The period between the two world wars of the twentieth century was one of the most exciting in the history of war. In anticipation of another conflict, military planners and civilian thinkers struggled after 1918 with the painful implications of World War I. Given its scope, the wholesale mobilization of civilian populations, and the targeting of civilians via blockades and strategic bombing, many observers regarded this titanic conflict as a “total war.” They also concluded that any future conflict would bear the same hallmarks; and they planned accordingly. The essays in this collection, the fourth in a series on the problem of total war, examine the interwar period. They explore the lingering consequences of World War I, the intellectual efforts to analyze this conflict’s military significance, the attempts to plan for another general war, and several episodes in the 1930s that portended the war that erupted in 1939.

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PUBLICATIONS OF THE GERMAN HISTORICAL INSTITUTE
WASHINGTON, D.C.

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The shadows of total war : Europe, East Asia, and the United States, 1919–1939
Edited by Roger Chickering and Stig Forster
Frontmatter
More information
# Contents

Contributors  
Roger Chickering and Stig Förster  

**Introduction**  
Roger Chickering and Stig Förster  

**PART ONE**  
**Reflections on the Interwar Period**  

1. The Politics of War and Peace in the 1920s and 1930s  
   Gerhard L. Weinberg  
   23  

2. War and Society in the 1920s and 1930s  
   Hew Strachan  
   35  

3. Plans, Weapons, Doctrines: The Strategic Cultures of Interwar Europe  
   Dennis E. Showalter  
   55  

**PART TWO**  
**Legacies of the Great War**  

4. Religious Socialism, Peace, and Pacifism: The Case of Paul Tillich  
   Hartmut Lehmann  
   85  

5. No More Peace: The Militarization of Politics  
   James M. Diehl  
   97  

6. The War’s Returns: Disabled Veterans in Britain and Germany, 1914–1939  
   Deborah Cohen  
   113  

7. The Impact of Total War on the Practice of British Psychiatry  
   Edgar Jones and Simon Wessely  
   129  

**PART THREE**  
**Visions of the Next War**  

8. Sore Loser: Ludendorff’s Total War  
   Roger Chickering  
   151
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Strangelove, or How Ernst Jünger Learned to Love Total War</td>
<td>Thomas Rohskeimer</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Shadows of Total War in French and British Military Journals, 1918–1939</td>
<td>Timo Baumann and Daniel Marc Segesser</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Yesterday’s Battles and Future War: The German Official Military History, 1918–1939</td>
<td>Markus Pohlmann</td>
<td>223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>PART FOUR</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>“Not by Law but by Sentiment”: Great Britain and Imperial Defense, 1918–1939</td>
<td>Benedikt Stuchtey</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>“Blitzkrieg” or Total War? War Preparations in Nazi Germany</td>
<td>Wilhelm Deist</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The Condor Legion: An Instrument of Total War?</td>
<td>Klaus A. Mäier</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Stalinism as Total Social War</td>
<td>Hans-Heinrich Nolte</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Total Colonial Warfare: Ethiopia</td>
<td>Giulia Brogini Künzi</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Japan’s Wartime Empire in China</td>
<td>Louise Young</td>
<td>327</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Index</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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