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“There is no book like this one, to my knowledge, that discusses in depth two global capitals arising from vastly different cultures.”
—**Henry Millon, Center for Advanced Studies in the Visual Arts, National Gallery of Art, editor of *Circa 1700: Architecture in Europe and the Americas***

MIRRORS OF MEMORY

Paris and Tokyo: A Joint Exploration of Culture, Politics, and Time

As society becomes more global, many see the world’s great cities becoming increasingly similar. But while contemporary cultures do depend on and resemble each other in previously unimagined ways, homogenization is sometimes overestimated.

In **MIRRORS OF MEMORY: *Culture, Politics, and Time in Paris and Tokyo*** (February 2011; UVA Press), James W. White considers how two of the world’s great cities, Paris and Tokyo, may appear to be growing more alike, but in fact remain profoundly different places. Exploring how the roles of cities and urbanism, and the balance between nature and artifice, account for some of these differences, White provides the following provocative arguments:

- It is Tokyo, not Paris, which is the City of Light, shaped by peace and order, confidence and reassurance, progress and inclusion
- Despite Restoration, earthquake, and war, Tokyo has (relatively) built on its past, while Paris—despite a heritage of splendor and a beautiful cityscape more than a century old—has spent much more time and effort overcoming its own
- Paris has been regarded by provincial France with a greater degree of fear and loathing than has Tokyo by the Japanese
- Paris is better poised both to maintain its international renown, while more globalized and governmentally favored Tokyo may have already missed its chance to fulfill its international potential

Extensively documented, MIRRORS OF MEMORY re-envision how we view these two global capital cities.

James W. White is Professor Emeritus of Political Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the author, most recently, of *Ikki: Social Conflict and Political Protest in Early Modern Japan*.