

The work deals with thieves in law as chiefs of Russian-language criminal organizations. On the basis of an analysis of available sources, and their historical, criminologically focused processing, there is examined a hypothesis that criminality represented by the thieves in law creates in its fight against the society a specific form of self-defence. Part of the work being also an answer to a question to what extent today's division into old and new vors is topical, and whether this world has modernized in permanent relation to the environment surrounding it. The author proceeds in his analysis from the role of the thief in law as the individuality acting in constant tension with the society to the characterization of the thieves in law and to relations by which they are connected. He also focuses on power structures to which the thieves in law are subordinated. Thus, the author pursues an overall picture of chiefs of the Vor world and its possible modernization.