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The Maidan Massacre in Ukraine: Revelations from Trials and Investigation¹

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“Il est défendu de tuer; tout meurtrier est puni, à moins qu’il n’ait tué en grande compagnie, et au son des trompettes; c’est la règle.” [It is forbidden to kill; therefore all murderers are punished unless they kill in large numbers and to the sound of trumpets; it is the rule].²

Voltaire

“Facts are stubborn things; and whatever may be our wishes, our inclinations, or the dictates of our passion, they cannot alter the state of facts and evidence.”³

John Adams at the Boston massacre trial

Abstract

This study examines evidence revealed by the ongoing trial and government investigations concerning the Maidan massacre in Ukraine. The massacre of the protesters and the police during the “Euromaidan” mass protests in February 2014 contributed to the overthrow of the Ukrainian government and ultimately to a start of the civil war in Donbas, Russian military interventions in Crimea and Donbas, the Russian annexation of Crimea and an international conflict between the West and Russia. The research question is as follows: What does evidence made public by the Maidan massacre trials and Ukrainian government investigations reveal about which of the parties of the conflict was involved in this mass killing? This paper analyzes several hundred hours of video recordings of the Maidan massacre trials and information concerning investigations of this massacre in over 2,500 court decisions from the official court decisions database in Ukraine. It examines trial and investigation testimonies of wounded protesters, relatives of the killed protesters, prosecution and defense witnesses, and top officials of the Yanukovych government. The study also analyzes results of forensic ballistic and medical examinations and investigative experiments, and videos and photos of the Maidan massacre made public during the trial. It includes several online video appendixes. They contain testimonies of wounded protesters and witnesses concerning snipers in Maidan-controlled locations and content analyses of synchronized segments of American, Belgian, Belarusian, British, Finnish, French, Dutch, German, Polish, Russian, Spanish, and Ukrainian TV videos, recordings of live online broadcasts, and social media videos of this crucial massacre.

The Maidan massacre trials and investigations have revealed various evidence that four killed and several dozen wounded policemen and at least the absolute majority of 49 killed and 157 wounded Maidan protesters were massacred on February 20, 2014 by snipers in Maidan-controlled buildings and areas. Such evidence includes testimonies of the absolute majority of wounded protesters, several dozens of prosecution witnesses, dozens of defense witnesses, and 14 self-admitted members of Maidan snipers groups. Videos presented at the trial showed that times of shooting of the absolute majority of protesters did not coincide with times of shooting by the Berkut policemen, who were charged with their massacre. Forensic medical examinations determined that the overwhelming majority of the protesters were shot from steep directions from the sides or the back. Initial ballistic examinations did not match bullets extracted from the bodies of killed and wounded protesters to the Berkut Kalashnikovs. Forensic examinations of the bullet holes by the government experts for the Maidan massacre trial suggested that Berkut policemen were shooting in the Hotel Ukraina snipers above the Maidan protesters and in trees and poles. The analysis shows cover-up and stonewalling of the investigations and trials by the Maidan governments and the far right. The prosecution denied that there were any snipers in the Maidan-controlled buildings. Not a single person is convicted or under arrest for the massacre of the protesters and the police almost 8 years after one of the most documented mass killings in history.

The Research Question

The massacre of the protesters and the police during the “Euromaidan” mass protests on February 18-20, 2014 in Ukraine resulted in the overthrow of the semi-democratic, corrupt, and relatively pro-Russian Yanukovich government. (See Katchanovski, 2015a, 2016a, 2020a). This mass killing was a tipping point of the conflict in Ukraine and led to government overthrow. It also ultimately led or contributed to a civil war in Donbas, Russian military interventions in Crimea and Donbas, and the secession and annexation of Crimea by Russia and international conflicts between Ukraine and Russia and the West and Russia. (Katchanovski, 2015b, 2016b; Kudelia, 2016; Hahn, 2018). This conflict over Ukraine escalated into the most serious international crisis since the end of the Cold War because it involves largest nuclear powers, and it is often dubbed the new Cold War (Black and Johns, 2016; Sakwa, 2015).

This paper examines the following research question: What does evidence made public by the Maidan massacre trials and Ukrainian government investigations reveal about which of the parties of the conflict was involved in this mass killing? Maidan massacre trials and Ukrainian government investigations made public for the first time a large volume of various evidence, such as results of forensic medical and ballistic examinations and testimonies of wounded protesters concerning this politically crucial case of mass killing. This study reviews main findings of previous academic studies and divergent narratives by the Western, Ukrainian, and Russian governments and the media concerning the Maidan massacre, and analyzes trial and investigation testimonies, results of forensic examinations for the prosecution and the Maidan victims lawyers for the trial, videos and photos presented at the trial, and cover-up and stonewalling of the investigation and the trial.

The dominant narrative promoted by the governments and the media in Ukraine and the West attributed the Maidan massacre of the protesters to the government forces and mostly ignored killings of the police. The GPU arrested in April 2014 and charged the Berkut special company commander and two members of this police unit with the murder of 39 out of 49 killed Maidan protesters on February 20 on Yanukovych order. The trial of two policemen from a Berkut special company began in January 2015 after the arrested Berkut commander was released by a court and escaped from Ukraine. In the beginning of 2016, this trial was restarted after a deputy commander of the Berkut regiment and its two other members were also charged with the February 20th massacre. The charges against all Berkut members in this case were expanded to killing of 48 and wounding 80 protesters on February 20 and to terrorism. It is noteworthy that a killing of a Georgian protester on February 20 was not included in the charges, and circumstances of his killings have not been officially disclosed.

The Prosecutor General of Ukraine announced in 2019 that the investigation of the Maidan massacre was complete. The prosecution presented all its evidence at the trial of the five Berkut members before they were released by a Kyiv court of appeals under President Zelensky's order and exchanged to Donbas separatists in December 2019. The trial examined by that date all evidence presented by the prosecution, including testimonies of relatives of killed Maidan protesters, almost all wounded Maidan protesters, prosecution witnesses, videos and photos of the massacre, forensic medical and ballistic examinations, on-site investigative experiments, and documents. Testimonies of most of the Berkut defense victims were also presented at the trial before it stopped, and a verdict stage was expected in Spring 2020. The trial was suspended because of the release and exchange of the Berkut policemen. The Maidan massacre trial resumed since for 2 Berkut policemen, who returned from the exchange to Donbas

separatists, and in absentia for 3 Berkut policemen who remained in separatist-controlled Donbas.

Viktor Yanukovych, his SBU, Internal Troops, and Berkut commanders were charged in absentia with ordering the Maidan massacre only several years after this massacre but they were not brought to the trial because they resided in Russia or Russian-annexed Crimea. The GPU and DBR announced in November 2021 that their investigation of Yanukovych, his ministers of internal affairs, defence, and the SBU, Internal Troops, and Berkut heads and commanders for the Maidan massacre was finished. Expanded charges against them for the massacre included perpetration of a terrorist attack, mass killing, and creation of an organized criminal group.⁴ The Berkut commanders and members, ex-president Viktor Yanukovych, his SBU, Internal Affairs and Internal Troops heads and commanders, and their lawyers denied their involvement in the Maidan massacre and stated that the Maidan leaders and snipers massacred the Maidan protesters.

If the Yanukovych government, its police and security forces, or any pro-Yanukovych “third force” did perpetrate this mass killing one would expect speedy and effective investigations and the prosecutions with forensic ballistic and medical evidence, synchronized videos, witness testimonies, and documents proving such an massacre order and involvement in the mass killing beyond reasonable doubt. It was in the interest of the new governments to conduct such investigations and prosecutions and reveal such evidence.

This is the highest profile political crime in Ukraine and one of the most significant in contemporary Europe in the 21st century. The Maidan massacre trial in Ukraine is the trial of the century because of its political significance. The Maidan governments legitimacy relied to a large extent on this mass killing, which ultimately brought them to power. There are top-level

commemorations of the massacre on its anniversaries, and more than 100 protesters were posthumously awarded Heroes of Ukraine titled by President Poroshenko.

The Maidan massacre was one of the most documented if not the most documented cases of mass killing in history. Protesters were shot in the very downtown of Kyiv City in presence of thousands of witnesses and more than one hundred journalists from Ukraine, the West, Russia, Poland, and other countries. The massacre was recorded in numerous videos filmed by the journalists and protesters, in live broadcasts of some Ukrainian TV channels, in Internet video streams, and security cameras on various buildings. While this case involved several dozen killings of the Maidan protesters, many of the moments of these killings and the special company of the Berkut police shooting were captured in various videos, while communications of SBU Alfa snipers and commanders during the massacre were intercepted and recorded. Such volume of evidence is unprecedented in the typical cases of murder or political violence.

A special department of Prosecutor General Office of Ukraine (GPU) was created to investigate this massacre and other cases of political violence during the “Euromaidan.” It was staffed by more than 200 people. The GPU has both highly qualified investigators and resources to identify both organizers and perpetrators of the Maidan massacre of the protesters and the police and others involved in this crime. Most of them were transferred to the State Bureau of Investigations (DBR) in 2019 to continue the investigation. The GPU during the entire investigation was headed by Maidan politicians or confidants of Poroshenko and Zelensky, both of whom publicly blamed the Yanukovich and the Berkut police for the massacre. They selected and oversaw the Maidan massacre investigators. Maidan victims lawyers, who were themselves Maidan activists, publicly supported the GPU investigation after criticizing it initially for being too slow.

Conversely, if the elements of the Maidan leadership and Maidan or Maidan-linked shooters were involved in the massacre of the protesters, the speed and effectiveness of the investigations and the prosecutions would be expected to be the opposite. And the evidence of such an involvement would be covered up and the evidence of the government forces involvement would be expected to be falsified or lacking.

The official investigation by the Prosecutor General Office of Ukraine publicly and consistently denied since the very start of its investigations that the Maidan opposition was involved in the massacre. The GPU, after it arrested and charged the Berkut special company policemen in April 2014 with the massacre on February 20th, repeatedly publicly denied that that any snipers shot protesters from the Maidan-controlled buildings, such as the Hotel Ukraina, or stated that ongoing investigation did not confirm this. A then head of SBU in the Kyiv region was charged with responsibility for the killings of some of the killed Maidan protesters on February 18 and 19 by ordering SBU operation to seize control of the Trade Union building. Other Berkut policemen were charged with wounding of 33 protesters on February 18-19. But the trial of the Berkut policemen did not start because they were released by courts and ended up in Russia.

The GPU stated that four policemen were killed and several dozen wounded by unknown persons of unknown allegiance from the Music Conservatory and the Maidan area at the start of the Maidan massacre on February 20. The GPU charged in 2018 a Maidan protester with killings two police officers after he publicly admitted in his Ukrainian media interviews in 2014 and 2016 such killing and/or shooting of the p, and he was released and escaped from Ukraine after intervention of the Prosecutor General of Ukraine, who was one of the Maidan leaders.

However, the government investigations in two related cases of political violence during the Maidan found that they were staged or false flag. The Ukrainian police closed on March 27, 2020 its investigation of kidnapping, torture, and crucifixion of Dmytro Bulatov during the Maidan because the investigation determined that the crime “was absent” and could have been “staged.” The documents from his investigative criminal case show that associates of Bulatov in the Automaidan testified in 2014 after the Maidan and in 2019 that he staged his own abduction, torture, and crucifixion. One of them testified that Bulatov told him shortly before his disappearance that he planned to stage his own abduction. Another testified that she heard from Bulatov and other Maidan activists about need for some “fiery information” in order to regain popularity of the Automaidan, and that his staged abduction accomplished this. Other Automaidan leaders testified that there was no rationale for Bulatov’s kidnapping and torture because he was removed from the Automaidan leadership a couple of days prior, and they regarded his staging his own kidnapping as a real possibility. Two of them also testified that the light wounds and his appearance did not match his statements about being kidnapped and tortured for a week without food. A government forensic expert determined in his expert report for the investigation after the Maidan that Bulatov’s wounds, including a cut of a piece of his ear, could have been inflicted by himself or by someone else with his agreement using sterile materials and disinfecting wounds, because they did not have any signs of infection. The government forensic expert also determined that there was no damage on his hands that would be consistent with Bulatov being handcuffed.⁵ This is consistent with a testimony by David Zhvania, a former associate of Poroshenko and the head of the parliamentary committee during and after the Maidan. He stated that Maidan leaders, whom he names, staged the abduction and

crucifixion of Bulatov and most other high-profile cases of violence, such as the Maidan massacre.⁶

In another case, an investigation by the Military Prosecutor Office in Lviv found that an elderly Maidan protester was killed and several wounded in Khmelnytskyi by another Maidan protester from the SBU porch that was then occupied by Maidan protesters. Forensic ballistic examinations showed such bullet trajectories.⁷ The GPU reversed this investigation as politically inappropriate and charged an SBU Alfa officer for shooting the protesters from the second floor inside of the SBU building. But the Security Service of Ukraine publicly stated that the GPU investigation was falsified. This is consistent with the content analysis showing that the protesters were shot from the SBU porch and not from the second floor.⁸

Previous Studies and Conflicting Narratives of the Maidan Massacre

In spite of its importance to the politics of Ukraine and global politics the Maidan massacre have been central subject of only a few academic studies. A comprehensive study based on theories of rational choice and instrumentally rational action and analysis of a large amount of various data, such as synchronized videos, recordings of radio intercepts, testimonies of eyewitnesses, social media posts, and media reports, concluded that the Maidan massacre of the protesters was not a failed attempt by the government to suppress the “Euromaidan” protests but a successful false flag operation. This operation was organized and covertly conducted by elements of the Maidan leadership and concealed armed groups of shooters or “snipers” in order to win the asymmetric conflict during the “Euromaidan” and seize power in Ukraine. It was extremely irrational from a cost vs. benefit perspective to massacre both the protesters and the police or the protesters alone for Yanukovich and his government but in rational self-interest of some far right and oligarchic opposition leaders. The analysis suggested that far right

organizations, such as the Right Sector and Svoboda, and oligarchic organizations, such then a part of the Fatherland Party which formed the Peoples' Front after the "Euromaidan," were directly or indirectly involved in this massacre of the police and the protesters. However, this study could not determine specific nature and degree of the involvement of specific political organizations and specific identities of organizers and "snipers" because it relied only on publicly available information and was concerned with examining political aspects of this massacre and not the role of specific individuals. (Katchanovski, 2015a).

The study showed that concealed armed Maidan groups, such as the special Maidan company, which were based, in particular, in Music Conservatory and the Trade Union buildings, broke a truce agreement between Yanukovich and the Maidan leaders and started the massacre in the early morning on February 20, 2014 by targeting Berkut and Internal Troops units with live ammunition fire, inflicting mass casualties, and forcing them to retreat. Then such groups of concealed shooters or "snipers" massacred the unsuspecting Maidan protesters from Maidan-controlled buildings or areas, such as the Hotel Ukraina, Bank Arkada, Zhovtnevyi Palace, and Horodetskyi Street and Muzeinyi Lane buildings. The analysis found that the special Berkut company was most likely shooting at the Maidan "snipers" and as warning to stop the advance of unarmed protesters to the presidential administration and to evacuate Internal Troops from Zhovtnevyi Palace during this advance. But the study did not exclude that the police killed or wounded some of the protesters, specifically armed ones, because of lack of publicly available information about circumstances of shooting of many of them. The analysis did not find reliable evidence of "third force," i.e. Russian or Western government snipers or organizers of the massacre. (See Katchanovski, 2015a). This academic study was used by the GPU in their investigation of the Maidan massacre and by different sides during the Maidan massacre trial.⁹

Major findings of Katchanovski (2015a, 2016a) study were replicated by Hahn (2018). Another study presented more evidence of far-right involvement in the Maidan massacre, in particular public admissions by some members of the far right organizations in killing and wounding the police and court decisions revealing GPU investigations of such involvement (Katchanovski, 2020a). A number of other academic studies suggested or regarded as plausible, in particular based on Katchanovski (2015a) study and other sources, that the Maidan massacre was perpetrated with the involvement of the far right (see, for example, Bandeira (2019, pp. 206-207); Cohen (2018); Hahn (2018); Lane, 2016; Mandel, 2016; Sakwa, 2015, pp. 90-92).

Kudelia (2018) argues that the violence was initiated by the Maidan protesters, who killed and wounded many policemen and that the Berkut police then massacred unarmed protesters in turn. Another study found significant involvement of the far right in violence during the Maidan but did not examine the Maidan massacre specifically (Ishchenko, 2016).

In contrast, some other studies of the “Euromaidan” attributed the massacre of the protesters to the Berkut anti-riot police or snipers from the Security Service of Ukraine and Internal Troops. (See, for example, Marples and Mills, 2014; Wilson, 2014). However, they were not based on a comprehensive analysis of this crucial case of political violence and uncritically accepted claims by the Maidan politicians and the Ukrainian and Western media concerning the massacre perpetrators and organizers. The Maidan opposition leaders during and immediately after the massacre publicly accused the government snipers from SBU Alfa and Internal Troops Omega units and the special Berkut company of perpetrating the massacre of the protesters on the Yanukovych orders.

For instance, Wilson (2014) stated citing Maidan activists and Ukrainian media reports that government snipers, led by Internal Troops and SBU Alfa commanders, massacred Maidan

protesters from the government buildings and the Hotel Ukraina and Kozatsky Hotel and one of the snipers was killed in the Hotel Ukraina. However, the Internal Troops and SBU Alfa commanders, named as being in charge of the massacre, were not charged by the prosecution in Ukraine and some of them continued to serve in commanding positions after the Maidan. The evidence, such as statements of Svoboda leaders before the massacre about taking the Hotel Ukraina under their control, videos, and testimonies of Maidan protesters and the hotel staff showed that the Hotel Ukraina and Kozatsky Hotel were under the Maidan control during the massacre (See Katchanovski, 2015a).

But the previous studies did not examine systematically evidence revealed by Maidan massacre trials and investigation. There is not a single academic study of trials and government investigations of the Maidan massacre. Since this crucial case of political violence is highly politicized, academic analysis of the revelations from the trials and investigations could help to determine which party of the “Euromaidan” conflict was involved in this mass killing.

Then President Poroshenko, Oleksandr Turchynov, the Head of the National Security and Defense Council, and the head of the SBU stated in February 2015 that Vladislav Surkov, an aide of Russian President Vladimir Putin, was personally coordinating foreign “snipers” on the Maidan but presented no supporting evidence. However, Serhii Leshchenko, a member of the Poroshenko’s faction in the parliament, revealed that Surkov arrived in Kyiv by plane after the massacre was already over. The Prosecutor General of Ukraine and the head of its department in charge of the Maidan massacre investigation stated later that they did not have evidence about such Surkov’s and Russian snipers’ involvement in the massacre.¹⁰

The Western governments and organizations, such as the European Union (EU), either explicitly or implicitly, by threatening sanctions, blamed the Yanukovych government and the

government forces for the massacre of the Maidan protesters when and after it happened and before any investigation was conducted. For instance, Joe Biden, the US vice-president, spoke to Yanukovych on February 20, 2014 right after the massacre and demanded a withdrawal of the security forces, specifically snipers and paramilitary units most responsible for the violence.¹¹ Michael McFaul, who served as the US Ambassador to Russia at the time of the massacre, stated that this mass killing was committed by the Yanukovych government. He rejected findings Katchanovski (2015a) and referred to unidentified and undisclosed US government data as evidence.¹² However, the US ambassador to Ukraine told Biden during their visit to the massacre site in 2015 that “snipers” were on surrounding buildings. This contradicted the GPU investigation that protesters were massacre by the Berkut police on the ground and not by any snipers in surrounding buildings but was consisted with Katchanovski 2015a) findings.¹³ The Prosecutor General of Ukraine stated in 2014 that he gave videos of the Maidan massacre to the FBI to enhance their quality.¹⁴ However, the US and other Western governments did not release their intelligence assessments and other information concerning this massacre, and results of such reported involvement of the FBI in the Maidan massacre investigation also were not revealed.

The Western governments and organizations generally ignored the Maidan massacre trials and investigations even though this mass killing was one of the most serious human rights violations in contemporary Ukraine and Europe overall and it had crucial political significance beyond Ukraine. Many top Western officials paid tribute to the killed protesters on the site of the massacre during their visits to Ukraine. Such Western governments stance concerning the Maidan massacre investigations and trials contrasts with their various public statements and other forms of involvement concerning other politically important criminal cases and trials, such

as the Yuliya Tymoshenko trial during the Yanukovych presidency, cases of corruption in the Ukrainian government after the “Euromaidan,” and the successful US administration pressure to remove Viktor Shokin as the GPU head. Similarly, the EU did not show interest in investigations of this mass killing even though in a leaked intercepted telephone call with the EU foreign affairs chief, the Estonian minister of foreign affairs referred to Olha Bohomolets, the head of the Maidan doctors team, pointing out similarity of the wounds among the protesters and policemen, and indicating that some Maidan leaders hired “snipers” and stonewalled the investigation.¹⁵ The European parliament rejected 17 requests by one its members to include investigations of the Maidan and Odesa massacres on its agenda.¹⁶

In contrast, the Russian government and media, as well as ex-president Yanukovych and former top officials of his government, who fled to Russia following the massacre, stated immediately after the massacre and then often repeated that the Maidan massacre was a part of a coup d'état or a fascist coup by some of the Maidan leaders, radical elements of the Maidan opposition, and the US government. However, they have not presented sufficient evidence in support of their statements. For instance, Yanukovych made such claims in 2017 in his letters to the US president Donald Trump, leaders of Germany, France, Poland and Russia, and the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. In these letters, he named such People's Front leaders, as Oleksandr Turchynov (the acting president after the Yanukovych overthrow and the current head of the National Security and Defense Council), Andriy Parubiy, (the head of the Maidan Self-Defense and the current head of the Ukrainian parliament), Serhii Pashynsky (the head of the presidential administration under Turchynov and the current head of the National Defense and Security committee of the Ukrainian parliament), and Arsen Avakov (the current Minister of Internal Affairs) as organizers of the Maidan massacre. Yanukovych stated in his

interviews, his Ukrainian and Russian court testimonies, and in his letter to Trump and other foreign leaders that he had documents and witnesses in support of his claims. But he did not make such evidence public citing potential threats to witnesses in Ukraine. He called for international investigation of this mass killing and stated that he would then provide such evidence.¹⁷

Oleksandr Yakymenko, the SBU head under Yanukovych, testified in a Russian court concerning the “Maidan coup” in the end of 2016 that the SBU identified by name several Maidan snipers who massacred the police and protesters, and that they included some Georgians, a former SBU Alfa officer, who then reportedly worked in the Fatherland party security. He also named Volodymyr Parasiuk, who headed the special Maidan company, established in the Music Conservatory with help of the Right Sector, and his father as Maidan “snipers.” The ex-SBU chief stated that during the Maidan massacre on February 20, 2014 the SBU located 10 snipers in the Music Conservatory, obtained their photos and then tracked five of them entering the Hotel Ukraina but lost track of other five snipers.¹⁸ Andriy Klyuyev, the former head of the Yanukovych administration, stated in the end of 2016 that one of the Maidan leaders hired snipers from Georgia and the Baltic States. He identified Pashynsky as this leader and one of the Georgian snipers identified in a protocol of his interrogation by senior Right Sector activists. Reported position of this “sniper” matches a sole uninhibited Maidan area building, which is located near Dnipro Hotel and was identified in Katchanovski (2015, pp. 18-19). The reported Georgian snipers is consisted with Caucasian accent of one of unidentified snipers in intercepted radio-communication of their coordinated shooting (Video Appendix A). Klyuyev also stated that Turchynov, Parubiy, and Pashynsky organized the massacre of the police and the protesters

and used the Right Sector and leaders of Maidan parties, including far right Svoboda, in the dark.¹⁹ However, he did not make public the specific evidence in support of his statements.

Some international organizations examined the Maidan massacre trial and investigations in their reports, but they did not conduct their own investigations of this mass killing and ignored academic studies of the massacre. They did not question the official investigation conclusions that the government forces on the orders of the Yanukovich government were responsible for the massacre of the protesters and relied on the investigation findings. An International Advisory Panel of the Council of Europe report in 2015 found that the investigation was stalled, in particular by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the GPU. The report revealed that contrary to the public statements, the official investigation had evidence of “shooters” killing at least three protesters from the Hotel Ukraina or the Music Conservatory and that at least 10 protesters were killed by unidentified “snipers” from rooftops of buildings. A UN report stated in 2019 that “no individuals responsible for acts of killing or violent deaths have been brought to justice... raising concerns about the authorities’ genuine intention to ensure accountability and justice for victims.”²⁰

Interpol rejected GPU requests to put ex-president Yanukovich, a number of his ministers, and the commander and members of the Berkut special company on its wanted list on murder-related charges for the Maidan massacre because this international police organization deemed that these charges constituted political persecution.”²¹ The Ukrainian parliament asked the International Criminal Court (ICC) immediately after the overthrow of Yanukovich to investigate this and other cases of political violence during the “Euromaidan.” However, the GPU reportedly informed the court representatives in the fall of 2014 that the Ukrainian law enforcement agencies were not interested in assisting such an ICC investigation. (See

Katchanovski, 2015a, p. 8). As it was expected on the basis of its statutes and precedents, the ICC suggested that it would not pursue the Maidan massacre case and other cases of political violence during the “Euromaidan” because they did not constitute crimes against humanity.²²

A report by Euromaidan SOS, other Maidan organizations, and lawyers of the killed protesters in June 2015 also concluded that the government investigation was ineffective and was stonewalled. It is noteworthy that the Bellingcat organization did not conduct any analysis of the Maidan massacre, even though its founder promised to do it.²³

The Western mainstream media with some exceptions, primarily involving a testimony by Yanukovich, did not cover the Maidan massacre trials and investigations. Google news searchers produced no reports of major revelations from these trials and investigations or evidence of the massacre of the protesters by “snipers” from the Maidan-controlled buildings and the massacre of the police by the far-right organizations. The Western mainstream media, with a few notable exceptions, explicitly or implicitly attributed the Maidan massacre to the Berkut police or government “snipers,” dismissed the false flag massacre as a conspiracy theory, and generally repeated the Ukrainian government statements and prosecution charges at face value.²⁴

There were a few major exceptions. A Reuters investigation in 2014 reported that the prosecution case against Berkut members was problematic because it relied primarily on videos and photos and misrepresented or ignored some key pieces of such evidence.²⁵ An investigative report by a Monitor ARD TV program in Germany 2014 reported that the government investigation was manipulated and that concealed shooters who targeted the protesters were based in the Hotel Ukraina.²⁶ An investigative report by the BBC in 2015 corroborated findings of Katchanovski (2015a) and earlier versions of this study concerning the covert presence of armed protesters at the Music Conservatory and their shooting of the police. It also reported a

statement of a unidentified GPU prosecutor that he examined a version that both police and the protesters were killed by the same shooters.²⁷ Italian, Israeli, and US TV documentaries, Macedonian TV, and Russian media showed in 2018-20 testimonies of eight former members of the Georgian military. They stated that they were members of the Maidan snipers groups, which included snipers from Georgia, the Baltic States, and Parasiuk-led group in the Hotel Ukraina and the Music Conservatory and that they were ordered by Maidan leaders and ex-Georgian leaders to massacre both the police and the protesters and assassinate then president Yanukovich and that they witnessed such massacre by the Maidan snipers or were involved themselves.²⁸

Ukrainian media reports generally, with some notable exceptions, presented the Maidan government and GPU prosecution version of the massacre. This coverage, with some exceptions, omitted major evidence revealed by these trials and investigations that suggested the massacre of the protesters by shooters in the Maidan-controlled buildings and the massacre of the police by the far right. While the Ukrainian media reports during and soon after the massacre contained various evidence of “snipers” in the Hotel Ukraina and other Maidan-controlled locations, such reports have since become rare even though the February 20th massacre trial revealed much more such evidence.

In contrast, the Russian media coverage was dominated by the false flag theory of the massacre. But the media in Russia, with some exceptions, also did not report the revelations from the Maidan massacre trial and investigations. The Russian media often relayed statements about this massacre by Yanukovich and his former government members, who found refuge in Russia, and by self-reported Georgian snipers.

Data

This paper analyzes more than 350 hours of video recordings of the Maidan massacre trials. These videos include official recordings of live broadcasts of all sessions of the trial concerning killings and wounding of the Maidan protesters on February 20.²⁹ All these recordings posted on YouTube are publicly available. They contain examinations of evidence concerning killings of 48 out of 49 Maidan protesters and wounding of about half of the wounded Maidan protesters on February 20, sworn testimonies by wounded protesters, relatives of the killed protesters, prosecution witnesses, the defence witnesses, including ex-president Yanukovich and the commander of the Internal Troops under Yanukovich, results of forensic ballistic and medical examinations and investigative experiments by government experts, the SITU model of the killings of 3 protesters, and videos and photos of the Maidan massacre pertaining to specific killed and wounded protesters.

Online video appendixes A, B, C, D, E, F, and H include brief relevant excerpts from various videos of the Maidan massacre and testimonies of wounded Maidan protesters and prosecution witnesses at the Maidan massacre trial and investigation about snipers in the Maidan-controlled buildings and areas and results of corresponding forensic medical and ballistic examinations from trial recordings (See online or as embedded videos).³⁰ The videos are synchronized using speeches from the Maidan stage. The timing is consistent with time-stamped compilations of videos of the massacre that are based on similar synchronization and are used during the trial as evidence.³¹

The absolute majority of the witness testimonies are by direct eyewitnesses. Testimonies of indirect witnesses concerning the Maidan snipers are primarily by Maidan protesters and politicians and pro-Maidan journalists. Such “statements against interest” relayed

by indirect witnesses are accepted in criminal law and trials in the US, Canada, and other Western countries.³²

The analysis includes information concerning GPU investigations of this massacre of the protesters and the police in over 2,500 court decisions. These court decisions are publicly available in the official online Ukrainian court decisions database. But names of people being investigated are omitted in these decisions.³³ Media interviews of prosecutors, Maidan victims' lawyers and Berkut lawyers, and various media reports about the Maidan massacre trials and investigations are also examined.

Trial and Investigation Testimonies

Although the official investigation denied existence of snipers in these Maidan-controlled buildings and areas, the absolute majority of 72 wounded Maidan protesters, with whose shooting on February 20 Berkut policemen are charged and whose testimonies were revealed at the trial, testified at the trial and/or the investigation that they were shot by snipers from Maidan-controlled buildings or areas, witnessed themselves snipers there, and/or were told by other Maidan protesters during the massacre about such snipers. At least 28 wounded protesters testified at the trial and/or the investigation that they were shot from the Hotel Ukraina, the Bank Arkada, and Zhovtnevyi Palace, Muzeinyi Lane and Horodetskyi Street buildings and other Maidan-controlled buildings or areas. At least 30 wounded Maidan protesters testified that they witnessed snipers there and/or were told about snipers in these Maidan-controlled locations by other protesters. (See Video Appendix D and Map 1).

[Map 1 about here]

For instance, Borys Kharchuk testified during the trial on September 22, 2016 that he was wounded by a sniper from a Hotel Ukraina window. He said that he was shot immediately

after he saw two persons in black clothes and black balaclavas in a Hotel Ukraina window between the fourth and the sixth floor, and one of them was aiming a rifle. When Kharchuk shouted “snipers,” he noticed that another protester near him was shot in the back and he himself was wounded in his arm when he turned to look at this protester. Kharchuk demonstrated his own position in the moment of his shooting and locations of his entry and exit wounds at a significant vertical angle. They all point to a gunshot from the direction and the height of the hotel and not from the Berkut police on the ground. (Video Appendix D).

Volodymyr Venchak says that he was wounded in the back from the Hotel Ukraina. Andrii Khalak said in the investigative experiment video that he was shot from the Hotel Ukraina based on his position and his wounds location. Ivan Filipovych suggested at the on-site investigative experiment that he was wounded from Zhovtnevyi Palace based on his position and locations and a steep direction of his entry and exit wounds. Petro Ladym testified during the investigation that there was shooting from the Hotel Ukraina and that he saw snipers in windows of Zhovtnevyi Palace shooting people. Ivan Plish stated that he was wounded near Zhovtnevyi Palace in the back of his head from the Hotel Ukraina and that he saw 3-5 people with weapons, including with an apparent assault rifle, on the roof of the Hotel Ukraina.

Pavlo Onufriiv testified during the investigation that there were one or two snipers in black uniforms on the roofs of this hotel and Zhovtnevyi Palace and that he was shot by a sniper that might had been located on the hotel roof or the roof of Zhovtnevyi Palace. He identified these two Maidan-controlled buildings along with Bank Arkada on the map and a number of undisclosed buildings that he saw snipers at with his binoculars. Yuri Slyvka testified at the trial and the investigation that he saw three snipers who shot Maidan protesters from the roof and a window of the Hotel Ukraina. Vitali Karpyn stated at the trial and at the investigative experiment

that he clearly saw gunshots from the Hotel Ukraina, in particular gun flashes. Similarly, Bohdan Datsyshyn testified that when he was near Zhovtnevyi Palace other protesters told him that a sniper was shooting from the 6th floor of the Hotel Ukraina and killed or wounded a couple of protesters. (Video Appendix D).

The testimonies of the wounded Maidan protesters concerning snipers in the Maidan-controlled buildings shooting them and other protesters are generally consistent with videos of snipers in these buildings and testimonies of over 80 witnesses during the massacre about such snipers in the Video Appendix A, testimonies in the media and the social media about such snipers by over 200 other witnesses, including over 100 video testimonies in the Video Appendix B, with results of forensic medical and ballistic examinations by government experts, and with positions of these wounded protesters at the time of their shooting in videos. For instance, forensic examinations of his wounds and clothing determined that Venchak was shot in the back from a steep direction when he was filmed from the Hotel Ukraina advancing towards a Berkut barricade.

Similarly, Sviatoslav Kolesnikov testified during two investigative experiments and his first interrogation in 2014 that he was wounded from upper floors of the Hotel Ukraina. His wounding from the Hotel Ukraina is consistent with his description of his position at the moment of the shooting that he demonstrated during both investigative experiments, his wound in the right shoulder, and its steep direction. A video showed Maidan protesters taking cover under this bridge and pointing towards shooting from the upper floors of this hotel at the direction of the bridge at about the same time as Kolesnikov was wounded on the bridge. A government ballistic expert during an on-site investigative experiment determined that the bullet impacted his chair,

which he shielded himself from the Hotel Ukraina, at a 35 degrees angle and that this pointed to a gunshot from an upper floor of this hotel. (See Video Appendix H).

Yuri Kravchuk testified at the trial that he was wounded first two times from a sideways direction from the Bank Arkada and not from the Berkut barricade in front of him. He determined this because he was taking cover behind a tree from the Berkut, because the bullet did not go through a tree and because he saw down flying in front of his face from a bullet hole in his jacket. A ballistic expert during an investigative experiment also determined that Kravchuk was wounded there not from a Berkut barricade, as the prosecution charged, but from the Bank Arkada or the attached metro entrance. (Video Appendix D).

Similarly, a government ballistic expert during an on-site investigative experiment concluded that Roman Kotliarevsky was shot from a sector ranging from the Hotel Ukraina to Bank Arkada. A forensic medical report made public during the trial confirmed that Kotliarevsky was shot in the top back part of his right thigh at a steep angle from a top to bottom direction. This wounded Maidan medic stated during this investigation experiment that he was most likely shot from the Bank Arkada based on the steep direction of his wound channel. The moment of his wounding was filmed by CNN from the Hotel Ukraina and used by the media in the West and in Ukraine as evidence that the government forces deliberately targeted even medics. (See Video Appendix H). A forensic ballistic report, which was made public during the trial, found that this medic was shot from the same 7.62x39 caliber weapon, which was used to kill Mykola-Oleh Pankiv.

Several wounded protesters also testified about witnessing snipers in the Maidan-controlled Music Conservatory and the Maidan barricades near the Maidan stage in the early morning of February 20. Volodymyr Venchak testifies at the trial that he saw two or three

persons with weapons on the Music Conservatory roof circa 7:30-8:00 am and that a politician on the Maidan stage warned protesters about snipers there. Andrushko saw one protester on the Maidan shooting at Berkut from a hunting rifle and another protester there with a Kalashnikov assault rifle or its hunting version. They were often changing positions between the Maidan and the Music Conservatory.

The Prosecutor General Office of Ukraine investigation determined based on their testimonies and investigative experiments that almost half of protesters (77 out of 157) were wounded on February 20 from other sectors than the Berkut police and did not charge Berkut with their shooting. Since the trial and investigation testimonies of commanders of government sniper and counter- sniper units and other evidence, such as videos, revealed that that government snipers arrived in their positions when almost all protesters were already killed and wounded, and therefore could not massacre these Maidan protesters this suggests that at least the absolute majority of these 77 protesters were wounded from the Maidan-controlled buildings or areas and that absolute majority of them also testified concerning snipers in the Maidan-controlled locations.

Their testimonies were not made public at the trial. However, one such protester, said that when he was wounded, he heard a gunshot behind and that shots came not from the front but from the back, i.e. from the Maidan-controlled area. (Video Appendix B, 33:29).

The Prosecution and in 2021 the Maidan massacre trial refused to classify Olesia Zhukovska, a Maidan female medic, as a victim in a trial of Berkut policemen who are charged with this massacre. She was turned into a Maidan “icon” after tweeting that she was dying shortly after she was filmed on the Maidan running to an ambulance with blood on her clothes. Numerous Ukrainian and Western media reported that she was wounded by the Berkut police or

government snipers.³⁴ This Maidan medic testified as a witness in the Maidan massacre trial in 2021 that she was wounded from direction of the Maidan-controlled Hotel Ukraina based on her reported entry and exit wounds locations in the neck.³⁵ However, she admitted in an interview with a Ukrainian journalist that she was not wounded. This Ukrainian journalist reported that a Maidan activist revealed that the wounding of this Maidan medic was staged by the Maidan Self-Defense leadership and that her surgery conducted shortly before the massacre was misrepresented as her exit wound. This Maidan activist reportedly revealed that there was an intention to stage a false flag killing of a female protester in order to galvanize public support for the Maidan and blame the government forces. But because there was reluctance to kill a woman, the leadership of the Maidan Self-Defense decided to stage a fake wounding of the female Maidan medic by misrepresenting her neck surgery as her wounding.³⁶

However, a Maidan protester standing near her was killed in the same Maidan spot right after she was filmed running to the ambulance with blood on her neck. Two protesters said that they saw that he was shot from the Main Post-Office building, which was then the Right Sector headquarters. A Polish reporter video showed a few apparent “snipers” on the roofs of Finbank and adjacent Main Post-Office. and a Maidan stage speaker and protesters warned about “snipers” there. (See Video Appendix A, 1:11:16-1:12:06).

The testimonies of the absolute majority of wounded Maidan protesters concerning snipers in Maidan-controlled locations were consistent with testimonies of several dozens of prosecution witnesses and relatives of killed protesters at the Maidan massacre trial and the investigation. These prosecution witnesses were supposed to provide testimonies supporting the prosecution charges that the Berkut policemen massacre the Maidan protesters and the denial of the existence of any snipers in the Maidan-controlled buildings and areas. However, they

testified concerning snipers in the Maidan-controlled locations massacring protesters and the police. Their testimonies concerning the snipers in the Maidan controlled building are shown and cited in the online Video Appendix E.

For example, Dmytro Holubnychyi testified at the trial that other Maidan protesters wondered during the massacre whether "ours [shoot] at ours" and told him that there were shooters on the Hotel Ukraina. He was filmed as a teenage protester in one of the most widely publicized videos of the Maidan massacre, including in "Winter on Fire" Netflix documentary, which omitted evidence of Maidan snipers.

Pastushok testified that he, and other three protesters from the Volhynian company were filmed by the BBC running away along with other protesters and the BBC TV crew after shouts about "a sniper" in the Hotel Ukraina. Another protester told him then that this was "our sniper." Pastushok saw someone opening a window in the Hotel Ukraina on the 7-9 floor and waving at them not to shout about this sniper, aimed his rifle, raised it, and waved his hands giving a similar sign. He testified to the government investigation that Oleksandr Khrapachenko, who was then next to him, was shot from across the Instytutska street, in particular, the left wing of the Hotel Ukraina. Pastushok also stated that the protesters were shot at from the Hotel Ukraina when they carried Khrapachenko.

Kulish testified at the investigation that the gunshot that killed Poliansky was from the Hotel Ukraina and that protesters shielded them from the Hotel Ukraina when he and other protesters carried him. His wife testifies at the trial that Vasyl Aksenyn before he passed away told another Maidan protester that he most likely was shot from the Hotel Ukraina. A brother of a killed protester stated during the investigation that he saw circa 8:00am snipers on the 5th or 6th floor of the Hotel Ukraina shooting at Maidan protesters. (Video Appendix E).

Another Maidan protester testified that he saw a sniper shooting from the Main Post Office roof and killing a person behind the Maidan stage. This matches killing of Viktor Smolensky, who was shot there along with a female medic. This building was then the headquarters of the Right Sector. Berkut lawyers referred to testimonies of protesters to the investigation about armed people in this Right Sector headquarters building during the Maidan massacre. (Video Appendix E).

The Omega commander testified at the trial that his Internal Troops unit of snipers was in its base near Kyiv when circa 9:30am he received an order to deploy because the Maidan side used weapons on the Maidan and there were killed policemen and protesters. When the Omega snipers opened windows on the third floor of Kabmin Club were shot at, and bullet hit a window frame and walls. The Omega commander said that based on the bullet holes in Kabmin Club the shooting at the Omega snipers was likely from the 5-7th floors of the Hotel Ukraina. He stated that the Omega snipers saw gunshot flashes from the 5-7th floors of the Hotel Ukraina. They reported gunfire from the 5-7th floors of the hotel and the attic of Zhovtnevyi Palace. He said that locations of the shooters at the police included the Music Conservatory, the Hotel Ukraina, and attic windows of Zhovtnevyi Palace after it was occupied by Maidan protesters. (Video Appendix E).

An Ukraina TV correspondent testified that one of policemen behind a truck Berkut barricade said that there was shooting at them. Policemen said that they noticed shooting from the Hotel Ukraina to the police [Berkut] barricade direction. He testified that [Omega] snipers later arrived in a bus to check whether there was shooting from this hotel. They started to check the hotel windows via the scope. His video operator testified at the trial that he filmed a government [Omega] sniper targeting a window in Hotel Ukraina on the 6th or 7th floor. This

video operator also testified during the interrogation that the police warned them about shooting from Hotel Ukraina. Their Ukraina TV video, which was posted by the Right Sector on YouTube, presented these Omega snipers as a death squad which killed the Maidan protesters, and it was broadcast by many TV channel as evidence that they massacred the protesters. (Video Appendix E).

Then the coordinator of the special forces of the Internal Troops testified that Maidan snipers started shooting first and that they massacred the Berkut police and Internal Troops on February 20 not on their own as a group but in a planned action by the Maidan leadership. Both Security Service of Ukraine and the Internal Troops intelligence on the Maidan reported that two vans with about 20 armed men in military-style fatigues arrived to the Music Conservatory right before shooting at the police started from there. The Internal Troops intelligence also reported that Maidan protesters guarding a barricade near the Conservatory were told to leave shortly before the massacre and that smoke from burning tires was used to cover snipers. He also testified about reports of the Maidan snipers in the Trade Union building, the Hotel Ukraina, and Muzeiny Lane building. His special forces unit came under fire by snipers from the tall building under reconstruction in the Hrushevsky Street area [Muzeinyi Lane 2A] and later found evidence of sniper positions there. He stated that he along with the Crimean special forces unit and the Omega unit arrived to the presidential administration area with an order from the Internal Troops commander to neutralize the Maidan snipers in the Music Conservatory. (Video Appendix E).

The commander of the SBU Alfa snipers testified that his unit was deployed from an SBU base circa 10:00am because of information that sniper weapons were used on the Maidan and that there were both police and protesters killed. He and other members of his unit stated at the trial that their order was to act as counter-snipers and that they observed the Hotel Ukraina

and roofs of buildings. They testified that during their deployment to the Cabinet of Ministers around 10:30am-11:00am they came under fire from a Maidan direction. (Video Appendix E).

Similarly, the UDO snipers testified at the trial that they received an order circa 10:00am to locate a sniper in the Hotel Ukraina because there was information that a sniper in the hotel was shooting at the police and that they were deployed to Cabinet of Ministers building around noon. The commander of the UDO counter-sniper unit testifies that he was told by his commander that there was shooting from the Hotel Ukraina and received his order to take 3 snipers, go to Cabmin and determine from which hotel window there was shooting. His understanding was that someone was shooting at both sides, i.e., the government forces and the Maidan protesters.

His commander told him to determine from which window there was shooting from the Hotel Ukraina and that this information would be reported to the SBU leadership, which would use its Alfa special unit to neutralize the shooter. The Omega snipers commander also testified that the Alfa unit of the Security Service of Ukraine and his Omega unit of the Internal Troops were ready to clean out the shooters but their passage to the Music Conservatory and another building was refused by the Maidan leadership.

The testimonies of the commanders and snipers of Alfa, Omega, and UDO sniper units and other prosecution witnesses show that snipers in the Hotel Ukraina and other Maidan-controlled buildings shot not only at the protesters but also at the police and government snipers, that the government units of snipers were deployed to their positions only after the massacre was long underway, that they had orders to locate snipers who shot the police and the protesters, and that snipers were located in the Maidan-controlled buildings, such as the Hotel Ukraina, Music Conservatory, and Zhovtnevyi Palace.

The testimonies of the absolute majority of the wounded Maidan protesters and several dozen of the prosecution witnesses concerning snipers in the Maidan-controlled buildings are consistent with synchronized videos of the massacre and testimonies of several dozen defense witnesses at the Maidan massacre trial (Video Appendix A and Video Appendix C). The commander of the Internal Troops during the Maidan in his video-link testimony at the Maidan massacre trial said that his observers reported that snipers were shooting at the protesters and the police, including the Internal Troops, from top floors of the Hotel Ukraina and other Maidan-controlled locations, such as the Music Conservatory. He also stated that the SBU Alfa negotiated with Andrii Parubii, then the head of the Maidan Self-Defense, to search for these snipers at the Hotel Ukraina but that Parubii refused to allow this.³⁷ Ex-president Viktor Yanukovich during his video-link testimony as a witness in the Maidan massacre trial also stated that he received reports about snipers shooting from the top floors of buildings whose entrances were guarded by the Maidan forces.³⁸ Many Berkut policemen testified at the trial that they or other Berkut servicemen were shot from the Music Conservatory in the early morning of February 20.

The testimonies by the absolute majority of the wounded Maidan protesters and several dozen of prosecution witnesses are generally consistent with testimonies of 8 Georgian ex-military for the Maidan massacre trial and with their interviews in American, Italian and Israeli TV documentaries and Macedonian and Russian media. Three of them testified at the Prosecutor General Office of Belarus on request of the Prosecutor General Office of Ukraine following an appeal of Berkut lawyers in the case of the killings and wounding of the police during the Maidan massacre. The Maidan massacre trial in November 2021 admitted as evidence a testimony of one of these Georgians who confessed of being a member of a group of Maidan

snipers.³⁹ Three self-admitted Georgian snipers gave written depositions to Berkut lawyers for the Maidan massacre trial, two provided notarized letters to the Ukrainian courts and offered to testify via a video link from Belarus.

These Georgians stated that they and other members of sniper groups from Georgia, the Baltic States, received orders, weapons, and payments from specific members of the Maidan leadership and former Georgian government leaders and commanders to massacre both protesters and the police in order to stop a peaceful agreement that was to be signed by Yanukovych and Maidan leaders. They stated that they also received shooting instructions from a far-right linked ex-US Army sniper. These ex-Georgian military members testified that they saw Georgian, Baltic States, and specific far right Sector-linked Ukrainian snipers shooting from the Music Conservatory and the Hotel Ukraina, in particular, before 8:00am on February 20. specific Maidan-controlled buildings. They said that there were four groups of Georgian snipers on the Maidan with total of 40 members, including themselves. One of them stated without revealing his identity in a US documentary that he shot the protesters from the Hotel Ukraina⁴⁰ Another said that the plan involved assassination of Viktor Yanukovych.⁴¹ Most of these Georgians revealed their names, passport numbers & border stamps, copies of plane tickets, videos and photos in Ukraine or Georgian military, and other evidence in support of their testimonies.

The ex-commander of the special armed Maidan Self-Defense Company, who was named along with his father as snipers by these Georgian ex-military, and two members of his company admitted in Ukrainian media interviews and one in a BBC interview that they shot the police from the Music Conservatory and the Maidan barricades in the morning of February 20.⁴²

The GPU investigation confirmed these public admissions. One of the members of the special armed Maidan Self-Defense Company, who stated in a Ukrainian media interview that he killed two policemen on the Maidan, was afterwards charged with murders of two policemen. (Katchanovski, 2020a).

Another member of this Maidan company confessed in a leaked video of his interrogation of providing a hunting version of a Kalashnikov assault rifle to members of this company to massacre the police and witnessing such shooting. He also testified that snipers in the Hotel Ukraina massacred the Maidan protesters.⁴³ A Pechersk District court decision, which approved in 2020 his arrest in absentia on charges of killings and attempted killings of policemen during the Maidan massacre, cited the official investigation findings that the Maidan massacre on February 20 was started with killings and wounding of policemen by Maidan snipers in the Music Conservatory.⁴⁴

Pechersk court decisions revealed that the Prosecutor General Office of Ukraine investigated leaders and members of the far right Right Sector, neo-Nazi “Warriors of Narnia,” Sokil, a youth affiliate of far right Svoboda party, far right Bratstvo, and other unidentified Maidan activists for their suspected involvement in the killing and wounding of the Interior Troops servicemen and the Berkut police on February 18-20, 2020.⁴⁵ The Prosecutor General Office investigation revealed in October 2016 that one of the leaders of far right Svoboda and its member of the parliament occupied a Hotel Ukraina room from which a sniper in reported Maidan style green helmet was filmed shooting by BBC in the direction of the Maidan protesters and the BBC journalists. (See Video Appendix C).

In contrast, there were no such testimonies admitting involvement in the massacre of the Maidan protesters, witnessing such involvement, or getting such specific information from others

by the Berkut policemen, ex-police and SBU commanders, and ex-Yanukovych government officials. This includes both those charged with the massacre in Ukraine or in absentia and those who were not charged and continued to serve under the new Maidan governments. All Berkut policemen, two Omega servicemen, and Kyiv SBU head, who were arrested and charged with the massacre, denied that they massacred the Maidan protesters.

In contrast, the absolute majority of testimonies of wounded Maidan protesters about being shot by the Berkut police or snipers in government-controlled buildings or about snipers in these buildings are not corroborated by videos, forensic medical examinations, and other evidence. In the small minority of remaining cases, such evidence is either absent or contradictory. For instance, Kolesnikov, reversed his testimony about being shot from the upper part of the Hotel Ukraina and backed in his trial testimony prosecution charges that he was wounded by a Berkut policeman on the ground behind a Berkut barricade, in spite of the evidence described above. Moreover, a timestamped video, which was used by the prosecution as evidence that Kolesnikov and other Maidan protesters were wounded and killed by one of the Berkut policemen being tried, showed that this policeman behind a Berkut barricade was not shooting at all at the time and around the time of the Kolesnikov's wounding. (Video Appendix H).

Many protesters, such as Yuri Kravchuk, who testified during the trial about being wounded from such Maidan-controlled locations, as the Bank Arkada or the Hotel Ukraina, still accused the Berkut police in shooting them. However, the government investigation, videos, eyewitness testimonies, and cell phones tracking showed that all Berkut policemen charged with the massacre of these protesters and other government units and snipers were in other locations during the massacre and not in these Maidan-controlled buildings.

Some wounded protesters testified that they were shot by snipers in the Cabinet of Ministers building, the Cabmin Club buildings, or the National Bank. However, the government investigation, synchronized videos of the massacre, security cameras recordings, and testimonies of the commanders and snipers of SBU Alfa, Internal Troops Omega, and UDO snipers units as prosecutions witnesses showed that there were no government snipers during the massacre in the National Bank building and that SBU Alfa and Internal Troops Omega sniper units were deployed in these buildings around 11:00 after the overwhelming majority of Maidan protesters were killed and wounded.

For instance, Oleksandr Huch the Volhynian company of the Maidan Self-Defense commander, stated that he thought based on his position that he was shot from the Cabinet of Ministers building. However, his position in a Norwegian TV video, which was not shown at the trial, the ricochet impact seen in this video, and his wound location and steep direction suggest that he was shot from a Muzeinyi Lane building on the left and somewhat in front of him. An on-site investigative experiment by the government forensic experts, including a ballistic expert, determined that Huch was shot from a sector of fire which included Muzeinyi Lane buildings. (See Video Appendix A, 21:39).⁴⁶

Similarly, Ivan Halamai claimed at the trial that he was wounded from a Berkut barricade. However, the locations and the direction of the bullet wounds, his position in the video at the time of his shooting, and the steep slope of the bullet in his x-ray in the upper left leg point to a gunshot from the top of the Bank Arkada and not from the Berkut barricade on the similar ground level. The forensic medical examination found that he was shot in his right buttock area from back to front direction with the bullet ending in his right leg significantly lower, while the

videos show that he was turned by his right side towards the Berkut barricade and by his back towards the Bank Arkada. (See Video Appendix A, 00:45:53).

The government investigation and the Maidan massacre trial and the Yanukovych state treason trial did not reveal any evidence of an order or orders to massacre the Maidan protesters by then President Yanukovych, his Internal Affairs and SBU chiefs, SBU, Internal Troops, and police commanders. The same concerns “titushki,” or any “third force.”

The Prosecutor General of Ukraine and the head of its department in charge of the Maidan massacre investigation stated that they did not have evidence about involvement of the Russian government and Russian snipers in the Maidan massacre.⁴⁷ The trials and investigations in Ukraine also did not reveal any evidence of the involvement of any other foreign governments and foreign government snipers, including the US, the UK, Georgia, the Baltic States, Poland, etc.

Videos, Photos, and Audio Recordings

Various videos and photos of Berkut policemen and specific Maidan protesters were presented during the Maidan massacre trial by the prosecution in cases of almost all killed and many wounded protesters as evidence that the specific protesters were shot by the Berkut. However, the videos of Berkut on the ground near Zhovtnevyi Palace and behind two barricades on Instytutska Street shooting live ammunition from AKMs and videos of killing and wounding of specific protesters were shown at the trial separately or in a compilation of 16 videos, which were shown simultaneously and made difficult to discern such details.⁴⁸

The trial confirmed that specific times of Berkut shooting and specific times of killings of Maidan protesters did not coincide in the synchronized videos of the Maidan massacre with a small number of exceptions. This means that it was physically impossible for the Berkut

policemen to shoot the absolute majority of the protesters when the exact times of their killing and wounding do not coincide with the times of the Berkut shooting in synchronized videos. The prosecution charges stated that about two dozen members on the special Berkut company massacred the Maidan protesters during brief police advance and retreat on the ground near Zhovtnevyi Palace and then from behind two barricades on Instytutska Street. All these Berkut policemen were filmed in numerous videos and National Bank security cameras for almost entire time from their deployment to the end of the massacre.

The content analysis of synchronized and time stamped videos, which were used by the prosecution and which were publicly available on the social media or in the media, visually illustrates that specific times of Berkut shooting and specific times of killings of and wounding of Ihor Dmytriv and Andrii Dyhdalovych and wounding of Sviatoslav Kolesnikov and Roman Kotliarevsky do not coincide in the synchronized videos of the Maidan massacre in the online Video Appendix H. In the small number of the exceptions when such times coincide, the wounds locations in forensic medical examinations and videos did not match the locations of the Berkut police. For instance, forensic medical examinations by the government experts for the prosecution, a testimony of his sister at the trial, and a single bullet hole in his helmet in synchronized videos show that Yuri Parashchuk was killed in the back of his head when he faced the Berkut police. This evidence suggest that he was shot from the Bank Arkada in the Maidan-controlled area. (See Video Appendix H).

The synchronized and time-stamped videos along with other evidence presented during the trial confirmed that three Maidan protesters were killed on Instytutska Street before the special Berkut company first appeared and started shooting with Kalashnikovs and pump rifles a

few minutes after 9:00am. (See video Appendix A). This means that the Berkut policemen charged with their killing could not physically shoot them.

Some videos shown at the Maidan massacre trial revealed Maidan snipers. A recording of a live broadcast of Espresso TV showed a Maidan protester giving a Kalashnikov-type firearm to another protester at the Maidan barricade in front of the Maidan stage during a standoff with the police and another protester shooting from a hunting rifle in the direction of the police. The video showed the police retreating from the Maidan in about 20 minutes afterwards before 9:00am. This video matches unbroadcast CNN video which showed the armed special Maidan company members going to this barricade and shooting in the direction of the police. (Video Appendix A).

Unbroadcast segments of the most famous video of the Maidan massacre, which was filmed by the Belgian VRT News TV and shown at the Maidan massacre trial, show two Maidan protesters luring a group of other protesters to advance shortly before they would be massacred there. One of these two protesters at the trial and one in the media interviews could not explain why they did this. The VRT video also includes a protester shouting to the other protesters in this group not to move ahead because there is shooting from the Hotel Ukraina. He warned that they shoot [take down] from the hotel all protesters together and that there were gunshots from there. The VRT News video then shows a bullet hitting a tree in the direction of this group of the Maidan protesters. The protesters looked back towards the Hotel Ukraina after this shot. One of them pointed his hand towards the hotel and shouted about gunshots from the hotel and that they shoot to take down the protesters and asked the shooters there not to shoot. (See Video Appendix C). Six wounded protesters from this group testified at the Maidan massacre trial and the investigation that they or their group were either shot from this hotel and other Maidan-

controlled buildings, witnessed snipers there or were told by other protesters about them. (Video Appendix D).

SBU Alfa snipers and commanders stated at the trial that recoding of their intercepted radio communications of SBU was selectively edited and was made after they were deployed to the Cabinet of Ministers building to locate snipers in the Maidan controlled Hotel Ukraina and other buildings. This audio recording was widely publicized in the Ukrainian media after the Maidan massacre as evidence that these government snipers massacred the Maidan protesters.

Results of Forensic Examinations

Findings of forensic medical examinations, which were done by government experts for the prosecution and were made public during the Maidan massacre trial, revealed that the absolute majority of protesters were shot on February 20 from side and back directions and from top to bottom directions. Since videos and photos showed that the absolute majority of the killed and wounded protesters faced the Berkut police in front of them on the same or similar ground level and that Maidan-controlled buildings were generally behind them and on the left and right side, this forensic evidence means that they could not have been shot by Berkut but were shot by snipers in the Maidan-controlled buildings. One does not need to be a forensic expert to understand this since bullets do not fly like guided missiles in order to hit the protesters from the directions and height that do not match the locations of the Berkut police.

These forensic medical examinations indicated that 40 out of 48 protesters with whose murder Berkut policemen are charged were shot dead from significant vertical angles based on the directions of their wounds. At least 36 of these protesters were killed when the Berkut policemen were filmed on the same or similar level on the ground. Just one killed protester had nearly horizontal entry and exit wounds, but he was shot sideways.

Out of 7 killed protesters with no forensic information about their wounds directions made public, three were shot by hunting pellets before the Berkut special company appeared in the Maidan area. Khrapachenko was shot by a rusted expanding hunting bullet. Another was killed, inter alia, by a handgun bullet behind a wall that made it physically impossible to shoot him from the Berkut positions. Two others were killed at the same time and place as the many other protesters. (See Video Appendix A).

Similarly, 48 out of 51 wounded protesters, whose wound directions were revealed at the trial and with whose shooting on February 20th Berkut policemen were charged, had wounds at significant vertical angles. The significant vertical angles of wounds are consistent with snipers in Maidan-controlled buildings or on the roofs of these buildings and not with their shooting by the Berkut police on the ground. (see Map 1).

The forensic ballistic examinations presented by the prosecution at the Maidan massacre trial found that 19 protesters were killed on February 20 by 7.62x39mm caliber bullets which match calibers not only of AKM Kalashnikov assault rifles, but also hunting versions of Kalashnikovs, or other weapons of this caliber, such as Simonov carbine (SKS). They indicated that Ivan Bliok was killed from Vepr carbine, a hunting version of Kalashnikov machine gun.⁴⁹ Three other protesters were killed by pellets used in hunting. Two protesters were killed by expanding hunting bullets, whose calibers did not match calibers of weapons used by the special Berkut company, whose members were charged with killing these protesters.⁵⁰ Videos showed protesters with hunting rifles in the Hotel Ukraina during the massacre (Video Appendix A).

A forensic ballistic examination conducted by government institute experts on the prosecution request with use of an automatic computer-based IBIS-TAIS system in January 2015

found that bullets extracted from killed protesters, trees, and the Hotel Ukraina rooms did not match police database of bullet samples from any 7.62x39 caliber Kalashnikov assault rifles of members of the entire Kyiv Berkut regiment, including the special Berkut company charged with the massacre of the protesters.⁵¹

The government investigation determined that most of protesters killed on February 18-19 were shot with hunting pellets and smoothbore rifles used in hunting. It revealed that the absolute majority of 11 policemen killed on February 18-19, and all 4 policemen killed on February 20 were shot from similar types and calibers of hunting pellets and bullets, handgun bullets, and 7,62x39 bullets as the protesters.

The court decisions revealed that the weapons used by the wounded checkpoint attackers in Sloviansk on April 20, 2014 were the same weapons from which two Internal Troops servicemen were killed, and three other policemen wounded on the Maidan on February 18. The court rulings specifically referred to two Right Sector activists, who were wounded during a Right Sector attack of the separatist checkpoint and many other Right Sector members as suspects in GPU investigation in killings and wounding the police on the Maidan.⁵² Visual examinations of the bullet holes and their impact points in a Hotel Ukraina room, which was occupied by a German ARD TV female journalist, by the government investigators confirmed that it was shot at from the direction of the Main Post Office, which was the Right Sector headquarters (See Video Appendix F).

The visual reconstruction based on government forensic expert reports concerning locations and directions of bullet holes on the massacre site in trees, flower box, and in the Hotel Ukraina, as well as videos and photos of locations and directions of these bullet holes, shows that the Berkut police and Omega were generally shooting above protesters at the second and higher

floors of the Hotel Ukraina and in electric poles, a flower box, and trees. It also shows that they did not target the Maidan protesters because of lack of bullet holes on the first floor of the Hotel Ukraina, which was located behind several dozen protesters who were killed and wounded in that area. (Photo 1).

[Photo 1 about here]

A New York architecture company working with a team of Ukrainian “volunteers” did a 3D model reconstruction of the killings of three Maidan protesters on an order of Maidan victims lawyers for the Maidan massacre trial.⁵³ This SITU model was cited by these lawyers and the Prosecutor General of Ukraine under Poroshenko as definite evidence that the Maidan protesters were massacred by the Berkut police and that snipers did not massacre the protesters.

However, the wound locations of the three killed Maidan protesters in the 3D model do not match the wound locations in the forensic medical examinations of the bodies and clothes and locations of appearing bullet holes in shields and a helmet of these protesters right after they were shot. For instance, according to forensic medical examination, Ihor Dmytriv was shot in the “right side surface” and the “left side surface” of the torso “from the right to the left, from the top to the bottom, and a little from the front to the back” with the entry wound 20.5cm higher than the exit wound. A Maidan victims’ lawyer visually demonstrated at the trial that these wounds locations of were in the right and left sides. In the video of their examination of Dmytriv right after his shooting, Maidan medics also show such locations of his wounds with no wounds visible in the front area, contrary to the 3D model. However, in the 3D model, his wounds were moved to the front and the back and made nearly horizontal in order to fit them to the Berkut positions on the ground.⁵⁴ (See Video Appendix H).

The locations and directions of the wounds of these three protesters in forensic medical examinations and matching bullet holes that appeared in the shields of two of them and a helmet another along with their positions at the times of their killings point to their shooting from the top part of the Bank Arkada in the Maidan-controlled area. Several Maidan protesters and medics pointed to snipers there shortly before and after these three protesters were killed. (Video Appendix H).

Cover-Up and Stonewalling

It is striking that almost eight years after one of the best documented cases of the mass murder in history, there is not a single person convicted or under arrest for the Maidan massacre of the protesters and the police. No one was prosecuted for killings of 13 and wounding of over 100 policemen on February 18-20 on the Maidan and two traffic policemen in another location in Kyiv. The prosecution did not charge anyone for wounding 77 protesters, or almost half of all wounded protesters on February 20, after the investigation determined that they were not shot from the Berkut positions but from other sectors, which implies Maidan-controlled areas.

The Prosecutor General Office has been headed by Maidan politicians or close allies of the Maidan presidents of Ukraine and President Zelensky and the investigation of the massacre was under control of Maidan government leaders from the start. Two factions of main Maidan parties blocked creation of a parliamentary commission concerning Maidan massacre during the Poroshenko presidency.⁵⁵ The failed investigation, the prosecution, and to a large extent trial are consistent with cover-up and stonewalling of the investigation by the Turchynov, Poroshenko, and Zelensky governments and the investigation by the Prosecutor General Office, the State Bureau of Investigations, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

An amnesty law, which was adopted by the Ukrainian parliament on February 21, 2014, granted blanket immunity from prosecution for Maidan participants for various serious crimes, including killing of the police, terrorism, and seizure of power. The law also prohibited investigation of the Maidan participants for such crimes and specified that such evidence that was already collected had to be destroyed.

Two out of five Berkut policemen, who were arrested for several years and tried for the Maidan massacre on February 20 were released by the trial judges because of the lack of evidence. This is consistent with trumped-up charges. All Berkut policemen were released and exchanged to Donbas separatists by a Kyiv court on an order of President Zelensky within a several months of the expected verdict. This decision stonewalled the trial.

In contrast, the release to house arrest and escape from Ukraine of the Berkut special company commander, who was charged with the massacre on February 20, and Berkut policemen, charged with wounding of 33 protesters on February 18-19 by the courts is consistent with the cover-up and stonewalling. A Ukrainian journalist, who headed in 2014 the civic council of GPU, stated that the Minister of Internal Affairs of Ukraine, who was a member of the Maidan leadership, was involved in transferring the Berkut special company commander from Ukraine.⁵⁶

The GPU investigation denied that there were snipers in Maidan-controlled buildings and did not investigate them. This was done in spite of overwhelming evidence revealed by the investigation, the trial, and the publicly available evidence, such as testimonies by over 100 wounded protesters, several dozen prosecution witnesses, and over 300 other witnesses, and videos, photos and audio recordings of snipers in these buildings, including their shooting of the

protesters and the police, and results of forensic ballistic and medical examinations. The Berkut policemen on the ground shooting openly from Kalashnikov's were not snipers by any definition.

The GPU initially stated in March 2014 that its investigation identified snipers who massacred the Maidan protesters, identified their locations, and seized their weapons, and that foreigners were investigated in the involvement of the massacre.⁵⁷ The GPU also officially stated in the beginning of April 2014 that protesters were shot with a Simonov "sniper rifle" from the Hotel Ukraina.⁵⁸ However, the heads of the Prosecutor General Office, the Security Service of Ukraine, and the Ministry of Internal Affairs reversed these statements without any rationale offered and announced during their join press conference in April 2014 that the special Berkut company massacred the Maidan protesters.

The Prosecutor General Office reversed without any explanations their own previous investigation findings that at least three protesters were killed from the Hotel Ukraina and 10 others were also killed from significant heights and charged the Berkut policemen with their killings. Similarly, the GPU charged an Omega sniper and an Omega machine gunner with killing one protester each even though it previously charged and tried the Berkut policemen for killing these two protesters. However, government forensic examinations presented at the Berkut trial, testimonies of protesters, who were next to them and witnesses killings of these two protesters, and videos of their killings show that it was physically impossible to shoot them from Omega and Berkut positions in front of them. Khrapachenko was killed in the back by a rusted hunting expanding bullet while Oleh Ushnevych was shot from a handgun behind a wall when they faced Omega and Berkut positions. (See Video Appendix A and Video Appendix D). The courts released both Omega members because of the lack of evidence even before their trials.

Public statements by eight Maidan politicians and activists and seven Georgian ex-military members about involvement of Maidan snipers and Maidan leaders in the Maidan massacre of the protesters were not investigated. The Maidan massacre trial judges refused requests of self-reported Georgian members of Maidan sniper groups to testify at the Maidan massacre trial by video links from Belarus. The Prosecution General Office of Ukraine claimed that these Georgians were fake, and Maidan victims lawyers called them “actors” and denied that they even visited Ukraine even though they provided their real names and aliases, passports, plane tickets to Ukraine, videos, photos, and other evidence corroborating their identities and their visits to Ukraine. Armenian and Belarusian government agencies confirmed identities of some of these Georgians. Their detailed testimonies are generally consistent with evidence revealed by the Maidan massacre trial and findings of academic studies of this massacre (Katchanovski, 2015a, 2020a).

Nadia Savchenko stated that people from the armed group that she saw arriving on the Maidan are in the Ukrainian parliament and that she saw as one of Maidan leaders brought the snipers to the Hotel Ukraina and that she saw shooting from this hotel. A Right Sector sponsor and a leader during the Maidan massacre said that he and other Right Sector activists found and photographed three positions of snipers and their exit routes in the Maidan-controlled buildings, and one of the snipers found there was released by Maidan leaders. Several Maidan activists said that they witnessed that some snipers were captured by Maidan protesters, in particular, in the Hotel Ukraina but were evacuated by Maidan leaders and then disappeared. (See Video Appendix B).

Davyd Zhvania, a former associate of President Poroshenko and the head of the parliamentary committee during the Maidan, stated that the Maidan leaders, whom he named in

his videos, “arranged” the Maidan massacre. He said that then Maidan opposition leaders had blood on their hands and wanted to seize power in Ukraine. He stated that the Maidan leaders knew in advance about the Maidan massacre, in particular, shooting at the police, and called their members of the parliament before the massacre not to go to the Maidan so that they won’t be killed. Zhvania also alleged that weapons were provided to Maidan via the Lithuanian Embassy in Kyiv. (See Video Appendix B).

Similarly, a public statement by a Maidan member of the parliament that one of “titushky” leaders, who was involved in killing of a journalist on February 19, worked for a business of leading Maidan activists and that they knew about the massacre in advance also was not been investigated.⁵⁹ Neo-Nazi C14 leader and members took refuge in the Canadian Embassy shortly before the Maidan massacre and stayed there during the massacre, and one of its ex-leaders stated that the C14 leader knew about the massacre in advance.⁶⁰

The same concerns a statement of the Estonian foreign affairs minister telling the EU foreign affairs chief in an intercepted phone conversation about a Maidan medics leader’s statement that both police and protesters were shot by the same “snipers” because their wounds had the same distinctive features. Two Ukrainian writers in their book quoted a Maidan leader from far-right Svoboda and a the deputy head of the parliament from Svoboda saying that a Western representative before the massacre told them and other Maidan leaders that the Western governments would turn on Yanukovych if casualties among protesters would reach 100. (Video Appendix B).

Ukrainian media revealed in 2019 that Kyiv prosecutors during their investigation found that killers of two traffic policemen during the Maidan massacre were among Maidan snipers. These killers received phone calls from prominent female and male parliament deputies from one

of Maidan parties after killing these policemen during a traffic stop. The investigation after these findings was transferred to the police controlled by the same party and completely stalled. The two killed policemen were included, like the computer technician killed in the Party of Regions office, in the “Heavenly Hundred” of killed Maidan protesters, and their killing was attributed to government “titushki.” The female deputy description matches Tetiana Chornovol, a former far right activist, who was presented as a Maidan hero and a victim.⁶¹ In 2020, Chornovol was charged with the arson of the Party of Regions headquarters and the murder of the computer technician killed who was killed there. But she was put under house arrest and then released by the court and the trial has not began in this case.

The GPU investigation failed to determine bullet trajectories with help of forensic ballistic experts even after the Maidan massacre trial ordered such examinations, specifically to determine if these trajectories were from the Maidan-controlled buildings. The investigation, with some exceptions, instead of ballistic experts used complex forensic examinations by medics to determine sectors of fire without on-site visits and any measurements and explanations provided.

Unexplained reversals of testimonies of many wounded protesters concerning snipers in the Maidan-controlled buildings and areas at the Maidan massacre trial compared to their testimonies previously provided to the investigation are consistent with cover-up. The same concerns unexplained reversals of forensic examinations of bullets and directions of wounds of protesters a few weeks before the investigation submitted the case to a court for the trial. The completely different findings of the few new ballistic examinations that protesters were killed by bullets from specific Berkut Kalashnikovs reversed findings of some 40 previous forensic ballistic examinations, including computer-based ones. Synchronized content analysis of the

videos of the Berkut police and several such killed and wounded protesters along with locations and directions of wounds in forensic medical examination, testimonies of eyewitnesses among Maidan protesters, and on-site investigative experiments by government ballistic experts show that Maidan protesters were shot from Maidan-controlled buildings and could not have been physically shot from the Berkut positions in spite of the reports of matching bullets. (See Video Appendix H).

Key pieces of forensic evidence of the massacre on February 20 disappeared when it was under the Maidan opposition or Maidan government control or when it was in the possession of the Maidan government investigation without anyone responsible identified and prosecuted. Such evidence includes almost all shields and helmets of killed and wounded protesters since bullet holes in them or their absence could easily identify locations of the shooters. Many bullets extracted from bodies of the protesters and the police, trees, soil, a flower box, and the Maidan buildings disappeared, in some cases when they were in the GPU possession. Several trees with bullets and/or bullet holes were cut in the Maidan protesters massacre area and in the Berkut barricade areas after the massacre, and the prosecution admitted this three years afterwards. Recordings of live online streams and web cameras on the Maidan at the start of the massacre in the early morning of February 20 also “disappeared” immediately after the massacre. The same concerns security cameras recordings from the Hotel Ukraina, the Bank Arkada, and other Maidan-controlled buildings at the time when snipers were located there.

The first Prosecutor General of Ukraine under Zelensky said that the investigation of the Maidan massacre and other Maidan crimes was sabotaged and was organized in such way that it did not find who ordered these crimes. He stated that a part of materials disappeared during this

investigation. He questioned as to why the Berkut members, who were charged with the Maidan massacre, were imprisoned for four years without a verdict.⁶²

Many of more than 100 people, who were included in the “Heavenly Hundred” of the killed Maidan protesters and were posthumously awarded Heroes of Ukraine titles by then President Poroshenko, were killed not on the Maidan or died from various illnesses.⁶³

The State Bureau of Investigations of Ukraine charged Tetiana Chornovol with the deadly arson of the Party of Regions office and killing of a computer admin there during the Maidan massacre on February 18, 2014. Videos and their own admissions showed the involvement of Chornovol and far right Maidan activists in this arson attack. But until February 2020, the Prosecutor General Office of Ukraine investigated his death as a result of a fire and not an arson attack.⁶⁴

A leader of a Maidan organization and its members were revealed and investigated by the Prosecutor General Office for evacuating and hiding firearms of the special Berkut company charged with the massacre of the protesters on February 20. The landscape, the street, and trees on the site of the massacre would be almost completely changed into a park and a new Maidan massacre museum. This would make physically impossible for the investigation to finally conduct on-site investigative experiments to determine bullet trajectories.

Investigations of the massacres of the police and the protesters were separated even though they happened on the same days and in the same places. There were no forensic examinations comparisons of bullets extracted from bodies of the police and the protesters in spite of various evidence that they were shot by same groups of snipers.

The Maidan massacre trial was restarted in 2016. Its fate became uncertain after the exchange of the five Berkut policemen to separatists by President Zelensky. Several attacks by

the neo-Nazi C14 and other far right groups disrupted and threatened the trial. There is no such evidence of systematic cover-up by the Yanukovich government leaders and Berkut members. The Yanukovich treason trial revealed various evidence that he fled Ukraine following several associations attempts by Maidan forces, including the far right.⁶⁵ He and his Internal Troops commander volunteered to testify via video links about the massacre at the trial. Two of the Berkuts, who were exchanged to separatists, voluntarily returned from the separatist-controlled Donbas in order to continue to participate in their trial. Like Berkut policemen openly staying in Ukraine and not hiding or leaving Ukraine after the Maidan massacre until they were arrested and charged with the mass murder, these actions do not suggest cover-up or stonewalling of the investigation on their part.

There is also certain evidence of involvement of the far-right Svoboda or Svoboda-linked activist and bot or troll accounts in the cover-up of Maidan massacre perpetrators and evidence. Several dozens of identical or nearly identical English-language accounts and pages on all major social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, VKontakte, YouTube, Redditt, etc. and various forums, such as Ukrainska Pravda forum with the name of the author or fake names, denounced the author as a “falsifier of the Maidan massacre and modern Ukrainian history” and claimed that the author falsified the evidence of that Maidan protesters were massacred by the Maidan snipers. For instance, they falsely claimed that the video appendix B with witness testimonies about snipers in Maidan-controlled locations did not include witnesses but rumors even though the absolute majority of testimonies are by eyewitnesses and this video appendix was admitted and shown as evidence at the Maidan massacre trial (See Video Appendix B).⁶⁶

Such use of multiple fake accounts and pages to mislead people, in particular, “about the identity, purpose, or origin of the entity that they represent,” “the purpose of an audience or

community,” and “about the source or origin of content” is classified as unauthentic by Facebook.⁶⁷ Such social behavior is also unauthentic compared to typical social media users.

The text of comments posted by Svyatoslav Gut, a far-right immigrant activist linked to Svoboda, under *Ukrainska pravda* articles concerning the Maidan massacre investigation using his personal Facebook account is basically identical to the idiosyncratic text of these social media accounts and online forums and bot and troll comments. They call the author the falsifier of the Maidan massacre and ask to Google such phrase.⁶⁸ The first name of Svyatoslav Gut, the Chicago location, and age match the aliases, such as Slavw and Slav70, the Chicago IP location, and the age of the creator of these multiple social media accounts and pages and posts in the online forums, the Ukrainian media, and Wikipedia.⁶⁹ There is also a match to similar social media and forum accounts and pages, which were created using the same alias and which called the noted Ukrainian Canadian history professor John Paul Himka as “the falsifier of history” for his academic study of the OUN involvement in the Lviv pogrom during the Nazi occupation (see Himka, 2012, p. 215). The person with the same alias used “scientific anti-Semitism” to justify the OUN-led pogrom and mass killing of Jews in Lviv during the Nazi occupation in 1941.⁷⁰ The same person also created or edited hundreds of Wikipedia pages in Ukrainian and English concerning the far-right OUN, the UPA, and Nazi Germany and included similar justifications and apologetics of their mass murders of Jews, Poles, Russians, and Ukrainians.⁷¹

Besides “like” of the far-right Svoboda party’s page and a post with a link to the Svoboda’s chapter in Chicago on his Facebook page, Svyatoslav Gut has no other background concerning the Maidan massacre and the OUN and the UPA. He describes himself as an immigrant from Lviv, and he apparently has bachelor degree in accounting and also a certain background in software.⁷² The scholarly studies by the author and the Maidan massacre trial and

investigation revealed various evidence of involvement of Svoboda, which was founded as a neo-Nazi Social National Party of Ukraine, and other far right organizations, such as the Right Sector, in the massacre of the police and the protesters (See Video Appendix C and Katchanovski, 2015a, 2020a).⁷³

Conclusion

The Maidan massacre trials and investigations have revealed various evidence that the police and at least the absolute majority of 49 killed and 157 wounded Maidan protesters on February 20, 2014 were massacred by snipers in Maidan-controlled buildings and areas. Such evidence includes testimonies of the absolute majority of wounded protesters, several dozen prosecution and dozens of defense witnesses. The Prosecutor General Office investigation Determined that about half of Maidan protesters were wounded from other locations than the Berkut police positions on the ground.

Since the investigation and the trial did not reveal any “third force” snipers, this means that the Maidan snipers with the involvement of the elements of the Maidan leadership perpetrated this massacre. This is consistent with various evidence, such as videos of Maidan snipers in the Maidan-controlled buildings and areas during the massacre and testimonies by 14 self-admitted members of Maidan sniper groups.

Videos presented at the trial confirmed that specific times of shooting of specific protesters in the absolute majority of cases did not coincide with times of shooting by the Berkut policemen and directions of their shooting. This visual evidence alone shows beyond any doubt that the Berkut policemen, who are charged with the massacre of the protesters, did not massacre at least the absolute majority of killed and wounded Maidan protesters on February 20. The videos made public during the trial, such as the Belgian VRT TV video, provided evidence that

the Maidan protesters were lured and then massacred by snipers from the Maidan-controlled buildings, such as the Hotel Ukraina.

Forensic medical examinations determined that the absolute majority of the protesters were shot from steep directions from the sides and back. This is consistent with locations of the Maidan-controlled buildings and areas and inconsistent with the locations of the Berkut police on the ground. Initial ballistic examinations did not match bullets extracted from the bodies of killed and wounded protesters to the Berkut Kalashnikovs. Forensic examinations of the bullet holes by the government experts for the Maidan massacre trial suggested that Berkut policemen were mostly shooting above the Maidan protesters into the Hotel Ukraina, which was the main location of the snipers.

Killing and wounding of a small minority of protesters by the Berkut police, in particular, by ricochets or in crossfire with snipers in the Maidan-controlled buildings, cannot be excluded because of the lack of publicly available data or because of contradictory data. But their killing and wounding in the same locations and at the same time as other protesters suggest that most of them were also likely shot by the Maidan snipers. The trials and investigations have not revealed any evidence that Yanukovich or his law enforcement ministers and commanders ordered the massacre of the Maidan protesters.

There are various indications of stonewalling of the Maidan massacre investigations and the trials by the Maidan governments and far right organizations and the cover-up of much of the key evidence of the massacre. The investigation denied presence of any snipers in the Maidan-controlled buildings in spite of the overwhelming evidence. The Maidan massacre investigation and trial were stonewalled, charges against Berkut policemen and later two Omega members

were trumped up, and much of the evidence destroyed in order to cover-up involvement of Maidan leaders and snipers in this mass killing.

Not a single person has been convicted or under arrest for the Maidan massacre of the protesters and the police on February 18-20, 2014 after almost eight years of the investigations and six years of the trials in spite of this case of political violence being one of the best documented cases of the mass murder in history and one of the most significant human rights violations in independent Ukraine. No one was charged with attempted murders of almost half of the wounded protesters on February 20.

Such revelations from the Maidan massacre trials and investigations corroborate findings of the previous academic studies that this massacre was a false flag mass killing with involvement of elements of Maidan leadership and the far right and that it included the massacre of the police. The puzzling misrepresentation of the Maidan massacre, its investigation, and the trial by Western governments and the media requires further research concerning reasons for such misrepresentation.

The revelations from the trials and investigations which confirm that the Maidan massacre of the protesters and the police was a false flag operation which involved Maidan snipers and elements of the Maidan leadership have major implications for understanding not only this crucial case of political violence in Ukraine. They have major implications for understanding the “Euromaidan” and the origins of the violent conflict in Ukraine and the conflicts between Russia and Ukraine and between Russia and the West. The revelations from the Maidan massacre trials and investigations show that the narratives promoted by the Ukrainian and Western governments and with some notable exceptions the media that the Maidan protesters were massacred by government snipers and/or the Berkut police are false.

Contrary to the dominant narratives, the mass “Euromaidan” protests failed to achieve a political transition. This massacre started an armed conflict in Ukraine that led to the Ukrainian government overthrow and escalated into the secession and annexation of Crimea by Russia, the civil war in Donbas, Russian military interventions in Crimea and Donbas, and major protracted conflicts between Ukraine and Russia and the West and Russia.

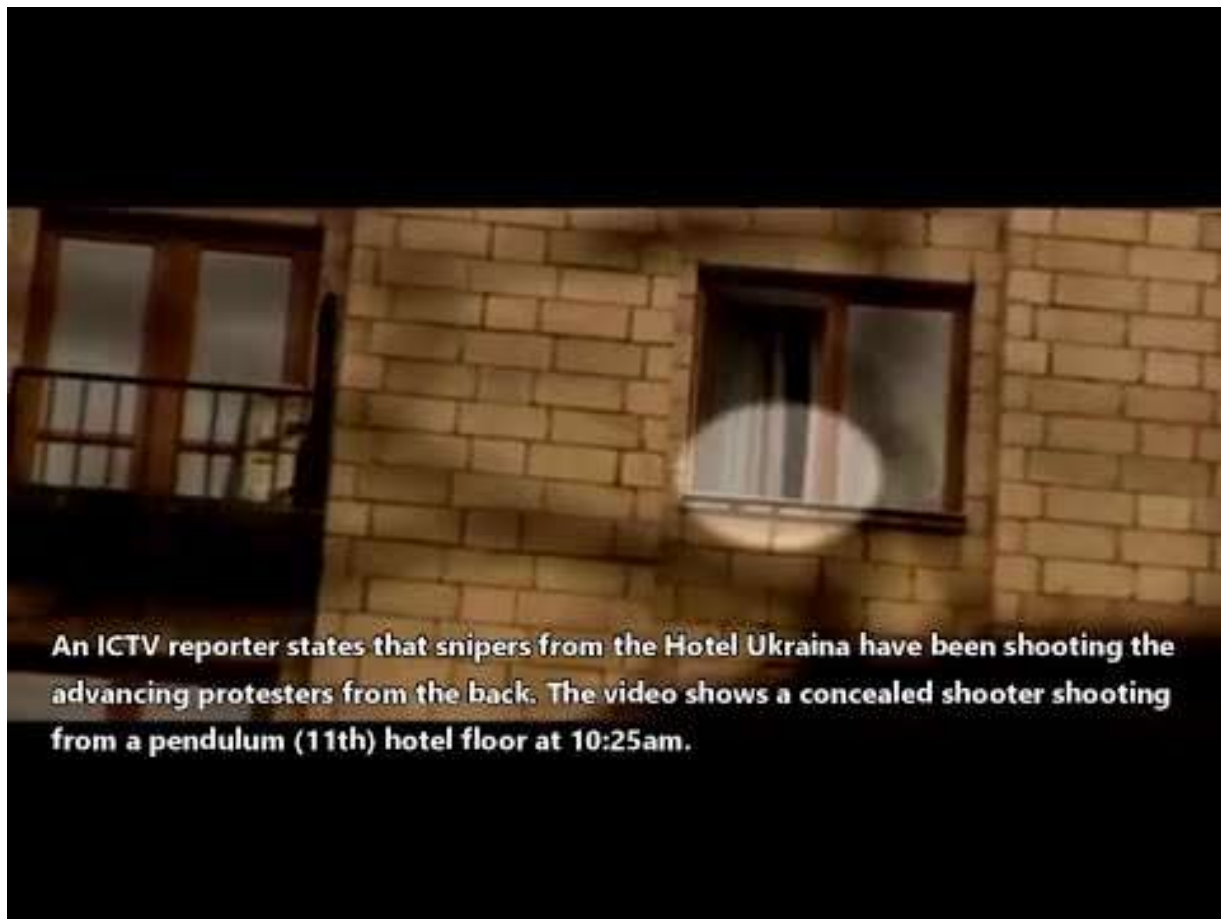
Online Video Appendixes



[Video Appendix A](#): The “Snipers’ Massacre” on the Maidan in Ukraine (2021)



[Video Appendix B](#): Over 100 Witness Testimonies Concerning Maidan Snipers in Ukraine
(2021)



[Video Appendix C](#): Shooting of Maidan Protesters from Maidan-Controlled Locations (2020)



[Video Appendix D](#): Maidan Massacre Trial and Investigation Testimonies by 47 Wounded Maidan Protesters about Snipers in Maidan-Controlled Locations



[Video Appendix E](#): Testimonies by Dozens of Prosecution Witnesses at the Maidan Massacre Trial & Investigation Concerning Snipers in Maidan-Controlled Locations



[Video Appendix F](#): Shooting at Western, Polish, and Russian Journalists during the Maidan Massacre in Ukraine



[Video Appendix H](#): How Maidan Protesters Were Shot from Maidan-Controlled Buildings



Map 1. The Maidan Massacre on February 20, 2014



Photo 1. The Visual Reconstruction of Shooting at Maidan Protesters and Western, Polish, and Russian Journalists during the Maidan Massacre in Ukraine

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Notes

¹ Previous versions of this paper were presented at the 22nd Annual World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities in Columbia University, New York, May 4-6, 2017, the Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association in Boston, August 29-September 2, 2018, and the Regimes and Societies in Conflict: Eastern Europe and Russia since 1956 conference by Institute for Russian and Eurasian Studies at Uppsala University and British Association for Slavonic and East European Studies in Uppsala, Sweden, September 13-14, 2018, and the Virtual 52nd Annual Convention of the Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies, November 5-8 and 14-15, 2020 (Katchanovski, 2017, 2018a, 2018b, 2020b).

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https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/feb/20/i-am-dying-volunteer-tweet-shot-kiev-ukraine?CMP=tw_t_gu.
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⁷³ It is noteworthy that Riabchuk (2019, p. 12) relies on these social media pages, which are anonymously created by the far-right activist, and their deliberate fakes, such as misrepresenting eyewitness testimonies concerning Maidan snipers as “rumors,” to claim that they disprove the findings of the scholarly studies that the Maidan protesters were massacred by the Maidan snipers.