

Allies or Collaborators? The Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists and Nazi Germany during the Occupation of Ukraine in 1941–43

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Abstract: *The question of how to classify the relationship between the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN) and Nazi Germany during World War II is both extremely complex from the scholarly point of view, and heavily politicized and emotionally charged. Was the OUN's relationship to Nazi Germany a case of a full-fledged alliance, or should we rather view this as an instance of collaboration, in which the OUN was in a subordinate position vis-à-vis the Nazi authorities? This article sets out to classify the relations between the Ukrainian nationalists and various structures of the German Reich during the different periods of their cooperation, with a particular focus on the period of the Nazi occupation of Ukraine. The specificity of the OUN case, especially when it comes to this particular period, means that the OUN's actions do not fit neatly within a clear-cut ally/collaborator dichotomy. In this article, a case is made for viewing this relationship as neither an alliance nor collaboration, but rather a specific form of situational tactical cooperation arising out of conditions in which the aims and intentions of the two parties were in temporary alignment with one another. In making this argument, the article seeks to contribute to the scholarship on the problem of how to define collaboration in the context of the particular conditions of the Eastern front.*