

thousand years the climate of those regions has passed through four successive phases. Up to the first or second century of our era, it appears to have been distinctly colder and moister than at present. Then, for several hundred years, it grew rapidly warmer and drier, until in the fifth or sixth centuries the desert regions were even more arid than to-day. During the succeeding mediæval epoch, the climate again became slightly cooler and moister; while during modern times, there is a general, though slight tendency toward aridity. The earliest legend demands a large lake. Physiographic evidence shows that such a lake was probably formed during the dry interfluvial epoch preceding or possibly synchronous with the occupation of Kashmir by man.

Evidence as to the succeeding epoch is more definite and more completely harmonious. The legend points to a cold period, during which Kashmir was not habitable in winter, and during which the lake that occupied the plain was drained by the cutting of a deeper channel. Physiography, as we have seen in the discussion of the paradoxical origin of lakes, seems to show that if there were a lake larger than that of to-day, it must have been drained during one of the moist epochs of which the terraces furnish independent evidence. In Transcaspia, Persia, and Turkestan, other lines of research indicate that two thousand or more years ago the water supply was decidedly larger than now, the country was colder, and the desert regions were more habitable. Putting together all these conclusions, there seems to be reason for believing that a fluvial epoch, culminating somewhere in remote antiquity, had not yet wholly passed