

# An Autopsy of a Fading Civilization Afraid to Name Its Enemies



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## The Prophet in the Ruins

In his December 2025 commentary for The Daily Signal, “Leaders Fail When the Threat of Radical Islam Is Ignored,” Victor Davis Hanson does not merely contribute to the 24-hour news cycle; he pens a digital memento mori for a fading civilization. To review this piece from the perspective of a cultural archaeologist is to see Hanson as a man standing amidst the marble dust of a crumbling forum, frantically sketching the silhouette of a storm that the city’s architects insist is merely a light fog. Hanson emerges here as a “Prophet in the Ruins,” an intellectual classicist who recognizes that the collapse of a society rarely begins with an external breach of the walls, but with an internal rot of the language used to describe the danger.

From this perspective, Hanson’s article is a primary source document on the “Era of Euphemism.” He dissects a peculiar 21st-century pathology: the belief that naming a demon is more dangerous than the demon itself.

Hanson begins by mapping a series of violent tremors – shootings in Australia, cancellations in Paris, and executions in Rhode Island. However, his focus isn’t on the ballistics or

the blood; it is on the lexicon of the aftermath. He observes a recurring ritual among Western elites: the “nanosecond” pivot. Whenever a radical Islamist strikes, the political apparatus performs a linguistic sleight of hand, widening the lens until the specific threat disappears into a foggy generality of “all extremism.”

Hanson’s critique of the Bondi Beach response is particularly sharp. He views the Australian government’s refusal to name the ideology of the killers – preferring to pivot to “white extremism” even when the perpetrators were on terrorist watchlists – as a form of state-sponsored gaslighting. Through the lens of a cultural historian, this is the “Suicide of Clarity.” Hanson argues that when a society loses the courage to identify its enemies, it has already lost the will to protect its citizens.

The most intellectually provocative segment of the article is Hanson’s analysis of how Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) has moved from a HR initiative to a national security vulnerability. He describes DEI as a “binary” religion that has categorized the world into fixed roles of victim and victimizer based on skin color and heritage.

In this framework, Hanson argues, the radical Islamist is granted a “victimhood shield.” Because they are perceived as part of the “oppressed 30%,” their actions are viewed by Western elites as symptoms of Western failure rather than autonomous acts of ideological warfare. This perspective is a fascinating reversal of traditional geopolitics. To Hanson, the West is no longer being conquered by external armies, but by an internal software update that has deleted the concept of “self-defense” from the cultural hard drive.

Hanson’s review of Western decline takes on a casi-theological tone. He speaks of “spiritual, emotional, and psychological” decay. By linking low fertility rates, anemic military spending, and “green energy zealotry” to the threat of radical

Islam, he presents a holistic theory of civilizational exhaustion.

He posits that the West is “slouching” toward its own end not because it lacks the technology to win, but because it lacks the “confidence” to exist. The cancelation of Christmas in Paris is his “smoking gun.” To Hanson, when a majority population of 65 million people cancels its own sacred traditions to avoid offending a radicalized 10%, it is not practicing “tolerance” – it is practicing “pre-emptive surrender.” He views this as a “pathology of the elite,” who would rather see their culture erased than be accused of an “-ism” or a “-phobia.”

Perhaps the most poignant “unique” observation in Hanson’s piece is the mention of the Syrian immigrant who tackled the shooter in Australia. In a strange irony, Hanson highlights that it was a man from an “antithetical society” who displayed the very Western virtues – courage, decisive action, and physical defense of the innocent – that the native Western leaders lacked. This creates a fascinating subtext: the “West” is no longer a geography or a race, but a set of values that some immigrants cherish more than the bureaucrats born into them.

To review Hanson’s article is to acknowledge that he is playing the role of Cassandra. His prose is heavy with the frustration of a man who sees a pattern that his peers are incentivized to ignore. He identifies a “perfect storm” where open borders meet a lack of assimilation, fueled by a domestic ideology that views the host culture as inherently evil.

Hanson’s “Radical Islam” article will likely be remembered by future historians as a desperate plea for “The Great Re-naming.” He argues that the first step to survival is the restoration of the truth: that there are ideologies that wish for the West’s destruction, and that no amount of DEI training or semantic gymnastics will change that fact. It is a grim,

unflinching look at a civilization that has replaced its “will to power” with a “will to disappear,” and it challenges the reader to decide whether they are watching a tragedy or a transformation.

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