

## BULGARIA (BĀLGARIJA)

The Bulgars appear to have included several Iranian- and Turkic-speaking tribes that had been co-opted into the Hunnic confederacy after migrating westwards. After Attila's death in 453, the Bulgars withdrew to the northern and eastern coasts of the Black sea together with various other remnants of the confederation, like the Kutrigurs and Utigurs. In the early 7<sup>th</sup> century Kubrat overthrew Avar and Turkic overlordship and emerged as an ally of the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire against both Avars and Persians. On his death in 665 his sons divided the tribes and fell prey to Khazar attacks. Asparuh migrated westwards at the head of Bulgars proper and Onogundurs, crossed the Danube in 680, and settled in Moesia after defeating the Byzantine emperor Kōnstantinos IV. In part subjugating and in part co-opting the local Slavs, the Bulgars expanded their state across the Balkans. The kings of Bulgaria claimed descent from Attila, though the actual relationships are only detailed in a 17<sup>th</sup>-century Volga Bulgar source (the *Džagfar tarihy*).

In 705 the Bulgar king Tervel aided the deposed Byzantine emperor Ioustinianos II in regaining his throne and was rewarded with the court title of caesar (*kaisar*). This led to cooperation with Byzantium, and the Bulgars aided the Byzantines against the Arabs in 718. In the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century a series of campaigns launched by emperor Kōnstantinos V destabilized Bulgaria's leadership, and in the 811 Nikēphoros I sacked the Bulgar capital Pliska, before being ambushed and killed by Krum, who proceeded to devastate Byzantine Thrace and advance on Constantinople. A more peaceful relationship followed the accession of Omurtag in 814. Boris I's conversion to Christianity in 864 helped diminish the distinction between Bulgars, Slavs, and other ethnic elements within the state, and increased Bulgaria's exposure to the cultural influence of Byzantium. Simeon I sought to emphasize his independence from the Byzantine Empire by obtaining from it the title of emperor (*car*, "tsar") in 913 (confirmed in 927). Simeon I and his son Petăr I also obtained an independent patriarch for the autocephalous Bulgarian Church at the capital Preslav. Russian and Byzantine invasions led to Byzantine occupation of eastern Bulgaria in 971, but the Bulgarian state survived in the west under the leadership of Samuil, who temporarily recovered much of the lost grounds. In 1018 the Byzantine emperor Basileios II entered Ohrid and completed the subjugation of Bulgaria, which remained under Byzantine domination until the revolt of Petăr IV and Ivan Asen I in 1185.

Under Kalojan and Ivan Asen II the restored Bulgarian state expanded, defeating all Balkan rivals and, under the latter, the Bulgarian patriarchate was restored at the new capital Tărnovo in 1235. This period of prosperity was interrupted by the Mongol invasion in 1241–1242, and usurpations, civil wars, and foreign invasions plagued Bulgaria in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Stability was restored in the reign of Todor Svetoslav after 1300, but Mihail Asen III's defeat and death in battle against the Serbs in 1330 demonstrated the danger of overreaching. In spite of a promising start, Ivan Aleksandăr was not able to arrest the devolution of central authority, to which he may have contributed by conferring imperial status and territorial principalities to his several sons. This, and the growing autonomy of hereditary lords like those of Wallachia and Dobrudža, coincided with the initial stages of the Ottoman conquest. Tărnovo fell to the Ottomans in 1393, Nikopol and Dobrudža in 1395, and the last vestiges of the remaining Bulgarian state of Vidin disappeared in 1422.

The Medieval Bulgar kings (not entirely accurately called "khans" in historiography) had used the title *kanasybigi*, rendered in Latin as *rex*, in Greek as *arkhōn*, in Slavic as *knjaz*, and in Turkic as *qağan*. From 913 this title was changed to emperor (and autocrat), rendered in Greek as *basileus (kai autokratōr)* and in Bulgarian as *car* ("tsar") (*i samodăržec*).

The Ottoman domination ended in 1877, when outrage over the brutal suppression of local rebellions led to a final Russo-Turkish war and the establishment of the Third Bulgarian State. In 1878 Aleksandăr I of Battenberg was elected autonomous prince (*knjaz*) of Bulgaria and annexed another Bulgarian autonomous principality, Eastern Rumelia, in 1885. In 1908 Ferdinand I proclaimed himself completely independent from the Ottoman Empire. Although he took the traditional title of *car* ("tsar") of the Bulgarians, he was recognized internationally only as king, just like the modern Greek *basileus*. The death of the popular Boris III was closely followed by Soviet occupation and the monarchy was abolished in 1946.

The list below follows the chronology of Moskov (1988) with slight emendations, and supplies some gaps in the information (e.g., the name Ajjar for the anonymous king in 715 and most specific genealogical relationships down to c.800, indicated by \*), *faute de mieux*, on the basis of excerpts from the controversial *Džagfar tarihy*.

Names are rendered in standardized forms and in scientific transliteration of the Cyrillic alphabet. The numbering of rulers is often inconsistent in Bulgarian historiography. The list distinguishes between names, nicknames, dual names and patronymics (e.g., Mihail Asen III, *son of Šišman*, *not* Mihail Šišman).

### Kings and emperors of the Bulgarians (First Bulgarian State)

#### *House of Dulo*

629 <sup>?</sup> –665	Kubrat ... son of *Alburi, descendant of Irnik, son of Attila
665–668	<i>Bat</i> Bajan ... son of Kubrat; remained in “Old Bulgaria” 668–690
668–694	Asparuh ... son of Kubrat; settled in Moesia 680
694–715	Tervel ... son of Asparuh
715	*Ajjar ... *son of Asparuh
715–721	Kormesij ... *son of Tervel
721–737	Sevar ... *son of Kormesij

#### *House of Vokil*

737–754	Kormisoš ... *son of Uran by Bozok, daughter of Ajjar
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#### *House of Ukil*

754–760	Vineh ... *son of Urus Bugu by Zuhra, sister of Kormisoš
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#### *House of Ugain*

760–763	Telec ... *husband of daughter of Umor (below)
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#### *House of \*Bilig*

763–765	Sabin ... husband of daughter of Kormisoš; *son of Kelbir; fled to Byzantium
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#### *House of Ukil*

765	Umor ... *father-in-law of Telec; fled to Byzantium
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#### *House of Dulo*

765–766	Toktu ... *son of Kermek, son of Sevar
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#### *House of Ukil*

766–767	Pagan ... *son of Vineh
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#### *House of Ugain*

767–777	Telerig ... *son of Telec; fled to Byzantium
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#### *House of Dulo*

777–797:	Kardam ... *brother of Toktu
:802–814	Krum ... *son of Toktu
814–831	Omurtag <sup>1</sup> ... son of Krum
831–836	Malamir ... son of Omurtag
836–852	Presian I ... son of Zvinica, son of Omurtag
852–889	Boris I <sup>2</sup> ... son of Presian I; abdicated, died 907
889–893	Vladimir ... son of Boris I; deposed, died 893?
893–927	Simeon I ... son of Boris I; emperor 913
927–969	Petăr I <sup>3</sup> ... son of Simeon I; abdicated, died 970
969–977	Boris II ... son of Petăr I <sup>4</sup>
977–997	Roman ... son of Petăr I <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The inference from hagiographical sources that two kings, Dukum and Dicevg, intervened between Krum and Omurtag in 814–815, remains unproven and is generally considered unlikely.

<sup>2</sup> Baptized as Mihail 863, canonized as saint (Boris-Mihail).

<sup>3</sup> Canonized as saint.

<sup>4</sup> In Byzantine captivity 972–977 (during Byzantine occupation of eastern Bulgaria).

<sup>5</sup> In Byzantine captivity from 991; Roman was possibly named more fully Roman Simeon.

*House of the Komētoupouloi*

- 997–1014 Samuil ... son of count Nikola; regent 971–977 and since 991  
 1014–1015 Gavril Radomir ... son of Samuil  
 1015–1018 Ivan Vladislav ... son of Aaron, brother of Samuil  
 1018 Presian II ... son of Ivan Vladislav; abdicated, died 1060?  
 1018–1185 (to the Eastern Roman Empire, partly interrupted by the rebellions of the following)  
 (1040–1041 Petăr II Deljan ... son of Gavril Radomir; deposed)  
 (1041 Alusian ... son of Ivan Vladislav; abdicated)  
 (1041 Petăr II Deljan ... restored; deposed, died 1041)  
 (1072 Petăr III Bodin ... son of king Mihailo I of Zeta, son of prince Stefan Vojislav by daughter of prince Vladimir I by Kosara, daughter of Samuil; deposed; Zeta 1081–1099)

**Emperors of the Bulgarians (Second Bulgarian State)***House of Asen*

- 1185–1197 Petăr IV<sup>6</sup> ... leader of revolt against Byzantine rule  
 & 1188–1196 Ivan Asen I ... brother of Petăr IV  
 & 1196–1207 Ivan I (*Kalojan*) ... brother of Petăr IV  
 1207–1218 Boril ... son of sister of Petăr IV; deposed, died 1218:  
 1218–1241 Ivan Asen II ... son of Ivan Asen I  
 1241–1246 Kaliman Asen I ... son of Ivan Asen II  
 1246–1256 Mihail Asen I ... son of Ivan Asen II  
 1256 Kaliman Asen II ... son of *sebastokratōr* Aleksandăr, son of Ivan Asen I; expelled, died 1256  
 1256–1257 Mico Asen ... husband of daughter of Ivan Asen II; expelled, rival 1257–c.1262, died :1278  
 1257–1277 Konstantin Asen I ... married Eirēnē, daughter of emperor Theodōros II of Nicaea by Elena, daughter of Ivan Asen II; son of Tih[omir?]  
 1277–1279 Mihail Asen II ... son of Konstantin Asen I; associated c.1272; deposed, died 1303:  
 & 1278–1279 Ivajlo<sup>7</sup> ... married Maria Kantakouzēnē, mother of Mihail Asen II; deposed, died 1280  
 1279–1280 Ivan Asen III ... son of Mico Asen; fled to Byzantium, died 1302

*House of Terter*

- 1280–1292 Georgi Terter I ... husband of Marija, daughter of Mico Asen; fled to Byzantium, died 1308?

*House of Smilec*

- 1292–1298 Smilec ... husband of daughter of Kōnstantinos Palaiologos, brother of emperor Mikhaēl VIII of Byzantium  
 1298–1299 Ivan II ... son of Smilec; expelled, rival 1299–1300, died :1330

*House of Terter*

- 1299–1322 Todor Svetoslav<sup>8</sup> ... son of Georgi Terter I; associated c.1285–1289  
 1322–1323 Georgi Terter II ... son of Todor Svetoslav; associated c.1321?

*House of Šišman*

- 1323–1330 Mihail Asen III ... son of *despotēs* Šišman of Vidin by daughter of *sebastokratōr* Petăr by daughter of Ivan Asen II  
 1330–1331 Ivan Stefan ... son of Mihail Asen III; associated 1323–1324; expelled, died 1339:

<sup>6</sup> Originally named Todor.

<sup>7</sup> The attribution of the name Ivajlo to this usurper is uncertain; it may be a nickname for his rival Ivan Asen III.

<sup>8</sup> Although Todor Svetoslav came to the throne under the protection of Jōgā (“Čaka”), son of the Mongol prince Noqai, it does not appear that Jōgā actually reigned as Bulgarian emperor in 1299–1300, as traditionally held.

*House of Sracimir*

- 1331–1371 Ivan Aleksandăr ... son of *despotēs* Sracimir of Karvuna by Petrica, sister of Mihail Asen III  
+ Mihail Asen IV ... son of Ivan Aleksandăr; associated c.1332–1355
- 1356–1397 Ivan Sracimir ... son of Ivan Aleksandăr; associated 1337–1356; in Vidin<sup>9</sup>  
+ Ivan Asen IV ... son of Ivan Aleksandăr; associated 1337–1349
- 1371–1395 Ivan Šišman ... son of Ivan Aleksandăr; associated 1356; in Tărново  
+ Ivan Asen V ... son of Ivan Aleksandăr; associated 1356–1388?<sup>10</sup>
- 1397–1422 Konstantin Asen II ... son of Ivan Sracimir; associated 1395 in Vidin; deposed, died 1422
- 1422–1878 (to the Ottoman Empire)

**Princes and kings of the Bulgarians (Third Bulgarian State)***House of Battenberg*

- 1878–1886 Aleksandăr I ... son of Alexander, son of grand duke Ludwig II of Hesse; prince of Bulgaria;  
also of Eastern Rumelia 1885; abdicated, died 1893

*House of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha*

- 1887–1918 Ferdinand I ... son of August, brother of king Fernando II of Portugal; prince of Bulgaria and  
Eastern Rumelia 1887, then king of the Bulgarians 1908; abdicated, died 1948
- 1918–1943 Boris III ... son of Ferdinand I
- 1943–1946 Simeon II ... son of Boris III; deposed  
(republic 1946)

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<sup>9</sup> In Hungarian captivity 1365–1369 (during Hungarian occupation of Vidin).

<sup>10</sup> Perhaps only as *despotēs*?