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Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Two-world metaphors, from Plato to Alan Greenspan -- Historians against history -- Economists discover a new New World -- Literary critics become cultural critics -- Ecologists on why history will never end -- When prophecy fails.
Sommario/riassunto	Why do modern people assume that there will be perpetual economic growth? Because, David W. Noble tells us in this provocative study of cultural criticism, such a utopian conviction is the necessary foundation for bourgeois culture. One can imagine the existence of modern middle classes only as long as the capitalist marketplace is expanding. For Noble, the related-and relevant-question is, how can the middle classes believe that a finite earth is an environment in which infinite growth is possible? The answer, which Noble so painstakingly charts, is nothing less than a genealogy of th