The 2015 Gottschalk lecture is an inquiry into the relations among Catherine de Médicis, Mary Stuart, and Elizabeth Tudor as they faced down the resistance to their shared “gynocratic” rule (as Ronsard termed it). History usually posits competitive antipathy if not sexual jealousy of their personal relations but it is possible to find that their usual sobriquets for each other as “sister” and “cousin” or even “daughter” are indeed specifically gendered signals of a shared experience as embattled female rulers, in which the successes and failures of one had an undeniable influence on the policies of the others.

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