

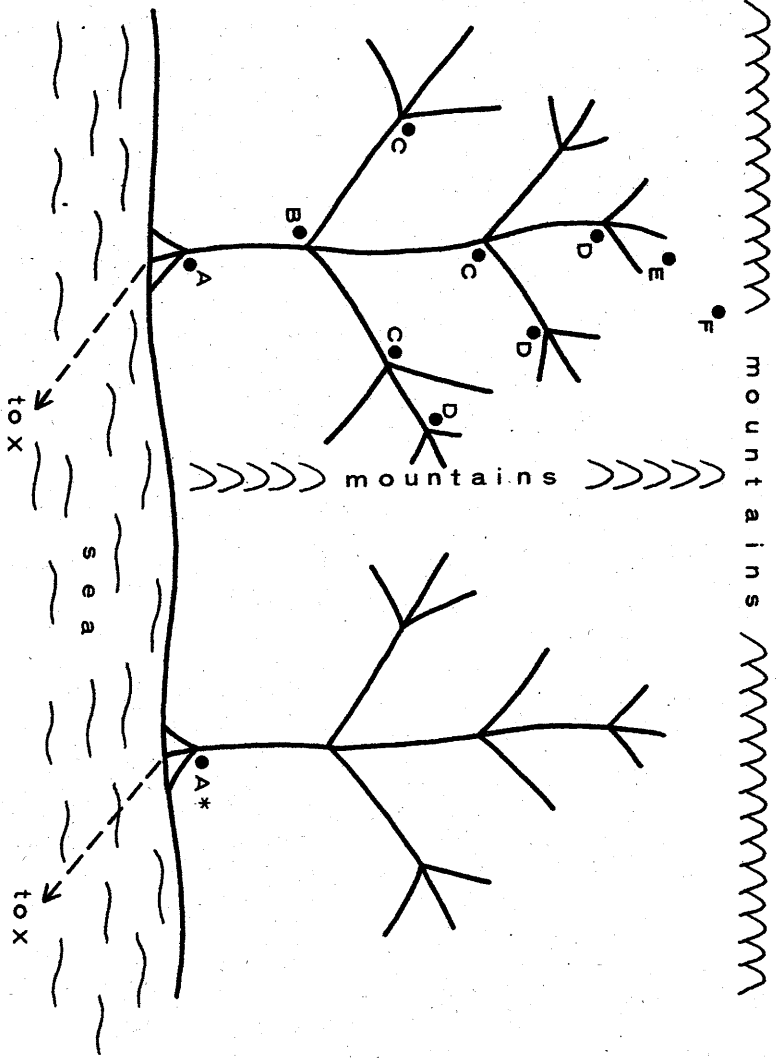


Figure 1: Abstract Model for Exchange between a Drainage Basin Center and an Overseas Power

These obstacles to inductive understanding form the justification for proposing a model based entirely on abstract, a priori considerations. As will be shown later, enough empirical data do exist to give the model a certain historical plausibility. But for the moment it seems best to present it in as schematic a fashion as possible.

The model focuses on a single hypothetical class of ancient exchange networks, one which involves the control of a drainage basin opening to the sea by a center located at or near the mouth of that basin's major river. A diagram of such a system is illustrated in Figure 1. It contains these elements:

A, the center at the river mouth;
B and C, second- and third-order centers located upstream and at primary and secondary river junctions;

D, the most distant upstream center to participate in the A-based system of market exchange and the initial concentration point for products originating in more remote parts of the watershed;

E and F, the ultimate producers of these products and perhaps centers on a separate exchange system based on non-market institutions, involving goods only part of which come from or go to the marketized system centered on A;

X, an overseas center which serves as the main consumer of goods exported from A and the principal supplier of its imports; and

A*, another river-mouth center some distance along the coast, controlling a hinterland similar to that of A.

This system is assumed to operate under several constraints. (1) The interfluvial countryside of the drainage basin is sufficiently marshy, forested, or mountainous to confine all movements of goods to water routes, rendering the economic pattern closely congruent with the dendritic pattern formed by the main stream and its tributaries. (2) X, the overseas center, is the economic superior of A, possessing a larger population