

SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF URBAN AREAS COMBINING CONTEMPORARY HIGH RESOLUTION SATELLITE IMAGERY WITH HISTORICAL AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY - THE OUTWARD EXPANSION OF DEVELOPMENT IN BARCELONA'S METROPOLITAN REGION: 1956-2006

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This paper addresses the emerging results from a number of ongoing projects, focussing on Barcelona's Metropolitan Region (RMB). This Region today comprises 164 municipalities extending over a land area of some 3,240 Km², with a population nearing 5 million inhabitants. The artificialised component, i.e. land having been subject to some form of urban development, extends to 550 Km², representing 17% of the total area of the RMB. In 1950 the population of this area stood at fewer than 2 million inhabitants, rising to 2.6 million inhabitants in the period 1950-60. The research is helping to proportion an historical appreciation of the spatial extent of these urban areas, in order to contribute towards the formulation of urban and environmental policy in the short and medium term.