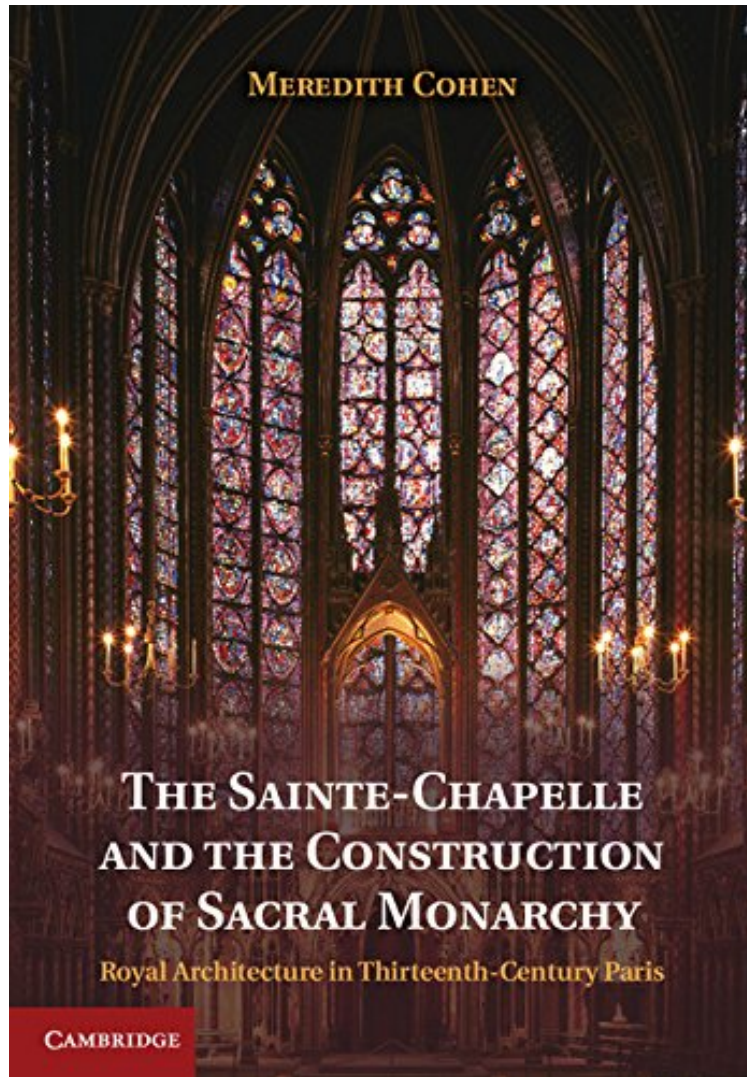


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The Sainte-Chapelle and the Construction of Sacral Monarchy: Royal Architecture in Thirteenth-Century Paris

Meredith Cohen

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Meredith Cohen : The Sainte-Chapelle and the Construction of Sacral Monarchy: Royal Architecture in Thirteenth-Century Paris before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Sainte-Chapelle and the Construction of Sacral Monarchy: Royal Architecture in Thirteenth-Century Paris:

This book offers a novel perspective on one of the most important monuments of French Gothic architecture, the Sainte-Chapelle, constructed in Paris by King Louis IX of France between 1239 and 1248 especially to hold and to celebrate Christ's Crown of Thorns. Meredith Cohen argues that the chapel's architecture, decoration, and use conveyed the notion of sacral kingship to its audience in Paris and in greater Europe, thereby implicitly elevating the French king to the level of suzerain, and establishing an early visual precedent for the political theories of royal sovereignty and French absolutism. By setting the chapel within its broader urban and royal contexts, this book offers new insight into royal representation and the rise of Paris as a political and cultural capital in the thirteenth century.

"Meredith Cohen's study of the Sainte-Chapelle belongs to the distinguished tradition of studies of thirteenth-century Parisian and northern French Gothic architecture inaugurated in the United States by Robert Branner and continued by her teacher Stephen Murray ... It does for the Sainte-Chapelle what the studies of the late Stephen Gardner did for the abbey of Saint-Denis, providing a contextual perspective on a well-known monument, without pretending reductively that context wholly explains any building. It is a study of the way the Sainte-Chapelle fitted into a new urban Gothic as well as promoting a cult of very special relics, and of kingship itself ... What Meredith Cohen has done in this very useful and thoroughly documented book is to extend our understanding of a great single monument by contextual analysis, in which objective she has succeeded admirably." Paul Binski, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*

"The Sainte-Chapelle is a book directed at true scholars. Its dense yet nuanced architectural descriptions reward the attentive reader with a rich image of medieval spaces, many of which are no longer extant. It has a great deal to offer students of architecture and medieval France, not simply in re-examining the chapel's style and typology, but especially by considering its importance within the built landscape of Paris as a statement of Louis' redefinition of kingship." Maile Hutterer, *Speculum* [The Sainte-Chapelle and the Construction of Sacral Monarchy] is absolutely crammed with data, citations, documents in Latin followed by translation, measurements taken with the latest devices now in use, precise references to archival documents as well as an impressive collection of images of early drawings of many lost monuments of medieval Paris. ... For readers whose research touches the themes of Cohen's book, therein lie its riches." Meredith Parsons Lillich, *French History*

About the Author Meredith Cohen is Assistant Professor of Art History at the University of California, Los Angeles. She specializes in the art, architecture, and urban development of high medieval Europe, particularly in France and England. She has published articles on the Sainte-Chapelle, the Court Style, medieval Paris, nineteenth-century restoration, and the historiography of Gothic architecture. In addition, she has edited a series of interdisciplinary volumes on medieval history and culture. In 2010, she curated an exhibition (with Xavier Dectot) on medieval Paris at the Musée national du Moyen Âge. She has received fellowships and grants from the British Academy, the Châteaubriand Foundation, the Société des Professeurs de Français et Francophones d'Amérique, the Whiting Foundation, and UCLA for her research. Cohen is the founder and was the first president of the International Medieval Society of Paris, an interdisciplinary scholarly society based in Paris.