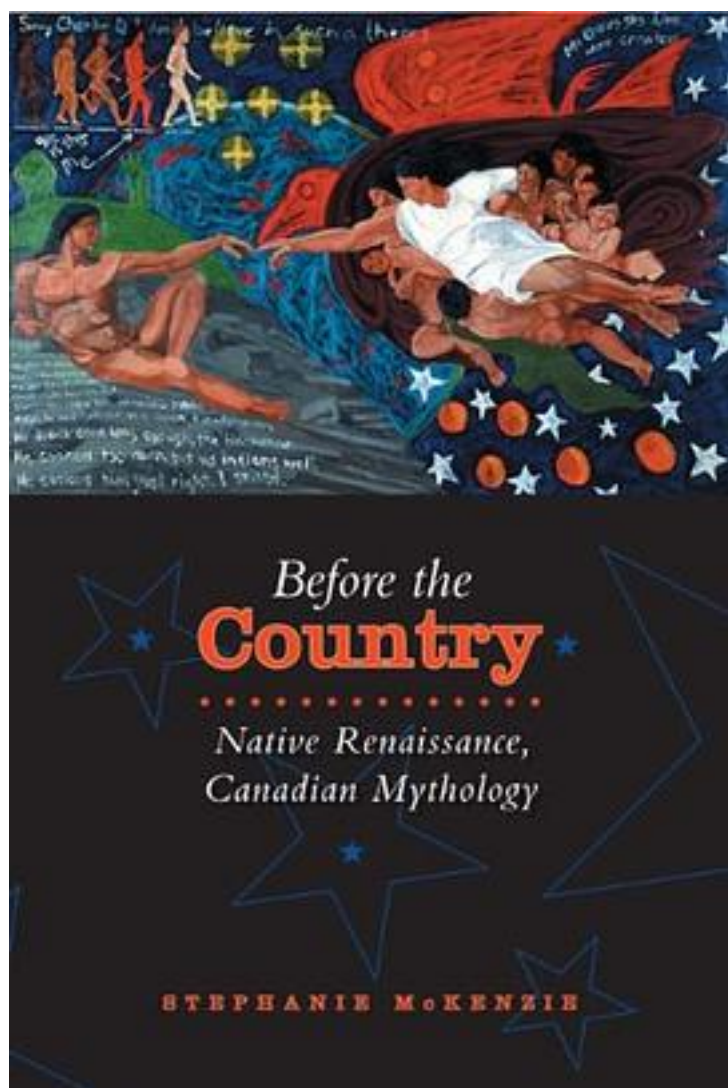


Before the Country



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In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Canada witnessed an explosion in the production of literary works by Aboriginal writers, a development that some critics have called the Native Renaissance. In *Before the Country*, Stephanie McKenzie explores the extent to which this growing body of literature influenced non-Native Canadian writers and has been fundamental in shaping our search for a national mythology. In the context of Northrop Frye's theories of myth, and in light of the attempts of social critics and early anthologists to define Canada and Canadian literature, McKenzie discusses the ways in which our decidedly fractured sense of literary nationalism has set indigenous culture apart from the mainstream. She examines anew the aesthetics of Native Literature and, in a style that is creative as much as it is scholarly, McKenzie incorporates the principles of storytelling into the unfolding of her argument. This strategy not only enlivens her narrative, but also underscores the need for new theoretical strategies in the criticism of Aboriginal literatures. *Before the Country* invites us to engage in one such endeavour.

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目录:

[Before the Country_ 下载链接1](#)

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