List of Khazar rulers

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Contents

- 1 Early Khazar rulers
- 2 Khazar Khagans (Ashina dynasty)
  - 2.1 618 — 650
  - 2.2 690 — 715
  - 2.3 720 — 732
  - 2.4 730s — 840s
  - 2.5 861 -
- 3 Khazar Beks
- 4 Bulanid dynasty
- 5 Late Khazar Rulers
- 6 References
- 7 Sources

Early Khazar rulers

- Khozarig (Eponymous folk-ancestor of the Khazars)
- fl. 450s Karadach

Karadach was the king of the Akatziroi, a steppe nation allied to the Huns. He is described in the accounts of Priscus.

Khazar Khagans (Ashina dynasty)

See also: Ashina and Göktürk Khagans.

The Khagans were the supreme chiefs of the people, holding a position of much influence and spiritual authority, but not much actual day-to-day command.

618 — 650

- 618-630 Ziebel (Tun Yabgu Khan of the West Göktürks)
- 630-650 Possibly Böri Shad
- fl. 650 Irbis ?

For the period between the 650s and the 680s, one will sometimes see references to a Khalga, fl. mid 660s, and a Kaban, fl. late 660s. Researchers should be aware that these names derive from a single document, the *Cağfär Tarïxı*, and that a great many scholars have severely attacked this document as a mixture of factual data and outright fabrications.

The *Cağfär Tarïxı* purports to be a compilation of early Bulgar historical information, assembled (or at least written in its present form) in the late 17th century. It has been used by Volgan Tatars to provide documentation for extending their antecedents in their region back in time by many centuries.

Its critics claim it to be a forgery, created by or at the behest of the Soviet Secret Police (then the NKVD) in the 1930s for the purpose of creating divisiveness and factionalism within the ethnic Tatars of that era. The Soviet government did create spurious historical documents on several occasions. The historicity of the people that it refers to is therefore questionable, so until additional documentation comes to light, Khalga and Kaban should be regarded warily at best.

690 — 715

- c. 690-715 Busir (Ibuzir Glavan)

Busir Glavan took in the exiled Byzantine Emperor, Justinian II, and gave him his own sister (baptismal name Theodora). He later tried to kill Justinian to placate Tiberius III, causing Justinian's flight to Bulgaria and his ultimate restoration to the throne.

720 — 732

• fl. late 720s-731	Barjik
• c. 732	Bihar

Bihar is the name given in some sources to the Khazar Khagan whose daughter, Tzitzak, married the future Byzantine Emperor Constantine V. Their son was Leo IV, called "Leo The Khazar".

730s — 840s

• fl. late 730s	Prisbit (fem.) (Regent?)
• 737 - c. 740	To the Caliphate
• fl. c. 760	Baghatur
• c. 825 - 830 d. ?	Khan-Tuvan (a.k.a. Dyggvi)
• 840s	"Tarkhan"

Arab sources speak of "Tarkhan, King of the Khazars" during this period. Tarkhan can be both a proper name and a military rank, and it is unclear whether the sources refer to a Khagan named Tarkhan or are merely a confused reference to a general.

861 -

• c. 861	Zachariah

Khazar Beks

•	Yazir Bulash
• c. 630	Chorpan Tarkhan
• early 8th century	Alp Tarkhan
• fl. c. 730	Tar'mach
• ? - 737	Hazer Tarkhan
• 737 - c. 740	To the Caliphate

The Khagan Beks were warlords, military commanders who exercised considerable day-to-day authority, and were sometimes regarded by outsiders as the supreme lords of the Khazar nation. It is not entirely clear that the individuals listed before 737 AD were or were not Bulanids, or were Beks. They may have been simply warlords. Nevertheless, their activity parallels that of later Beks, and so are included.

Hazer's army was annihilated at Itil in 737 AD and the Caliphate imposed Islam upon the Khazars. Nevertheless, the Caliphs could not adequately garrison Khazaria, and within a few years the Khazars were once again independent. The famous conversion to Judaism seems to have occurred about this time. The date of the actual conversion to Judaism is a matter of some controversy. According to Yehuda Halevi in *Kuzari*, it occurred around 740 AD, though some Arab sources point to a date closer to the end of the 8th century or early 9th century, and more recent scholars postulated that 861 AD, the date of St. Cyril's visit to Khazaria, was the year of the conversion to Judaism.

The 2002 discovery of a coin hoard in Sweden further complicates the issue, as some of the coins bear dates from the early 9th century and the legends "Ard al-Khazar" (Land of the Khazars) and "Moses is the Prophet of God". Since the coins date from 837 AD or 838 AD, some scholars think the conversion occurred in 838 AD. Bulan Sabriel was the Khazar ruler at the time of the conversion, but in the below list all the dates up to Aaron I are based on a presumed 740 AD conversion date.

Bulanid dynasty

- fl. c. 740 Bulan Sabriel
- c. 786-809 Obadiah
- Hezekiah
- Manasseh I
- Chanukkah
- Isaac

- Zebulun
- Manasseh II
- Nisi
- fl. c. 900 Aaron I
- Menahem
- fl. c. 920 Benjamin
- c. late 920s-940 Aaron II
- fl. 940-965 Joseph

Joseph corresponded with Hasdai ibn Shaprut, a Jewish vizier to Abd al-Rahman III, Caliph of Córdoba. It is from this letter that the preceding list is taken. It is not entirely ruled out that the Bulanids were in fact Khagans rather than Beks, though their power certainly appears to be that of the Beks. Moreover, it is possible that the positions merged in the 10th century, as Joseph makes no reference to a colleague, instead referring to himself as "king of the Khazars."

Late Khazar Rulers

In 969 AD, Sviatoslav I of Kiev sacked Itil, the capital of the Khazar Khaganate. Khazar successor states appear to have survived in the Caucasus and around the Black Sea. We know of two later Khazar rulers:

- c. 986-988 David
- ? -1016 Georgius Tzul (In Kerch)

Georgius Tzul was captured by a joint Rus-Byzantine expedition and his state was destroyed. Shortly thereafter, the Kipchaks became masters of the Pontic steppe (see Cumans). However, there continue to be tantalizing references, in Muslim sources, of battles against "Khazars" in the Caucasus well into the late 11th century; whether Khazar states continued to survive or their name was used generically to describe Caucasian highlanders is unclear.

The fate of the Jewish Khazars is unclear. Jewish travellers of the 12th century continue to refer to them in passing. Khazar Jews are known to have lived in Kiev and even to have emigrated to Spain, the Byzantine Empire and Iraq. According to some sources the majority may have gone to Hungary, Poland and the Crimea, mingling with Jews in those areas and with later waves of Jewish immigrants from the west.

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List largely adapted from Bruce Gordon's Regnal Chronologies - Eurasian Nomads (http://www.hostkingdom.net/siberia.html)

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