

Chapter 1

Introduction

For many years, China's statistical authorities did not systematically publish regional data, at any level (province, prefecture, county, or township/commune). Outside China, scholars and government agencies managed to assemble a few cross sections of provincial data but, for the most part, regional dimensions of China's economic development could not be addressed in a thorough and credible manner.

This situation changed suddenly in the early 1980s, when China's State Statistical Bureau and Ministry of Agriculture began publishing yearbooks that disaggregated a number of statistical indicators to provincial level. Several large compilations of provincial-level statistics, each spanning a number of years, soon followed.

County-level data appeared during the mid 1980s. Within a few years, provincial yearbooks routinely incorporated such data; soon thereafter, national compendia began to appear. These include, for example, several widely used collections of rural economic statistics published during the late 1980s and early 1990s (*Zhongguo fen xian nongcun jingji tongji gaiyao*).

The latest phase in this process of spatial disaggregation has seen the release of township-level data—first in county-level gazetteers and yearbooks and more recently in provincial yearbooks. A single province typically has only a few dozen counties, but hundreds of townships (and, in some cases, a thousand or more). Township-level data, therefore, provide a much more detailed picture of the economic landscape, and also permit recourse to multivariate methods that are not feasible with smaller numbers of regional units.

This book and CD collect township-level data for the province of Fujian, provide digital maps showing township boundaries and seats of government (to which the data can be attached for display and for spatial analysis), and describe how the maps and data tables were produced and how to use them.

Table 1.1 – Organization of Material on the CD

Directory	Subdirectory	Contents and Format
FJtowns	BasicMap	digital maps of township boundaries and seats of government, and essential identifying information for the various map objects; Excel and MIF formats
	SuppMaps	supplementary map objects, useful mainly in enhancing the appearance of maps produced from BasicMap; MIF format
	TownData	township economic data covering all of Fujian, 1999–2003; these can be easily attached to digital maps; Excel format
	SuppData	additional township-level data for three municipalities, and county-level data for all of Fujian; Excel format
FJtownsM	BasicMap	same content as <i>BasicMap</i> and <i>SuppMaps</i> above (but without Chinese characters); MapInfo native format
	SuppMaps	
Text	Book	a book describing the digital maps and data, explaining how they were compiled and how to use them, and presenting examples of maps produced from them; suitable for printing or viewing on screen; PDF format
	Appendix	eight appendices, most of which include color graphics, long tables, or both; can be printed, but intended primarily for viewing on screen; PDF format
Software	MSExcelsV AdobeRdr	programs for viewing files in Excel and PDF formats

The material on the CD is divided into several directories and subdirectories, as described in Table 1.1. The CD also includes a *Readme* file, in ASCII format, containing a guide to the CD (similar in substance to this introduction).

All maps and data are supplied, in the *FJtowns* directory, in formats that can be readily imported into most desktop-mapping and GIS packages running on the Windows operating system. These formats are Microsoft Excel 97 (.xls files) and MapInfo Interchange Format (.mif and .mid files). For aspatial forms of analysis, virtually any spreadsheet, graphing, or statistical package can import the Excel files, which contain all of the quantitative data (without the maps).

The *FJtownsM* directory contains tables in MapInfo native format. These are identical in content to tables in the *FJtowns* directory, with one exception: tables in *FJtownsM* do not have “hanzi” columns (Chinese characters), while some of those in *FJtowns* do. Readers using MapInfo Professional (version 6.5 or later) can simply open the tables in the *FJtownsM* directory, rather than importing the corresponding Excel and MIF files.

The *Text* directory includes this book, with eight appendices. The main text (a single PDF file, in the *Book* subdirectory) is designed for printing in black and white on 8½-by-11 inch paper, and is also suitable for viewing on screen. The appendices (each in a separate PDF file) can be printed; however, most include color graphics or long tables (or both). They are intended primarily for viewing on screen.

Much of the book is keyed to the directory structure shown in Table 1.1 above. Chapter 2, for example, describes the digital map objects in *BasicMap* and how to access them. Chapter 6 provides analogous information concerning attribute data collected in the *TownData* subdirectory, and explains how to attach data to maps. The remaining chapters describe the supplementary maps and data and explain how to use them, provide information concerning source materials, and explain how maps and statistical materials in these sources were converted to digital form.

Appendix 8 (in *Text\Appendix* on the CD) provides a brief hands-on introduction to the maps and data, through a sequence of simple examples.