

# The differentiation of theft from related offenses

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## **Abstract**

*The article is devoted to the analysis of criminal law, namely, the delimitation of theft and related offences. In criminal law theory, the embezzlement of funds is determined, just as the form of theft is determined by the method of its commission; therefore, theft, fraud, misappropriation or embezzlement are forms of theft. In the practice of criminal proceedings, the delimitation of theft is one of the problematic issues and causes many errors. Judicial practice materials and analysis of statistical data indicate that the activity of the courts to combat these crimes does not fully meet the requisites; therefore, some courts make mistakes in qualifying the actions of perpetrators, including the delimitation of theft and related categories of crimes, and so on.*

## INTRODUCTION.

First of all, theft must be delimited from robbery (Article 161 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation) and robbery (Article 162 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation).

The main immediate objects of robbery and theft coincide. The facultative immediate objects of these crimes differ. So, during a robbery (clause "g" part 2 of article 161 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation), such relations are those that ensure the inviolability of the person (physical or mental), and according to clause "c" part 2 of article 161 of the Criminal Code of the inviolability of the home. There is only one optional direct object of theft - this is the inviolability of the home (paragraph "a", part 3 of article 158 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation).

Differentiation of theft from other forms of larceny.

The most significant signs of delimiting robbery from theft are present on the objective side of these crimes. Above, we called the theft signs - the seizure of another's property, etc. According to its objective features, theft is characterized by such a seizure of property from

the possession of another person, which is carried out secretly, unnoticed, and therefore without the knowledge or in addition to the will and consent of the victim. This provides the opportunity for unhindered possession of the stolen. The method of seizure during robbery is the openness of theft. Theft and robbery thus differ in the manner in which the property is seized.

The main thing in delimiting robbery from theft is the subjective criterion (the conviction of the offender himself of the secrecy or openness of the larceny committed). The perpetrator's recognition of the open method of encroaching on someone else's property speaks of the special impudence and social danger of the criminal's personality.

Unlike a thief, a robber does not rely on the absence or non-management of eyewitnesses to the crime, but on the suddenness and audacity of his actions, the quick disappearance from the scene of the crime, the confusion and confusion of the eyewitnesses, caused by fear of probable violence

When delimiting robbery from theft, the issue of escalating theft into robbery is important (paragraph 5 of Resolution No. 29).

The courts were given an explanation that if during the theft the actions of the perpetrator are discovered by the owner or other owner of the property or by other persons, however, the perpetrator, realizing this, continues to commit unlawful seizure of the property or its retention, the offense should be qualified as robbery.

On October 27, 2014, the Kirov District Court of Astrakhan convicted R. of guilty of attempting to openly steal someone else's property. It follows from the verdict that R., being in the trading floor of the store, taking advantage of the fact that no one was watching his actions, secretly stole property from the counter by free access, hid it in his left trouser pocket, and then passed the cash register terminal and left the store. The seller, who was in the trading floor, called R. and asked him to stop. R., wanting to bring his criminal intent to the end, realizing that his actions are open in nature, not responding to the seller's legitimate demands to stop and return the stolen, tried to escape from the scene of the crime. He ran out of the store, but could not bring his criminal intent to the end, as he was detained by store employees.

On October 22, 2014, L. was convicted by the Soviet District Court of Samara for attempting to openly steal someone else's property.

The verdict indicates that L. was in the trading floor of the store. Passing by the stalls with goods, L. suddenly conceived the secret theft of another's property in his favor, with a mercenary purpose. After making sure that no one was watching his actions, he secretly, using free access for the purpose of personal enrichment and the seizure of other people's property, took a console from his window. After that L. with the stolen property left the trading floor through the fire exit and tried to escape from the scene of the crime without paying for the goods and planning to subsequently dispose of the stolen property at his discretion. At this time, criminal acts became apparent to guard A., who asked L. to stop. However, L., realizing that his actions began to be open, and wanting to bring his criminal

intent to the end, he tried to escape from the scene with the stolen property, but was detained by security officers.

The above examples are united by the fact that the perpetrators seized the property of others secretly (this is reflected in the sentences). The process of retention of property after its seizure provided grounds for a judgment on the reorientation of intent from secret larceny to open, which may be

erroneous, as the retention occurred after the guilty person seized someone else's property from its owner and thereby realized his intent for secret its seizure, which is the objective side of the theft. Subsequent actions to retain property are not included in the objective side of this corpus delicti and depend on many factors (Savchenko, 2015).

We believe that the author of the above judgment is mistaken: the theft, at the moment when it is discovered, is not yet over, the guilty party has not yet turned the property in its favor or in favor of third parties. He continues to realize his intent for theft even when it becomes obvious to him that his actions of theft are open to others, i.e. it has the intention to continue to steal as open, already committing robbery.

#### Methodology.

The methodological basis of the research consists of general scientific, private scientific and special methods of cognition.

The analysis method was used in the interpretation of regulatory legal acts, the study of special legal literature and the study of materials of judicial practice.

#### Discussion and results.

Rights in this regard, L.V. Chernysheva, that in order to establish the fact that the theft has developed into robbery, the following criteria must be taken into account:

1. The moment the larceny is completed (at the time of the loss of the secret nature of the theft, the theft must not be completed).
2. The purpose of violence (in the case of violent robbery) is to keep the stolen (Chernysheva, 2009).

Moreover, the first criterion is the most important.

If the victim or those present at the commission of the crime only suspected the theft, but were convinced of the loss of property after it was taken, the theft does not "grow" into robbery.

Robbery is rightfully one of the forms of larceny of another's property. Its legislative description should not have fundamental differences from the characteristics of other forms of larceny, including theft. Now there are such differences: the composition of the robbery is formal or truncated, and the composition of the theft is material.

When delimiting robbery and theft, it must be borne in mind that in robbery, the commission of violence against the victim is aimed at committing larceny.

Establishing the boundaries between fraud and theft is of great difficulty if, when committing a secret larceny, the perpetrator resorted to various deceptive tricks and tricks or used the victim's trust, under the influence of which the latter himself transferred his property to the guilty, or did not prevent his seizure.

Scientists are unanimous in the opinion that fraudulent actions that only facilitate access to property, if it is confiscated secretly and, most importantly, the perpetrators themselves, should be qualified according to Art. 158 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (Bezverkhov, 2002; Esakov et al., 2007; Lopashenko, 2006).

The main difference between the considered forms of theft in such situations is indicated by the fact that in case of fraud, the owner of the property or another person, under the influence of fraud (breach of trust), themselves transfer the property to other persons, and in case of theft, the seizure of other people's property takes place against the will of the victim.

The above distinction between theft and fraud is far from the only one. It differs from each other also in the subject of the crime (it is wider in fraud); in this regard, in some situations, - at the time the crime ends (fraud in respect of the right to property is completed when the right to this property is acquired); by the presence (in fraud) and the absence (in theft) of the powers of the perpetrator in relation to property; on the process of seizing property (in fraud, the victim himself passes it to the guilty party, which is not theft); according to certain qualifying characteristics; on the subject of the crime (from the age of 14 liability was established for theft, from 16 - for fraud).

However, the main difference between theft and fraud is what cheating acts in these larcenies (the method is fraud; the means of committing a crime, its relief is theft).

Practice has experienced and continues to experience difficulties in delineating the appropriation, embezzlement and secret larceny of another's property.

The judicial interpretation on the issue of delimiting theft from embezzlement and embezzlement is contained in paragraph 2 of paragraph 18 of Resolution No. 51 of December 27, 2007. In such cases, it is necessary to establish whether the offender has the authority to order, manage, deliver, use or store in relation to another's property. At the same time, the fact of documenting the powers (powers) of the subject of the crime in relation to the property entrusted to him does not affect the qualification of the act. The commission of secret larceny of another's property by a person who does not have such powers, but has access to stolen property due to the work performed or other circumstances, should be qualified as theft.

Exclusively on the basis of the subject of the crime, they differ: larceny of especially valuable objects (Article 164 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation) from other larceny (Articles 158 - 162).

A.P. Rezvan, A.S. Sentsov, A.P. Sevryukov and E.V. Demyanchuk noted that in order to blame a person for larceny of cultural property, it is necessary that the consciousness of the guilty person at least in general terms covers the fact of the larceny of an object of particular historical, scientific, artistic or cultural value (Rezvan et al., 1999; Demyanchuk, 2003; Sevryukov, 2004). As an argument

A.P. Rezvan and A.S. Sentsov cited materials of law enforcement practice.

So, at the stage of the preliminary investigation, the investigator qualified T.'s deed on the aggregate of crimes provided for by paragraphs "c" and "g" of part 2 of article 158, part 1,

article 164 and h. 1 Article 167 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. T. stole property from the temple, including two objects of certain historical, artistic, cultural and scientific value, according to the conclusion of an art criticism examination, and then, after committing the larceny, he burned one of the stolen icons, which was not of particular value.

The court reasonably found T. guilty of committing theft of another's property under aggravating circumstances, but excluded from the charge the crimes under Part 1 of Art. 164 and h. 1 Article 167 of the Criminal Code, and indicated in the verdict that two stolen objects have a certain historical, scientific and cultural value .... But, as the court further emphasized in the verdict, justifying the decision in so far as the guilty's consciousness "at least in general terms should cover the fact that he has stolen an object of special historical, scientific, artistic or cultural value, this is not the case installed".

However, such a vague wording is unlikely to clarify the content of the subjective side of this corpus delicti. Questions arise:

1. What does "in general terms" mean.
2. As not experienced in the issues of art history (we are not talking about professional kidnapers), the kidnapper can be aware of this fact, even if the results of the relevant examinations are not always concrete and unambiguous.

So, taking into account the foregoing, we can say that the main distinguishing feature of theft and robbery, and in the case of robbery, is the only way - larceny. With robbery - it is not secret, but open. In addition, a non-violent method of theft is also a characteristic feature of larceny. As for robbery, it differs from theft in the way of larceny. Robbery, unlike theft, has a formal (truncated) corpus delicti. In case of fraud - the perpetrator himself transfers the property to the victim, as opposed to theft. Deception can also be used in theft, but in this case it should act only as a way to facilitate access to property.

There is a judicial interpretation on the delimitation of theft from misappropriation and embezzlement. When deciding on the delimitation of the composition of misappropriation or embezzlement from theft, the courts must establish whether a person has the authority to order, manage, deliver, use or store in relation to another's property. The commission of secret larceny of another's property by a person who does not have such powers, but has access to stolen property due to work performed or other circumstances, must be qualified according to Art. 158 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.

Theft of objects of special value from theft are distinguished solely by the characteristics of the subject of the crime. When delimiting these two compositions, special difficulties arise because the criminal should at least in general cover the fact that he is stealing an item of special value, while experts sometimes give different assessments of the value of the stolen.

The delimitation of theft from other related elements of the crime.

In the most general terms, the larceny of another's property in any form or form is delimited from other types of unlawful possession or use of another's property by such a criterion as the inherent nature of any form or larceny of the totality of all the larceny signs

provided for in Note 1 to Article 158 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, as well as those developed by the theory of criminal law.

Theft should be distinguished from the unlawful seizure of a car or other vehicle without the purpose of larceny (Article 166 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation).

The main signs that are not characteristic of theft, unlike larceny, are: the presence of a selfish target; seizure and (or) appeal of the subject of the crime in favor of the guilty person or other persons.

According to Yu.V. Plodovsky, crimes under Art. 158 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation and Art. 166 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, are self-serving, therefore, the purpose, according to the signs of which today is the distinction between theft and larceny, is not a perfect

criterion (Plodovsky, 2012). The researcher believes that “when theft, the perpetrator, as well as during larceny, gets the opportunity to dispose of the vehicle at his discretion, as his own - can return to the owner, abandon, destroy. Ultimately, he realizes this opportunity when the need for a vehicle disappears, after satisfying his need for it.

The mercenary goal is still traditionally interpreted by scientists as the desire of the perpetrator to enrich themselves, to seize property for which he does not have the right, while in the case of theft, the perpetrator does not (Lopashenko, 2006). In addition, we have already mentioned that a selfish purpose implies a desire to turn a thing in its favor permanently, while hijacking, the guilty person obviously does not want this, otherwise he would have left the car for himself.

It is believed that the motive for theft (Pavlik, 2013), among other things, may be self-interest. M.K. Magomedov explains it this way: during the theft, there can be any motive, including selfish, if the possession of the car is dictated, for example, by the desire to save on transportation costs (Magomedov, 2007).

In Decree No. 25, the law enforcer draws attention to the absence of not selfish goals, but selfish motives: “If the court determines that the aforementioned unlawful actions of a person were committed only for driving a stolen car or for other purposes without selfish motives, committed if there were grounds for that legal assessment ... according to Art. 166 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.

This provision is not entirely clear. It is not clear whether the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation denies the existence of selfish motives in general to all possible cases of theft. It is noteworthy that the law enforcer points to a legal assessment of car ownership as theft, if there is no “goal without selfish motives”.

When a car is hijacked, there can be no selfish purpose, but not selfish motives, since one cannot put an equal sign between the “selfish purpose” and “selfish motives”. The position of the law enforcer will be true only if the identification of “mercenary purpose” and “mercenary motives” is made (Gorbunov, 2015; Gorbunov, 2015), but this cannot be done, since one should not forget that the goal is secondary to the motives.

It should be assumed that hijacking is possible both with selfish motives (selfish motives) and without them, but a selfish goal must be absent. In this regard, it is advisable to

amend Resolution No. 25, adding paragraph 28 as follows: selfish motives can occur in cases where the possession of a car is dictated by the desire to save on transportation costs, transport any property, use transport for private transportation. At the same time, the person should not have intent on turning the stolen vehicle into its possession and disposal, as well as the possession and disposal of other persons (Zakharov et al., 2019). The mercenary motives in theft are associated with the extraction of material benefits solely from the functional properties of the car as a means of transportation, while the mercenary purpose of theft is aimed at benefiting from the possession of another's property as an object of property, which can not only be used (to extract useful properties of the thing), but to own and dispose of as one's own, that is, to determine the legal fate of a thing.

These crimes are distinguished by subject, which is obvious and does not require comment. These crimes differ in the object - the object of theft, are not property relations, as relations in the distribution of material wealth in society. These crimes differ in that when hijacking, property is not applied free of charge in favor of the guilty person or other persons. The seizure of property during the theft is temporary, in case of theft property is appropriated permanently (Sapunov, 2010; Sevryukov, 2004; Kovalenko, 2019).

The only question is how long can the property be used so that it does not develop into theft. Hence the experts' suggestions about the advisability of determining the upper limit of temporary use of another's property, the excess of which would allow drawing a conclusion about theft. L.D. Gaukhman and S.V. Maximov as such a border with reference to Art. 228 of the Civil Code of the Russian Federation propose to consider the expiration of a six-month period from the date of the actual disposal of property from legal possession (Gaukhman et al., 2002; Emami et al., 2019).

Theft of another's property, regardless of form and type, is delimited from the destruction or damage of another's property on a number of grounds.

Immediate objects, the subject of these crimes coincide.

The distinction is made on the objective side: the destruction of property is not characterized by the seizure and (or) circulation of another's property in favor of the guilty or other persons, and if the seizure is carried out, it is solely for the destruction or damage of the seized property, and excludes the existence of a mercenary purpose, and committed by negligence - also a deliberate form of guilt (Kovalenko et al., 2019).

If the seizure of property was carried out in such a way that other property was damaged or destroyed, then the deed (if there are necessary signs) is classified by the totality of crimes as theft in relation to one property and destruction or damage in relation to other property, since the composition of the theft is not objective, on subjective grounds, does not include incapacitation of other property that is not the subject of theft (Ismagilov, 2001). Therefore, no matter what the purpose of destroying property that does not constitute the subject of theft (to ensure access to stolen property, to commit seizure or to conceal theft), such destruction always requires an independent criminal legal assessment under Art. 167 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (intentional destruction or damage to property)

or Art. 168 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (destruction or damage to property through negligence).

According to Resolution No. 29, if a person illegally entered a dwelling, premises or other storehouse by breaking doors, then additional qualifications under Article 167 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation are not required, i.e. Intentional damage to the same doors characterizes only the theft method. But if during the theft the property of the victim was deliberately destroyed or damaged, which was not the subject of theft (for example, furniture, household appliances and other things), then there will already be an additional qualification of the offense under article 167 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.

In criminal law literature, without any reservations, it is recognized that intellectual property is not property and, therefore, the subject and object of crimes against property, and that encroachment on it always constitutes other offenses, for example, provided for in Art. 146 or Art. 147 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation (Semenov, 2005).

Objects, if they do not participate in civil circulation, as a general rule, cannot be considered as a subject of crimes against property.

Limited in civil circulation or withdrawn from it include certain types of property provided for by international legal domestic regulatory acts, which, for reasons of public or state security, as well as in accordance with accepted international obligations, cannot be subject to free circulation. That is why responsibility for the theft of nuclear materials or radioactive substances (Article 221 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation), nuclear, chemical, biological or other types of weapons of mass destruction, as well as materials or equipment that can be used to create weapons of mass destruction (Part 2 of Art. 226 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation), firearms, component parts for it, ammunition, explosives or explosive devices (part 1 of article 226 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation), narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances (Article 229 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation), property subjected to inventory or arrest lib subject to confiscation (article 312 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation), official documents, stamps or seals (part

1 of article 325 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation), passport or other important personal documents (part 2 of article 325 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation), as well as excise duty stamps, special stamps or marks of conformity protected from counterfeiting (part 3 of article 325 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation) are specifically provided for in other chapters, because the essence of such an encroachment is not so much the infliction of property damage to the owner (although he is certainly present in each of these encroachments ), how much in creating a threat to public safety awn (in the theft of radioactive substances and weapons), public health (in the theft of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances), the functioning of justice (in the theft of property subjected to inventory or seizure, or the appropriation of property subject to confiscation), as well as the management of official circulation documents (during the theft of documents, stamps and seals). These items have such features that give criminal acts aimed at capturing them a qualitatively different object orientation than that possessed by crimes against property,



although under certain circumstances they can form a combination with the latter (Belyaev, 2003).

Theft does not constitute a theft of possession of another's property, not with a mercenary purpose, but, for example, for the purpose of its temporary use with subsequent return to the owner or in connection with the alleged right to this property. Such actions, subject to the grounds for qualification under Art. 330 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation or other articles of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation. Those distinguish between theft and arbitrariness. Self-government is unauthorized, contrary to the procedure established by law or other normative legal act, the performance of any actions, the legitimacy of which is disputed by the organization or citizen, if such actions cause substantial harm.

Establishing the motive and purpose of self-actions provides additional opportunities for delimiting the crime in question from theft. Sometimes, in practice, an unauthorized secret seizure by a person of property that was illegally held by the victim, without analyzing the motive and purpose, is erroneously qualified as theft. However, unlike theft under arbitrariness, the guilty person does not pursue the goal of taking possession of other people's property, but seizes or demands the transfer of property belonging to himself or other property, in his opinion, illegally held by the victim.

#### CONCLUSIONS.

To summarize the interim results.

Theft should be distinguished from car theft. One of the important demarcating signs is the absence of a mercenary purpose in the case of theft. At the same time, hijacking can be done out of selfish motives. In order not to confuse the mercenary motives and the mercenary purpose in such cases, it is better to clarify the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, and to determine that the mercenary motives in theft are connected with the extraction of material benefits solely from the functional properties of the car as a means of transportation, while the mercenary purpose of theft is directed to benefit from owning someone else's property as an object of property, which you can not only use, but also own, and dispose of as your own.

It will be true to determine some limit on the temporary use of property in theft, by stepping over which the person is considered to have already committed theft.

Destruction or damage to another's property is delimited from theft by the fact that the property is not seized, there is no mercenary purpose, in some cases it is committed through negligence.

In contrast to the theft at arbitrariness, the perpetrator does not pursue the goal of taking possession of other people's property, but confiscates or demands the transfer of property belonging to himself or other property, in his opinion, illegally held by the victim.

Items, if they do not participate in civil circulation, then, as a general rule, cannot be considered as a subject of crimes against property. Accordingly, in the event of their theft, liability under Art. 226, 229 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation, etc., and not under Art. 158 of the Criminal Code of the Russian Federation.

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