

# OLD CITADEL

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My partner once told me about an ancient Imperial Citadel in Hanoi, Vietnam. It was captured and controlled by many powers throughout its history, and each regime tried to demonstrate its control by building something new there, sometimes requiring the destruction of the old buildings. But even after a millennium of those changes, the foundations remained. As a result of being an American and a wild animist (poet), I couldn't help but see something of myself in the old citadel, a guilt and camaraderie. I'll be a relic too, soon enough.

Beneath this stone floor, there is another,  
Made of wood, tall, like a platform.  
Another building stood here long ago,  
It was destroyed before you came,  
To make this. A marble caste, an epitaph  
Reading: something used to be here  
And now it is gone. If we dig deeper  
We will dredge up many ages  
Long since forgotten, but left just under  
Foundations that hint, just barely  
Beneath the soft ground, at a life long gone.  
The mud has taken the remains.  
The rubble has melted down to magma.  
But stone and wood reminders stay.