

from Urgenj had formerly flowed to the Sea of Aral or to the Caspian. The account of Jenkinson, an English merchant who came down the Volga to the Caspian, and thence to Urgenj, in 1559, indicates, however, that it flowed to the Aral. Jenkinson saw the mouth of the Uz-boi, and was told that formerly the Oxus discharged there, but had lately changed its course and gone back into the Sea of Aral. In coming to the Uz-boi, the Englishman sailed along the eastern coast of the Caspian near Mangishlak, and found deep water close to a shore where streams and trees abounded. To-day, as Rawlinson points out, the water is so shallow that no ship can approach the shore, and no one would think of describing the coast as abounding in streams and trees. This implies that the level of the lake was high. A similar implication is found in the atlas of Ortelius, dated 1562, which shows a deep gulf of the Caspian extending far toward Khiva — probably the Scythian gulf once more.

After the days of Jenkinson, the Oxus appears never to have flowed to the Caspian. Hanway, in 1743, and later travelers merely heard traditions of the drying up of the Uz-boi "a hundred years ago," or "long ago in the days of our fathers." Even before the time of Hanway, when Kitab Chelebi (Book Gentleman) wrote, about 1650, the fact of the discharge of the Oxus into the Caspian was known only from books and tradition. Kitab Chelebi, commenting on the statement of Hamdulla already quoted, that the Oxus in 1359 flowed partly to the sea of Aral and partly to the Caspian, remarks: "There exists an arm of the Jihun [Oxus] which, after having passed the capital of Khowaresm