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"Dark is the World to Thee: A Historical Perspective on Environmental Forewarnings"

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Evidence of human impact on the natural world and of environmental degradation has existed from approximately the fifth century B.C. From time to time we find this evidence noted by a variety of sources ranging from the classical through to the medieval period. However, what we like to think of as our modern environmental consciousness was slow to form. We review and offer some analysis both of the evidence and of the responses to it over this period. The overall aim of the paper is to chart and to understand the contingencies of our predecessors' understanding of their environmental predicament, the better to understand and put in context the contingencies of our own understanding.

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