty and the Beast
 - b. Historical facts
 - (1) The Seven Wonders of the World
 - (2) The Taj Mahal of India
 - (3) The Hanging Gardens of Babylon
 - c. Geographical background
 - (1) Is it possible for people to live under the mountains? in the mountains? on top of the mountains? How? Why?
6. Suggestion to the teachers:
Lecture or give visual aids to prove your answers to guide questions above.

FIG. 2. DISTRIBUTION OF LOANS OF THE CLAC CREDIT UNION, INC. FROM MARCH 1, 1954 TO JUNE 30, 1957

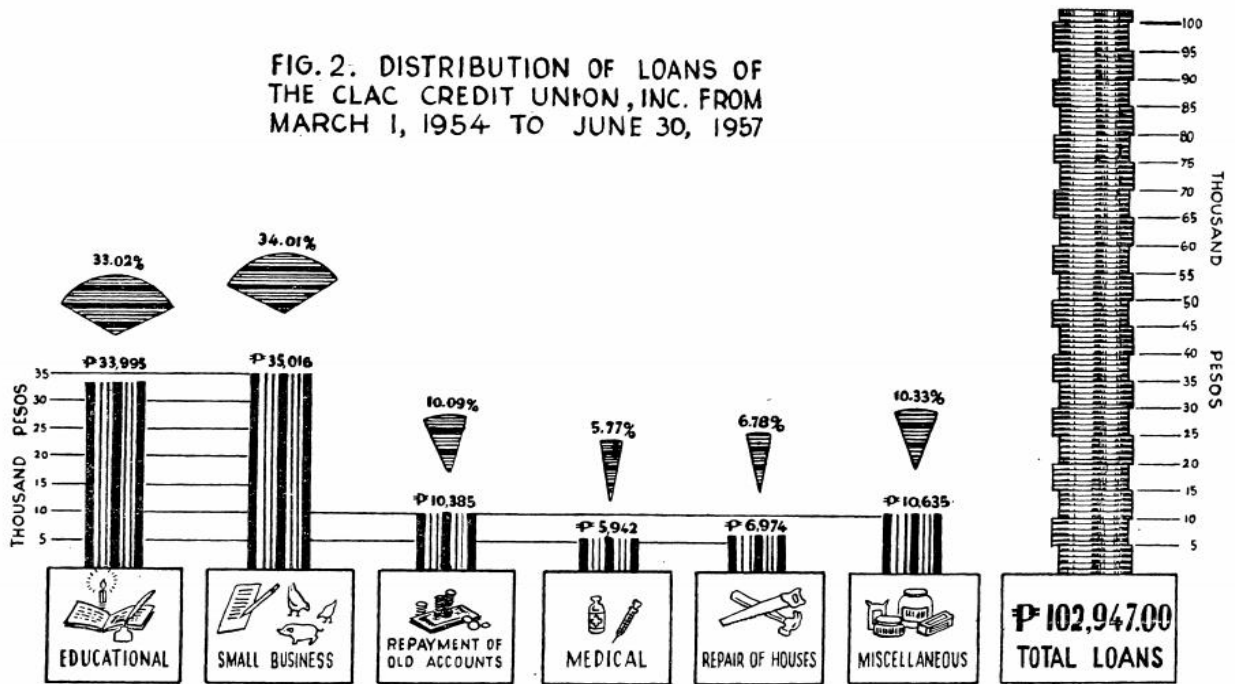


TABLE 2. Amount of Loans Issued for Different Purposes by the CLAC Credit Union, Inc.
From March 1, 1954 to June 30, 1957

PURPOSE	1954 a		1955		1956		1957 b		Total Number & Amount of Loans With Corresponding Percentages			
	No. of Loans	Amount	No. of Loans	Amount	No. of Loans	Amount	No. of Loans	Amount	No. of Loans	Per Cent	Amount	Per Cent
1. Educational	48	P 6,593.00	39	P 6,430.00	51	P12,532.00	26	P 8,440.00	164	31.12%	P 33,995.00	33.02%
2. Small Business	14	1,905.00	56	9,101.00	51	12,710.00	38	11,300.00	159	30.17%	35,016.00	34.01%
3. Repayment of Old Accounts	—	—	17	2,806.00	14	3,484.00	14	4,095.00	45	8.54%	10,385.00	10.09%
4. Medical	14	1,716.00	6	1,066.00	6	1,815.00	5	1,345.00	31	5.88%	5,942.00	5.77%
5. Repair of Houses	3	337.00	8	990.00	10	2,132.00	14	3,515.00	35	6.64%	6,974.00	6.78%
6. Miscellaneous	24	2,057.00	27	2,523.00	29	4,605.00	13	1,450.00	93	17.65%	10,635.00	10.33%
Total	103	P12,608.00	153	P22,916.00	161	P37,278.00	110	P30,145.00	527	100%	P102,947.00	100%

a From March 1, 1954 to December 31, 1954.
b From January 1, 1957 to June 30, 1957.

twelve-month period. If one pauses to compare this interest of P26.00 for a P400.00—loan for one year with the usurious interest of at least ten per cent (10%) on the balance, or P260.00 a year, one should be spurred to organize credit unions.

Besides the long term loan, the CLAC Credit Union, Inc. also grants short-term loans in emergency cases. A short-term loan of P50.00 payable in one-month's term, with an interest of one percent (1%), or P0.50, can also be granted to any member immediately upon the approval of the Credit Committee.

The CLAC Credit Union, Inc. handles not only fixed deposits but also savings deposits with an interest of four per cent (4%) a year, compound quarterly. Withdrawals is allowed more than two times a month, except on meritorious cases with the approval of the Credit Committee.

One interesting feature of the CLAC Credit Union, Inc. is the patronage refund. The more money a member borrows, the more patronage refund he gets. This is possible because all earnings of the Credit Union, after deducting the expenses and interests on the fixed and savings deposits, are distributed as patronage refund. There is, for example, a member whose total loans amounted to P1,300.00. The total interest paid was P61.99 and the total patronage refund he got was P26.71. Another member whose total loan was P666.00 for which he paid an interest of P40.93, got a patronage refund of P17.50.

The reason for which loans are borrowed by mem-

bers may be classified into medical, educational, small business, repair of houses, repayment of old accounts, and miscellaneous purposes. Table 2 and Figure 2 show the purposes and the corresponding amount of loans issued during the existence of the CLAC Credit Union, Inc. It may be interesting to note that the highest numbers of loans were for educational purposes and for putting up small business.

As can be seen in the accompanying Table 3 and Figure 3, all savings are distributed into equity reserve fund, educational and publicity reserve fund, and cash patronage refund. The cash patronage refund is paid to the individual members, but as a matter of agreement, all members prefer to deposit the cash in their savings account in order to increase the working capital of their Credit Union. The equity reserve fund is a capital reserve fund to be used "to meet losses that may be incurred in business operations or in realizing the assets of the credit union in case its affairs are wound up." At least ten per cent (10%) of this reserve fund may be used for inspection and supervision expenses of the Cooperative Administration Office. A fund for education and publicity is also set aside for spreading the knowledge of cooperative principles and the credit union movement.

The help given by the CLAC Credit Union, Inc. to its members is immeasurable. A security guard had a child who became very ill. Knowing that only P0.50 was charged a month as interest on a short-term loan of P50.00, he did not hesitate to get this

TABLE 3. Allocation of Savings of the CLAC Credit Union, Inc.
From March 1, 1954 to December 31, 1956

Allocation	1954 Amount	1955 Amount	1956 Amount	Total for 1954-1956 Amount	Percentage
Equity Reserve Fund ¹	P 50.20	P145.04	P472.49	P 667.73	39.75%
Education & Publicity Reserve Fund ²	25.10	48.35	188.99	262.44	15.63%
Cash Patronage Refund ³	175.71	290.20	283.49	749.40	44.62%
TOTAL	P251.01	P483.59	P944.97	P1,679.57	100%

¹ To be used as capital reserve.
² To be used in spreading knowledge of cooperative principles and credit union movement.
³ To be paid to members in cash as patronage refund.