PART TWO

SPACES ON THE MOVE
It is true that Ceylon is an outpost of East Africa, but it is also in India’s front line, and the presence of the K.A.R. in Ceylon should suggest how unimportant frontiers are and geographical terms, or even Oceans and Continents, when the common nature of the cause is understood.¹

Introduction

Academic interest in the history of the Indian Ocean has not only resulted in an astounding number of publications and conferences, but also triggered a major change in its historiography in the last two decades. While earlier works mainly focused on structures, recent publications have put agency to the forefront. This perspective nourished the tendency to conceptualise the Indian Ocean as ‘pluralised space’ with overlapping spatial and temporal layers.² Thus, the Ocean can neither be defined by its geographic borders, nor is there any possibility to identify a single periodisation. Instead, it is conceptualised as a dynamic space, the changes of which are defined by concrete social practices.

Using this conceptual approach, this contribution attempts to discuss maps which appeared in army newspapers for East and Central African soldiers, as part of the British military propaganda to legitimise
