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Sergei A. Kan and Pauline Turner Strong along with their nineteen colleagues have com-
Justice writes well, and I recall someone’s observing once that Sigmund Freud became influential not only for his theories but for the passionate, compelling prose with which he delivered them. Justice’s passages about Nanye’hi (Nancy Ward) and Tsiyu Gansini (Dragging Canoe) are good examples of this. In terms of Justice’s articulating the dichotomy between the Chicamaugua (War Chief) tradition and the Beloved Path (Peace Chief) tradition, the portraits of Tsiyu Gansini and Nanye’hi are crucial. The stories of these two important Cherokee historical figures are compelling, and Justice’s prose brings the stories to life.

Justice divides Cherokee literature into that which emphasizes resistance to white domination (Chicamaugua faction) and that which devotes more effort toward sustaining awareness of tradition and a continuation of Cherokee spirit life (the Beloved Path). He exemplifies the Chicamaugua (resistance) mode in the works of Thomas King and the Beloved Path in those Awiakta, both eloquent voices in the Cherokee present.

Indeed, Justice chooses well among Cherokees writing today: Geary Hobsen, Craig Womack, the prolific, wonderfully talented Diane Glancy, and several others. Always—limitations of space, personal preference—there are people left out. Although one of those, I hope I am not resentful in my own behalf, though omission of pre-Momaday elders, like myself, may be seen as one of the book’s weaknesses. Justice confesses to emphasizing the Great Plains (Oklahoma) Cherokees, and a look at Joseph Bruchac’s anthology, Aniyunwiya / Real Human Beings (1995) might suggest that Justice could have been more inclusive in bringing Cherokee literary history up to date.

All books have strengths and weaknesses, and Our Fire Survives the Storm is a good book, valuable for both libraries and classrooms.

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