



The Vory: Russia's Super Mafia

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The first English-language book to document the men who emerged from the gulags to become Russia's much-feared crime class: the *vory v zakone*

Mark Galeotti is the go-to expert on organized crime in Russia, consulted by governments and police around the world. Now, Western readers can explore the fascinating history of the *vory v zakone*, a group that has survived and thrived amid the changes brought on by Stalinism, the Cold War, the Afghan War, and the end of the Soviet experiment.

The *vory*—as the Russian mafia is also known—was born early in the twentieth century, largely in the Gulags and criminal camps, where they developed their unique culture. Identified by their signature tattoos, members abided by the thieves' code, a strict system that forbade all paid employment and cooperation with law enforcement and the state. Based on two decades of on-the-ground research, Galeotti's captivating study details the *vory*'s journey to power from their early days to their adaptation to modern-day Russia's free-wheeling oligarchy and global opportunities beyond.

The Vory: Russia's Super Mafia Details

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Author : Mark Galeotti

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From Reader Review The Vory: Russia's Super Mafia for online ebook

Eddie Choo says

An eye-opening read into the world of the Russian underworld

This is a magisterial book into the criminal aspects of Russian society. Crucial insights also into how criminality has seeped into the state. Makes one reflect about the similarities and differences between the state and a protection racket.

Royce Ratterman says

A work of immense interest. Read for personal research.

I found this book's contents helpful and revealing - number rating relates to the book's contribution to my needs.

Overall, this work is a good resource for the researcher and enthusiast.

D?c??r says

Exceptional study of the history of Russia's organized crime.

Nick Richards says

A very insightful and comprehensive look at the history of the Russian Vory and how they've ended up so prevalent these days. Far better as a paperback than an audiobook.

AC says

An interesting, well researched book. But the subtitle is a bit misleading, as the Vory are a thing of the past. This book is not an analysis of a contemporary problem.

Robert Muller says

Anyone interested in understanding Russian organized crime should read this book. It is by far one of the best books on criminal organizations I have ever read. Although Galeotti eschews sociological analysis of his information in favor of a more simple historical analysis approach, you can easily read between the lines to get a clear picture of how the culture and social systems of Russia contribute to the structure of criminal

organizations and black/grey markets. I would have liked more information about the latter, particularly the French cheese market and its relationship to elites, sanctions, national and local politics, Putinism, and gangster opportunism, but I'm sure that would be an entire book by itself :). And I remain uncertain about the possibilities of gang warfare (indeed of state warfare, say in East Ukraine/Donbas) over French cheese (and other, more prosaic goods such as heroin, of course) and its implications for world peace.

Willem Van says

Gives a good idea in which direction Rusland is moving. Well documented with lots of references.

Steven Lewis says

I was nearly put off by a review saying this was a diatribe against communism. That review couldn't have been more wrong. If you think Galeotti is against communism in particular, how do you explain his discussions of organised crime in non-communist countries? Not only is this a fascinating book, it's a reminder to read multiple reviews before making a decision.

Ti.Me says

A textbook-quality look at organized crime in Russia and surrounding regions, from the humblest beginnings in local horse stealing gangs of the early 1900's through to today's covert global networks of white collar and cyber criminals.

Each generation of organized crime, in each region, was guided and shaped by movements of government, and government has been somewhat moved and shaped by Russian/Eurasian organized crime.

Peppered with Russian proverbs and pithy quotes from former Vor, police, and government officials, The Vory is a masterpiece of written edutainment.

5 stars.

***** Notable Topics *****

- Russian Revolution
- Soviet era handling of criminals, crime bosses
- Lenin
- Stalin
- Brezhnev
- Gorbachev's reforms (effects on organized crime)
- Putin
- Language - mainstreaming of crime slang
- Comparison to organized crime Italy, Japan, and U.S.
- Prison camps/Gulag system
- Afghanistan (invasion, occupation, veteran involvement in organized crime)
- Chechnya

- Georgia
 - China (cooperation with organized crime networks)
 - Post-Soviet criminal adaptation
 - Overseas criminal expansion
-

Corry says

The very fascinating underground of Russia, constructed by Stalin, fed by Brezhnev, given total liberty by Gorbatskov and used by Putin. Very well informed and sometimes very funny written. If you want to understand Russia nowadays, read the story of the vory.

Bettie? says

Description: *The first English-language book to document the men who emerged from the gulags to become Russia's much-feared crime class: the vory v zakone*

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thief in law (Russian: ??? ? ??????, tr. vor v zakone; Estonian: seaduslik varas; Ukrainian: ????? ? ?????, zlodiy u zakoni; Belarusian: ????? ? ?????, zlodzey u zakone; Georgian: ????????? ?????, kanonieri kurdi; Armenian: ?????????, orenk'ov go?; Azerbaijani: Qanuni o?ru) in the Soviet Union, the post-Soviet states, Serbia and respective diasporas abroad is a specifically granted formal status of a professional criminal who enjoys an elite position within the organized crime environment and employs informal authority over its lower-status members. Each new Vor is vetted (literally "crowned", with respective rituals and tattoos) by consensus of several Vors. Vor culture is inseparable from prison organized crime: only repeatedly jailed convicts are eligible for Vor status. Thieves in law are drawn from many nationalities from a number of post-Soviet states. [wiki sourced]

The Vory: Russia's Super Mafia review – a kleptocracy in the making. Mark Galeotti's timely account of the Russian underworld charts its rise from Soviet-era gangsters to Kremlin collaborators under Putin

SL says

More an academic study on the history of criminals in Russia and the surrounding states than any one group.

Elizabeth says

A good history of Russian major crime, its major players, politics, and market globalization. Starting with the original vory and the gulags through the 20th century and into the 21st century, Galeotti covers the history of Russian organized crime (an imprecise term) and how Russian politics and other criminal organizations have helped it to grow beyond its own borders.

Paul says

Over the years I've read a fair few books about various Mafia groups from around the globe, From Sicily, to Tokyo, I have had a fascination with learning about them. These are groups of people who live on the outside of our normal world. Choosing to make a living by doing things we wouldn't dare do. From the big screen to the latest European crime series the mafia is big business in the world of both fiction and nonfiction. So with the release of this book I decide to take a tiny peek into the world of the Russian side of things. How would they live up to the myths that have spread across the globe, Are they, in fact, the boogeymen who lurk in the shadows ready to strike at any moment?

Galeotti does a great job of telling the tale of the Vory in broad strokes, He starts by giving us background on how various factions came into being and then goes on to deliver key point throughout there history up until the present day. He shows us the the big players that have strived to move the world of Russian crime forward. And while he doesn't go into great detail of each of the lives he does shows the effect each of these people has had and how most came to an untimely end. We also get insight into how each generation of Russian officials has tried to tackle organised crime and for the most part failed to really achieve anything.

The book is written in a fairly easy and straightforward style to get on with, You can tell in the reading of this book that the author is an expert in his field. He speaks to you from a place of knowledge and experience. And does this in a way that feels like you are having a conversation with the author rather than just page after page of dry facts. Quite often these sorts of books are written by people in the life and feel like they build things up, I guess in an attempt to make it sell to there audience. While covering a lot of ground he gave me a lot of information that I had no idea about, this is a good thing as it means I wasn't left feeling that I was covering ground from other books out there. The only downside with this is that we don't ever spend too much time with each of the things he talks about, so I was left wanting more. But I suppose the book doesn't claim to be a biography on any of these people individually but as the story of a whole group over

many generations.

This book in my opinion delivers on what it promises in a quick and easy way. If you are looking to dip your toes into the world of Russian crime, this is the place to start your journey. It gives a good all-around view and also points you in the right direction if you wish to go a little deeper.

Radu says

Goes from the gulag, through post Stalin, wild 90s until today, with interesting insights. Some parts are bit academically and probably interesting for a historian. Still, I liked it overall cause is not the usual “Russia is a mafia state” surface scratching reading but an account of how organised crime developed in Russia and became part of the state.
