

# Translation of the Memorial (Yizkor) Book of the Jewish Community of Buczacz, Galicia

Norbert Porile



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The history of Buczacz is a microcosm of the history of Galician shtetls and yet Buczacz was a more prominent shtetl than many in Galicia. As a spiritual center for Galician Jews, Buczacz produced a number of prominent rabbis, many of whom are named in the Yizkor Book. The town was a center for scholarship as can be seen in the long list of books by Buczacz authors. Buczacz produced prominent internationally known scholars including: Shmuel Yosef Agnon (winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1966); Schlomo Freud (grandfather of Sigmund Freud) and several generations of the Freud ancestors; Emanuel Ringelblum (historian, politician, and Holocaust chronicler); Simon Wiesenthal (post-World War II Nazi hunter). The Jewish community of Buczacz was organized to produce a wide variety of social and religious services including, a hospital, an old-age home, an orphanage, as well as a synagogue, and a prayer house. The community contained a heterogeneous mix of orthodox, secular, and Zionist Jews. Despite its history of episodic ethnic and class violence, Buczacz remained a multi-cultural community in which the various ethnic groups lived in mostly harmonious interdependence until the ethnic cleansings of World War II and its aftermath. Today, Buchach (as it is now called) is inhabited largely by Ukrainians; there are no Jews left and few Poles. This Memioral (Yizkor) Book describes the history and geography of Buczacz, details the social and economic life of the town, names many of the prominent people, details the destruction of the Jewish community, and gives the Holocaust-era fates of many families. Today this book serves as a memorial to the Jewish Community that no longer exists there. The town is also know as Buchach [Russian, Ukrainian], Buczacz [Polish], Betshotsh [Yiddish], Butschatsch [German], Bucac [Czech], Butchatch, Bitshutsh. Buczacz is located at 49°05' North latitude, 25°24' East longitude. It is 246 miles WSW of Kiev.

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