

“Wait a Minute, You’re a Woman!” An Interview with Maria Berlins’ka

Olesya Khromeychuk

MARIA BERLINS’KA is an activist, member of the Ol’ha Kobyl’ians’ka All-Female Unit of the Maidan, and founder of the Ukrainian Centre for Aerial Reconnaissance.

The text presented here consists of one face-to-face interview conducted by **OLESYA KHROMEYCHUK** with Maria Berlins’ka in Kyiv in April 2014, and an e-mail exchange between Berlins’ka and Khromeychuk in September 2015. The interviews were conducted in Ukrainian. The English translation is by Olesya Khromeychuk.

O.Kh.: When and how did you end up at the Maidan? What prompted you to go there?

M.B.: I got to the Maidan on 22 November 2013. We initially took to the streets to support the country’s integration into European economic and political processes, but that was only one of the reasons. As of autumn 2013, Ukrainian society had lost hope in democratic processes, and gathering on the Maidan was perceived as a form of civil protest against the usurpation of power by the then president.

O.Kh.: What did you do when you got to the Maidan?

M.B.: I immediately got involved in volunteering, and it started with sandwiches. When I saw that my help was needed, when I saw that the girls were dropping dead from exhaustion, I immediately got stuck in. I performed every task I could see: when I noticed that water was needed, we went and got water, when they brought firewood, I knew that it had to be unloaded. So, in the first week