My name is Citlalli and I’m a Tenochtitlan citizen. I am married to my husband Momoztli and we have two kids. I have a daughter named Yaotl who is 12 years old and a son named Meztli who is 11 years old. Tenochtitlan was recently invaded by Hernan Cortes; therefore, my family was one of the many families that got enslaved by the Spaniards. We tried to escape, but the Spaniards made it clear that if we try to rebel or escape, we will be killed or severely punished. Therefore, my world changed within the span of two weeks, since the Spaniards arrived in Tenochtitlan on November of the year 1519.

I used to live a decent life where I was happily married. I also had an occupation as a weaver, and I had a spot in the market where I would always sell my handmade items. The money I made came from the items that I sold every day which led me to be wealthy enough where I could support my family, just like my husband. According to Kellogg, “…women-like men-provided the labor necessary to sustain their families and to fulfill the labor, tribute, and ceremonial obligations of their households”(570), therefore the combination of both spouse’s income generated a good amount of wealth for the household. Under the Mexica society I had some authority. Whether it was through my job or having the ability to own property and being able to pass it down to my children. For instance, according to Socolow, “The Aztecs allowed land, houses, and moveable property to be inherited by either male or female children.” (23), this gave women in this society a sense of control and value of being able to work for something and being able to contribute something towards their families and society. I inherited some property and other items from my parents before I got married to Momoztli. Therefore, I hope to do the same for my children.

I worked hard every day as a weaver so I could pass down property and items to my children. Many women who had work within the marketplace also had the same dream and intentions. Also, another reason why both my husband and I worked every day was so that we could have enough money to send our kids to good schools where they can learn and become something great in the future. I also wanted them to obtain a job that contributed to society. Therefore, I sent my daughter to a school that trained her to become a priest. I wanted her to study hard so she can become the greatest priest within the community and live a good life afterwards. In Indian Women of Early Mexico, Kellogg states, “Temples had individual male and female priests called tlamacazque and cihuatlamacazque, respectively…” (131), thus male and female individuals could train for certain job positions regardless of their gender. However, if this doesn’t end up becoming her occupation in the future, I at least hope she will become an administrator which is just as good as becoming a priestess. My friend Yaretzi was an administrator who oversaw the marketplace and made sure everything was in order. She held a great amount of power and authority; therefore, I would have loved my daughter to have had an occupation as an administrator as well. Therefore, investing into our child’s education was an important issue for us.

My son on the other hand was sent to a school where he was training on becoming a warrior and a priest. Meztli did have more job opportunities than my daughter. He had various job options to choose from. Since the beginning we invested in him more since he had the ability to obtain a higher position in society. In *Indian Women of Early Mexico*, Anderson states “…the boy was being brought up to be a warrior or a priest or a merchant or an agriculturist-commoner…” (59), boys from the start had a better chance to thrive in Tenochtitlan society than girls as they had more jobs and opportunities to choose from. Girls on the other hand had limited options to choose from especially if their social status was inferior than a commoner. Furthermore, knowing that Meztli is my only son he would hold many responsibilities within the Tenochtitlan society. Thus, my husband had been training Meztli by making him complete certain tasks that will prepare him for his future.

My husband is a priest who does simple work. Therefore, Momoztli trained my son on how to become a priest but wanted him to become a cuacultin, a more superior priest which was more than what my husband was. He would take my son with him to the temple to make him see what his job was like and the duties he had to complete. However, when Tenochtitlan declared war on another tribe my husband was one of the many men who had to leave and fight. Therefore, it then became my job to fulfill his duties. Kellogg states, “Whether noble or commoner, women often had to manage households and productive activities in the absence of husbands and other kinsmen.” (571), women during this time had to juggle with many occupations such as being a housewife, weaver and their husband’s job which in this case a priest. I had many responsibilities to fulfill while my husband was gone. Although my son also helped during that time, he completed certain tasks for his father, that is until he returned. My experience fulfilling my husband’s job was an amazing as I got to be in a position where I held some power. I got to feel what it was like to manage certain tasks that women weren’t usually given. Thus, for the couple of months my husband was away I felt empowered as I felt seen through my hard work.

Tenochtitlan was a place where everything was in order but not perfect. I was content living a regular life with my family. I had an occupation where I was able to provide for my family. My husband’s occupation gave our family some benefits and a bit more power than the average commoner. With his job and mine combined we were living a good life. We had a system in place where I understood the significance of my job as a weaver and how it contributes to society. My children also benefited from my job as they were going to inherit the property and items I owned; regardless of their gender they both were entitled to these goods. Moreover, we were able to provide both our children with a great education where they were destined to become something great in the future. Furthermore, women in this society held some power and control. Those who came from a noble family where allowed to hold special positions in the society regardless of their gender. Furthermore, being a woman in this society had a few benefits since we were given the ability to thrive in this nation, and we were given certain rights as well. Thus, in this society I held power and economic significance. Regardless of one’s social status everyone contributed to the Tenochtitlan society.

However, having control over certain situations is no longer a reality for me. I have witnessed Tenochtitlan get conquered by the Spaniards. I have seen the Spaniards tear families apart, and I have seen countless women and girls being sent away. As for me I am forced to please Spanish men, and if I don’t comply with their orders I get punished and the same goes for my family. Therefore, I am in a situation where me and my family are trying to survive. I don’t know where these men came from and what they want with Tenochtitlan. I can’t understand their language as well. Therefore, I went from having a stable life, where I had some authority and my marriage was a concept where both my husband and I understood the importance of each other’s work and the effect it had within our family and society. We each contributed something towards our marriage. But this all has changed for me ever since the Spaniards came to our community and took everything we have ever worked for. I don’t really understand what is going on and what waits for us in the future, but I do know that these men who have invaded Tenochtitlan are dangerous.

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