

## **Melnyk V. Historical and Legal Research of the Era of the Kyivan Ruler Askold (860-882): Trade Routes and Byzantine Suzerainty**

The Principality of Kyiv (IX century) was born as a result of the struggle for the direct use of the Dnieper trade route by the Slavs, without the usurious mediation of the Khazar merchants and bureaucracy. By promoting the political independence of the Kyiv region, the Byzantines during the 860-870s were able to frustrate the creation of a common border and, accordingly, a military alliance between Vikings and Khazars. Stimulating the economically Kyivans, sending their merchants to Kiev, the Byzantines reoriented the Norman trade from the Volga to the Dnieper. Previously, the Vikings shared with the Khazars, but thanks to Askold Vikings began to pay money to the people of Kiev and the Greeks. Political problems in Khazaria and the Islamic Caliphate contributed to the reorientation of the economic attention of the Scandinavians to Kiev.

The functioning of the Dnipro trade route had two forms:

1) collection of the transport duty from the Vikings for the transit of goods to Byzantine Chersonesos (Crimea) and Constantinople;

2) collecting tax on the sale of goods from those foreign merchants who traded in the Kyiv market.

Kyivan Rus (more correctly – Kyivshchyna, Principality of Kyiv) appeared as a form of administration of two fees: a transport tax and a sales tax. On the top of this pyramid was the Byzantine emperor, who provided legal status and international support (Ugrians, Pechenegs, Bulgarians).ve.

**Key words:** Age of Askold, Kyivan Rus, Principality of Kyiv, Khazar Khanate, Byzantine Empire, Dniepertrade route, Vikings, Normans, Askold baptism, Ruska era.