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Sommario/riassunto	Using the accounts of fur traders, explorers, officials, and missionaries, Colin Yerbury documents the profound changes that swept over the Athapaskan-speaking people of the Canadian subarctic following European contact. He challenges, with a rich variety of historical documents, the frequently articulated view that there is a general cultural continuity from the pre-contact period to the twentieth century. Leaving to the domain of the archaeologists the pre-historic period when all the people of the vast area from approximately 52N to

the edge of the tundra and from Hudson Bay to Alaska were hunters, fishers, and gatherers subsisting entirely on native resources, Yerbury focuses on the Protohistoric and Historic Periods. The ecological and sociocultural adaptations of the Athapaskans are explored through the two centuries when they moved from indirect contact to dependency on the Hudson Bay trading posts. For nearly one hundred years prior to 1769 when North West Company traders began to establish trading relationships in the heart of Athapaskan territory, contacts with Europeans were almost entirely indirect, conducted through Chipewyan middlemen who jealously guarded their privileged access to the posts. The boundaries of the indirect trade areas fluctuated owing to intertribal rivalries, but generally, the hardships of travel over great distances prevented the Athapaskans from establishing direct contact with the posts. The pattern was only broken by the gradual expansion of the traders themselves into new regions. But, as Yerbury shows, it is a mistake to believe significant sociocultural change only began when posts were established. In fact, technological changes and economic adjustments to facilitate trade had already transformed Athapaskan groups and integrated them into the European commercial system by the opening of the Historic Era. The Early Fur Trade Period (1770-1800) was characterized by local trade centered on a few posts where Indians were simultaneously post hunters, trappers, and traders as well as middlemen. But the following Competitive Trade Period before the amalgamation of the fur companies in 1821 saw ruinous and violent feuding which had devastating effects on traders and natives alike. During these years there were great qualitative changes in the native way of life and the debt system was introduced. Finally, in the Trading Post Dependency Period, monopoly control brought peace and stability to the native population through the formation of trading post bands and trapping parties in the Athapaskan and Mackenzie Districts. This regularization of the trade and proliferation of new commodities represented a further basic transformation in native productive relations, making trade a necessity rather than a supplement to furnishing native livelihoods. By detailing this series of changes, *The Subarctic Indians and the Fur Trade, 1680-1860* furthers understanding of how the Hudson's Bay Company and then government officials came to play an increasing role that the Dene themselves now wish to modify drastically.
