Second Writing Assignment: Proposed Research Questions  
MMW 13, Spring 2014

**Length**: 2-4 pages + Works Cited Page  
**Due date**: Hard copy due in section on Thursday, April 17, and Friday, April 18.  
**Format**: MLA Format, following Style Sheet guidelines  
**Percentage of Final Course Grade**: 4%. You must complete all five writing assignments in order to pass MMW 13.

The goal of the second assignment is to formulate potential research questions for the research paper (assignments 4-5). Building on the first assignment, continue to explore potential topics, conducting more research and recording interesting new observations. Write a list of two to five potential research questions on one or more of the topics you have been exploring in your preliminary research, and explain why you think they could be productive topics for your research paper.

This assignment asks you only to pose questions and explain why they may be worthwhile to explore further. You do not have to propose answers to your questions. It’s too early in the research process for you to be able to formulate plausible hypotheses. If you can see how research questions develop out of observations about omissions, contradictions, discrepancies, and arguments in the scholarship on the topic, you will have understood the point of this assignment.

**Keep the graded copy of this assignment**: at the end of the quarter, you are required to turn in a portfolio containing graded copies of all 5 assignments.

**THE ASSIGNMENT:**

**Select one or more topics about which you will pose potential research questions.** You can use either the same topics that you explored for the first assignment or new topics. Focus on what interests you the most; you’re going to be spending a lot of time on your research project, so choose topics you would be happy to pursue.

Remember your topics and questions must be drawn from 1200-1750 CE, the period covered in MMW 13.

Although you can read about as many topics as you like, you need to learn enough about each to pose one or more questions. Explore one or two topics in depth rather than making scattered observations about a wide variety of topics.

**Formulate a total of two to five open-ended, argument- and research-based questions.** Express each question in a single sentence, and pose at least one question for each topic. **Note:** You need two to five questions total, not two to five questions on each topic.
Provide a rationale for each question with observations, explanations, context, and in-text citations. After each question, list all of the observations that relate to it, and explain how the observations led you to ask the question. Take all observations from scholarly sources.

Explain, briefly, why your research leads you to believe that the question might lead to a productive line of research. Specify and discuss the context (historical period and geographical region) of each question and observation.

Follow each observation with an in-text citation for its source.

Use the template at the end of this assignment sheet to present your material and ideas. The template is the required format for the paper. To help you complete it, you may also work with the “Proposed Research Question Worksheet” posted on the MMW 13 website.

Compile a list of Works Cited that includes, in correct MLA format, the sources of all of your observations. You may consult as many sources as you wish for this assignment, but everything you cite must be scholarly.

Provide a photocopy or a printout of the source of each of your observations. Photocopy or print out the relevant pages of each source: the cover page showing the publication information for the source and the page with the information you cite. Highlight the places where the relevant information is located, and label each page with the source’s author and title. Arrange your photocopies in the order in which the sources are cited in the body of the paper. Clip them together, but do not staple them to your written assignment. (It’s better not to staple the photocopies together, because you might want to reuse some of them for subsequent assignments.)

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST:

___ Two to five open-ended, argument- and research-based questions, with observations, contexts, explanations, and in-text citations for each question, following the template provided at the end of this assignment sheet
___ Works Cited page in MLA format
___ Photocopies or printouts with cover pages and relevant passages highlighted, labeled with the source’s author and title, and arranged in the order in which the sources are cited in the body of the paper. Clip them together, but do not staple them to your written assignment.
TEMPLATE for Assignment 2: [Please follow the Style Sheet for formatting the heading and page numbers.]

Topic 1: Gender imagery in Sufi literature

Time period: 13\textsuperscript{th} Century CE

Geographical region: Persia

Question 1: How did gender imagery used in Sufi poetry during the 13\textsuperscript{th} Century in Persia challenge cultural stereotypes about the role of Muslim women? [You can also try multiple phrasings of the same question.]

Observation 1: quote or paraphrase of source (MLA in-text citation) + historical context + explanation of how it relates to question posed

Observation 2: quote or paraphrase of source (MLA in-text citation) + historical context + explanation of how it relates to question posed

Observation 3:

Observation 4:

Explanation: [Why does research suggest this is a good level 3 question and will lead to a productive line of inquiry?]

Topic 2: Mother-in-law Languages in Australia

Time period: 10\textsuperscript{th} Century CE

Geographical region: Australia

Question 1:

Observation 1: quote or paraphrase of source (MLA in-text citation) + historical context + explanation of how it relates to question posed
Observation 2: quote or paraphrase of source (MLA in-text citation) + historical context + explanation of how it relates to question posed

Observation 3:

Observation 4:

Explanation: Why does research suggest this is a good level 3 question and will lead to a productive line of inquiry?

Question 2:

Observation 1: quote or paraphrase of source (MLA in-text citation) + historical context + explanation of how it relates to question posed

Observation 2: quote or paraphrase of source (MLA in-text citation) + historical context + explanation of how it relates to question posed

Observation 3:

Observation 4:

Explanation: [Why does research suggest this is a good level 3 question and will lead to a productive line of inquiry?]

Works Cited [separate page]

List of Citations in MLA format

[Updated 4/11/14]