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Titolo	Beyond our means : why America spends while the world saves / / Sheldon Garon
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Note generali	"A Princeton University Press e-book"--Cover.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	The origins of saving in the Western world -- Organizing thrift in the age of nation-states -- America the exceptional -- Japanese traditions of diligence and thrift -- Saving for the new Japan -- Mobilizing for the Great War -- Save now, buy later : World War II and beyond -- "Luxury is the enemy" : Japan in peace and war -- Postwar Japan's national salvation -- Exporting thrift, or the myth of "Asian values" -- "There is money. Spend it" : America since 1945 -- Keep on saving? : questions for the twenty-first century.
Sommario/riassunto	If the financial crisis has taught us anything, it is that Americans save too little, spend too much, and borrow excessively. What can we learn from East Asian and European countries that have fostered enduring cultures of thrift over the past two centuries? Beyond Our Means tells for the first time how other nations aggressively encouraged their citizens to save by means of special savings institutions and savings campaigns. The U.S. government, meanwhile, promoted mass consumption and reliance on credit, culminating in the global financial

meltdown. Many economists believe people save according to universally rational calculations, saving the most in their middle years as they plan for retirement, and saving the least in welfare states. In reality, Europeans save at high rates despite generous welfare programs and aging populations. Americans save little, despite weaker social safety nets and a younger population. Tracing the development of such behaviors across three continents from the nineteenth century to today, this book highlights the role of institutions and moral suasion in shaping habits of saving and spending. It shows how the encouragement of thrift was not a relic of indigenous traditions but a modern movement to confront rising consumption. Around the world, messages to save and spend wisely confronted citizens everywhere--in schools, magazines, and novels. At the same time, in America, businesses and government normalized practices of living beyond one's means. Transnational history at its most compelling, *Beyond Our Means* reveals why some nations save so much and others so little. Some images inside the book are unavailable due to digital copyright restrictions.

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