

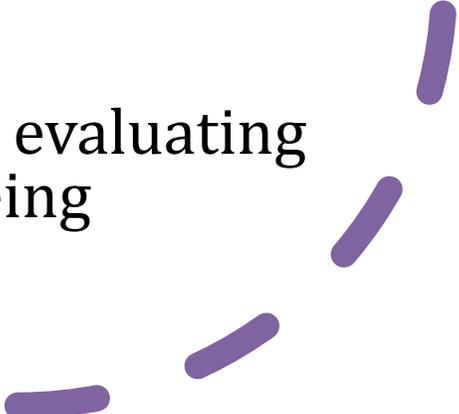
# Culturally Intelligent Storytelling

A Southeast Asian Lens on Narrative, Identity, and Engagement

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# Why Storytelling Matters in Consumer and Family Economics

- Storytelling is not just entertainment — it shapes identity, emotional well-being, and decision-making.
  - In Asia's digitalized landscape, streaming content is a form of cultural consumption.
  - Stories influence:
    - Intergenerational relationships
    - Aspirations and behaviors
    - Cultural belonging and representation
  - This paper proposes a framework for evaluating stories as cultural goods with a well-being impact.
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# The Problem

- Southeast Asian storytellers often face a creative dilemma:
  - Stay 'authentic' but risk being seen as too local
  - Or go 'universal' and risk erasing cultural nuance
- This binary limits cultural agency and narrative depth.
- Creators currently lack a framework for designing stories that are both rooted and resonant.
- Storytelling is rarely recognized as part of consumer or family well-being.

# Introducing the CIS Framework

- CIS stands for Culturally Intelligent Storytelling.
- It applies Cultural Intelligence (CQ) to storytelling — helping creators navigate cultural differences without erasing identity.
- CIS offers a structured way to design stories that are both rooted in cultural authenticity and resonant across borders.
- It's not a formula, but a reflective tool — for creators, educators, and media leaders.

# Why Cultural Intelligence Matters in Storytelling

- Cultural Intelligence (CQ) is the capability to relate and work effectively across cultures
- Originally applied in global leadership, teams, education — now reimagined for storytelling
- Different cultural audiences respond to stories in different ways
- CQ helps creators navigate differences without losing identity
- Foundation for culturally intelligent story design

# CQ Dimensions and Cultural Clusters

## Cultural Dimensions that Affect Storytelling:

- Identity: Individual vs. Collective
- Time: Short-term vs. Long-term orientation
- Expression: Direct vs. Indirect communication
- Authority: Egalitarian vs. Hierarchical
- Lifestyle: Doing vs. Being
- Structure: Tight vs. Loose cultural rules

## Selected Cultural Clusters:

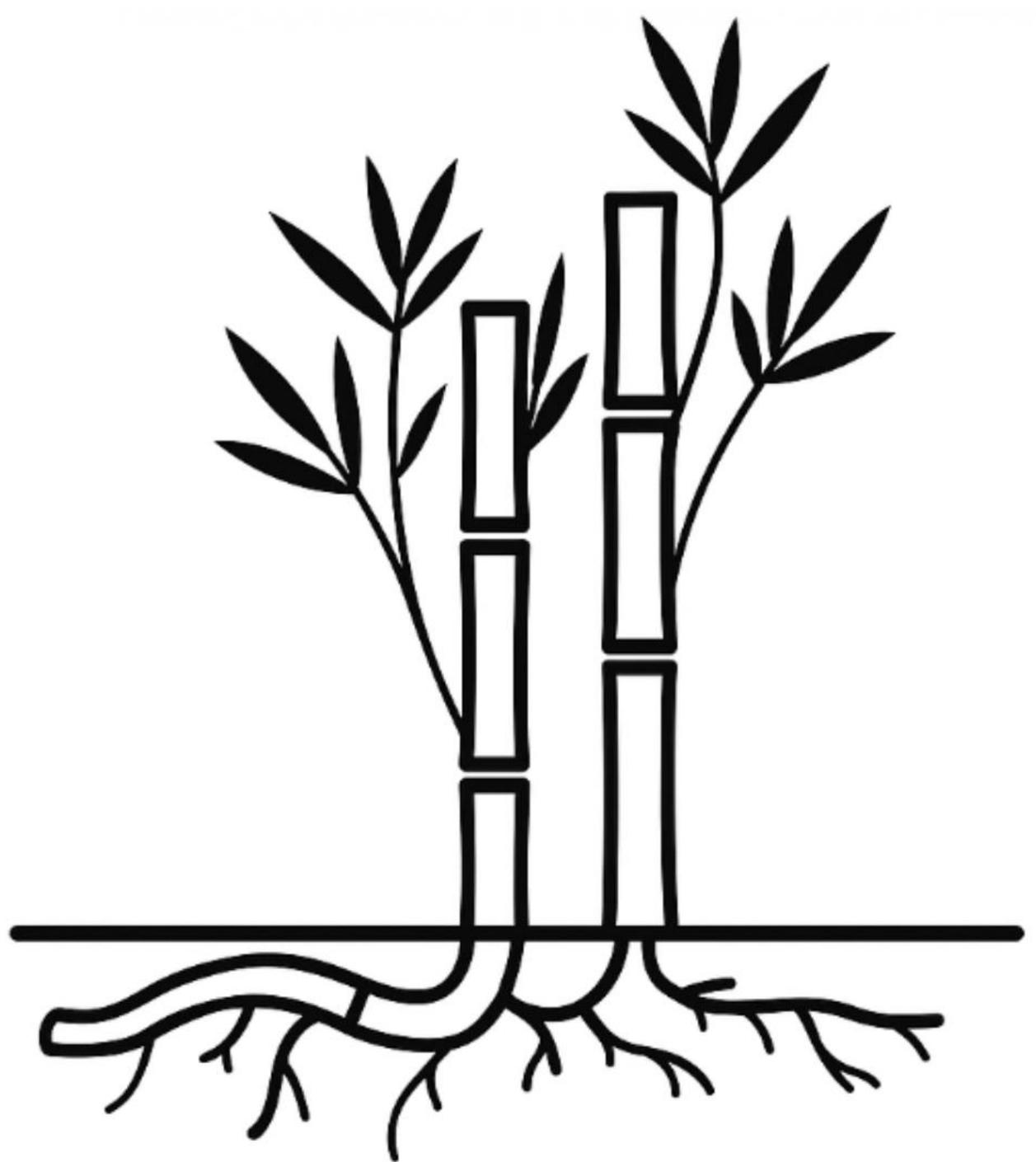
- Anglo: US, UK, Australia – direct, individualist, low-context
- Confucian Asia: China, Korea – hierarchical, collectivist, long-term
- Southeast Asia: Philippines, Thailand – relational, flexible, high-context
- Latin Europe: Italy, Spain – expressive, family-centered, indirect

# The Bamboo as Metaphor

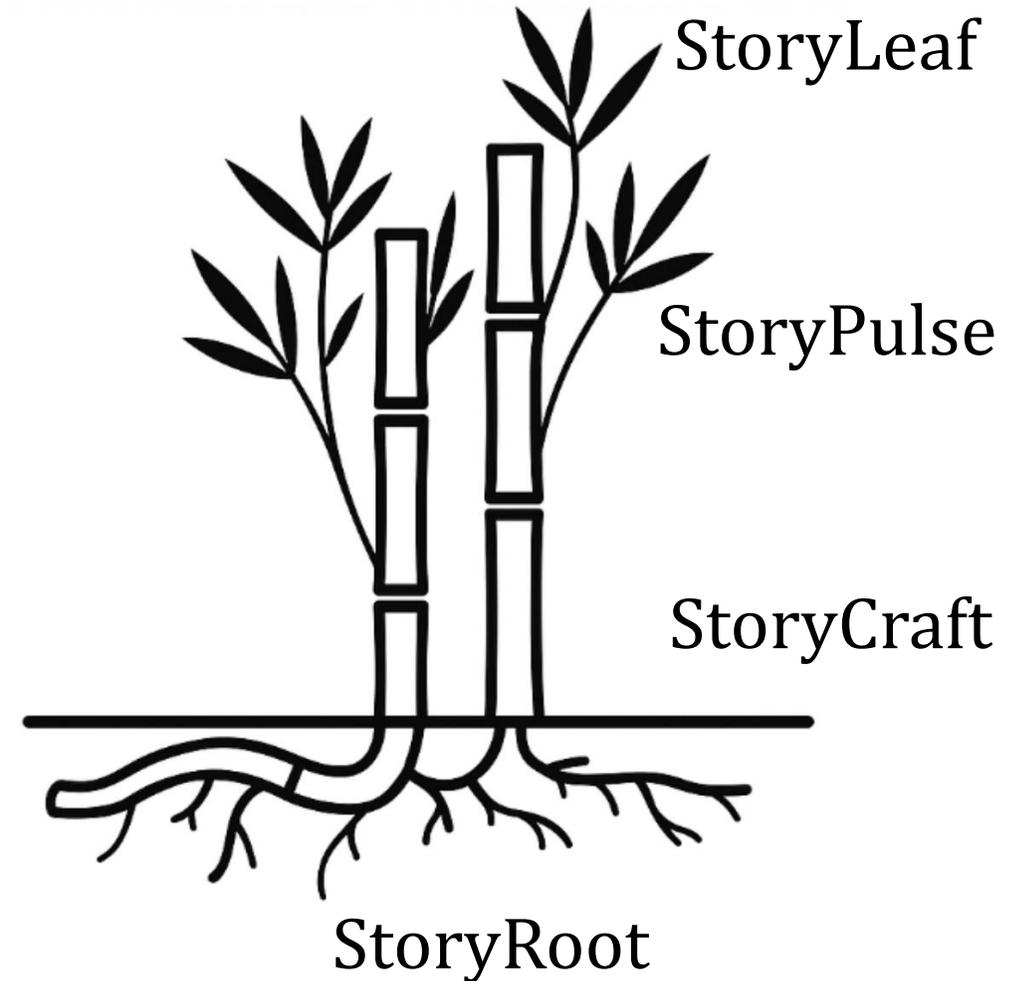
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- Bamboo is deeply rooted, yet flexible — it bends but does not break.
- It grows in clusters and adapts to its environment — just like culturally intelligent stories.
- Bamboo is hollow at the core — a reminder to leave space for reflection and listening.
- As a metaphor, it reflects Southeast Asian resilience, relationality, and growth.

→ The CIS Framework grows from this metaphor.



# The Four Stages of the CIS Bamboo Framework



PUTTHIPONG  
ASSARATANAKUL

USHA  
SEAMKHUM

姥姥的外孙

A FILM BY  
PAT BOONNITIPAT

HOW TO  
MAKE  
MILLIONS  
before  
GRANDMA  
DIES

Coming Soon



# Case Example: How to Make Millions Before Grandma Dies

Applying the CIS Bamboo Framework:

- StoryRoot – Grounded in Thai values of family duty, intergenerational bonds, and karmic justice
  - StoryCraft – Characters are flawed yet familiar; pacing balances comedy and poignancy
  - StoryPulse – Thai audiences connected deeply; global viewers praised emotional resonance and universality
  - StoryLeaf – Film became a surprise hit in the Philippines and Asia.; sparked conversations on family caregiving and death
- Rooted in Thai culture, yet resonated across clusters without translation loss

# Storytelling, Well-Being, and the Future of Consumer and Family Life

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- Stories shape how we define family, success, care, and sacrifice
  - In aging and digital societies, they influence intergenerational empathy and emotional decision-making
  - Streaming content is a form of cultural consumption — with economic and psychological impact
  - The CIS Framework helps creators design stories that:
    - Support emotional well-being
    - Reflect cultural values
    - Travel across clusters without losing depth
- If we want economies that care, we need stories that do, too.

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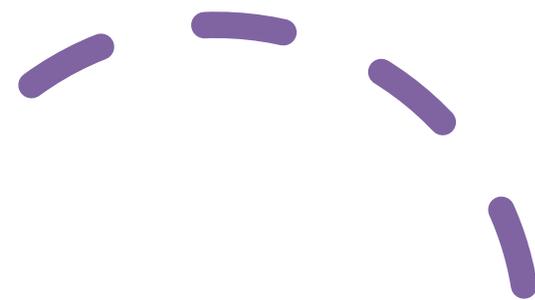
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Thank You



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Let's collaborate on culturally intelligent  
storytelling for a caring, connected world.