

What can be said about an edifice's spatial layout when no documents comment on it ?

There should be nothing more in a visualisation than the data – no interpretation, no point of view. But in all cases a visualisation can help analysts spot meaningful patterns inside the data (Fig. 32).

Documents give us almost no indication about the spatial layout of a number of edifices – in particular those that cannot be precisely localised. Yet the following visualisation does reveal that some stalls inside those edifices significantly stand out. The visualisation is based on a simple data set: an 18th century inventory of commercial facilities describing stalls one by one (surface, tax level before 1760, tax level after 1760).

The visualisation is a re-vision of *candlestick charts*, a solution developed in the 18th century by the Japanese rice trader Munehisa HommaHomma, in order to represent price movements over time. Each individual stall (in the example below each stall inside the *cooks.shops*) is represented by a candlestick. The candlestick's horizontal position corresponds to its order of appearance in the inventory: *stall 1* is the first on the x axis. The candlestick's vertical position corresponds to the stall's tax levels before and after 1760. Colour is used to show differences in the tax increase (Fig. 32f) : the brighter the red is, the higher the increase is. Finally, brownish lines below and above the main rectangle show the tax/surface ratios before and after 1760.

The visualisation shows, for instance, that ratios remain rather stable, and spots a catching up mechanisms for stall 9. What is striking here, is the way stalls 1 and 2 stand out – far higher taxes. This can be due to the specificity of the products that were sold in those two stalls, or to their profit. But it can also be a result of their position with regard to other stalls.

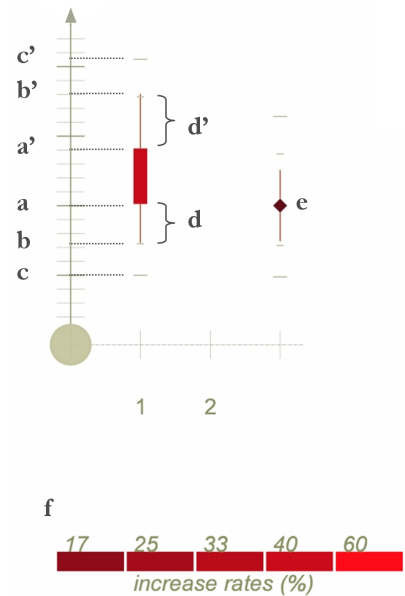
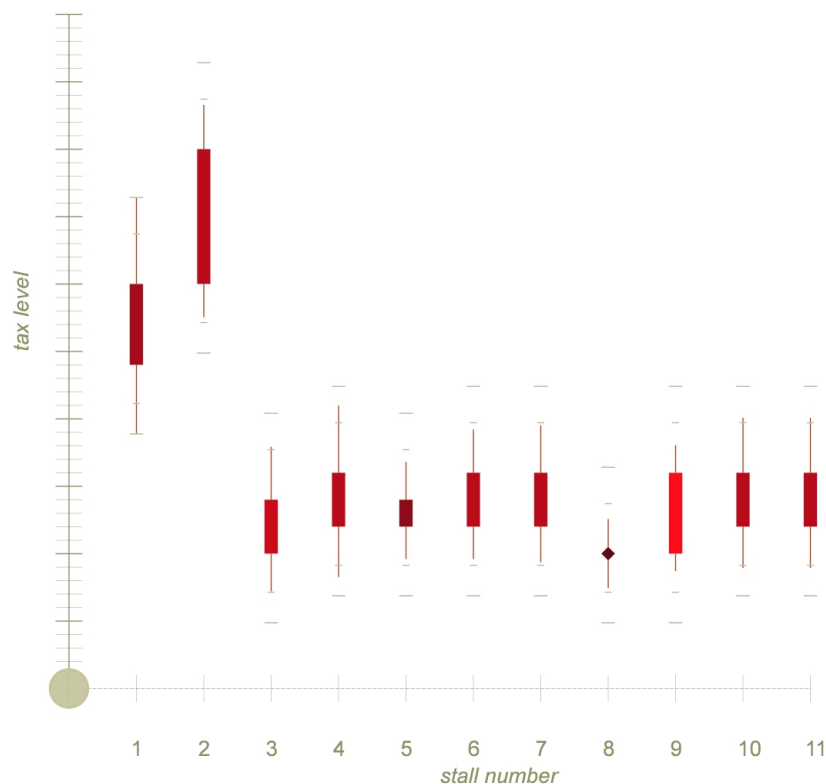


Fig. 32 A re-vision of M. Homma's candlestick charts, used to uncover how some stalls may stand out inside a commercial facility.

a/a' - the tax level (amount), before 1760 (a) and after 1760 (a').

The higher the rectangle is positioned, the higher the tax is paid. The higher the rectangle is, the biggest the difference between tax levels before and after 1760 is.

b/b' - short grey horizontal lines show the average tax per m² ratio across all the stalls (b - before 1760/ b' - after 1760)

c/c' - slightly larger grey horizontal lines show the maximum tax per m² ratio across all the stalls (c - before 1760/ c' - after 1760)

d/d' - tax per m² ratio for this specific stall (d - before 1760 / d' - after 1760)

e - this specific glyph is used when tax levels before and after 1760 remain unchanged.