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Policing the Wild North-West: A Sociological Study of the Provincial Police in Alberta and Saskatchewan, 1905-32. By Zhiqiu Lin. Calgary, AB: University of Calgary Press, 2007. 233 pp. Figures, photographs, appendices, references, notes, index. \$34.95 paper.

In this short book, sociologist Zhiqiu Lin explores the structure and significance of the provincial police forces of Saskatchewan and Alberta. These two organizations have long been obscured, a function of their relatively short lives (from 1917-28 and 1917-32, respectively) but especially the tall shadow cast by their much better-known federal counterpart, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), whose jurisdiction in Saskatchewan and Alberta both preceded and succeeded that of the provincial constabularies.

Lin organizes his study around three central themes: the process by which the Alberta Provincial Police (APP) and the Saskatchewan Provincial Police (SPP) became professionalized; the shift in their missions from maintaining public order to addressing more serious offences like domestic violence and homicide; and the impact of such efforts on crime rates in the communities they policed. Along the way, he offers some valuable and intriguing observations. For one thing, he notes the many continuities between the duties of the Mounted Police and the provincial forces, particularly the work of the APP and SPP to “Canadianize” European immigrants by introducing them to the laws and social mores of their adoptive country, in much the same way that the Mounties had done earlier in the twentieth century. For another, Lin is quick to emphasize that the provincial constabularies were hardly interchangeable, explaining—to cite but one example—that the SPP was subject to far more political interference than the APP, due in part to the latter’s emphasis on police autonomy. Lin also investigates the ways in which the enforcement of Canada’s unpopular prohibition laws undercut the overall efficacy of both provincial forces by engendering widespread public resentment towards the police.

In the end, however, many scholars will find *Policing the Wild North-West* to be of limited use. While Lin chronicles some important sociological trends on the prairies during the early period of full provincial status (and the extensive graphs, tables, and appendices are testament to his prodigious research), his book is so narrowly drawn that it does not serve adequately as a window onto larger questions concerning the Canadian nation or even the broader western region during the interwar period. **Andrew R. Graybill**, *Department of History, University of Nebraska–Lincoln*.