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One of the people you can see is Artist Nguyen Huu Bao - A photographer taking picture of Hanoi street - living in 48 Hang Dao street.

How signs were made? Different types in

Speaking of signs in Hanoi, there are 3 periods.

We will set the time mark to be when the **French occupied Hanoi**. It was an important time and before that was the Nguyen's feudalism period, even before that is Le's.

Before 1945, Hanoi was under controlled by the French. In 1945, Democratic Republic of Vietnam was born. In the 9 years after 1945 when the Hanoi was dependent on the French, the economy as well as the signs developed relatively in a modern approach as we see today. In terms of signs before that, firstly prior to the time the French came to Vietnam, Hanoi had these old quarters. They traded with each other using the products (not money) in the open market. The shops back then also include handicraft i.e. the shop owners were also those who made the products. These people often didn't need signs thanks to their personal reputation. **People often knew that there was Mr. X or Y in this quarter, who made this products and the merchants often came there to buy the products and took them to the open market to resell. That is how the old quarters were formed e.g. Hang Dong street was specialized in processing? copper, May Ma street was specialized in bamboo handcrafted products.**

So the shops on these streets, which were as small as a lane today, usually had one or two floors. They were known through the reputation of their owners, the brand was the owners so they did not really need signs. (For example) Back then, on Nguyen Khuyen Street (formerly known as Sinh Tu Street, specializing in blacksmith), there were lots of blacksmiths.

But there was one called Sinh Tai, and the name was so famous and unique? that a sign was not needed. Later, when too many other blacksmiths appeared, signs were needed. It was also because it was common in Vietnam that people would copy names e.g. Sinh Ton,... like they call today "brand infringement". That was why people had to make signs: to differentiate with other shops. Shop owners did not have as many materials like today and they simply used whatever was available to them. Some who have some space on the wall next to their door would emboss some Han (Chinese) characters and use them as sign. Otherwise, they would use some very basic materials such as baskets (made of bamboo), ..., as long as they have a blank space. In terms of color, there weren't many colors: white from lime, black was used to write the letters and made from Chinese ink or by grinding coals,... These signs were often taken out in the morning and in in the evening and it was very rare that they were left permanently in one place. Signs in this period were very simple and not structured/significant enough to become a profession of making signs. It was just the families who felt necessary to show their craftsmanship/reputation that made signs. Usually, the signs told exactly what jobs/profession that the owners were doing. The products then were distributed to the society in two main channels: merchants, who visited

the stores to buy and resell at the open market and the makers themselves who made and sold the products in one place (their shop). The products were handmade and in low quantity e.g. one knife maker? could often make from 10 up to 20 knives per day, which wasn't significant at all. That was why there were the whole quarters specializing in making a product so that there could be enough for the local demand and to sell to other places. So that can be considered the earliest stage of signs: the period between Nguyen's feudalism era and the French occupation.