**From the Maidan to the Donbas: the Limitations on Choice for Women in Ukraine.**

Olesya Khromeychuk.

‘I am normally a pacifist but this is a step I’ve had to take’, explained Mariya Berlins’ka about her decision to join the conflict in eastern Ukraine and became a drone operator.[[1]](#footnote-1) Since she started volunteering for the army, Berlins’ka has become a celebrity in Ukraine. Her daily schedule resembles that of a busy politician: a talk on the legal status of women in the army, an interview for a TV channel, a panel discussion on gender-based violence, another public debate.[[2]](#footnote-2) I first met Berlins’ka in April 2014 in Kyiv, immediately after the Maidan protests. Makeshift tents covered the central streets, paving stones were still upturned following street battles, and people were in a state of shock: no one had expected blood to be shed in Ukraine’s capital in peacetime. Berlins’ka was visibly shaken by what she had experienced. This was before the start of the full-scale conflict in eastern Ukraine, her involvement with the army, and her celebrity status. She could still choose to walk away from the barricades and go back to her old life as a graduate student. She did not.

Berlins’ka’s story is that of an ordinary woman in extraordinary circumstances, and demonstrates the choices that were available to women during the Ukrainian crisis, from the Maidan protests to the conflict in eastern Ukraine.[[3]](#footnote-3) This chapter traces her journey, looking at why women like Berlins’ka joined the Maidan protests, which roles were available to them and how they negotiated their presence on the Maidan; and then assessing why women chose to be actively involved in the conflict in eastern Ukraine, and, again, what choices were open to them there. I will argue that although women made a conscious choice to participate in the protests and/or the military conflict, the roles they could play were limited because of their gender. Some limitations were due to gender stereotypes; others, such as the positions women could perform in the Ukrainian army, were enshrined in law. Women had to choose whether to accept or resist the roles available to them. I will argue that challenging the established gender order bore fruit, but it remains to be seen whether the changes will be long-lasting.

Concerning the Maidan protests, I rely on scholarly works, articles in the media, and interviews I carried out with women who took part in the protests in April 2014 and August 2015. My data on servicewomen in the conflict in eastern Ukraine include interviews which I conducted in Kyiv in 2016, and a sociological study, *‘Invisible Battalion’*, carried out by Mariya Berlins’ka and her colleagues Tamara Martsenyuk, Anna Kvit, and Ganna Grytsenko, which offers a unique analysis of women’s participation in military operations in the conflict zone.[[4]](#footnote-4)

From Euro-Maidan to *Sich*-Maidan

The Maidan demonstrations began on 21 November 2013 on Kyiv’s Independence Square (*Maidan Nezalezhnosti*), which then lent its name to the protest movement, and continued for three months, spreading all over Ukraine. The initial stage followed Viktor Yanukovych’s decision to suspend preparations for signing the Association Agreement with the European Union, interpreted by many as a sign that he was breaking Ukraine’s ties with the EU and strengthening relations with Russia.[[5]](#footnote-5) This stage of the protests ended with the forceful dispersal of protesters in the early hours of 30 November by riot police.[[6]](#footnote-6) The demonstrations that followed no longer called only for closer ties with the EU, but for the resignation of Yanukovych and his government. The final stage saw violent clashes between protesters on the one hand and the militia, riot police and government-hired thugs on the other, and reached its peak in mid-February, resulting in over 100 protesters killed, around 1.5 thousand injured, and another 100 declared missing.[[7]](#footnote-7) The Ministry of Internal Affairs reported seventeen police officers killed in the clashes.[[8]](#footnote-8)

The Kyiv Maidan changed from a largely peaceful rally to something resembling a Cossack *Sich*:[[9]](#footnote-9) a closed-off space fortified with barricades, with people in military-style outfits. If In December 2013, only 13.8 per cent of the protesters were willing to forcefully occupy buildings, by mid-January 2014, 41 per cent of those surveyed were prepared to do so, and 50 per cent to form independent armed units.[[10]](#footnote-10) This had a direct impact on women. Anastasiya Ryabchuk described the protest space after confrontations with the authorities: ‘[s]elf-defence groups were formed to defend the square at night, barricades built and constantly fortified, and women, children and the elderly discouraged from participating in the more tense moments.’[[11]](#footnote-11) In the early stages of the Maidan 42.8 per cent of the protesters were female,[[12]](#footnote-12) but with the escalation of violence women were actively discouraged from taking part. By the time the Maidan turned into a *Sich*-like space, 88 per cent of the protesters were male.[[13]](#footnote-13)

Without Choice

All people protested as citizens dissatisfied with their government’s actions. However, it would be a mistake not to consider gender factors when analysing the choices protesters made, as they impacted the choice to join or not to join the protests in person, the roles that were available to men and women during the protests, and the decision to cease protesting before, during or after the violent clashes. The popular slogan of the protests – *Vsi na maidan!* (Everyone to the Maidan!) – encouraged all citizens to come out to their respective Maidans, but not everyone who made it to the protests was treated equally. The demonstrators were divided into two groups: the revolutionaries, understood to be male, and women, children and the elderly, who *helped* the revolutionaries, and who, supposedly, needed to be protected.[[14]](#footnote-14)

The choice not to join the protests in person was automatically available to women, while men who chose not to come onto the streets were either accused of opposing the Maidan’s aims or were ridiculed as ‘armchair warriors’ (members of the so called *dyvanna sotnya*, the ‘sofa unit’).[[15]](#footnote-15) As one of the male activists put it: ‘those of you who are weaker can sit it out in front of the TV, but a real man should be here’.[[16]](#footnote-16) On International Women’s Day, women were encouraged to greet the men who stayed away from the Maidan: ‘such a greeting was supposed to humorously shame the men, comparing them to women, who *a priori* are not capable of courageous acts.’[[17]](#footnote-17) Therefore, men’s choices could be interpreted as indicative of their political views as well as the measure of their masculinity, while if a woman chose not to join the protest in person her decision could be perceived not as a manifestation of a political stance but as a suitable expression of femininity.

Although the majority of protesters accepted the gender order on the Maidan, the separation of men and women into supporters of violence and peace respectively was artificial. Kateryna Chepura, the leader of an all-female platoon of the 16th self-defence unit, witnessed women throwing paving stones at the pro-government forces and supporting violent methods of resistance.[[18]](#footnote-18) Equally, there were men who supported peaceful means of protesting. Some of them ended up joining the violent clashes because they felt inadequate in their peaceful role when other men were being injured or even killed in the street fighting. In Chepura’s assessment, the radicalisation of the protesters on the Maidan was connected to the changing mood of the demonstrations, which encouraged ‘people who in the first days were absolutely ordinary’ to become ‘aggressively inclined’. The environment and peer pressure, then, were important factors in the protesters’ choices. Gender, however, continued to be relevant as the aggressive ‘inclination’ of men was perceived as natural, while the aggression expressed by women was seen as exceptional.[[19]](#footnote-19)

To the Maidan via the kitchen

The allocation of duties on the Maidan was firstly based on gender and only then on the person’s skills. All of the women I interviewed said that they either started their volunteering in the kitchen or were aware that this was where most women started their protest activity. Anna Kovalenko, who was the only woman amongst the forty-two leaders of the self-defence structure, said that the women who wanted to join her all-female unit were ‘tired of making sandwiches and said “I want to join your unit”’.[[20]](#footnote-20)

Tasks such as cooking were perceived widely by men and women not only as auxiliary, but also as inferior in their revolutionary importance to activities such as being part of the self-defence or building and guarding barricades. Iryna Ovchar, who had been studying in London, also started her volunteering on the Maidan by making sandwiches, but she sought a more meaningful involvement: ‘I understood that I could do much more than just sandwiches, and that maybe sandwiches could be made by women who came simply to support their husbands on the barricades, and who had nothing better to do while they were waiting for their husbands’.[[21]](#footnote-21)

Thus, tasks performed by women were seen as requiring little or no skill, and treated as less physically demanding. There are several conclusions that can be drawn here. First, rather than being based on the assessment of individual skills, the duties assigned to the protesters were often based on their gender; second, women were expected to perform jobs perceived as unskilled simply because they were women; and, finally, although preparing food for thousands of protesters was a vital task, it was at the bottom of the hierarchy of duties performed on the Maidan.

Revolution within a revolution

The protesters were faced with the choice of whether to accept the status quo or challenge it. Ruslana Panukhnyk, a human rights activist, stayed on the Maidan not despite the patriarchal order, but because she felt that it had to be challenged: ‘I stood with a placard that said ‘Liberty Equality Sisterhood’ […] when some people approached us and said: ‘you are provocateurs! What are you doing?’ and started to pull these [placards from us], and break them. And I understood that now it’s a matter of principle to come out and state my point of view.[[22]](#footnote-22) Dariya Popova describes a similar situation: ‘at the very beginning of the uprising ultra-right ‘fighters for European values’ used violence towards people who tried to put these ideas forward.’[[23]](#footnote-23)

With the escalation of violence, many people were arrested or abducted by the police or government-sponsored thugs. Protection of human rights, therefore, became more than a slogan. Panukhnyk and her friends, who stayed on the Maidan despite being harassed for their political views, organised a contact point for legal help, which supported activists whose rights were infringed.[[24]](#footnote-24) Many women united into an informal group which they called the Ol’ha Kobylyans’ka All-female Unit.[[25]](#footnote-25) Their main concern was to coordinate women who wanted to take part in the protests, make them realise that their gender did not have to dictate the tasks in which they engaged, and that if they did take on duties traditionally viewed as feminine, they should not be treated as support staff, but as demonstrators with equal rights.

Women were also restricted in terms of physical space, especially in the later stages of the demonstrations. Each of my respondents was prevented from entering space open only to male protesters.[[26]](#footnote-26) Berlins’ka’s experience was the most striking. Although she took a very active part in the street clashes, when she attempted to cross the checkpoints guarded by self-defence units, she was stopped: ‘It was particularly funny when at a checkpoint I heard: “we are letting people through. We are not letting women through”.’[[27]](#footnote-27)

Like Panukhnyk, Berlins’ka chose to see the protests as an opportunity to challenge gender stereotypes rather than allowing them to be reinforced by growing militarisation. She voiced her concerns in a speech delivered from the Maidan stage, pointing out that ‘the rhetoric about weak and fragile women was always debunked in times of crises […when] all humans, regardless of their gender, revealed themselves and acted in dignified or in undignified ways.’ She stressed that on the Maidan, women, like men, did all the work necessary for the protests, and concluded that ‘in the new Ukraine, the Ukraine for which we are fighting here, there is no place for discrimination.’[[28]](#footnote-28) This was Berlins’ka’s first public speech, but many more were to follow because the conflict in the Donbas brought the question of gender equality to the foreground once more.

An ‘untimely’ question

On the Maidan, it was considered not an appropriate time to raise the issue of gender equality. Mariya Dmytriyeva, a feminist blogger and one of the speakers at the so-called Maidan Open University, said that ‘there are people who take offence when I and other feminists raise the problem of sexism on the Maidan, because this problem is untimely. They argue that we have many external enemies, and criticising one’s own only benefits the enemies.’[[29]](#footnote-29) She rebuked such claims by saying that ‘if we don’t do this now, doing it later might be too late’.[[30]](#footnote-30) Dmytriyeva’s view turned out to be accurate; in the context of the military conflict in Donbas, the seeming untimeliness of the gender equality issue was treated as self-evident by the state and much of society.[[31]](#footnote-31)

In times of conflict, women and other underprivileged groups experience the hardships connected to political violence especially harshly. Therefore, gender equality activists tried to confront the reluctance of the authorities to see the connection between political violence and gender-based violence. The organisers of a feminist march, held on International Women’s Day in 2015, explained why it was important to talk of gender discrimination when the country was at war:

War leads to an increase in violence against women perpetrated by the military from both camps; the devaluation of women’s labour and the heroicisation of male defenders encourages the silencing of such important problems as domestic violence, discrimination against women in the labour market, and so on. Therefore, war is also a question of gender […]. Inflation and the militarisation of the economy make all other social and cultural questions ‘untimely’, in particular the question of women’s rights. However, it is the solution of these questions that will lead us to the new, equal and just society for which we fought a year ago [on the Maidan].[[32]](#footnote-32)

There is much evidence that the question of gender equality is more than timely in conditions of war. Before the conflict started, every fifth woman in Ukraine experienced physical and/or sexual violence.[[33]](#footnote-33) The situation worsened with the outbreak of hostilities. In its report on gender-based violence in the conflict-affected regions of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Centre for Social Reforms (UCSR) concluded that ‘the risks of conflicts and aggression have grown in society’.[[34]](#footnote-34) It identified, as factors contributing to this growth, ‘high emotional and psychological dependence of people on the situation in the ATO area […], distorted ethical norms and values due to atrocities of war, severed family ties due to ideological disagreements, and manifestations of post-traumatic syndrome among the demobilized soldiers’; however, ‘[a]t the national level, an adequate and comprehensive assessment of the new social risks is still lacking, no effective response mechanisms have been yet developed.’[[35]](#footnote-35)

In her analysis of the impact of the hostilities in eastern Ukraine on women, Danielle Johnson warns that:

[a] s women who have been affected carry their traumas with them across the territory, into their families and communities — as IDPs, as returning combatants, as battered wives or sisters or daughters — the war will begin to seep through the social fabric of the country in more insidious ways. If they feel they cannot speak, if they feel that it would be pointless to tell their stories amid so much obfuscation, Ukraine as a whole will be pulled down by this new collective trauma.[[36]](#footnote-36)

The authorities ignore the fact that the conflict in the Donbas region is making the already serious question of women’s discrimination even worse. The Ukrainian Parliament refuses to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, because the wording of the document contained terms such as ‘gender’.[[37]](#footnote-37) The militarisation of Ukrainian society prevents open discussion of the traumatising and destructive side of the war. It creates a certain value system where military activity is seen as the ultimate priority and its main actors – military men –occupy the top of the patriarchal hierarchy. This value system has permeated the patriotic discourse in Ukraine. In 2015, the Ukrainian Institute of National Memory even coined a new label to describe the Ukrainian people: an army-nation (*narod-viis’ko*).[[38]](#footnote-38)

The image of the military has been reinvented during the conflict: a stagnant and corrupt post-Soviet institution has supposedly been rebuilt by the ordinary people of Ukraine into a new, patriotic army. To assist this rebranding, six months after the outbreak of the conflict in Donbas, President Petro Poroshenko announced the creation of a new holiday, the Day of the Defender of Ukraine (which in its grammatical form – *Den’ zakhysnyka Ukrayiny* – uses only the masculine form of ‘defender’, thus excluding women).[[39]](#footnote-39) In his 2016 public address Poroshenko did mention women and even posted a separate tweet thanking women who were part of the military,[[40]](#footnote-40) but the reality of experiences of women who serve in the Ukrainian Armed Forces officially or as volunteers is rarely discussed publicly.

Unconscripted warriors

Many women who protested on the Maidan also chose to take an active stance in the conflict in Donbas. As on the Maidan, their contribution was welcomed by the state, because every effort to protect Ukrainian territorial integrity counted, but the roles they could play were restricted.[[41]](#footnote-41) Unlike on the Maidan, the limitations on women’s involvement were based not only on the patriarchal perception of gender roles, but also on legal restrictions concerning positions open to women in the army.

The vast majority of men who joined the Ukrainian Armed Forces since the conflict began were either conscripted or called up through a process of partial mobilisation.[[42]](#footnote-42) It is not surprising that many men found illegal or semi-legal ways of avoiding being mobilised, although the punishment for this is between two and five years’ imprisonment.[[43]](#footnote-43) The only women who could be mobilised are those who were under military obligation because of their professions, mostly related to medicine and communications.[[44]](#footnote-44) It is likely, therefore, that the majority of women who came to serve at the frontline chose to do so voluntarily.[[45]](#footnote-45)

As of June 2016, 49,552 women were employed by the Ukrainian Armed Forces (1,322 of whom joined in 2016 alone). Most of them – 32,405 – hold civilian posts, while 17,147 (8.5 per cent of total military personnel) hold military positions. Only 2,092 women are officers and there are no women generals.[[46]](#footnote-46) According to official estimates, as of 9 October 2017, 6282 women had received the ‘status of participants of military action for their participation in the anti-terrorist operation’.[[47]](#footnote-47) This figure does not include those women who do not appear on any official lists, or are sporadic volunteers. Nor does it account for around 500 women who serve in the National Guard, which is also engaged in the conflict, under the authority of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.[[48]](#footnote-48)

Mariya Berlins’ka is among the women who are not on the official army roster. She took the decision to go to the front in June 2014. At first, it was not easy to find a battalion willing to take her, but eventually she started volunteering with the ‘Aidar’ Battalion, which was in desperate need of drone operators.[[49]](#footnote-49) Berlins’ka trained herself to fly pilotless drones in order to perform air reconnaissance, and went to the frontline in September 2014. In due course she set up the Ukrainian Centre for Aerial Reconnaissance which trains drone operators free of charge, conducted successful campaigns to raise money for her centre and to buy drones and, in 2016, with a team of researchers, produced a report on the challenges faced by women serving in the conflict zone.[[50]](#footnote-50) She continues to visit Donbas every few months and plans to volunteer at the frontline for as long as she is needed.

Berlins’ka’s story has many fascinating and sometimes paradoxical aspects. However, interviewers tend to focus on her apearance, and how the army supposedly changed her from a feminine student to a boyish soldier.[[51]](#footnote-51) Some suggest that she went to the front to look for a boyfriend. Few focus on her actual experience in Donbas, and how difficult it was to make the choice to go there. Berlins’ka finds these descriptions amusing if irritating:

I gave interviews to many media outlets. All of them asked me to describe the situation [at the frontline], but at the end they would ask me private questions. The reports that followed were all identical: ‘She went to the frontline, chopped off her long plait, abandoned her MA course in Kyiv-Mohyla Academy… She is waiting for him and continues to hope that he is alive.’ This story is highly dramatised and is covered not from a professional, but from a melodramatic perspective.[[52]](#footnote-52)

Berlins’ka admits that her main motivational factor for going to the frontline was a feeling of guilt:

It was during the most active phase [of the conflict]. Nobody understood what was going on at that point, but everyone understood that the bravest, the best people had joined that first wave [of volunteer recruits]. I saw the scale of losses. […] I sat in Kyiv, watched the news and understood that people were dying there *en masse*, including people with whom I had stood on the Maidan and said that ‘body and soul we’ll lay down for our freedom’. But pathos aside, they were people with whom I shared values, and who became my brothers and sisters on the Maidan, and they went there [to the frontline], but I am here in peaceful Kyiv. I couldn’t just sit, peacefully drink my coffee and pretend that nothing was happening.[[53]](#footnote-53)

The feeling of guilt is a powerful motivation for many to join the army and to keep returning to the conflict zone after demobilisation. The realisation that friends, colleagues or simply fellow citizens risk and lose their lives encourages people to put their own lives in danger.[[54]](#footnote-54) Hence Berlins’ka’s motivation was far from unique; nor was it linked to her gender.

In their sociological study, Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit and Grytsenko assessed the motivations of forty respondents who came to the conflict zone voluntarily.[[55]](#footnote-55) Participation in the protests on the Maidan featured prominently. One of their respondents explained that ‘after the Maidan, when the disturbances started in the East, I decided that I had to help people. Because people from the East also came to the Maidan, they helped us. We are a single nation. And that is how I decided to go to war.’[[56]](#footnote-56) Some women felt they had an obligation as Ukrainian citizens to help the army protect the territorial integrity of the country. Other women joined the army because their partners, children, or friends had already joined. Still others had always wanted a military career, and saw participation in the conflict as a realisation of their childhood dream.[[57]](#footnote-57)

Yuliya Tolopa was one of these women. She found herself in a paramilitary setting from an early age. Born and brought up in Russia, she joined a so-called ‘military patriotic club’ when she was fourteen years old: ‘I did mountain climbing, military training, hand-to-hand combat… I really liked it. […] It really helped me in ATO, because I was prepared [to work] with weapons and had excellent physical training.’[[58]](#footnote-58) She explained that she came from a military family and always wanted a military education herself: ‘It didn’t work out in Russia, but I hope it will work out here [in Ukraine].’ The fact that she was a Russian citizen and had been brought up to be a Russian patriot and nationalist did not seem to present any problems for Tolopa. While in Russia, she had supported the position that Russia was for Russians, but she also disapproved of Vladimir Putin’s regime. In 2014, she came to Kyiv at the end of the protests to see for herself what the situation was like and how it compared it with its portrayal in the pro-Kremlin media. This persuaded her to fight on the Ukrainian side. She considered Ukrainians and Russians to be brothers and sisters, believed she was descended from Ukrainian Cossacks, and swapped her Russian nationalism for Ukrainian nationalism. ‘On the Maidan there were buses that went to ATO. I ended up in Luhans’k. There, a battalion commander took a look at me. Some men were accepted, some left behind. I was accepted and given a rifle. A few days later I found myself in a combat position.’[[59]](#footnote-59) She was 18 years old. In Russia she was ‘prepared to be a patriot and be ready to stand in defence of the country in case of war’; once in the conflict zone in Ukraine, she ‘was ready to give up [her] life for Ukraine’.[[60]](#footnote-60)

Without choice – again

Women who joined the army quickly learned that risking one’s life for Ukraine might be welcomed, but doing it officially, as part of the Ukrainian Armed Forces rather than a volunteer, was extremely difficult. The recruitment of army personnel is regulated by an ‘Interim list of personnel positions’.[[61]](#footnote-61) As Tamara Martsenyuk, Ganna Grytsenko, and Anna Kvit explain in their article on the recruitment of women into the army, discrimination on the basis of gender is forbidden in Ukraine. However, the Code of Labour Laws of Ukraine ‘still tries to protect women, family, and children,’ which results in over 500 professions being prohibited for women in Ukraine.[[62]](#footnote-62) The Constitution also contains some contradictions in relation to women’s rights. Article 24 says that ‘[c]itizens have equal constitutional rights and freedoms and are equal before the law. There shall be no privileges or restrictions based on race, colour of skin, political, religious and other beliefs, sex, ethnic and social origin, property status, place of residence, linguistic or other characteristics’; but Article 43 states that ‘the employment of women and minors for work that is hazardous to their health is prohibited.’[[63]](#footnote-63)

Accordingly, the Labour Code of Ukraine has a direct impact on the jobs in the military sector and dictates that the majority of army jobs are unavailable to women. Until June 2016 women were allowed to occupy only those positions in the army which did not threaten the gender order, such as archivist, disinfector or baker.[[64]](#footnote-64) Positions not open to women included traditionally ‘masculine’ jobs such as aviation specialist, firefighter, flamethrower operator, gunner, sapper, but also some that did not necessarily carry the connotations of masculinity such as translator, photographer, projectionist, diver, or instructor of physical training and sports. In addition, most positions that contained the word ‘commander’ were unavailable to women, apart from a few which fit within the traditional gender order (for example, a woman could be a commander of ‘a special unit that accompanies and guards female military personnel arrested and detained in a military prison’). Thus, as concluded by the *‘Invisible Battalion’*, positions open to women included ‘features of not only horizontal gender segregation, separate “niches” or types of jobs for women and men’, but also ‘of vertical gender segregation: woman can be a common baker, but not a senior baker.’[[65]](#footnote-65)

This segregation of women in the army is not a new phenomenon, and has been an obstacle for women wishing to join the military in Ukraine for decades. One woman who famously opposed this system is Nadiya Savchenko, Ukraine’s best known symbol of defiance in the conflict in Donbas. The language used to describe her has always been highly gendered. She has been referred to as a ‘*brother* in arms’, a ‘girl with steel character’, and even Xena the warrior princess.[[66]](#footnote-66) Her enemies described her as a ‘devil’s daughter’ and a ‘killing machine in a skirt’.[[67]](#footnote-67) Since her release from captivity as a political prisoner in Russia and her return to Ukraine she has pursued a political career as a member of the Ukrainian parliament. This has only drawn more attention to her gender. A senior politician publicly advised her to leave politics and ‘start a family, give birth to children and organise her personal life.’[[68]](#footnote-68) A photograph of her unshaved legs attracted more attention in the Ukrainian media than some of the speeches she made in parliament.[[69]](#footnote-69)

Savchenko was accustomed to being treated as a woman first, and only secondly as a professional. A book she wrote in captivity details her struggle to get a military education, and then to become the first female pilot in Ukraine,[[70]](#footnote-70) because of the legal restrictions on military professions available to women. She quotes the response she received from the Kharkiv Air Force University’s admission committee, or, as she calls them, ‘old guys in senior uniforms’: ‘Young woman, you only have one problem: you’re a woman…’[[71]](#footnote-71) Savchenko, however, is not a feminist. She believes that women’s roles in the army are restricted for a reason:

you put all this money into educating a chick [*baba*] and then she’ll just go and get married! She’ll go on maternity leave three times and retire a major!... And during all this time her workload will be dumped on other pilots. That’s why women are disliked in the army.[[72]](#footnote-72)

Savchenko saw herself as ‘one of the boys’ and was determined to get her way. She petitioned the Defence Ministry for the right to train as a fighter jet pilot, and in 2009 she graduated from the Kharkiv Air Force University. Hence she expanded the list of military jobs available to women by two positions: pilot and navigator.[[73]](#footnote-73) Yet although this had potential implications for other women, Savchenko was not interested in gender equality as such; hers was an individual mission, and she was not interested in fighting against the general restrictions against women.

Because of these restrictions, servicewomen performed the required duties, but their superiors had to ‘improvise’ by registering them in positions which were legally open to them. The story of another former Maidan activist, Viktoriya Dvorets’ka, demonstrates this ‘improvisation’. When in May 2014 she joined a battalion in Donbas, she was registered as an office administrator, but in reality, she performed combat and reconnaissance tasks. Interestingly, Dvorets’ka said that the hardest task in the army for her was a turn of duty in the kitchen: ‘it is not a job for a woman. Next day you have terrible muscle soreness.’[[74]](#footnote-74) After she was wounded and suffered concussion [*kontuziya*], an article in a local newspaper noted that ‘our compatriot, office administrator of the rear [*delovod tyla*] Viktoriya Dvorets’ka received concussion near Luhans’k.’[[75]](#footnote-75) This statement is factually correct, but makes no sense since there is no reason why an office administrator of the rear would be engaged in combat. Because of exemplary service for fourteen months as a combat fighter, her commanders offered her a promotion: her rank was raised to that of a junior sergeant and she was given a new official position of field bath house manager. To make things even more absurd, there was no bath house where Dvorets’ka served.[[76]](#footnote-76)

Dvorets’ka’s is not the only example of a woman registered in a position that does not match her actual activities. The *‘Invisible Battalion’* states that ‘one third of our respondents (15 out of 42) hold purely combat positions’,[[77]](#footnote-77) but are registered in different roles. This semi-legal or illegal status has serious consequences. Apart from the basic injustice of not being recognised by the state for the work they actually do, women who formally occupy invented positions, or are not registered at all, do not receive the benefits to which they are entitled as participants in military conflict [*uchasnyky/tsi boiovykh dii*], as outlined in the Ukrainian Law ‘On the Status of War Veterans and Guarantees of Their Social Protection’.[[78]](#footnote-78) In addition, women in combat who are not registered as such receive lower salaries based on their official rather than their actual positions.[[79]](#footnote-79) If they require medical help, not only do they not get the relevant compensation, butthey also find it difficult to explain how they received their wounds while working as administrators or accountants.

Both Mariya Berlins’ka and Yuliya Tolopa served as volunteers with neither remuneration nor official status as participants in military conflict. Berlins’ka was given the option of officially registering for one of the positions available to women in the ‘Interim list of staff positions’, but to unofficially continue as drone operator, a highly risky job that requires being very close to enemy lines.[[80]](#footnote-80) She subsequently chose not to register but to continue flying drones as a volunteer, making special arrangements with each unit she worked with.[[81]](#footnote-81) Tolopa initially served as a rifleman [sic] (*strilets’*) and later as an infantry vehicle commander, but she was also not officially registered.[[82]](#footnote-82)

Sometimes, the women themselves were confused about their status. The *‘Invisible Battalion’* report quotes one such instance:

Actually, I had not been officially registered for six months. My first document proving that I was in the ATO zone was dated 20 August, but I got registered only on 20 January. So, officially, I had not been in ATO for six months, although this whole time I was in Shchastya [a city in Luhans’k *oblast’*] under fire. But the biggest paradox was that on 28 January I was told that I had been registered. By that point I had been living in Kyiv for eight days, thinking I was a civilian […], but they called me and said that they were waiting from me, that I had been registered and that I was a deserter.[[83]](#footnote-83)

This example indicates the general chaos in army recruitment practices regarding female participation in the conflict in Donbas.

The situation is slowly changing. Following the publication of the *‘Invisible Battalion’* and the publicity servicewomen received due to the efforts of people such as Berlins’ka, the list of the positions open to women was extended in 2016 to make 63 more combat positions open to women, bringing the total number of positions to 290.[[84]](#footnote-84) These positions included sniper, gunner and reconnaissance agent.[[85]](#footnote-85) For the most part these new positions had already been *de facto* occupied by women in the conflict zone. It therefore helped to legalise the status of some women serving at the frontline. However, as Martsenyuk, Grytsenko and Kvit conclude, ‘[t]wo-thirds of all military positions remain inaccessible for women in Ukraine’.[[86]](#footnote-86) In addition, there was no significant improvement on the vertical hierarchy, since the amendments did not apply to positions at officer level, nor to the recruitment practices of the Ukrainian Airmobile Forces.[[87]](#footnote-87)

Practical choices by women in the Conflict Zone

The defence budget of Ukraine has been five per cent of GDP since 2016. Nevertheless, provisions and living conditions continue to be inadequate on the frontline, and the army has been supported since the start of the hostilities by substantial donations from people in Ukraine and the Ukrainian diaspora.[[88]](#footnote-88) Most servicemen and women struggle to get uniforms, medical supplies, food provisions and even arms. The invisibility of women at the frontline means that as well as facing all the problems of serving at the frontline, women also suffer from having additional gender-specific challenges. As detailed in the *‘Invisible Battalion’* and interviews, women have not been supplied by the state with uniforms and army boots of appropriate sizes, and have had to either purchase these items themselves or rely on volunteer organisations. One of the respondents cited in the *‘Invisible Battalion’* put it plainly: ‘there is nothing for women in the army. One gets the impression that there simply aren’t any women there’.[[89]](#footnote-89)

Women’s hygiene needs were also not met. Servicewomen were expected to use the same showers as men. ‘I was happy when at least I had wet wipes’, Tolopa told me, laughing. She continued, in a more serious manner: ‘To be honest, I put up with those eleven months at the frontline as one should. […] I didn’t find it shocking that there was no water or toilet. I didn’t worry about what I would do if there was only one shower for women and men. I understood that if I came here, I needed to accept things as they were.’[[90]](#footnote-90) Eventually, Tolopa’s fellow soldiers made a separate shower for the two women who served with them. Another female combatant, who was the only woman in her barracks, was less lucky and found sharing a shower with male soldiers more of a problem. She explained: ‘there was no lock on the shower room. I always had to ask someone I trusted to guard the door.’[[91]](#footnote-91) Cooperation with male colleagues, as is evident from both examples, was crucial both for the women’s safety, and for some degree of comfort.

The situation was more complex when it came to medical care. The *‘Invisible Battalion’* reveals that because many of the women serving at the frontline were physicians or paramedics, they had few complaints about general health care and one even set up a medical service in her unit.[[92]](#footnote-92) However, access to specialists such as gynaecologists was not available. One of the *‘Invisible Battalion’s’* respondents explained: ‘every military hospital or clinic has a staff gynaecologist. […] But the nearest clinic is 35 kilometres away and the nearest military hospital is 90 kilometres away.’[[93]](#footnote-93) Another complained about the lack of medication: ‘I’d like there to be better medical provisions, including medicines specifically for women. There are many women with cystitis here.’[[94]](#footnote-94) This is more evidence of the fact that the state treats women as if they are invisible, rendering the difficulties servicewomen face more complex than those of men.

Choosing between Being a Woman and Being a Warrior

It would be impossible to discuss women’s participation in the military conflict without tackling the question of consensual and forced intimate relationships. Even on the Maidan there were men who believed that the duties of women included ‘offering sexual services to the insurgents who spent a long time on the Maidan “without a woman”. […] If they provide food and clothes for free, why can’t they provide sex for free?’.[[95]](#footnote-95) There is a longstanding assumption that women join the army to find a partner or because they are promiscuous; this was a common idea, for example, in the USSR in the post-WWII years.[[96]](#footnote-96) Iryna Kosovs’ka, who was a member of the Ukrainian Volunteer Corps, explained that ‘[t]hrough my own experience of being involved in the military I have come to learn that such prejudices are still widespread’.[[97]](#footnote-97) Since there are usually only a few female members in the entire unit, their identity is often reduced to that of gender. Olesya Kotlyarova joined the ‘Aidar’ battalion together with her sister. She recalled a conversation with her male fellow-fighter about the first days after the women’s arrival in the unit:

he said, ‘when you just arrived we thought: great, fresh blood has arrived, the girls have arrived, how wonderful!’ But on the very first day we growled at them, saying ‘I came here not to look for love or play games. I came here to fight for Ukraine, just like you. You are a soldier and I am a soldier, there is no difference.’ We established ourselves on the first day and they treated us as their equals.[[98]](#footnote-98)

Berlins’ka had a similar story. When she first got to the frontline, her commander ‘suggested that [she] sleep with him in the same bed’. Like Kotlyarova, she believed that a woman must ‘show her character’, so she showed hers by telling the commander ‘to get lost’. In the war, ‘a woman has to put everyone in their place and say that here she is not a woman, but a soldier’.[[99]](#footnote-99)

As Yuliya Tolopa stated categorically: ‘I am a warrior and warriors have no gender’.

When I got to ‘Aidar’, there was a lot of attention. [Men said] ‘you are so cool, shall we get together?’ And I immediately said: ‘Look, guys, I am a woman, but that’s there [at home], not here. You are all my friends, my comrades, I know that you will cover my back and I will cover yours, but we can’t have a relationship. It’s impossible, because, first, in a group where there are 35 people and only one of them is a woman, if she starts seeing one person, someone will get jealous, and nobody needs that. And second, you already worry about your comrades, in case something happens to them; why would you want to worry even more? Because [if you are having a relationship with someone] this person is not a stranger to you at all, and you will worry about them and there won’t be a good working environment.[[100]](#footnote-100)

Nevertheless, Tolopa did not avoid having intimate relationships with men completely while serving in Donbass; she told me she left the conflict zone when she discovered she was pregnant.

Tolopa’s attempt to avoid emotional attachment is understandable: 86 of her comrades were killed, and while she suffered numerous wounds herself, she said that the wound of losing her friends went far deeper.[[101]](#footnote-101) Of course, losing friends and experiencing violence on the frontline is a universal experience. Yet some of the women who serve in the conflict zone experience violence directed at them not only by the enemy, but also by men on their side.

In her assessment of gender-based violence in military partnerships, Marta Havryshko analyses the story of one particular woman. Vika, as she calls her, was registered as a radiotelephonist but at the frontline, ‘she combined the duties of a sniper with those of the bodyguard of an authoritative commander’.[[102]](#footnote-102) Vika’s commander ‘protected’ her from other men’s advances, but soon started an intimate relationship with her himself. To demonstrate to everyone that Vika was *his* woman, he got her to wash his army undershirt in front of everyone.[[103]](#footnote-103) Eventually, the commander became violent towards her; Vika was also in danger of violence from other officers who sexually harassed her and tried to persuade the commander to ‘share’ her with them, threatening to have him sacked if he refused.[[104]](#footnote-104) When she tried to move to a different battalion, her commander blackmailed her and refused to let her go. Vika’s attempt to seek help from the military police proved futile. Eventually, she turned to another man, an army chaplain, to provide protection before she was able to leave this battalion.[[105]](#footnote-105)

Havryshko argues that while in peacetime men’s behaviour is usually restricted by the usual agents of social control, the war zone ‘becomes a territory in which men can easily follow patriarchal practices of gaining access to a woman’s body in exchange for resources (food, medication, money, patronage), a territory where women […] are transformed into a resource for men’s comfort.’[[106]](#footnote-106) As well as experiencing all the hardships of frontline life, because of her gender, Vika faced the additional problems of being in a precarious legal position, and experienced multiple incidents of sexual harassment and emotional and psychological abuse. It was hard for her to get recourse from the authorities because of a ‘pact of silence’ between her fellow soldiers, who were afraid to speak out against their superiors. As Havryshko argues, ‘[t]o stand up for a woman also meant to defy their military brotherhood (as a value of the military culture).’[[107]](#footnote-107)

Conclusion

Both men and women chose to take to the streets in Kyiv and elsewhere in Ukraine to defend their rights as citizens, and to fight in eastern Ukraine to defend their country’s territorial integrity. However, women had restrictions imposed on them by the patriarchal structures governing both the Maidan and the military and had to fight against not only their opponents, but also structural and individual discrimination. On the Maidan, they had to prove that they were doing more than merely *helping* the revolutionaries. At the frontline, they had to prove that they were not *merely women*, but good fighters. For them, the choices of tasks, occupations and behavioural patterns were all limited.

War is the archetypal domain for reinforcing masculinity. Taking part in political demonstrations is also seen as a conventionally masculine activity in traditional societies like Ukraine. In these contexts, the presence of women is seen as a potential threat to masculinity. Critics of women who take an active role in traditionally male spheres present their behaviour as unnatural and aggressive. For instance, those who took part in the Maidan were dubbed ‘furies’ by Kremlin supporters, who thought they were doing so because of psychosis caused by unsatisfied libido.[[108]](#footnote-108) Women who fight in the Ukrainian military are often depicted in the pro-Kremlin media as mythical beasts, who with their rifles – a sort of modern-day *vagina dentata* – are set on emasculating their enemies.[[109]](#footnote-109) The media which support the Maidan and the state’s action in the Donbas, and ostensibly approve of women’s involvement, have still highlighted the ‘unnatural’ character of women’s involvement in violence. They insist that the women remain traditionally feminine, even though they are temporarily wielding weapons; these have ‘no place in tender women’s hands’, but ‘they carry [them] with dignity on a par with men.’[[110]](#footnote-110) Women are also often sexualised by both opponents and supporters. As Amandine Regamey points out, ‘[p]hotographs of sexy women armed with a gun, sometimes openly erotic, sometimes only glamorous, abound on the Internet and are used by all parties to the conflict to represent “their” women.’[[111]](#footnote-111) The involvement of women in the protests and the military has also been used as a way of shaming men into action.[[112]](#footnote-112)

These representations reveal little about the reality of women’s experience, and the women themselves are only partially visible.[[113]](#footnote-113) Such fragmented visibility suits the state for a number of reasons. On the one hand, as Regamey argues ‘[w]omen volunteers are put forward because they allow the representation of a nation united against the aggression.’[[114]](#footnote-114) On the other hand, partial visibility means that women’s needs can be treated as secondary and untimely. Hence while their contribution to political protest or political violence is accepted, their interests and needs are ignored.

‘If a war comes to your country you have a choice: to be part of this process or not to be part of it. And your choice does not depend on your gender’, argues Berlins’ka.[[115]](#footnote-115) However, Berlins’ka’s choices were limited precisely because of her gender, despite her remarkable journey from history student to active protester, drone operator, founder of the Centre for Aerial Reconnaissance and women’s rights researcher and activist. Her story is, of course, exceptional, but the challenges she faced are commonplace for women. Thus, it is not surprising that many women choose not to fight for their rights and to accept the status quo, and some even to defend it. The presence of women on the Maidan and the incorporation of women into the army are unlikely, by themselves, to bring lasting results if the question of gender equality continues to be seen as untimely. Nevertheless, the discussions raised by studies such as the *‘Invisible Battalion’*, and the efforts of people such as Berlins’ka to ensure that the stories of women are heard both by society and the authorities, impact state policy directly and achieve some progress in educating society about the benefits of gender equality. However, the durability and effectiveness of changes in the gender order which are underway in Ukraine will depend on whether the Ukrainian state makes appropriate choices: first, replacing paternalist regulations based on patriarchal stereotypes by non-discriminatory policies; second, treating servicewomen not as a free auxiliary force but as equal employees of the army who are protected by law; third, seeing women not as symbols, or as potential victims who need to be sheltered, but as equal citizens of the state; and, finally, accepting that in post-Maidan Ukraine, a state that claims to see the protection of human rights as one of its ultimate priorities, gender equality cannot be treated as an irrelevance.

1. Mariya Berlins’ka, interviewed by Maxine Boersma, ‘Women at war: the red-nailed volunteers risking their lives on Ukraine’s Donbass frontline’, *I News*, 15 December 2016, para. 27, https://inews.co.uk/explainers/iq/ukraine-donbass-war-women-military-female-volunteers/, accessed 12 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Mariya Berlins’ka shared her schedule on her Facebook page on 30 November 2016, https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1439695359388986&set=pb.100000456087296.-2207520000.1484246576.&type=3&theater, accessed 12 January 2017. Unless otherwise

indicated, all translations from Ukrainian and Russian are mine. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The military hostilities in the Donbas, which started in April 2014 and are ongoing at the time of writing, are referred to in everyday speech in Ukraine as a war. The official term used by the Ukrainian authorities and much of the media was Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) until October 2017, when it was replaced by ‘security operations for the reestablishment of sovereignty and the territorial integrity of the country’. For further discussion see Nataliya Lebid’, ‘Vzhe ne ATO, ale shche ne viina’, *Ukrayina moloda*, 6 October 2017, http://www.umoloda.kiev.ua/number/3221/180/116472/, accessed 29 October 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. See Mariya Berlins’ka, Tamara Martsenyuk, Anna Kvit, and Ganna Grytsenko, ‘*Nevydymyi batal’ion’: uchast’ zhinok u viis’kovykh diyakh v ATO* (Ukr. http://www.uwf.org.ua/project\_activities/invisible\_batallion), *‘Invisible Battalion’: Women’s Participation in ATO Military Operations* (Eng. http://www.uwf.org.ua/en/project\_activities/invisible\_batallion),(Kyiv: Ukrainian Women’s Fund, 2016), accessed 3 February 2017. I will be referring to both versions of the report. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See Olga Zelinska, ‘Who Were the Protestors and What Did They Want? Contentious Politics of Local Maidans across Ukraine, 2013-2014’, *Demokratizatsiya: The Journal of Post-Soviet Democratization* 23, no. 4, (2015), pp 379-400 (398). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. #  See ‘Ukraine police smash pro-Europe protest, opposition to call strike’, *Reuters*, 30 November 2013, http://www.reuters.com/article/us-ukraine-protest-idUSBRE9AT01Q20131130, accessed 19 January 2017.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Volodymyr Paniotto, ‘Yevromaidan: profil’ povstannya’, *Kyiv International Institute of Sociology Review* 7 (2014), pp 5-7 (7). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See ‘Vichna pam”yat’ zahyblym pravookhorontsyam’, *Natsional’na Politsiya*, 3 March 2014, https://www.npu.gov.ua/uk/publish/article/989593, accessed 7 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. *Sich* refers to the fortification occupied by the Cossacks in the sixteenth‐eighteenth centuries. See Olesya Khromeychuk, ‘Negotiating Protest Spaces on the Maidan: A Gender Perspective’, *Journal of Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society* 2, no. 1, (2016), pp 9-47 (18-19). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Nazarii Polishchuk, ‘Oblychchya Yevromaidanu’, 13 December 2013, table 4. The data is taken from a survey conducted by Fond ‘Demokratychni initsiatyvy’ on 7-8 December 2013, http://infolight.org.ua/content/oblichchya-ievromaydanu-socialniy-portret-uchasnikiv-protestiv, accessed 19 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Anastasiya Ryabchuk, ‘Right Revolution? Hopes and Perils of the Euromaidan Protests in Ukraine’, *Journal of Contemporary Central and Eastern Europe* 22, no. 1, (2014), pp 127-134 (128). *Samooborona maidanu* consisted of forty-two self-defence units, *sotnyas*; only one of them, an all-female unit, had a female leader. Some units accepted both men and women, but most preferred to keep their membership all-male. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Polishchuk, ‘Oblychchya Yevromaidanu’, table 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. ‘Vid Maidanu-taboru do maidanu-sichi: shcho zminylosya?’, *Kyiv International Institute of Sociology*, 6 February 2014, http://www.kiis.com.ua/?lang=ukr&cat=reports&id=226&page=1, accessed 19 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. An information poster produced by the 16th unit of the self-defence structure stated that men were wanted for ‘the night guard on the barricades’, while women were needed ‘to make tea and food for the guards’. See Image 2, in Olesya Khromeychuk, ‘Gender i natsionalizm na Maidani’, *Historians.in.ua*, 27 October 2015, http://historians.in.ua/index.php/en/dyskusiya/1673-olesia-khromeichuk-gender-i-natsionalizm-na-maidani-a, accessed 7 February 2017. See also Olesya Khromeychuk, ‘Gender and Nationalism on the Maidan’, in David R. Marples and Frederick V. Mills (eds) *Ukraine’s Euromaidan. Analyses of a Civil Revolution* (Stuttgart: Ibidem, 2015), pp 123-145 (124); Khromeychuk, ‘Negotiating Protest Spaces’; Sarah D. Phillips, ‘The Women’s Squad in Ukraine’s Protests: Feminism, Nationalism and Militarism on the Maidan’, *American Ethnologist* 41, no. 3 (2014), pp 414-426; Olga Onuch and Tamara Martsenyuk, ‘Mothers and Daughters of the Maidan: Gender, Repertoires of Violence, and the Division of Labour in Ukrainian Protests’, *Social, Health, and Communication Studies Journal. Contemporary Ukraine: A case of Euromaidan* 1, no. 1 (2014), pp 105-26. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. See Dar”ia [Dariya] Popova, ‘“Dyvanna sotnya”: pryvileyi, yaki ne vyishlo rozdilyty’, *Ya* 3, no. 39 (2015), 14-15; Tamara Martsenyuk, ‘Hender i natsiya v ukrayins’komu suspil’stvi: maskulinnosti ta Yevromaidan 2013‐2014’, *Ya* 1*,* no. 37, 2015, pp 4-9. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. In ‘Aktyvisty Maidanu – kyyanam: “Spravzhni choloviky mayut’ buty tut!”’, *Ukrayins’ka Pravda*, 26 January 2014, http://www.pravda.com.ua/photo-video/2014/01/26/7011378/, accessed 24 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Dariya Popova, ‘Seksyzm na maidani’, *Spil’ne,* 3 October 2014, para. 4, http://commons.com.ua/seksizm-na-majdani/, accessed 22 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Interviewee Kateryna Chepura, a theatre director and an activist of the 16th unit of the self-defence, 10 April 2014, Kyiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. It is common to find descriptions of protesters engaging in tasks such as fortification of the barricades where the participation of women is perceived as exceptional: ‘Even girls, women and elderly men were engaged in performing these tasks.’ Oleksandr Vivcharyk, ‘Khto naspravdi nese v Ukrayinu fashyzm, abo dva dni na barykadakh’, *Natsional’na Spilka Zhurnalistiv Ukrayiny*, 29 January 2014, para. 22, http://www.nsju.org/article/2513, accessed 13 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. Interviewee Anna Kovalenko, radio journalist, theatre critic and leader of 39th unit of *Samooborona*, 8 April 2014, Kyiv. For further discussion of the 39th unit see Khromeychuk, ‘Gender and Nationalism’. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Interviewee Iryna Ovchar, a student of Political Science, 5 August 2015, London. [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Interviewee Ruslana Panukhnyk, ‘No Borders’ project worker at the Social Action Centre and an activist of the Ol’ha Kobylyans’ka all‐female unit, 8 April 2014, Kyiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Popova, ‘Seksyzm na maidani’, para. 23. For a detailed discussion of gender and nationalism see Khromeychuk ‘Gender and Nationalism’. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. Interviewee Panukhnyk. See ‘Anons. Vidkryto kontaktnyi punkt pravovoyi dopomohy’, *Pravovyi Prostir*, 10 February 2014, http://legalspace.org/ua/novini/item/1181-anons-vidkryto-kontaktnyi-punkt-pravovoi-dopomohy, accessed 24 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Although they adopted the wide-spread militaristic designation *sotnya* – a self-defence unit – the group did not embrace militaristic rhetoric. See Anastasiya Mel’nychenko, ‘Navishcho Ukrayini Zhinocha Sotnya?’, *Heinrich Böll Stiftung*, 24 March 2014, http://ua.boell.org/uk/2014/03/25/navishcho‐ukrayini‐zhinocha‐ sotnya, accessed 24 January 2017; Iryna Vyrtosu, ‘Ne buterbrodom yedynym, abo Navishcho Maidanu “Zhinocha sotnya”’, *Ukrayins’ka Pravda*, 5 February 2014, http://life.pravda.com.ua/society/2014/02/5/151445/, accessed 23 January 2017. Ol’ha Kobylyans’ka (1863-1942) was a Ukrainian modernist feminist writer. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. For a further discussion see Khromeychuk, ‘Negotiating Protest Spaces’. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Mariya Berlins’ka, ‘Pravo zhinky na Maidan’, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9du79huJxo (accessed 10 September 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Berlins’ka, ‘Pravo zhinky na Maidan’. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Mariya Dmytriyeva, ‘Bez zhinok Maidan by ne vidbuvsya’, in Iryna Vyrtosu (ed), *Maidan. Zhinocha sprava* (Kyiv: Ukrains’kyi zhinochyi fond, 2014), p 17, http://www.uwf.kiev.ua/files/20140604104737967428m aydan\_web.pdf, accessed 23 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Dmytriyeva, ‘Bez zhinok Maidan by ne vidbuvsya’. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. See ‘Hender. Na Chasi’, *Ia* 1, no. 37 (2015), http://krona.org.ua/assets/files/journal/Gendernyi-zhurnal-Ya-37-2015.pdf, accessed 13 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. See ‘Marsh vos’moho bereznya: feminizm zavzhdy na chasi!’, *Nihilist*, 7 March 2015, paras. 2-5, http://www.nihilist.li/2015/03/07/marsh-vos-mogo-bereznya-feminizm-zavzhdi-na-chasi/, accessed 27 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. See ‘Poshyrenist’ nasyl’stva shchodo divchat ta zhinok’, *Fond Narodonaselennya OON*, (2014), http://www.unfpa.org.ua/files/articles/4/70/GBV%20Infographics%20UKR.pdf, accessed 29 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. ‘Gender-based Violence in the Conflict-Affected Regions of Ukraine. Analytical Report’, *Ukrainian Centre for Social Reforms*, 2015, 61, http://www.unfpa.org.ua/files/articles/6/55/GBV%20Prevalence%20Survey\_ENG.pdf, accessed 27 January 2017. See also ‘Unspoken Pain. Gender-based violence in the conflict zone of eastern Ukraine’, *Eastern-Ukrainian Center for Civic Initiatives*, Warsaw: Justice for Peace in Donbas. Coalition of Human Rights Organizations, 2017, https://jfp.org.ua/system/reports/files/92/en/Unspoken-Pain-web.pdf, accessed 6 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. ‘Gender-based Violence’. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. ##  Danielle Johnson, ‘As Ukraine's women speak up on sexual violence, we must not ignore those affected by conflict’, *Open Democracy*, 25 July 2016, https://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/danielle-johnson/speaking-on-sexual-violence, accessed 29 January 2017.

 [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. See Valeriya Shyrokova, ‘Dev”yat’ zapytan’ pro domashnye nasyl’stvo i Stambul’s’ku konventsiyu v Ukrayini’, *Povaha*, 24 October 2017, http://povaha.org.ua/dev-yat-zapytan-pro-domashnje-nasylstvo-i-stambulsku-konventsiyu-v-ukrajini/, accessed 29 October 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. ‘Vitayemo zakhysnykiv i zakhysnyts’ zi svyatom! Ukrayintsi – narod-viis’ko’, *Ukrayins’kyi Instytut Natsional’noyi Pam”yati*, 2015, para. 1, http://www.memory.gov.ua/news/vitaemo-zakhisnikiv-i-zakhisnits-zi-svyatom-ukraintsi-narod-viisko, accessed 30 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. See Olesya Khromeychuk, ‘What place for women in Ukraine’s memory politics?’, *Open Democracy Russia*, 10 October 2016, https://www.opendemocracy.net/od-russia/olesya-khromeychuk/what-place-for-women-in-ukraine-s-memory-politics, accessed 30 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. See ‘Vystup z nahody Dnya zakhysnyka Ukrayiny ta prysyahy litseyistamy Kyyivs’koho viis’kovoho litseyu im. Ivana Bohuna’, 14 October 2016, https://medium.com/@petroporoshenko/виступ-з-нагоди-дня-захисника-україни-та-присяги-ліцеїстами-київського-військового-ліцею-ім-12327b99d74d#.ua9h3zqef, accessed 30 January 2017; Petro Poroshenko’s twitter account, https://twitter.com/poroshenko/status/786827054759211008, accessed 30 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. This chapter focuses on women who fought on the side of the Ukrainian state and will not discuss those who fought for the so-called Donets’k and Luhans’k People’s Republics or the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. Conscription was supposed to end in 2013, but resumed because of the conflict in Eastern Ukraine. See ‘Ukrainian Parliament Recommends Resumption of Mandatory Conscription’, *Radio Free Europe. Radio Liberty*, 17 April 2014, http://www.rferl.org/a/ukrainian-parliament-recommends-resumption-of-mandatory-conscription/25352661.html, accessed 13 February 2017. See also ‘Poroshenko nazvav kil’kist’ mobilizovanykh protyahom shesty cherh mobilizatsiyi’, *Unian*, 24 August 2015, http://www.unian.ua/war/1114740-poroshenko-nazvav-kilkist-mobilizovanih-protyagom-shesti-cherg-mobilizatsiji.html, accessed 26 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. ‘Ukhylyvsya vid mobilizatsiyi – vidpovidai po zakonu’, *Ministrerstvo oborony Ukrayiny*, http://www.mil.gov.ua/ministry/aktualno/do-uvagi-vijskovosluzhbovcziv/uhilivsya-vid-mobilizaczii-vidpovidaj-po-zakonu.html, accessed 26 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. See ‘Zakon Ukrayiny Pro viis’kovyi obovyazok i viis’kovu sluzhbu’, http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2232-12, accessed 26 January 2017; ‘Perelik spetsial’nostei, po oderzhanni yakykh prydatni do viis’kovoyi sluzhby zhinky perebuvayut’ na viis’kovomu obliku’, 14 October 1994, http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/711-94-п, accessed 26 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. Out of 42 women interviewed by the researchers, only two had been mobilised; the others volunteered to serve at the frontline. See Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, ‘*Invisible Battalion’*, 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. ‘U zbroinykh Sylakh Ukrayiny pratsyuyut’ i prokhodyat’ viis’kovu sluzhbu maizhe 50 tysyach zhinok’, *Ministerstvo Oborony Ukrayiny*, 23 June 2016, para. 2, http://www.kmu.gov.ua/control/publish/article?art\_id=249136997, accessed 3 February 2017; and Tetyana Moroz, ‘Ukrayinok dedali bil’she pryvablyuye… viis’ko’, *Narodna Armiya*, 11 July, 2016, paras. 4-5, http://na.mil.gov.ua/33948-ukrayinok-dedali-bilshe-privablyuye-vijsko, accessed 3 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. Official response of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine to author’s information request, 9 October 2017, author’s private archive. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. See Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Grytsenko, Kvit, *‘Invisible Battalion’*, 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Territorial Defence Battalion ‘Aidar’ was formed in May 2014 as a volunteer military detachment. See ‘Dobrovol’chi batal’iony: vid vynyknennya do pidporiadkuvannya ZSU chy Natshvardiyi’, *Tyzhden’*, 26 March 2015, http://m.tyzhden.ua/news/132877, accessed 1 February 2017. Unlike the units of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, volunteer battalions were more flexible in their recruitment practices and thus more likely to accept women into their ranks. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. See Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, ‘*Nevydymyi batal’ion’*. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. Yurii Tymoshchuk, ‘26-richna “aidarivka” Mariya Berlins’ka’, *Vikna,* 24 October 2014, http://vikna.if.ua/news/category/ua/2014/10/24/23995/view, accessed 26 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. Berlins’ka in Svitlana Spasibina, ‘“Komandyr prosyv zanochuvaty z nym v odnomu lizhku. Ya poslala ioho”. Yak zhinky na viini stayut’ “svoyimy”’, *InfoMIST*, 13 July 2016, para. 5, http://infomist.ck.ua/komandyr-prosyv-zanochuvaty-z-nym-v-odnomu-lizhku-ya-poslala-jogo-yak-zhinky-na-vijni-stayut-svoyimy/, accessed 26 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Interviewee Mariya Berlins’ka, 9 June 2016, Kyiv. The quotation ‘body and soul we’ll lay down for our freedom’ is from the Ukrainian national anthem which was sang frequently by protesters on the Maidan. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. See Halyna Tsyhanenko, ‘“Ochi, pokryti popelom”: pochuttya provyny na viini’, *BBC Ukrainian*, 30 October 2015, http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/blogs/2015/10/151019\_psychologist\_blog\_ko, accessed 31 January 2017; Marichka Paplauskaite, ‘Zvorotnii bik volonterstva. Yak ne vtratyty vlasnoho zhyttya, dopomahayuchy inshym’, *Ukrayins’ka Pravda*, 5 September 2016, http://life.pravda.com.ua/society/2016/09/5/217601/view\_print/, accessed 30 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. See Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, ‘*Nevydymyi batal’ion’.*  [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Female Respondent 1 in Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, *‘Nevydymyi Batal’ion’*, 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. Female Respondent 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Interviewee Yuliya Tolopa, 9 June 2016, Kyiv. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Yuliya Tolopa in ‘My znaishly rosiis’ku BMP, i ya stala komandyrom – rosiyanka z “Aidaru”’, *Hromads’ke Radio*, 15 October 2015, https://hromadskeradio.org/en/programs/hromadska-hvylya/my-znayshly-rosiysku-bmp-i-ya-stala-komandyrom-rosiyanka-z-aydaru, accessed 2 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Interviewee Tolopa. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. The full title of the list is ‘Interim list of staff positions for privates, sergeants, sergeants-major, including those for which the appointment of female military personnel is permitted, and the corresponding ranks and wage categories’. See Decree No 337, *Ministerstvo Oborony Ukrayiny*, 27 May 2014, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0600-14#n16, accessed 30 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. This article is separate from the sociological study quoted elsewhere in the chapter, although it relies on the same primary material. See Tamara Martsenyuk, Ganna Grytsenko, Anna Kvit, ‘The “Invisible Battalion”: Women in ATO Military Operations in Ukraine’, *Kyiv-Mohyla Law and Politics Journal 2* (2016): 171–187, pp 176-177. See also, ‘Law of Ukraine “On Principles of Prevention and Combating Discrimination in Ukraine”. Legal Analysis’, *Equal Rights Trust* (2013), http://www.equalrightstrust.org/ertdocumentbank/ERT%20Legal%20Analysis%20of%20Anti-Discrimination%20Legislation%20in%20Ukraine%20(English).pdf, accessed 2 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. See Constitution of Ukraine, http://zakon2.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/254к/96-вр, accessed 27 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. See Decree No 337. [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, *‘Invisible Battalion’*, p 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Emphasis is mine. See Yevheniya Shydlovs’ka, ‘P”yat’ istorii pro Nadiyu Savchenko’, *BBC Ukrainian*, 17 April 2015, http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/entertainment/2015/04/150306\_savchenko\_impressions\_she, accessed 6 February 2017. See also Maxine Boersma, ‘How Nadiya Savchenko became Ukraine’s Joan of Arc’, *New Statesman*, 21 November 2016, http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk/2016/11/how-nadiya-savchenko-became-ukraines-joan-arc, accessed 6 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. See ‘Kreml’ ne darma boyit’sya Savchenko – Atlantic Council’, *Dzerkalo Tyzhnya*, 18 March 2016, http://dt.ua/WORLD/kreml-ne-darma-boyitsya-savchenko-atlantic-council-202864\_.html, accessed 6 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Anton Herashchenko, an adviser to Ukraine’s Interior Minister in ‘Stranu nado sshyvat’’, *Korrespondent.net*, 17 August 2016, http://korrespondent.net/ukraine/politics/3732871-stranu-nado-sshyvat-yntervui-s-antonom-heraschenko, accessed 7 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. See Tamara Martseniuk interviewed by Iryna Slavins’ka in ‘Mizohiniya ta henderni stereotypy, abo She for She’, *Hromads’ke Radio*, 30 September 2016, https://hromadskeradio.org/programs/antena/mizoginiya-ta-genderni-stereotypy-abo-she-for-she, accessed 6 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Nadiya Savchenko, *Syl’ne im”ya Nadiya!* (Kyiv: ‘Yustinian’, 2016), pp 170-186. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. Savchenko, *Syl’ne im”ya Nadiya*, p 170. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Savchenko, *Syl’ne im”ya Nadiya*, p 171. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. See Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit and Grytsenko, *‘Invisible Battalion’*, 22. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Viktoriya Dvorets’ka in Oksana Khudoyar, ‘“Naryad na kukhni – tse naivazhche. To ne zhinocha robota”’, *Gazeta.ua*, 27 March 2015, para. 6, http://gazeta.ua/articles/ukraine-newspaper/\_naryad-na-kuhni-ce-najvazhche-to-ne-zhinocha-robota/617281?mobile=true, accessed 2 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)
75. Dvorets’ka interviewed by Tamara Balayeva, ‘14 mesiatsev schast’ya. Istoriya odnoi zhenshchiny na voine’, *Focus*, 29 October 2015, para. 14, https://focus.ua/society/339188/?utm\_source=email&utm\_medium=email&utm\_campaign=mail, accessed 8 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-75)
76. See ‘“Sovok” v ukrainskoi armii: razvedchitsy i piloty vypolniaiut boevye zadania za zarplatu… banshchits’, *Face News,* 30 March 2015, https://www.facenews.ua/articles/2015/267762/?hc\_location=ufi, accessed 2 February 2017. See also ‘Viktoriia, “Dyka”, Batal’ion “Aidar”, ofitser ZSU’, *Volonters’kyi foto proekt ‘Iakby ne viina’*, 8 March 2016, https://www.facebook.com/ifnotwar/posts/972287719530611, accessed 2 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-76)
77. Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, *‘Invisible Battalion’*, p 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-77)
78. Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, *‘Invisible Battalion’*, p 24. [↑](#footnote-ref-78)
79. Martsenyuk, Grytsenko, Kvit, ‘The “Invisible Battalion”’, p 179. [↑](#footnote-ref-79)
80. See Decree No 337. [↑](#footnote-ref-80)
81. Interviewee Berlins’ka, 9 June 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-81)
82. Interviewee Tolopa. See also Tolopa in ‘My znaishly rosiis’ku BMP’. Legally, as a foreign national, Tolopa should not have been allowed to join the Ukrainian army. However, in 2015, the number of foreign nationals fighting on the side of the Ukrainian state in the Donbas was estimated at over a thousand. See Svyatoslav Khomenko, ‘“Inozemnyi lehion” po-ukrayins’ky: khorosha novyna chy zakon bez sensu’, *BBC Ukrainian*, 7 October 2015, para. 7, http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/politics/2015/10/151007\_ukr\_army\_foreigners\_sx, accessed 3 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-82)
83. Female Respondent 21 in Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, *‘Nevydymyi Battal’ion’*, 25. [↑](#footnote-ref-83)
84. See Martsenyuk, Grytsenko, Kvit, ‘The “Invisible Battalion”’, p 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-84)
85. The full title of the document is ‘Amendments to the Interim list of staff positions for privates, sergeants, sergeants-major, including those for which the appointment of female military personnel is allowed, and the corresponding ranks and wage categories’. See Decree No. 292, *Ministerstvo Oborony Ukrayiny*, 3 June 2016, http://zakon3.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0881-16/paran7#n7, accessed 2 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-85)
86. Martsenyuk, Grytsenko, Kvit, ‘The “Invisible Battalion”’, 183. [↑](#footnote-ref-86)
87. See Decree No. 292. [↑](#footnote-ref-87)
88. ###  See ‘Ukraintsi ts’oho roku pererakhuvaly ponad 600 tys hrn na potreby armii’, *BBC Ukrainian*, 18 October 2016, http://www.bbc.com/ukrainian/news\_in\_brief/2016/10/161018\_sd\_ukrainian\_army\_funds, accessed 3 February 2017; Philippa H. Stewart, ‘Ukraine: A war funded by people’s donations’, 21 April 2015, *Al Jazeera*, http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2015/04/ukraine-war-funded-people-donations-150405064356775.html, accessed 3 February 2017.

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89. Female Respondent 25 in Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, *‘Nevydymyi Batal’ion’*, 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-89)
90. Interviewee Tolopa. [↑](#footnote-ref-90)
91. Female respondent 36 in Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, *‘Nevydymyi Batal’ion’*, 27. [↑](#footnote-ref-91)
92. Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, *‘Inivisible Battalion’*, 26. [↑](#footnote-ref-92)
93. Female Responded 14 in Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, *‘Nevydymyi Batal’ion’*, 28. [↑](#footnote-ref-93)
94. Female Respondent 17 in in Berlins’ka, Martsenyuk, Kvit, and Grytsenko, *‘Nevydymyi Batal’ion’*. [↑](#footnote-ref-94)
95. Popova, ‘Seksyzm na maidani’. [↑](#footnote-ref-95)
96. See Gelinada Grinchenko, Kateryna Kobchenko, and Oksana Kis (eds.), *Zhinky Tsentral’noyi ta Skhidnoyi Yevropy u Druhii svitovii viini: Henderna spetsyfika dosvidu v chasy ekstremal’noho nasyl’stva*—*zbirnyk naukovykh prats’*, (Kyiv: TOV ‘Art Knyha’, 2015). [↑](#footnote-ref-96)
97. Iryna Kosovs’ka, ‘Review Article: Eastern Europe’s Women in World War II’, *Journal of Soviet and Post-Soviet Politics and Society* 2, no. 1, (2016), pp 231-236 (234). [↑](#footnote-ref-97)
98. Olesya Kotlyarova in ‘Odkrovennya divchyny-dobrovol’tsya: zhinky na viini moral’no vytryvalishi’, *Dyvys’ Info*, 25 July 2016, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtOYQKmXAKw, access 6 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-98)
99. Berlins’ka in Spasibina, ‘“Komandyr prosyv zanochuvaty z nym”’, para 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-99)
100. Interviewee Tolopa. [↑](#footnote-ref-100)
101. Interviewee Tolopa. [↑](#footnote-ref-101)
102. Marta Havryshko, ‘Henderne nasyl’stvo v partnerstvakh viis’kovych: naratyv zhinky, yaka vyzhyla’, *Povaha,* 14 September 2016, para. 4, http://povaha.org.ua/henderne-nasylstvo-v-partnerstvah-vijskovyh-naratyv-zhinky-yaka-vyzhyla/, accessed 31 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-102)
103. Havryshko, ‘Henderne nasyl’stvo’, para. 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-103)
104. Havryshko, ‘Henderne nasyl’stvo’, para. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-104)
105. Havryshko, ‘Henderne nasyl’stvo’, para. 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-105)
106. Marta Havryshko, ‘Mistsevi zhinky ta cholovichyi comfort u zoni zbroinoho konfliktu’, *Povaha*, 30 January 2017, para. 18, http://povaha.org.ua/mistsevi-zhinky-ta-cholovichyj-komfort-u-zoni-zbrojnoho-konfliktu/, accessed 30 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-106)
107. Havryshko, ‘Henderne nasyl’stvo’, para. 8. [↑](#footnote-ref-107)
108. See ‘Furiyi Maidana. Seks, psikhoz i politika’, *NTV*, 19 April 2014, http://www.ntv.ru/video/777580/, accessed 7 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-108)
109. #  See **Amandine** Regamey, ‘Falsehood in the War in Ukraine: the Legend of Women Snipers’, *The Journal of Power Institutions in Post-Soviet Societies 17* (2016), paras. 27-28, https://pipss.revues.org/4222#ftn29, accessed 7 February 2017.

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110. *Volonters’kyi foto proekt ‘Yakby ne viina’*, 8 March 2016, https://www.facebook.com/ifnotwar/photos/a.949136258512424.1073741829.948611305231586/972142836211766/?type=3&theater, accessed 7 February 2017. See also ‘Zhinochi oblychchya revoliutsiyi’, aired on 1+1 channel in May 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzgEE8i360g, accessed 7 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-110)
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112. See Popova, ‘“Dyvanna sotnya”’. See also ‘Prykhovana pravda. Zhinky na viini’, *Espreso.TV*, 23 May 2015, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r8zunJxvyXk, accessed 6 February 2017; ‘Zhinky-viis’kovi u zoni ATO voyuyut’ na rivni z cholovikamy’, *TSN*, 9 November 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kY6SO4OnZ2o, accessed 6 February 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-112)
113. In 2017, Berlins’ka produced a documentary film, ‘Invisible Battalion’, which aims to highlight the reality of women’s experiences at the frontline. See ‘Invisible Battalion’ Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/InvisibleBattalion/, accessed 30 October 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-113)
114. Regamey, ‘Falsehood in the War in Ukraine’, para. 19. [↑](#footnote-ref-114)
115. Mariya Berlins’ka, ‘Lyudi. Hard Talk. Mariya Berlins’kaya, uchastnitsa ATO’, *112 Ukrayina*, 09 December 2016, https://youtu.be/y-gSxNncmYA?t=1507, accessed 30 January 2017. [↑](#footnote-ref-115)