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Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Preface -- Abbreviations -- I. Poetry, Nation, and the Last Canadian Poet -- 1. Bliss Carman's Shadow -- 2. D.H. Lawrence in North America -- 3. The Limits of Lyric -- 4. Poetry and the Poet -- 5. Starting from Ameliasburg: Old Rid, Owen Roblin, and Al -- 6. History and Nation -- 7. Origins and Being -- 8. Conclusion: The Future of the Past -- APPENDIX. Annotating the Poems of Al Purdy: Quotation, Allusion, Echo, and (Some) References -- Notes -- Bibliography -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	In The Last Canadian Poet Sam Solecki offers the first book-length study of the entire body of work of Al Purdy. The book grew out of Solecki's work as editor of The Canadian Forum (1979-82), and his growing sense that, despite being one of Canada's major poets, Purdy has been ignored by critics and academics. This book takes into account not only Purdy's more than forty published books, but also the manuscripts from the Purdy archives at the University of Saskatchewan and Queen's University. It is the first serious study of Purdy's work since George Bowering's monograph was published thirty years ago. The Last Canadian Poet suggests that Purdy's work articulates a vision of Canada, both of what it is and of what it might be. It is a poetic vision

of one man's encounter with his country and the world. Purdy's poems record his sense of being in the world as a Canadian, of being rooted in a particular landscape, way of life, and history. They also show the struggle for a Canadian poetics, a way of writing in what might be called the Canadian grain. The book also argues that Purdy's forging of a native poetic idiom occurred at roughly the same time that the nationalist phase of Canadian political and cultural development was coming to an end. In the 1960s, at the very moment when Canadian nationalism had gained general acceptance, a crucial shift was occurring not only in how the Canadian state and nation were being defined but also in how Canadians viewed their relationship to literature. The book offers an essentially conservative defence of what some critics have called the 'national-referential aesthetic' that underlays much of the literary production and cultural criticism of Canada's first century. It also questions the influence of multiculturalism and postcolonial criticism on the contemporary devaluation of the traditions, works, and history of the past hundred years. In this context, Purdy's poetry plays an important role in a larger argument about Canadian identity and nationhood and the need for a more nuanced attitude towards the past.
