

Deutsches Institut für Japanstudien  
German Institute for Japanese Studies



# DIJ Forum

Thursday, 05 July 2012, 18.30 h

**Sheldon Garon**

Princeton University, East Asian Studies

## Why America Spends While Japan and Europe Save

If the 2008 financial crisis has taught us anything, it is that Americans save too little, spend too much, and borrow excessively. How did Americans come to be such miserable savers, and what might they learn from Japan and European countries which have fostered enduring cultures of saving while often restraining consumption and credit? Drawing from his new book, *Beyond Our Means: Why America Spends While the World Saves*, Garon tells the story of how states in Japan and Europe actively shaped popular savings habits over the past two centuries by means of moral suasion campaigns, postal savings systems, and other institutions for small savers. Japan looms large in this global and comparative history, for it both emulated European practices and offered its own savings-promotion models to the West and rising Asian economies. The lecture is illustrated by evocative savings campaign posters from Japan and other nations.

**Sheldon Garon** is the Nissan Professor of History and East Asian Studies at Princeton University. A specialist in modern Japanese history, he also writes transnational history that spotlights the flow of ideas and institutions among Japan, the U.S., and European and Asian countries. His new book, *Beyond Our Means: Why America Spends While the World Saves*, has attracted international attention from the *Asahi Shinbun*, *New York Times*, National Public Radio, BBC, *Financial Times Deutschland*, and other newspapers. His other publications include *The State and Labor in Modern Japan* (1987), *Molding Japanese Minds: The State in Everyday Life* (1997); and the co-edited volume, *The Ambivalent Consumer: Questioning Consumption in East Asia and the West* (2006).

The lecture will be given in English. It will take place on **Thursday, July 05, 2012 at 6.30 p.m.** at the DIJ. Admission is free, please register at: [forum@dijtokyo.org](mailto:forum@dijtokyo.org) or

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