

## **ECAI Cultural Atlas Developments**

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ECAI is developing a Cultural Atlas Portal to highlight the work of ECAI affiliates and examples of cultural atlas components and styles. The site will provide a central location to find current ECAI examples and encourage submission by affiliates of related works. ECAI has from the beginning had methods for community members to contribute information and projects. The new browser will continue this tradition and have an (easier to use) online method for users to nominate atlases to include in the browser.

In addition to its web site, the portal has a Google Earth interface. This will allow the portal and its component projects to be discoverable through Google searches. Several ECAI projects are also either being migrated to Google Earth or have new Google Earth components. This process will provide experience in how to use new tools and create examples of innovative ways to use Google Earth with time components and cultural content.

The rapid development of digital earth systems has created great opportunities for development of electronic cultural atlases. The new systems provide the technical platform and contextual background information required for development of cultural atlases. Project development is easier. Google Earth, for instance, is relatively easy to use and has good documentation. The proliferation of these systems has spawned a large online user group familiar with using interactive maps and creating online content.

Together these trends have created an explosion of projects and available information. However, the issues that ECAI has addressed in design of excellent cultural atlases remain the same. We still need to address and explore questions such as:

- How to design the navigation and cartography of atlases ;
- How to link the map and time information with the cultural information;
- How to document the accuracy and source of information; and
- How to create an infrastructure to support cultural atlas development and use.

The new portal and examples of resource integration, time sequencing, and linkage to documentation will be demonstrated.