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Sommario/riassunto	""Thousands of years ago, before Christ or Buddha or Muhammad... before the Roman Empire rose or the Colossus of Rhodes fell,"" Eric Burns writes, ""people in Asia Minor were drinking beer."" So begins an account as entertaining as it is extensive, of alcohol's journey through world-and, more important, American-history. In The Spirits of America, Burns relates that drinking was ""the first national pastime,"" and shows how it shaped American politics and culture from the earliest colonial days. He details the transformation of alcohol from virtue to vice and back again, how it was