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Analysis of Sonnet 64
When I have seen by Time's fell hand defac'd
The rich proud cost of outworn buried age;
When sometime lofty towers I see down
raz'd, And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
And the firm soil win of the watery main,
Increasing store with loss and loss with store:
When I have seen such interchange of state,
Or state itself confounded to decay,
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminat-
That Time will come and take my love
away. This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.
As A. Kent Heatt did a great job in citing certain similarities in Sonnets to Spencer's Ruines of Rome: by Bellay, I was surprised enough not to find any parallels on sonnet 64 to that of Ruines of Rome. This sonnet delivers, moreover, the theme of Rome succumbing to time rather than textual correlations. I will provide a quatrain by quatrain explication that cites certain allusions to Spencer's text. In the first quatrain, time has destroyed Rome, the "buried age," having lived too long ("outworn") as a prosperous civilization. The "lofty towers" being "raz'd" echoes Rome being "Heapt hils on hils, to scale the starrie sky"; the first "hils" in Spencer refers to the Roman civilization and the physical buildings, whereas the latter "hils" refers to the mountains on which Rome was built. Thus, being "raz'd" are all of the monuments of Rome that are subject to mutability. Ambiguity in the second quatrain allows for two readings following the Roman theme. First, the "hungry ocean" is the sea itself which gains on Rome, "the kingdom of the shore," but if the ocean is rising against Rome, it is incongruous to say that the "firm soil" defeats the "watery main." A more appropriate alternate reading still refers to Rome as "the kingdom of the shore," but the "hungry ocean" refers to other civilizations

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that have tried to conquer Rome yet failed. 5-7: ' When I have seen usurping nations hostilely advance towards Rome, and then steadfast Rome defeat the opposing navy,'. This latter reading more supports line 8, in which Rome ' increases its wealth through the gains of (Rome's) conquests thus, " with loss", and yet at the same time increases its loss " with store," (that is, time's store of time)'. Therefore, time steals from Rome just as Rome steals from other civilizations. This imagery is extended into the third quatrain as Shakespeare realizes (in the sonnet) time's strength and guaranteed occasion. I would suggest the following paraphrase of the third quatrain: ' When I was Rome's change of government or condition' or ' Rome's change of other civilizations government or condition, or Rome itself susceptible to time, its ruin has provoked me to ponder-that time will, (just as it did to Rome), vanquish my lover from me' or ' vanquish the love I have (for my lover) away'. Working through to the couplet, Shakespeare cites his conceit: ' This knowledge (that thime is inevitable) might as well be death, knowledge of thought or knowledge not having the power to choose', choosing either " to weep" or control of time, ' but only plead to have (more) time, which (my) knowledge fears the loss of'. The " loss" is either the loss of time or the loss of his lover.