The Interconnectedness of Ancient Peoples Map Study

Janet Cuenca
Parkway Northeast Middle School
St. Louis County, Missouri

Level: Grade 7

Length of Unit: Intermittent days throughout the school year," can be less depending on teacher preference

Textbook: *Human Heritage: A World History*. Merill.

Readings for the Teacher:

Atlas of the Bible Lands: An Illustrated Atlas of the Bible. Ed. Harry Thomas Frank, Union, NJ: Hammond, 2002.
Casson, Lionel. *The Ancient Mariners: Seafarers and Sea Fighters of the Mediterranean in Ancient Times*. Second Edition. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
Grant, Michael. *Ancient History Atlas*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1986.
McEvedy, Colin. *The New Penguin Atlas of Ancient History*. Hong Kong: Viking Penguin, 1967.

Maps and Other Visual Aids for Lessons:
Lesson One: Map of Eurasia (*Rand McNally Quick Reference World Atlas*, Rand McNally, 1995, 24). Note: This map, suggested by Institute Lecturer Elizabeth Lyding Will, was a basic resource in the Cargoes program, as it illustrates water routes connecting the three continents, which were its focus.

Lessons Two through Five: Maps for these lessons are included at the end of this teaching plan. Some are drawn from the books listed above, as are the illustrations cited.

Introduction

This unit will use maps to illustrate

1) A view of Europe, African and Asia as one unit with three parts, interconnected by seas and waterways (including the Mediterranean Sea and the Red sea, which were both vital to the ancient Mediterranean trade). The exchange of goods, technology and ideas throughout the three continents, which came in surges during ancient times, happened on a fairly wide stage.
2) The simultaneous establishment of Phoenician and Greek colonies and their rivalry for trade.

Lesson One: A Large Map on the Classroom Wall

Map Source: Map of Eurasia, Rand McNally

Preparation and Classroom Activities:
My overall goal for the year is to help my students understand the interconnectedness of ancient peoples. Beginning the first week of school, when we are studying geography, I involve them in creating an 8'by 10' map on the wall that will be there for them throughout the school year. Here are the general directions for this promect.

Before school begins in September:
1) Make an overhead transparency of map of Eurasia.
2) Cover as large a section of your classroom wall as possible with white poster-board.
3) Project the map image onto the wall, making it as big as possible.
4) Outline in pencil onto the poster-board the entire map, including rivers.
5) Check for accuracy.

After school year begins:
1) Have students trace over the outline the continents with black marker. Save rivers for later.
2) Students color all the oceans. Be sure there are enough markers of the same shade of blue to finish the whole job. Choose a light blue so you can write names over the blue and have it be legible. Be careful not to let them color blue where land is.

As the year progresses:

Students add details as you present the history of an area. As you study an area, the map will "come alive" as you have them outline rivers in blue and add their names, show mountain ranges, deserts and other geographic features.

As we study a chapter in the textbook, glean place names from the text itself and from maps in the atlases listed in Readings above. Write the place names on slips of paper. On the back of each slip, write the book title and page of the map that shows the location. Students then draw slips form a box and check the resources. They therefore are consulting either their textbook or an atlas to see where on the large wall map

they should put their place names. As a check for accuracy, I have them use a thumbtack to affix the slip of paper with the name on it to the proper place on the wall map. Members of the next class can alternate between the "grab bag" or using a black pen to write names on after you have looked to see that the thumbtacks have been placed properly. (Be sure they give you the thumbtacks back. Thumbtacks are a "hot item" to seventh grade boys). Generally, it may be best to have students work on the wall map one at a time , in turn, while the class is working on some other assignment.

Yarn can be stapled to the map to show information about particular periods, such as, for example, the extent of bronze technology by 1600 B.C. (*Penguin Atlas*, p. 31). Later, when such information is no longer relevant, the yarn can easily be removed, and more yarn can be stapled onto the map to indicate the spread of other trends. A method such as this, with progressive additions that are then removed, keeps the map from becoming confusingly "busy."

Lesson Two: Resources Map (Mesopotamia and Egypt)

Map Source:
Teacher's copy (included here, Figure 1) contains additions about resources, based on McEvedy, *The New Penguin Atlas*, listed under Readings, pp. 35, 45, 55 and 71. (The *Rand McNally Desk Activity Map* 23090 can be used as a substitute for the maps provided in this book.)

Preparation:
Make an overhead transparency from this map (without additions, Figure 2). Also, make a class set of laminated individual maps for students' use at their seats. In preparation for a discussion with the class, use washable colored pens to highlight the resources to be discussed for the day. Below are some examples of classroom activities using the map.

Example: Colors such as red and green will make clear where deposits of copper and tin exist. Begin discussion by outlining the Nile, Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Then, help the class look for answer of the following questions:

Which metal (copper or tin) was easily available to the Mesopotamians? To the Egyptians?

Which metal would be harder to get? (tin) Why would getting tin be difficult?

Which areas have copper and tin that are beyond the reach of the Egyptians? The Mesopotamians? Why?

Example: Color-highlight desirable "luxury" resources such as gold, silver, ivory, amber and resins. Questions to explore:

Which luxury resource (amber) is farthest away from Egypt and Mesopotamia? Would it be easy or hard to get it in ancient times? Why?

What will they probably have to trade to get it? (gold) Did the Egyptians have gold? What about the Mesopotamians?

Which people are most likely to have amber to trade? Why?

Which luxury items would Egyptians be able to get from nearby?

What people live in that area? (Nubians)

What might they trade in exchange? (gold, silver)

What natural features of geography would make it hard to trade with the Nubians? (cataracts, desert)

Would the Mesopotamians be able to get gold easily? How about silver?

Where is the closest gold for them? Closest silver? Who owns it? (Egypt)

How might the Mesopotamians get gold from the Egyptians? (trade, war)

What natural features would make it hard for the Mesopotamians to trade with the Egyptians? (desert)

Lesson Three: Map Showing Prevailing Winds

Sources for Materials:
Lionel Casson, *The Ancient Mariners*, plate 1, top of page ("The earliest example of a sail, ca. 3200 B.C."). Note: In this book, the plates follow p 142. The additions to this map (Figure 3) indicate prevailing winds in the Mediterranean based on information from Casson's book as well as the lectures he gave at the Cargoes Institute. Note: For this lesson (in contrast to Lesson Two), use completed map, on which prevailing winds are shown, for both the transparency and the desk maps.

Classroom Activity:
This activity focuses on the earliest known sailing boat and the prevailing winds in the Mediterranean. Use Casson, plate 1, to make transparency for the overhead. Make another transparency of the map entitled "Prevailing Winds" as well as individual laminated copies for students to look at, at their desks.

Questions for Discussion:
Imagine yourself traveling in this boat. Would it be safe to take it on a river such as the Nile, Tigris or Euphrates?

Would it be easy to travel north on the Nile? (Most seventh graders believe that all rivers run south, like the Mississippi, so this presents a good opportunity to combat this misconception). Help them to recognize that traveling north on the Nile is going downstream, so they could easily do so without the sails, even though the winds are blowing from north to south.

Would it be easy to travel south on the Nile? (Even though they would be going upstream, the prevailing winds would push them if they used the sail). Help students see that travel and trade on the Nile was a gift of nature.

Would it be possible to sail this boat from Egypt out into the Mediterranean Sea and trade with Cyprus or Lebanon? Present the concept that the earliest sailing ships could not tack into the wind. However, boats could be rowed or sailed from the mainland to Cyprus or from island to island in the trading culture for the Greeks and Phoenicians and an importing, stay-at-home culture for the Egyptians.

Lesson Four: Using Monsoon Maps to Study Sailing Patterns

Source for Materials:
Lionel Casson, *The Ancient Mariners*
Map, "The Near and Far East," p. 201.
Plate 1, as listed in Lesson Three.
Figure 3, "Joining strakes…and tenons," p. 28.
Plate 9, "Shipwrights add a plank…off Cyprus."
"Prevailing Winds" map used in Lesson Three.

Classroom Activities:
1) Casson's map, "The Near and Far East," is the basis for the maps made by Janet Cuenca to show the directions of the summer monsoon (Figure 4) and winter monsoon (Figure 5) winds over the Indian Ocean. The overhead transparency of the earliest sailing boat can again be used. Again, it is recommended that you use a class set of laminated maps for the students to see up close. Discussion questions follow:

Locate the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. In what general direction do they flow?
Would it be safe to sail this boat on these rivers?
Would it be possible to sail such a boat to the south?
Do the monsoon winds seem to affect the Persian Gulf? The rivers?
Do there seem to be any prevailing winds to blow the sailboats back upstream?

(Help students recognize that, in this region, as well as in Egypt, which they studied earlier, nature established the pattern for trade, from north to south by river and overland to go north. Once people ventured out of the Persian Gulf to establish trade connections with the civilizations of India, the force of the monsoon winds forced the flimsy boats of the Fertile Crescent and Arabia to stay close to the shore. Water and land routes worked together in this region to move goods.)

2) The technological innovation of mortise-and-tenon carpentry is easily presented with Casson's figure 3 and plate 9, again made into overhead transparencies for class use. (Relate this information to something the students would be familiar with such as adding leaves into a dinning room table).

Using the "Prevailing Winds" map of the Mediterranean and the concept that the Greeks and Phoenicians had access to home-grown timber, students can readily see that stronger boats (made with mortise-and-tenon technology) and favorable winds reinforced their seafaring and trade activities. However, learning the mortise-and-tenon techniques did not help the Egyptians to sail in the Mediterranean because they still lacked timber and faced unfavorable winds. Rather, importing hardwood from Lebanon was a royal enterprise, and ships could be built to use in the trade down the Red Sea and out into the Indian Ocean, later on.

Lesson Five: Using Maps to Study Greek Trade

Materials:
"Resources," "Prevailing Winds," and "Spring Winds, Black Sea (Figure 6)" maps (the first two used in previous lessons).

Classroom Activity:
Use overhead transparencies and laminated class sets for the discussion. Highlight the "S" symbols (standing for wheat) on the Resources map. Suggested questions follow. Where was wheat grown in ancient time? (Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Northern area of the Black Sea).

Why would the Greeks be unable to buy wheat at an affordable price from the people in Mesopotamia? (Not accessible by sea; overland transport would be prohibitive).

Could the Greeks sail to Egypt to buy wheat? (Look at map showing prevailing winds).

Once the Greeks had loaded the ships, would they have been able to sail directly north? (It was not possible to sail back against the winds with heavy, lumbering grain ships).

Could the Greeks sail into the Black Sea against the prevailing

winds? Show the "Spring Winds" map. Help students see that they could use the spring winds to sail empty ships (or lightly loaded with trade goods) into the Black Sea in the spring, then use prevailing winds blowing favorably from behind to sail the heavily laden grain ships back to the Aegean in late summer.

Additional Map Study Lesson:

The following maps in Michael Grant's *Ancient History Atlas* may be used to study colonization rivalries between the Phoenicians and the Greeks: "Phoenician Trade and Colonisation," p. 8; "Greek Colonisation in the West," p. 19 and "Greek Colonisation in the East," p. 20. These may be used together with the large wall map for the following activity: Have students put all the cities on the map, using large dots in one color of ink to denote the Phoenicians (including the Carthaginians) and another color to indicate those of Greek origin. Once the information from all three maps is on one map, with colors, the rivalry becomes visible.

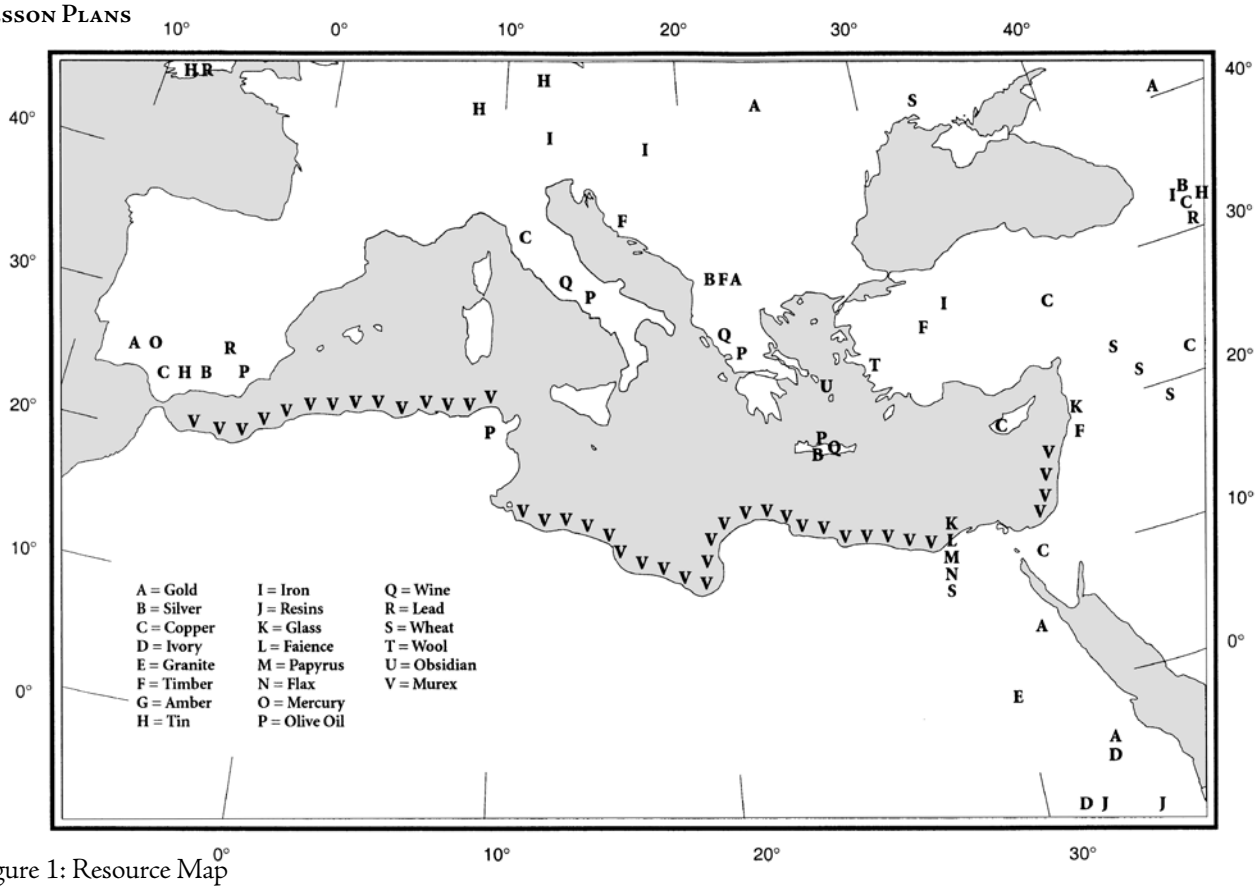

Figure 1: Resource Map

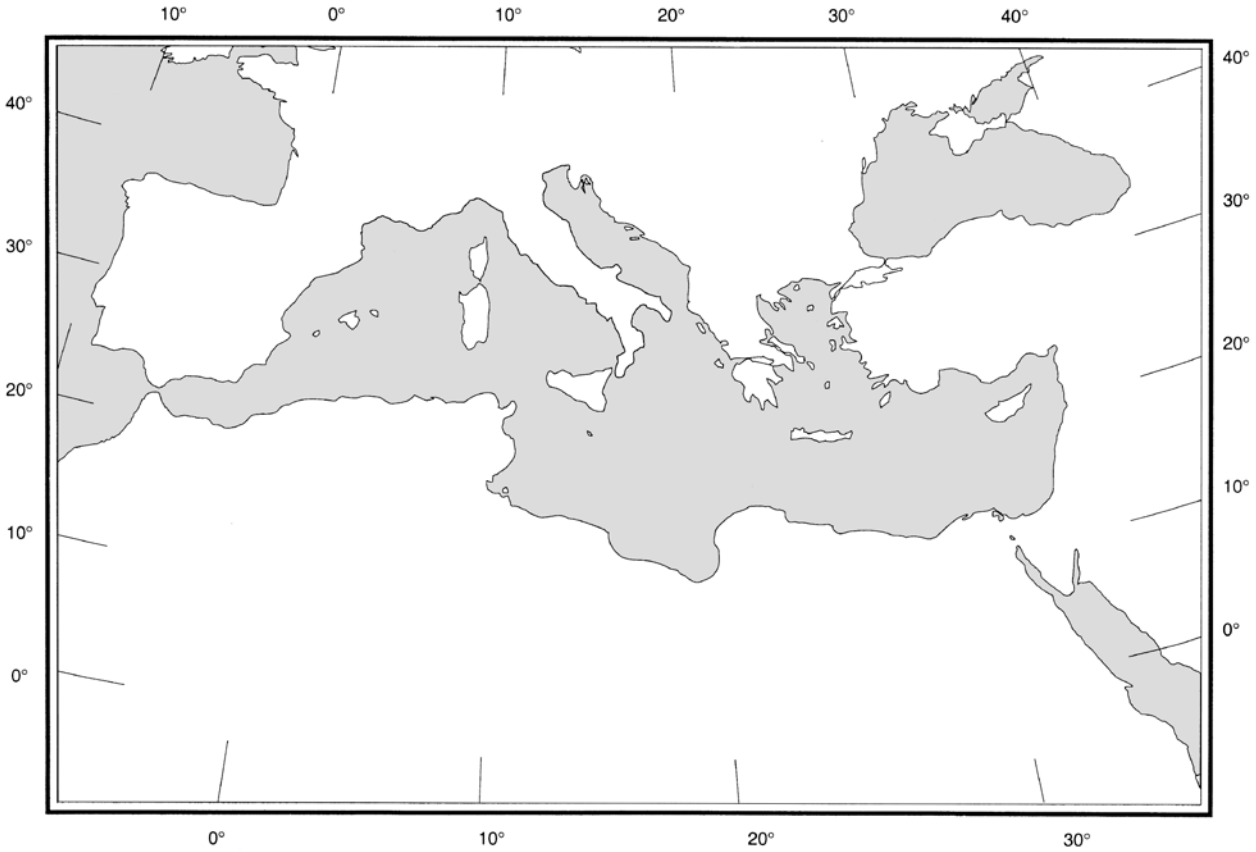

Figure 2: "Blank" Mediterranean Map

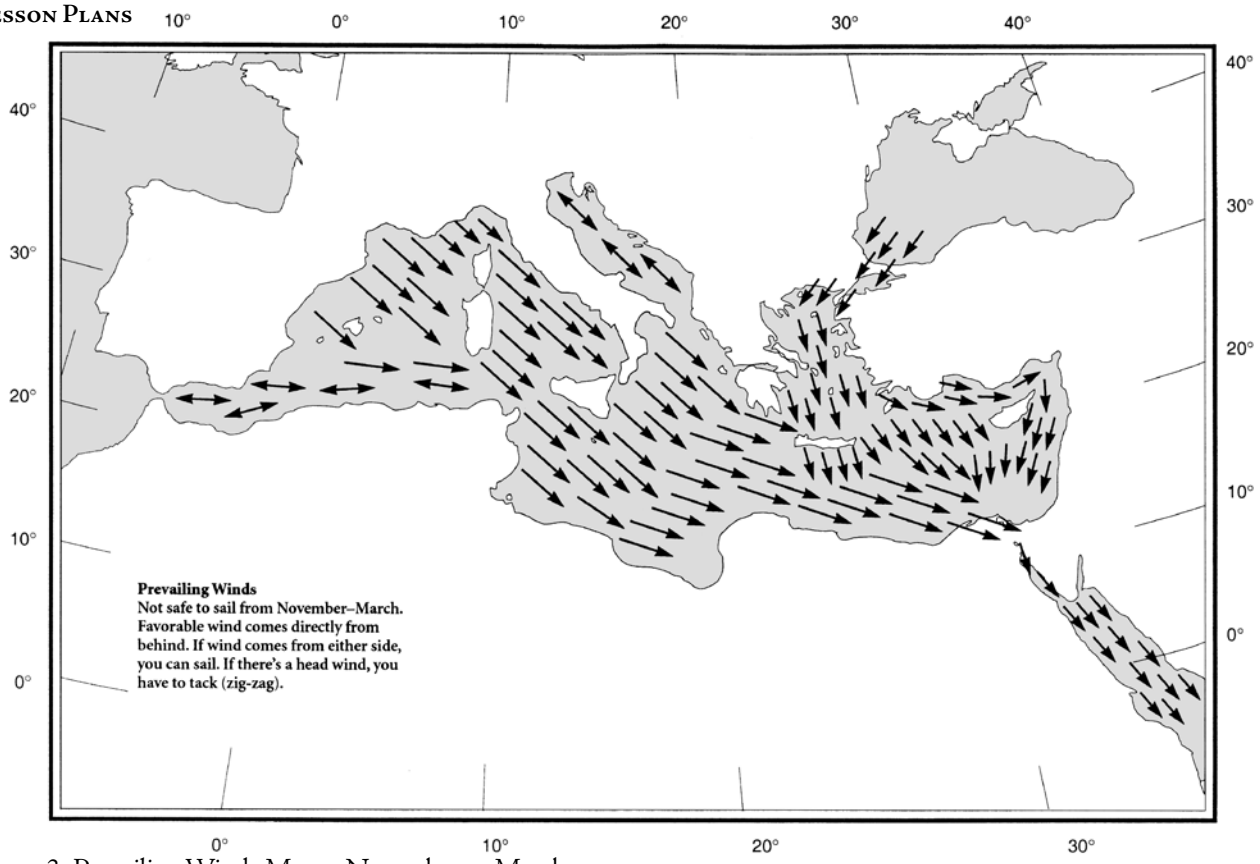

Figure 3: Prevailing Winds Map—November to March

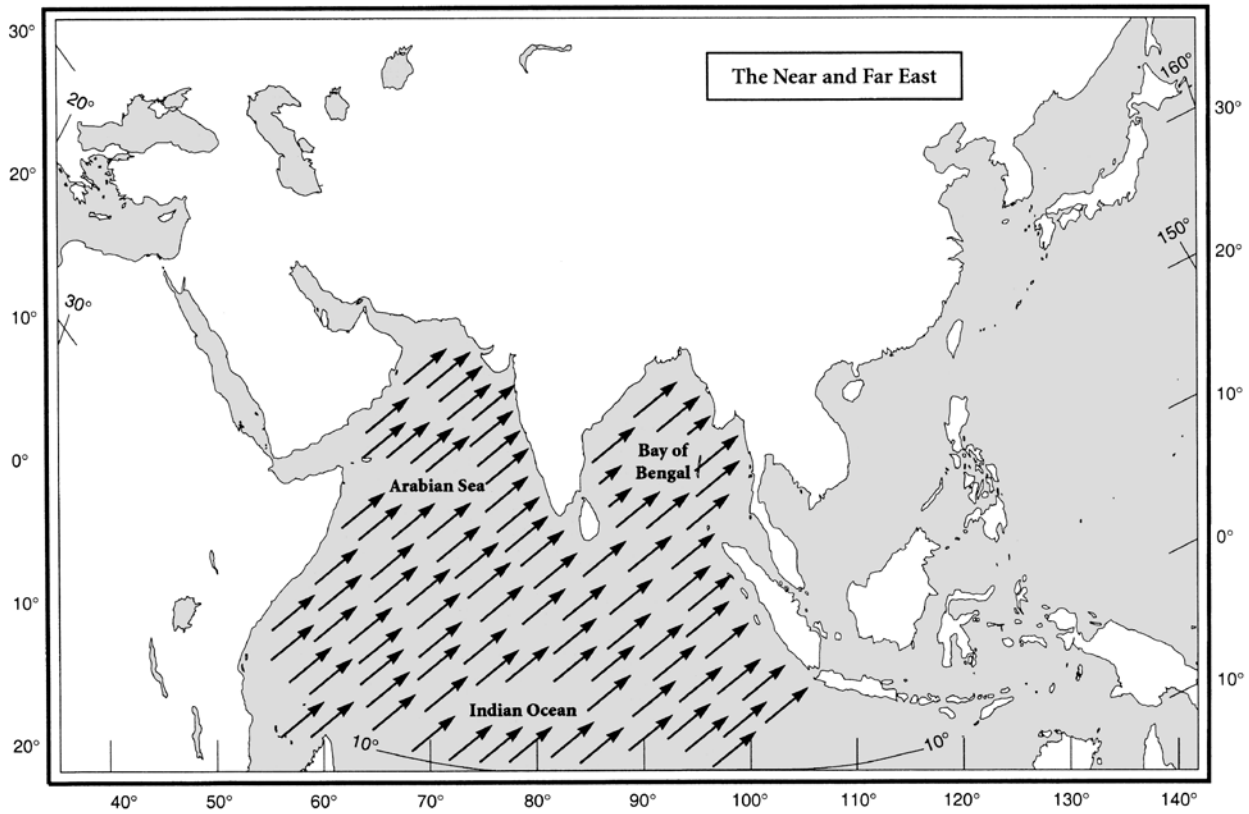

Figure 4: Summer Monsoon Winds Map—April to October

L

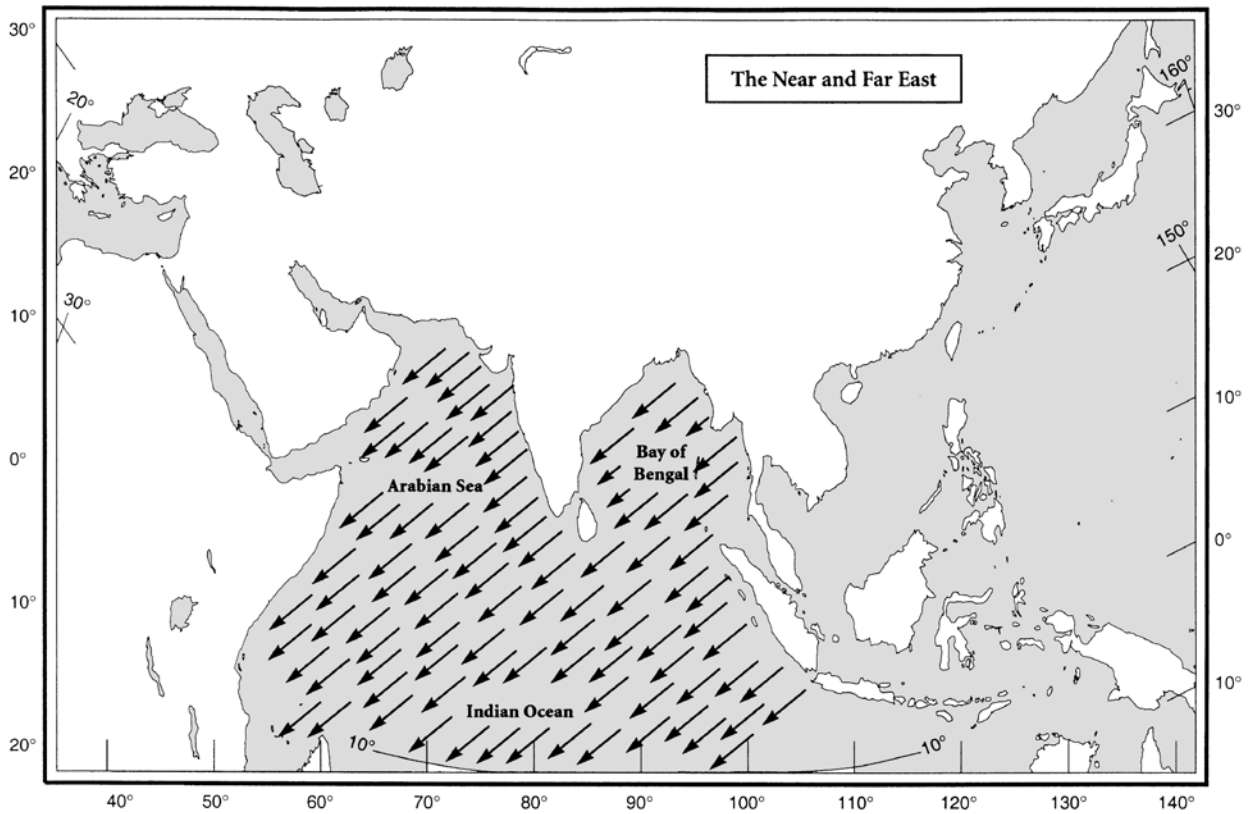

Figure 5: Winter Monsoon Winds Map—November to March

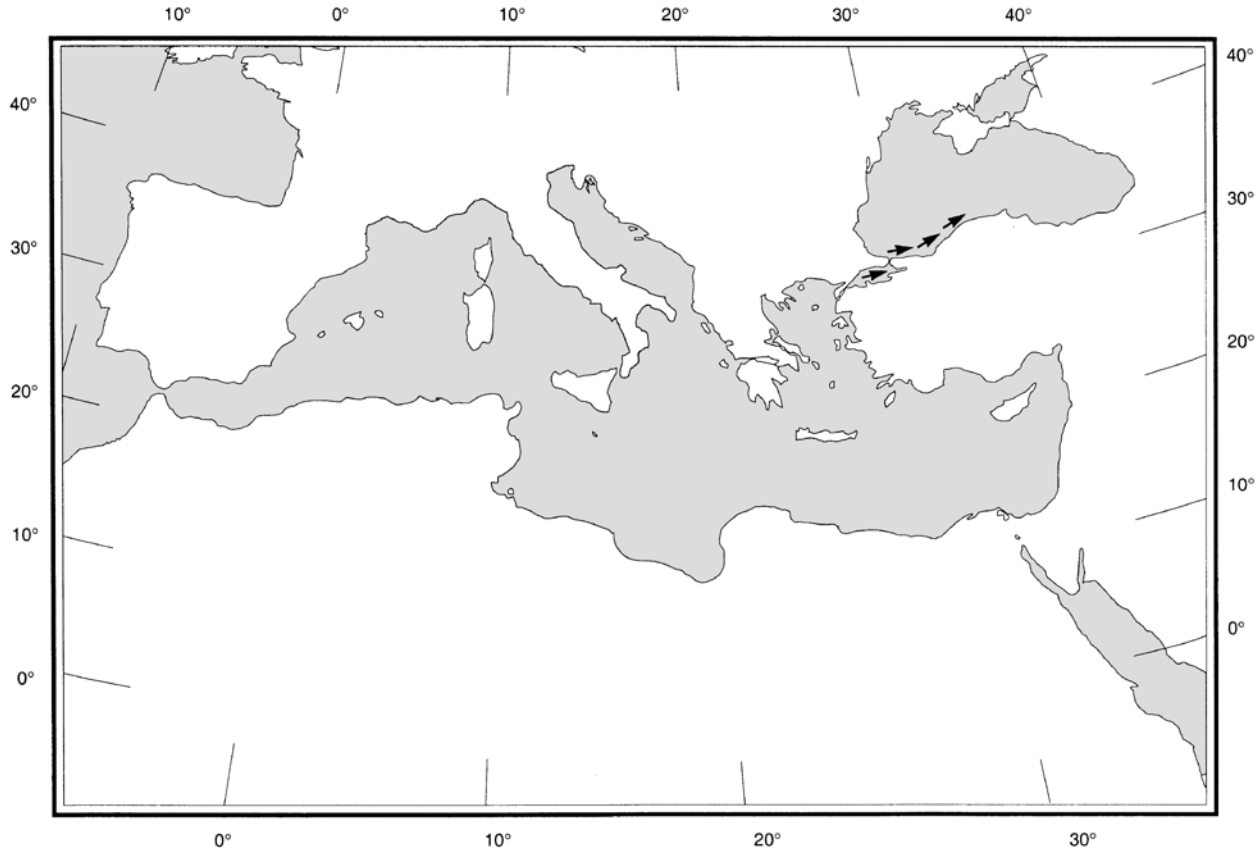

Figure 6: Spring Winds Map—Black Sea