Conference Name: Bangkok – International Conference on Social Science & Humanities, 06-07 July 2026
Conference Dates: 06-Jul- 2026 to 07-Jul- 2026
Conference Venue: Ibis Styles Bangkok Ratchada 212 Ratchadapisek Road, Huay Khwang, Bangkok 10310
Appears in: PEOPLE: International Journal of Social Sciences (ISSN 2454-5899)
Publication year: 2026

Farzana Naz Swarna Prova, 2026

Volume 2026, pp. 671-690

DOI- https://doi.org/10.20319/icssh.2026.671690

This paper can be cited as Prova, F.N.S. (2026). Narratives of Failure: Myth, Decision Ecology and Contemporary Crisis Governance. Bangkok – International Conference on Social Science & Humanities, 06-07 July 2026. Proceedings of Social Science and Humanities Research Association (SSHRA), 2026, 671-690

NARRATIVES OF FAILURE: MYTH, DECISION ECOLOGY AND CONTEMPORARY CRISIS GOVERNANCE

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Abstract

One of the major challenges of crisis management and governance in the contemporary world is to make the right decisions at the right time. Complex crises such as climate change, pandemics, economic instability, political conflicts and technological risks often deepen not only because of a lack of resources or technical limitations, but also because of the inherent failure of the decision-making process. This paper will argue that ancient myths contain insights into recurring patterns of human decisions; powers, knowledge, and failure that can help construct a theoretical framework for analyzing contemporary crisis governance. The main purpose of this study is to propose a descriptive model called "Decision Ecology" by analyzing patterns of decision failure reflected in four well-known myths: Hamlet, Cassandra, Daedalus, and King Midas. These four narratives have been read not only as literary or mythological works, but also as symbolic models of different forms of governance and decision-making failure. Together, they point to four fundamental failure types of crisis governance: decision delays, signal rejection, unintended consequences, and over-optimization. The findings will show that many governance

failures today are caused not only by technical or institutional problems, but also by recurring ways of thinking and cultural habits reflected in these narratives. Methodologically, this research will follow comparative narrative analysis and conceptual interpretive approaches. The study will suggest that crises should be understood not only as administrative or technical problems but also as narrative and cultural processes, offering new insights for crisis forecasting, risk assessment, and decision-making. This research will contribute to interdisciplinary dialogue between mythology, narrative studies, and governance theory. Future research may apply this framework to specific case studies involving climate change, public health crises, technological risks, and policy failures to test its analytical applicability.

Keywords:
Decision Ecology, Crisis Governance, Governance Failure, Narrative Theory

1. Introduction

The contemporary world has entered a crisis environment where climate change, pandemics, economic instability, political conflicts, and technological risks are intertwined, creating new kinds of governance challenges. Global crises over the past few decades have shown that the depth of crises does not depend solely on the severity of external events; Rather, it is also dependent on decision-making patterns, use of information, institutional responses, and social imagination (Beck, 1992; Boin et al., 2017). The COVID-19 pandemic, the global climate emergency, and recent economic instability have exposed the limitations of contemporary governance in a new way.

Conventional crisis-governance theory generally emphasizes administrative skills, policy making, risk management, and institutional coordination (Ansell et al., 2010). But in reality, the root cause of many crises is a delay in decision-making, ignoring warning signals, overconfidence, and unintended consequences. As a result, the question arises, is it enough to explain crisis management as an administrative or technical process? Or do we need to give equal importance to the cultural and narrative basis of decision-making?

This paper argues that ancient myths can be read as symbolic models of decision-making. Myths are not just a religious or literary narrative; They are cultural archives of the

recurring experiences of human society's powers, knowledge, desires, and failures (Campbell, 1949; Lévi-Strauss, 1963). The patterns of decision-making and the consequences depicted in the myths of different civilizations can provide important theoretical insights into the failures of contemporary crisis governance.

This study proposes the concept of "Decision Ecology", which refers to the overall environment of decision-making through the interrelationships of individuals, institutions, information flows, technological environments, power structures, and social beliefs. According to this concept, decisions are never made in isolation; Rather, it is produced and operated within multi-dimensional social and cultural systems (Weick, 1995).

The two main questions of this study are:

• How does myth contain recurring patterns of decision-making failure?

• Can myth provide an effective descriptive model for contemporary crisis-governance?

The purpose of this study is to construct a descriptive theoretical framework for explaining crisis-governance by analyzing the pattern of decision-failure reflected in myths. Hamlet, Cassandra, Daedalus, and King Midas have been selected for this purpose. Hamlet is a symbol of decision-making delay and moral dilemma; Cassandra warning signal rejection model; Daedalus replicates the unintended consequences of technological innovation; And King Midas has been considered a symbol of unlimited optimization and growth addiction.

In the next part of the article, we will first discuss the theoretical framework and the concept of decision ecology. Then the research method will be explained. A comparative analysis of the four selected myths will then be presented, and finally, the theoretical importance and applicability of this model in contemporary crisis-governance analysis will be discussed.

2. Literature Review

Existing studies on crisis governance, decision failure, narrative theory, myth analysis, risk governance, and cultural studies have been systematically reviewed to build the theoretical and analytical basis of current research. The purpose of this literature review is not only to present a summary of existing research; Rather, it is to identify connections, differences, and limitations between different theoretical traditions. Specifically, this review explored how crisis-governance research explained deterministic failures, how narrative theory explained the

processes of constructing social knowledge and political reality, and how mythology analyzed cultural memories and political fantasies. At the same time, this study explores why interdisciplinary dialogue between these different research areas is still limited and how a descriptive decision model can contribute to filling this gap.

2.1 Crisis Governance and Decision Failure

Contemporary crisis-governance research has largely focused on complex crises, institutional failures, and limitations in decision-making. Boin et al. (2017) argue that modern crises are multidimensional and politically complex, which poses a major challenge to conventional governance structures. Ansell et al. (2010) explain contemporary crises as a transboundary problem, where traditional regimes often fail to play an effective role.

The groupthink theory of Janis (1982) and the cognitive bias theory of Kahneman (2011) are particularly important in the study of deterministic failure. These studies show that both individuals and organizations can make wrong decisions despite the abundance of information. Similarly, Beck (1992) and Taleb (2007) explain the complexity of modern risk and uncertainty.

2.2 Narrative Theory and Social Knowledge

Narrative theory has been established as an important theoretical method of understanding human experience and social reality. Bruner (1991) argues that humans basically construct the meaning of reality through narrative. Ricoeur (1984) and White (1987) have shown that history, memory, and political reality are organized and interpreted through narrative structures. Weick (1995) highlights the importance of narrative sensemaking in the analysis of organizational crises. These studies indicate that narrative is not just a literary form; Rather, it is an effective means of decision-making and social knowledge generation.

2.3 Myth, Risk, and Political Imagination

Mythological narratives have long been considered a source of cultural memory, symbolic thought, and political imagination. Campbell (1949) and Lévi-Strauss (1963) have shown that myth is an important means of constructing the repetitive structure and social meaning of human experience. Bottici (2007) analyzed the role of myth in the construction of political imagination and collective identity. Similarly, Beck (1992) and Weick and Sutcliffe

(2007) explain the relationship between risk, technology, and unintended consequences in modern society.

2.5 Research Gap

It is apparent from the above literature review that crisis-governance, decision theory, narrative theory, and mythological research have individually developed rich theoretical traditions. Crisis-governance research has discussed institutional failures, decision-making constraints, and risk management extensively; Narrative theory explains the process of constructing the meaning of social reality and human experience; And mythology research has analyzed the deep structures of cultural memory and political imagination.

However, the interdisciplinary linkages between these three research areas are still limited. Attempts to use myths as an analytical or explanatory model, especially in the study of crisis-governance and decision-making failures, are almost absent. Similarly, descriptive research has rarely been directly linked to political decision-making and institutional crises.

The current research is an attempt to fill this research gap. Here, the myth is not just a cultural artifact; Rather, it has been analyzed as a descriptive model of decision-making, risk, cognitive limitations, and crisis-governance. This approach opens up the possibility of constructing a new interdisciplinary and narrative theoretical framework in crisis-governance research.

3. Methodology

This study uses comparative narrative analysis and conceptual interpretive approaches. The main purpose of research is not to determine the cause and effect of a particular historical event; Rather, it is to identify the recurring patterns of decision-failure embedded in the various mythological narratives and reread them as an analytical framework for contemporary crisis-governance.

The method of comparative descriptive analysis is based on the structural similarities that exist between different narratives, the types of repetitive decisions, and comparative interpretations of the results (Bruner, 1991). In this way, narrative is considered not only as a literary work, but also as a carrier of social knowledge and cultural experience. Ricoeur (1984) argues that human society organizes and interprets its experience primarily through narrative

structures. This study compares the narratives of Hamlet, Cassandra, Daedalus, and King Midas in light of that idea.

At the same time, the study followed a conceptual interpretive approach. Through this approach, the events of myth, character decisions, power relations, and outcomes have been reinterpreted in the light of contemporary crisis-governance theory. The researcher's purpose here is not to verify the historical veracity of the myth; Rather, it is to uncover the epistemological and political meanings implicit in myth (Geertz, 1973). For this reason, myth is considered both a cultural text and a deterministic model.

There are three main reasons for using myths as a symbolic model of governance failure in this study. First, the myth embodies the repetitive cultural experience of human decision-making (Campbell, 1949). Secondly, the myth preserves the long-standing social imagination of power, knowledge, caution, and failure (Lévi-Strauss, 1963). Third, many of the decisive failures seen in contemporary crisis regimes are structurally similar to the mythological narrative. Each myth was analyzed in this study as a distinct "Decision Ecology", examining the interrelationships between institutions, information flows, power structures, cultural beliefs, and human cognitive limitations.

3. Theoretical Framework

The present study is designed as an interdisciplinary study. As a result, this study combines various established theoretical approaches to crisis-governance, decision theory, narrative theory, and risk research without relying on a single theoretical framework. Specifically, this study uses four main theoretical frameworks: (1) Crisis Governance Theory, (2) Decision Failure Theory, (3) Narrative Theory, and (4) Risk Society Theory. Based on a comprehensive analysis of these frameworks, the study proposes an interpretive analysis framework called "Decision Ecology".

In this study, Decision Ecology is considered as an analytical framework consisting of five main components:

• Institutions: political and administrative structure;

• Information Systems: Methods of collecting, interpreting, and disseminating information;

• Power Structures: Distribution and Legitimacy of Power;

• Cultural Beliefs: Social Values and Cultural Imagination;

• Human Cognition: The cognitive limitation of human decision-making.

This framework analyzes the narratives of Hamlet, Cassandra, Daedalus, and King Midas as models of four distinct decision failures: Decision Delay, Signal Rejection, Unintended Consequences, and Hyper-Optimization. As a result, Decision Ecology served as an integrated explanatory framework in this study, creating a theoretical bridge between mythology and contemporary crisis-governance.

4. Comparative Analysis of Mythic Failure

4.1 Hamlet: Decision Delay, Moral Hesitation, and Institutional Paralysis

William Shakespeare's Hamlet (1603/2003) has long been considered one of the central texts of psychoanalysis, philosophy, political theory, and literary criticism. However, the present study rereads Hamlet in the light of the framework of "Decision Ecology", where he is not seen as a tragic hero, but as a political decision-maker who fails to make decisions in crises. The purpose of this analysis is not to recount Hamlet's personal tragedy; Rather, it is to analyze how its decision-making process progressively transitions from a personal crisis to an institutional disaster.

Hamlet's decisive crisis begins in the first act of the play. After the mysterious death of Hamlet's father, the King of Denmark, his uncle Claudius ascended the throne and married Hamlet's mother, Gertrude, in a very short time. This phenomenon creates a fundamental separation between Hamlet's personal and political realities. But the real crisis begins when Hamlet meets his father's spirit and learns that Claudius has indeed committed murder (Shakespeare, 1603/2003). At this moment, a clear decisive situation arises before Hamlet. He has information, a moral duty, and a political reality. According to the prevailing heroic narrative, an immediate decision was expected here. But that's not exactly what Hamlet does.

Hamlet's first reaction at this stage is doubt. He refuses to accept the statement of the Spirit as outright the truth. His argument is that the soul may be a deception of an evil force. It is not enough to interpret this position as a mere warning; Rather, it introduces a decisive mindset where the search for certainty becomes more important than decision-making. Kahneman (2011) showed that people in high-risk situations often fall victim to status quo bias and loss aversion, where the fear of making the wrong choice paralyzes effective decision-making. Hamlet's first

decisive failure lies in this: he continually expands the prerequisites for deciding rather than making decisions.

At a later stage, Hamlet decided to stage the play "The Mousetrap". This phenomenon is crucial, as it clarifies Hamlet's decisive strategy. Instead of taking direct action, he wants to assert his moral and political position by gathering more information. Seeing Claudius's reaction, Hamlet was convinced that the Spirit's statement was true. But even this certainty does not lead him to effective decision-making. Rather, this is where Hamlet's second stage of decisive failure begins.

Despite being convinced of Claudius' crimes, Hamlet misses the opportunity to kill him. For example, when Claudius is praying, Hamlet may kill him, but he doesn't, because he thinks that if he kills Claudius while he is praying, he will go to heaven. This moment is particularly significant because factual uncertainty is no longer an issue here; Rather, the problem is the moral dilemma. Hamlet begins to think about the moral legitimacy of revenge, the afterlife, sin, and the question of justice in such a way that decision-making itself is suspended. In the words of Janis (1982), it is a decision paralysis where a moral evaluation of alternatives makes decision-making impossible.

Hamlet's famous monologue "To be, or not to be" is the most vivid reflection of this crisis. Here, Hamlet is not thinking about any specific strategic decision; Rather, it questions the existential basis of decision-making. He enters into an intellectual cycle about the meaning of life, death, fear, uncertainty, and the consequences of human action, which gradually disconnects him from effective political action. Hamlet's problem in this sense is not a lack of information, nor is it a lack of power; Rather, it is the search for excessive introspection and moral perfection.

But Hamlet's personal crisis is never confined to the personal level. His decisive delay gradually destabilized the entire political structure. Hamlet's behavior led to increased suspicion and surveillance at the royal court; Polonius was killed by espionage; Ophelia broke down emotionally; Laertes entered the politics of revenge; And in the end, the Danish regime was virtually destroyed. Weick (1995) has shown that individual decision-making failures in crisis situations often break down the process of institutional money-making. The same thing happens with Hamlet. His personal uncertainty transformed into the uncertainty of the entire political system.

On the basis of this analysis, Hamlet has been identified as a narrative representing the "decision delay" dimension of the Decision Ecology model. Three observations contributed to this conclusion. First, Hamlet delays decision-making despite having enough information. Secondly, his moral and cognitive dilemma suspended political action. Third, this personal decision-making failure eventually morphed into a full-fledged institutional crisis. As a result, the tragedy of Hamlet is not just a story of one person's failure; Rather, it is a symbol of a decision-making environment, where over-analysis, moral uncertainty, and institutional weakness combine to produce a crisis.

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This model is also very relevant in the context of contemporary crisis-governance. Prolonged political delays in tackling climate change, indecisiveness of international organizations, and policy stagnation in many states demonstrate deep resemblance to Hamlet's decision-making framework (Beck, 1992; Boin et al., 2017). That is, sometimes the cause of the crisis is not the wrong decision; Rather, it is the excessive delay and uncertainty in decision-making that produces and intensifies the crisis. In this sense, Hamlet can be considered a powerful descriptive and theoretical model of contemporary crisis-governance.

4.2 Cassandra: Signal Rejection, Epistemic Failure, and Intelligence Failure

The narrative of Cassandra in Greek mythology is one of the strongest and most enduring descriptive symbols of ignoring warning signals in human history. In the conventional interpretation, Cassandra is presented as a cursed seer who can see the future but cannot make anyone believe it. But the current study analyzes Cassandra's narrative as a "decision ecology" model, where the key question is: Why does a society or political system fail to make effective decisions despite having the right information? That is, the tragedy of Cassandra is not a tragedy of the absence of information; Rather, it is a tragedy of denying facts.

According to the legend of the Battle of Troy, the god Apollo gave Cassandra the power to see into the future. But when Cassandra rejects her love, Apollo curses her so that she can prophesy the truth, but no one will believe her (Aeschylus, 1956; Hamilton, 1942). While at first glance it may seem like a story of a supernatural curse, from the point of view of Decision Ecology, it is a symbolic form of a complex cognitive and political crisis.

Analyzing Cassandra's decision-making environment, it is first seen that her problem is not the production of information, but the acquisition of information. Before the fall of Troy, Cassandra repeatedly warned that the outcome of the war would be disastrous. But the political leadership, the military establishment, and the general public do not take his warnings seriously. Here, an important question arises: why did they not believe Cassandra?

To find the answer to this question, we must first analyze the relationship between political power and knowledge. Cassandra does not hold any formal political power. He is not part of the decision-making body of the state, and his knowledge challenges the existing political structure. As a result, his statement is not considered as information, but as a threat. Weick (1995) showed that organizations often accept information that is consistent with their assumptions and existing organizational realities. In Cassandra's case, her predictions called into question the existing belief in political power structures; As a result, they are institutionally ignored.

This process is more clearly seen in the events of the last phase of the city of Troy. Before bringing the Trojan Horse inside the city, Cassandra explicitly warns that it is not a symbol of victory, but a carrier of destruction. It is worth noting that Cassandra does not give any vague or symbolic warnings; Rather, he refers to a specific danger. That is, the quality or clarity of the information is not the problem here. The problem is the lack of ability to absorb information politically and culturally.

There are three analytical reasons why this condition is characterized as "epistemic failure". First, the premonition of a crisis existed. Secondly, the forecast reached the concerned authorities. Third, the information was not considered credible for political and cultural reasons. As a result, failure is not information; Rather, it is the failure of the process of legitimizing knowledge.

Janis (1982)'s groupthink theory and Kahneman's (2011) study of cognitive bias help explain this phenomenon more clearly. In an environment of power-centric decision-making, a

collective mindset is often created, where information that goes against established beliefs is ignored. Cassandra's warning challenged the confidence, military pride, and cultural beliefs of the political elite in Troy. As a result, instead of verifying the authenticity of the information, the source of the information is distrusted.

This cognitive failure later turned into a complete intelligence failure. In modern political science, intelligence failure refers to situations in which political leadership fails to take effective action despite important warnings or intelligence information (Boin et al., 2017). Cassandra's narrative is an ancient but very powerful symbolic example of this process. The fall of Troy was not an accidental disaster; Rather it was a long-term warning that resulted from ignorance.

Analyzing Cassandra's narrative in the light of Decision Ecology reveals that information flows, political power, cultural beliefs, and human cognitive bias are intricately intertwined. Cassandra knew the truth, but her social status did not make her trustworthy. Political institutions had access to information, but their vested interests prevented them from receiving it. Society listened to the warnings, but its cultural confidence denied the real risk. As a result, this failure is not the fault of any individual or organization; Rather, it is a structural failure of the entire decision-making environment.

The Cassandra model is particularly relevant in contemporary crisis-governance. Similar decisive failures have been observed over and over again in scientific warnings about climate change, early predictions of the COVID-19 pandemic, risk analysis of financial crises, and intelligence on international security (Beck, 1992; Comfort et al., 2010). In many cases, it was found that the forecast of the crisis was not absent; Rather, the forecast was not given due importance due to political, cultural, and institutional reasons.

On the basis of this analysis, Cassandra has been identified as a narrative representing the "signal rejection" dimension of the Decision Ecology model. Cassandra's tragedy largely points to the fact that the biggest cause of the crisis is sometimes not a lack of information; Rather, it is the failure to trust the correct information and make decisions based on it. In this sense, Cassandra can be considered a powerful descriptive model of epistemic failure and intelligence failure in contemporary crisis-governance.

4.3 Daedalus: Innovation, Technological Risk, and Unintended Consequences

In Greek mythology, Daedalus is often portrayed as an extraordinary inventor, engineer, and artist. He has long been considered a symbol of the labyrinth, technological innovation, and human creativity. But in the present study, the narrative of Daedalus has been reread as a model of technological decision failure in the light of the framework of "Decision Ecology". The central question in this analysis is: how can a rational and successful innovation lead to undesirable disasters? That is, the tragedy of Daedalus is not the failure of technology; Rather, it is a tragedy of the limitations of technology-related decision-making.

The narrative of Daedalus begins with his extraordinary technical skills. He built the famous Labyrinth for King Minos of Crete, which was considered a highly effective technological solution to political control and security (Hamilton, 1942). But this is where the first theoretical complexity comes in. The technology that was built to ensure safety later became the cause of captivity for Daedalus and his son, Icarus. In other words, the first unintended consequence of technological innovation occurs in its initial success.

In order to escape the captivity of King Minos, Daedalus invented a new technological solution: artificial wings made of wax and feathers. This innovation is particularly important from the point of view of Decision Ecology, as it refers to the attempt to solve problems through technological innovation in a crisis situation. Daedalus analyzed the situation and found that both land routes and waterways were closed; As a result, he envisioned the airspace as a new possibility. At this stage, his decision-making appears to be completely logical, creative, and problem-solving.

But in the midst of this innovation, there existed an important decision-making limitation. Daedalus is extremely confident about the technology's efficacy, but did not fully consider its practical risks and potential diversity of human behavior. He warns Icarus not to fly too low, because the moisture of the sea can make the wings heavy; Again, do not fly too high, because the wax can melt in the heat of the sun (Ovid, 2004). This warning suggests that Daedalus was aware of the existence of technical risks. But he assumed that the user of the technology would behave perfectly reasonably and follow the instructions.

This is where the root cause of Daedalus's theoretical failure lies. The success of technological innovation does not depend solely on the design of the technology; Rather, it also depends on user behavior, environmental conditions, and unpredictable social factors. Beck (1992) argues in his "Risk Society" theory that most risks in modern technological societies are

not external; Rather, it is an internal and unintended consequence of technological progress. The narrative of Daedalus can be considered an ancient descriptive form of this theory.

The flight of Icarus makes this analysis even clearer. The technology was working effectively, but Icarus's ambition, excitement, and confidence took him beyond safe boundaries. As a result, the wax of the wings melts in the heat of the sun and falls into the sea. It is important to note here that the reason for the failure is not the fault of the technology; Rather, it is the complex interplay of technology, human behavior, and environmental reality. That is, the invention of Daedalus did not fail; Rather, the decision-making environment around the innovation has failed.

There are three main analytical reasons why this phenomenon is characterized as an "unintended consequences" model. In the first place, the main purpose of innovation was to achieve liberation, but the result is death and loss. Second, despite partial awareness of the existence of risks, the risk has not been fully assessed. Third, the uncertainties of human behavior and environmental variability have not been adequately incorporated in technical decision-making. As a result, Daedalus's decisive failure was not a personal mistake; Rather, it is a technological governance failure.

Analyzing the narrative of Daedalus in the light of Decision Ecology reveals that innovation, risk perception, human cognitive limitations, and environmental realities are closely intertwined. Daedalus developed technological solutions, but could not fully imagine the long-term social and behavioral consequences of those solutions. Its failure in this sense reflects a fundamental problem of the modern technological regime.

The Daedalus model is very important in contemporary crisis-governance. Artificial intelligence, nuclear technology, gene editing, social media algorithms, and automated decision systems operate within similar decision-making frameworks. In these cases, technical capabilities often move faster than risk assessments, resulting in unintended and sometimes catastrophic consequences (Taleb, 2007; Weick & Sutcliffe, 2007). The use of digital surveillance technology and AI-based governance during the COVID-19 pandemic has also raised similar ethical and technical questions.

On the basis of this analysis, Daedalus has been identified as a narrative representing the dimensions of the "Unintended Consequences" of the Decision Ecology model. The tragedy of Daedalus reminds us that the greatest risk of technological innovation is not in the failure of

technology; Rather, it is rooted in the belief that technology is capable of fully controlling its own social, political, and humanitarian consequences. In this sense, Daedalus can be considered a powerful descriptive and theoretical model of contemporary technological crisis-governance.

4.4 King Midas: Hyper-Optimization, Greed, and Value Collapse

In Greek mythology, the narrative of King Midas is generally regarded as a moral tale of greed and the desire for wealth. But the present study rereads King Midas's narrative as a model of decision-failure in the light of the framework of "Decision Ecology", where the central question is: How does the decision to prioritize a single goal lead to the collapse of the entire social and value system? That is, the tragedy of King Midas is not just a story of personal greed; Rather, it symbolizes a decision-making environment in which efficiency, profit, or optimization is established as the sole value, and as a result, the larger social and human structure collapses.

The narrative of King Midas begins with his desire for more wealth within his royal power and wealth. According to mythology, the god Dionysus, pleased with his hospitality, gave Midas the opportunity to pray a boon. This moment is especially important from the point of view of Decision Ecology, because here many possible decision options existed before Midas. He could pray for political status, social welfare, longevity or knowledge. But he desires a power that will turn everything to his touch into gold (Hamilton, 1942). While this conclusion may seem irrational at once, upon closer analysis it represents a special kind of decisive reasoning.

The rationale behind Midas' decision is to maximize or optimize a particular standard. His idea was that more wealth means more power, more security, and more success. That is, he narrows down a complex social reality to a single measurable goal. Kahneman (2011) showed that people often overvalue a particular indicator or criterion by simplifying multidimensional realities when it comes to making complex decisions. The decision of King Midas is a symbolic example of this kind of cognitive simplification.

In the early stages, Midas' decision seems to have been very successful. Whatever he touches turns into gold. That is, his set goal is fully achieved. This is where the most important principle of this narrative lies. Because the failure of Midas is not due to a failure to achieve the goal, rather, it is due to success in achieving the goal. His decision was a hundred percent effective according to his own standards, but that criterion was fundamentally incomplete.

This situation becomes even more apparent when Midas realizes that food, water, and even his daughter's body are turning into gold to his touch. At this moment, for the first time, he

realizes that his decisions have completely destroyed human, social, and existential values, even if they increase economic value. The problem here is not technical or administrative; Rather values. He considered only one variable when making decisions and virtually made other values disappear.

There are three analytical reasons why this phenomenon is characterized as "Hyper-Optimization". First of all, Midas has given the highest importance to a single goal. Second, the social, moral, and humanitarian consequences of achieving that goal were not considered. Thirdly, the success of achieving the goal has ultimately led to the failure of the overall system. That is, failure here is not due to wrong decisions; Rather, it has been caused by highly efficient but incomplete decisions.

Beck's (1992) risk sociology theory and Taleb's (2007) analysis of complexity and uncertainty help explain this phenomenon more clearly. Many crises in modern society are the result of decisions that appear to be highly successful and reasonable in the short term, but cause serious social and environmental damage in the long run. The narrative of King Midas is an ancient but powerful symbolic form of such a decisive framework.

Analyzing the narrative of King Midas in the light of Decision Ecology shows that economic rationalism, cultural beliefs, political power, and human cognitive limitations are deeply intertwined. Midas's personal aspirations were influenced by the notion of socially recognized wealth and power. At the same time, his political stance allowed him to ignore the importance of alternative values. Consequently, his failure is not the result of any personal moral weakness; Rather, it is the result of a decision-making environment where efficiency and growth are considered the only criteria for success.

The King Midas model is very relevant in the context of contemporary crisis-governance. Many crises, such as climate change, environmental degradation, global economic inequality, and algorithmic governance, can be explained as the result of over-optimization. For example, industrialization and resource extraction aimed at unlimited economic growth have produced development in the short term but have exacerbated environmental crises and social inequality in the long run (Beck, 1992). Similarly, overemphasis on efficiency and profitability in AI-based decision-making systems often undermines justice, equality, and human values.

On the basis of this analysis, King Midas has been identified as a narrative representing the degree of "Hyper-Optimization" of the Decision Ecology model. The tragedy of

King Midas reminds us that failure is not always the cause of crises; Sometimes the cause of the crisis is the success that is achieved within a narrow and incomplete value framework. In this sense, King Midas can be considered a powerful descriptive and theoretical model of value crises, over-optimization, and policy distortions in contemporary crisis-governance.

5. Towards a Narrative Model of Decision Ecology

The four myths analyzed in the previous discussion indicate that decisive failure in crisis-governance is usually not an isolated phenomenon; Rather, it is the result of multi-dimensional social, institutional, and cultural interactions. The proposed "Narrative Model of Decision Ecology" is based on four criteria for repetitive decision failure: (1) decision delay, (2) signal rejection, (3) unintended consequences, and (4) hyper-optimization. Although these four dimensions are different, in real situations, they are interrelated and collectively create a crisis-producing environment.

Decision delay basically refers to situations where decision-makers delay making effective decisions due to moral dilemmas, political uncertainty, or institutional complexity, despite having sufficient information and capabilities. Hamlet's narrative presents a symbolic model of such failure (Shakespeare, 1603/2003). Signal rejection, on the other hand, refers to the process by which legitimate warnings or cognitive signals are ignored due to existing power structures or cultural prejudices. Cassandra's narrative is a powerful example of this epistemic failure (Weick, 1995).

The third dimension, Unintended Consequences, refers to the unexpected outcomes of innovation, technology, and policy decisions. The myth of Daedalus shows that technological capabilities are not always synonymous with risk management (Beck, 1992). Ultimately, hyper-optimization refers to a decisive state in which over-emphasizing a single goal or value leads to the collapse of larger social and moral structures. The narrative of King Midas is emblematic of this tendency (Kahneman, 2011).

These four dimensions are not completely independent of each other. Rather, one failure can produce or accelerate another failure. For example, signal rejection can cause decisive delays; Decisive delay can again increase the likelihood of unintended consequences; And over-optimization can institutionally suppress alternative signals and values. As a result, Decision Ecology basically functions as an interconnected failure environment.

Table 5.1 *Narrative Model of Decision Ecology*

Myth	**Type of Failure**	**Governance Problem**	**Decision Ecology Component**
Hamlet	Decision Delay	Institutional Paralysis	Human Cognition and Institutional Structure
Cassandra	Signal Rejection	Epistemic and Intelligence Failure	Information Systems and Power Relations
Daedalus	Unintended Consequences	Technological Risk Governance	Innovation Systems and Risk Perception
King Midas	Hyper-Optimization	Value Collapse and Policy Distortion	Cultural Beliefs and Economic Rationality

This model also indicates that organizations themselves often create an environment of failure. Institutional structures, information flow constraints, unequal distribution of power, and cultural bias can combine to create a decision-making environment where failure is structurally reproduced (Boin et al., 2017). As a result, the crisis needs to be considered not only as an external disaster, but also as a socially produced process.

The particular importance of descriptive analysis lies in the fact that it makes visible the hidden structures of governance that are often invisible in conventional administrative or statistical analysis. Myths and narratives contain long-term social memories of power, fear, desire, knowledge, and decisions (Ricoeur, 1984; Bruner, 1991). For this reason, descriptive models are able to provide an alternative explanatory framework for crisis-governance.

The proposed Decision Ecology Model is applicable in a variety of contemporary fields. In the case of climate governance, this may explain the relationship between ignoring warnings and decisive delays. It can be helpful in analyzing the interrelationships of information, beliefs, and political decisions in pandemic management. In the case of political crises, it can explain institutional stagnation, crisis of legitimacy, and cognitive failure. Similarly, in technological fields such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and digital governance, it can

serve as an effective theoretical framework for assessing the unintended consequences of innovation and the risk of over-optimization (Beck, 1992; Kahneman, 2011).

Thus, the Narrative Model of Decision Ecology provides a new theoretical perspective of understanding crisis-governance not only as a question of administrative efficiency, but also as a descriptive, cultural, and cognitive process.

6. Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to construct a narrative theoretical framework for contemporary crisis-governance by analyzing the recurring patterns of decision-failure reflected in mythological narratives. The results of the study indicate that the narratives of Hamlet, Cassandra, Daedalus, and King Midas are not just literary or cultural works; Rather, they serve as long-term symbolic models of human decision-making, power, knowledge, and institutional failure. Analysis of these four myths identifies decisive delays, signal rejections, unintended consequences, and excessive optimization as the four fundamental failures of crisis-governance.

One of the theoretical contributions of this research is the introduction of the concept of "Decision Ecology", which explains decision-making as the result of the interactions of individuals, institutions, information flows, power structures, cultural beliefs, and human cognitive processes. This model provides an opportunity to consider crisis-governance not only as a question of administrative or technical competence, but also as a cultural, descriptive, and cognitive process. At the same time, the research can be seen as an attempt to establish a new interdisciplinary dialogue between myth analysis, narrative theory, and crisis-governance research.

The interdisciplinary importance of the study is also noteworthy. It presents an integrated analytical framework that partially transcends the existing boundaries between literature studies, cultural studies, political science, public policy, risk research, and decision theory. This opens up the possibility of alternative narrative analysis methods in addition to traditional explanatory models of crisis-governance.

The practical significance of this research is also important in the context of contemporary crisis-governance. In complex situations such as climate change, pandemics, political crises, and technological risks, it is equally necessary to consider not only information or technical skills, but also the role of cultural imagination, cognitive constraints, and decision-

making narratives. The Decision Ecology model provides a new method of analyzing these multidimensional relationships.

However, this study also has some limitations. First, there are only four mythological narratives analyzed here, which are not fully representative of the global mythological tradition. Secondly, the results of the study have not been verified empirically because the study is largely conceptual and interpretive. Thirdly, the relationship of mythological structures to contemporary political and administrative events is relatively limited to a theoretical level.

The inclusion of non-Western mythological narratives, especially South Asian, African, and Indigenous knowledge systems, may be important in future research. In addition, there is an opportunity to experiment with the Decision Ecology model in contemporary climate policy, public health crises, and artificial intelligence governance. Such research can be helpful in building a more integrated and multidimensional theoretical framework for crisis governance studies.

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