

# Ozymandias Revisited

Nobody asked but ...

Once again, I call upon my favorite poem, one from Shelley, entitled Ozymandias:

*I met a traveller from an antique land,  
Who said—"Two vast and trunkless legs of stone  
Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,  
Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,  
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,  
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read  
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,  
The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;  
And on the pedestal, these words appear:  
My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;  
Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!  
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay  
Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare  
The lone and level sands stretch far away.*

Do you see a picture there of every regime, past, present, and future? If you don't, then follow Ayn Rand's kind advice, "check your premises."

For every government formed and continuing, there is an end in sight, an end in war. It is the same recipe, trading off short term riches for long term peace.

Each civilization imagines itself immortal. But every civilization is a combination of mortals, unable to think in terms of the long run.

— Kilgore Forelle