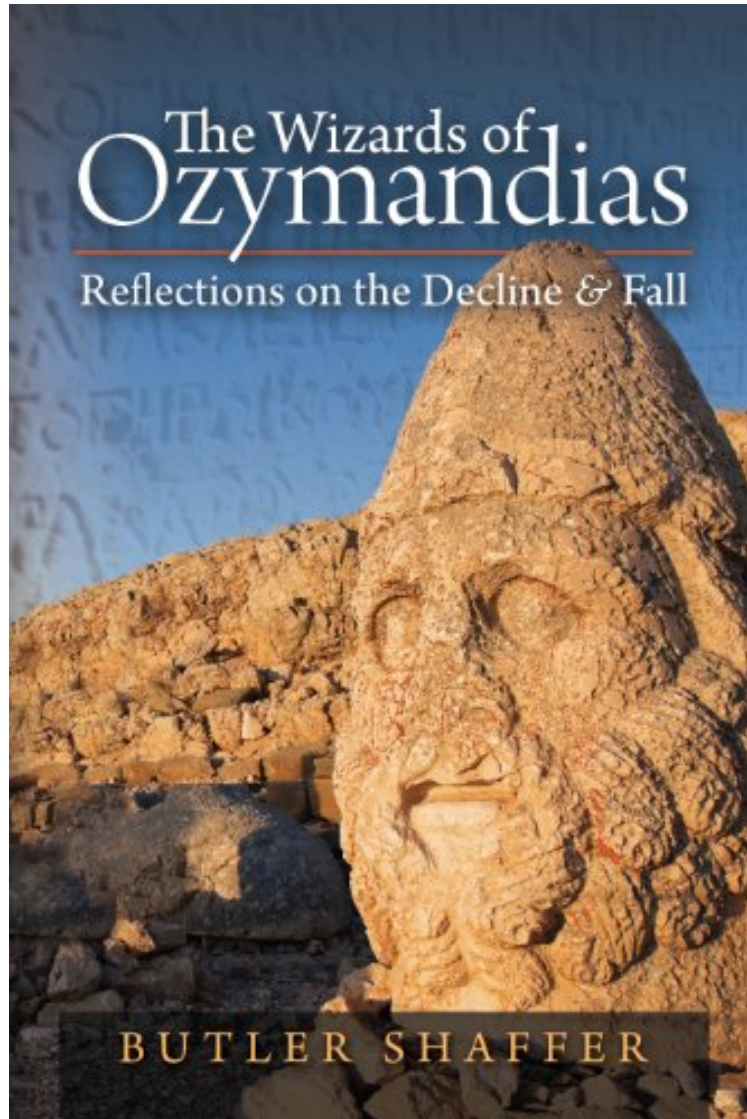


## The Wizards of Ozymandias: Reflections on the Decline Fall

*Butler Shaffer, Butler D. Shaffer*  
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**Butler Shaffer, Butler D. Shaffer : The Wizards of Ozymandias: Reflections on the Decline Fall** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Wizards of Ozymandias: Reflections on the Decline Fall:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. EnlighteningBy James WeilerButler Shaffer is a master at putting into word's what being an individual human being really means. As an anarchist/libertarian it opened more doors to my inner self.29 of 31 people found the following review helpful. Excellent and Logical!By Thomas MadisonConsidering I'm only on Chapter 4, it may be a little premature to call this an overall Excellent work, but I'm confident that the rest of the book will not disappoint. The author uses reasonable and logical explanations for his

arguments about the fallacy of central planning by government, politicians, and media. These 3 entities try so hard to fit the cause and solution of the nation's most complex problems into a simple mold. This book and reason show that chaotic systems such as human behavior and the economy cannot and should not be controlled. Trying to control them only results in more rules and laws, bad characterizations, and ultimately less freedom. Instead, let God-given liberty steer us on the right and proper course. Definitely recommend this book! 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. I felt that Chapter 37 was worth the price of the ebook. By Shane C. Pruyn Three and half stars. This was good, but after the brilliance of "Boundaries of Order" I was disappointed. This is a vast collection of articles and essays, while there are moments of brilliance, it is largely repetitive. I know that we are told that we must hear things three times to remember, but after nine times or 18 times... it does get monotonous. I felt that Chapter 37 "Bring Back Discrimination" was worth the price of the ebook. So in that light, everything else was a bonus. I am not turned off Shaffer by any means, but I am very glad that I read "Boundaries of Order" before I tackled this.

Western Civilization--the American version in particular--is in a very turbulent and, perhaps terminal condition. The sense of civility that helps give meaning to a "civilization" is in full retreat. Butler Shaffer has, over the course of several years, written 51 wonderful essays observing the dissolution of Western culture and civilization. They have been assembled in the *The Wizards of Ozymandias* a captivating work full of entertaining epigrams and anecdotes, as well as enlightening commentary on current events, and historical episodes, that will keep you engaged and immersed from the first to last page. Shaffer's intellectual prowess and deep well of life experience enlightens and rouses introspection at every turn. It is immediately evident that the author has been writing on law, economics, and history for decades. This book will challenge you to more deeply contemplate the ideals of liberty. The title may be foreboding, but for all that, the book is an uplifting and gratifying read. In his great poem "Ozymandias" Percy Shelley pictures for us the eponymous tyrant whose arrogance of power could not save him from historical oblivion. Ozymandias is a reminder of the fragile nature of every system be it biological, institutional, or cosmic in character. As we are learning from the advanced course in history in which we seem now to be enrolled, this precariousness also applies to civilizations. It is difficult for intelligent minds to doubt that this current system is in the process of joining Ozymandias in the dust-bin of history. Western culture has produced material and spiritual values that have done so much to humanize and civilize mankind. Unfortunately, it has also produced highly-structured institutions and practices that not only impede, but reverse these life-enhancing qualities. Is it possible for us to energize our intelligence in order to rediscover, in the debris of our dying civilization, the requisite components for a fundamentally transformed culture grounded in free, peaceful, and productive systems that sustain rather than diminish life? In the introduction Shaffer describes how civilizations are created by individuals. In following chapters, he explains how they are destroyed by collectives which are good for little more than the destruction of what others have created. Seen in the sharp contrasts between market economies and state socialism; the fundamental struggles are between the creative energies unleashed by liberty, and the repressive forces of politics. Shaffer explores the impact that institutionalism may have on the decline of civilization. Shaffer methodically takes the reader through the rise and decline of Western civilization using references that range from the construction of an Islamic cultural center a few blocks from the site of the former World Trade Center, to the BP disaster, to the 1951 motion picture, *The Day the Earth Stood Still* and on to experiments in removing road signs and traffic lights. What is likely to follow from this imminent decline and fall? Might the remnants of our terminal culture like an estate bequeathed us by a rich benefactor provide the foundations for a fundamentally transformed culture; one that does not cannibalize itself? Can conditions of peace and liberty replace the wars, coercive regulation, and worship of violence that have combined to destroy our present civilization? The book ends with such questions, and invites the reader to contemplate how such a life-centered culture might arise. If after reading this book you are not convinced that the fall of western civilization is upon us, don't grieve just yet! Shaffer is optimistic that such a collapse could be the turning point for a social transformation toward a society that embraces individual li