

# Survival of bazaars: Global spatial impact and local self-organising processes

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## Abstract

The traditional bazaar in contemporary Iranian cities was at the heart of what is now considered to be the historic core of these cities. The structural changes in Iranian cities, which began around the end of 19th century, caused the interruption of the organic interrelation between the bazaar and its historic spatial context. The bazaar and the rest of the historic core have responded to these changes differently. While the bazaar in all major Iranian cities is still functioning, the residential zone of the historic core in some cities has declined. This paper discusses the general position of the historic core of Iranian cities and focuses on the bazaars. In 9 Iranian cities the spatial system of the traditional bazaar in the existing global urban structures have been analysed. The bazaars that have survived have common configurational properties in the context of whole city. In 4 cities the maps from around 40 years ago up to now have been analysed to examine the changes in the bazaars after the first periods of so-called modernisation of Iranian cities. There is a remarkable case where, alongside the global changes, local self-organising processes help the bazaar to become the liveliest and most attractive place in the city. This case raises a question that calls for further research; has the upgrading of the bazaar had any impact on its surrounding traditional zones?

## Keywords

Local structure,  
global change,  
bazaar, self-  
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core

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