

## **Scenario for Friday Debate: “Pitching Democracy”**

First read the reading for **all** groups listed below, and then prepare a position based on your group’s assigned reading (and lectures) to respond to the following scenario:

I am a 15 year–old girl sold in early 1925 to a Tokyo brothel by my father, an impoverished farmer with no other means to make ends meet. He loved me, but love doesn’t put rice in the bowl. My contract term at the brothel is for 5 years, but after six months of an unbearable situation I manage to escape and wind up working long hours in a textile factory and hawking nattô (fermented bean curd) on a street corner. One day I overhear a political debate going on in front of the train station across from the factory. It seems to involve a conservative Diet member who is enthusiastic about the idea of a new Peace Preservation Law, another man named Yoshino Sakuzô who is enthusiastic about political parties and parliamentary government, a socialist labor organizer from the Sôdômei, and a radical anarchist woman (whose scandalous liaison with a Korean I heard about from my friend, a newspaper boy who sells papers near the factory). I catch a few words from their discussion, not really understanding what they might mean—“social and political reform”, “minpon shugi”, “parliamentary procedure”, “party government”, “popular sovereignty”, “rural commune”, “direct action”, “capitalist exploitation” etc.—and, with a vague sense that what they are talking about might concern the likes of me, I approach the crowd growing around the discussants. I pick up on the arguments in progress and before I know it each is trying to make a pitch to me to act in certain ways that would be beneficial to me, Japan, fellow workers, and/or the world in general. What are those pitches . . . ?

Groups:

- 1) Advocates of “parliamentary democracy” (“Yoshino Sakuzô’s Minpon Shugi”):  
Both Megans, both Jessicas, both Aarons, both Brians
- 2) Conservative Diet members (based on “Peace Preservation Law” & parts of text):  
Both Scotts, Jarrod B., Denise B., Liz C., Stacey F., Matt, Holly F.
- 3) Socialist, labor-organizing men (“Sôdômei’s Declaration”):  
Josh M., James S., Benjamin T., Eric U., Craig W., Kevin W., Jason W.
- 4) Radical anarchist women (“Reflections on the Way to the Gallows,” “The Road to Nihilism” and “Lamentations of Female Factory Workers”):  
Giovanna C., Lauren E., Caitlin G., Robin K., Leslie L., Katrina M., Laura S., Kelly S., Stephanie S., Nicole W., Tomoko Y.