

City walk exploring traces of Islam

The Muslim religious community
with its seat in Warsaw
is a member of the Muslim Religious Union.
The community has a mosque
where prayers are held
every Friday and holidays,
Islamic Center and two cemeteries...



The Maria Grzegorzewska
UNIVERSITY
established 1922



MAY-JUNE 2022

EDUCATORE Project:

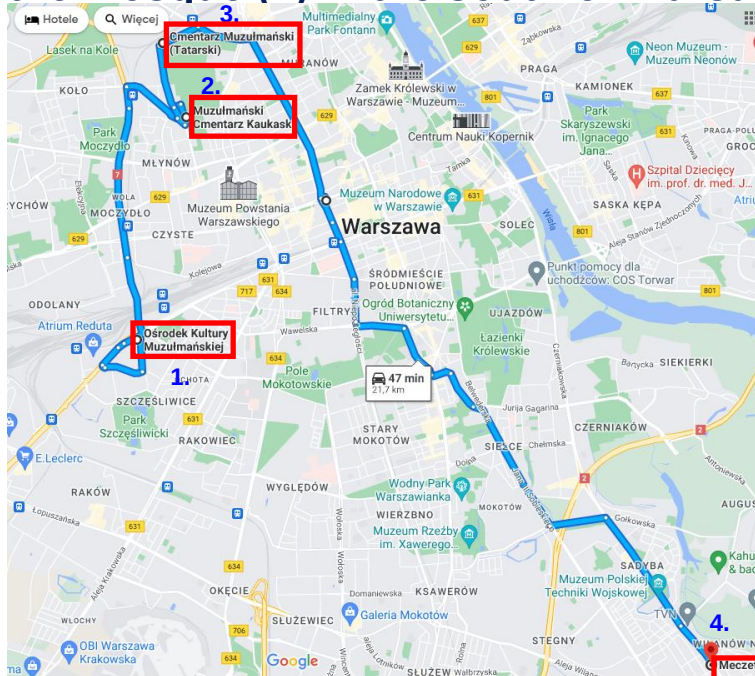
**End of Disaster: Undoing Crisis. Active Tutors Open to
Reflective Education**

EMPATHY Project:

**Let's Empower, Participate and Teach each other to
Hype Empathy - Challenging discourse about Islam and
Muslims in Poland**

Empathy

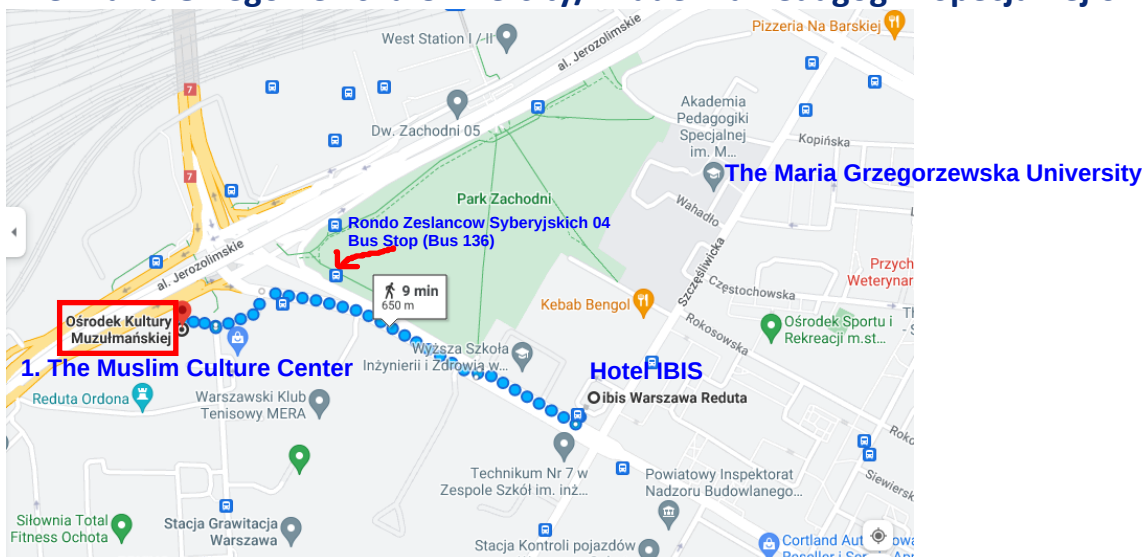
The walk starts not far away from the Maria Grzegorzewska University. The first stop is The Muslim Culture Center (1). Then we invite you to travel to Muslim cemeteries (2,3). We will finish our excursion sightseeing the Mosque (4) in the south of Warsaw



1. The Muslim Culture Center

In Polish: Ośrodek Kultury Muzułmańskiej, address: Aleja Bohaterów Września 23, Ochota district

You can walk to the Muslim Culture Center/Osrodek Kultury Muzułmańskiej (1) from The Maria Grzegorzewska University/Akademia Pedagogiki Specjalnej or Ibis Hotel



The center is one of the largest and most modern Muslim Culture Centers in Europe. The center was opened in 2015.

It is located in a very advantageous location, close to the Blue City and the West Railway Station. The fancy design of the Center refers both to the traditional Middle East style and modern European architecture. The Center includes, among others a large prayer room (for about 600 people), conference rooms and a library.

Opening hours of the Center

The prayer room is open daily at prayer times

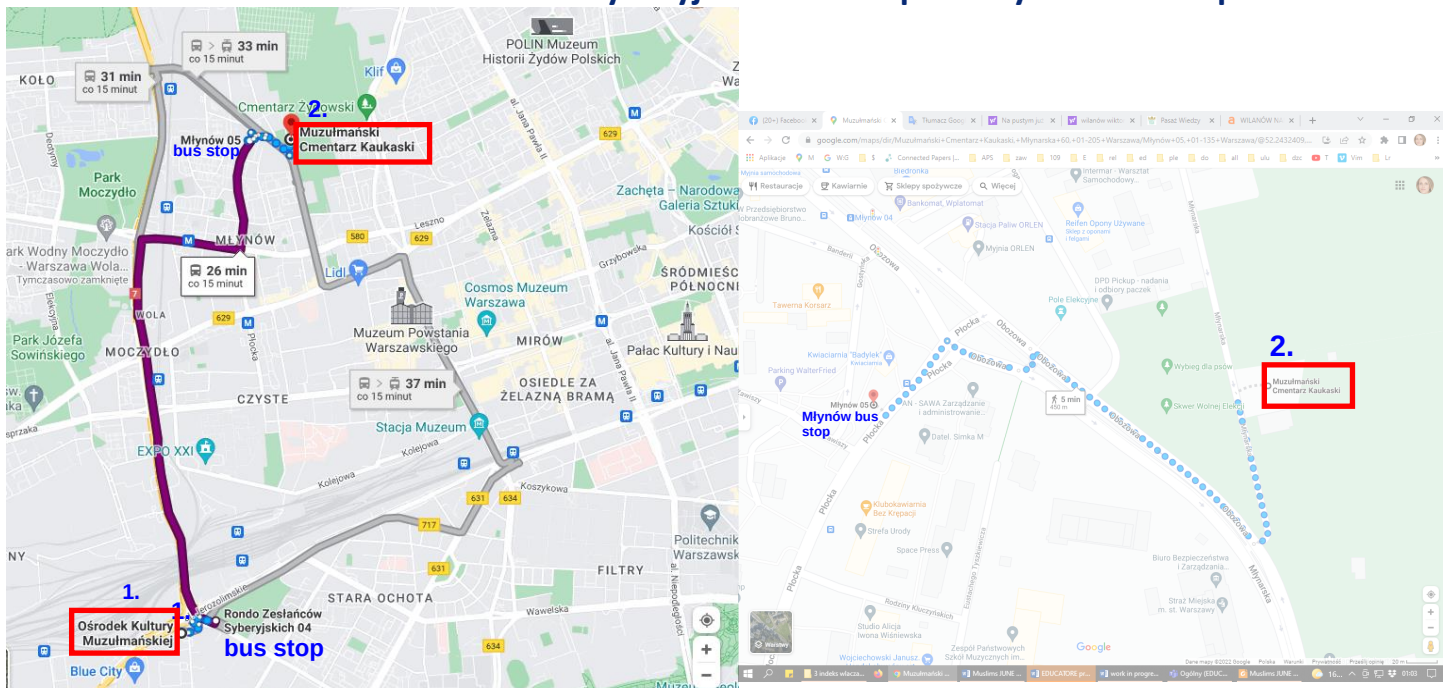
Friday Prayer - is held at 12:00

<http://www.okmwarszawa.pl/>



Muslim Culture Center, author: Darpaw, Creative Commons 4.0 International Licence, source: Wikipedia.org

To get from the Muslim Culture Center/Osrodek Kultury Muzulmanskiej (1) to the Muslim Caucasian Cemetery/Muzulmanski Cmentarz Kaukaski (2) you can take bus number '136' from Rondo Zeslancow Syberyjskich bus stop to Mlynow bus stop:



2. The Muslim Caucasian Cemetery

in Polish: Muzulmanski Cmentarz Kaukaski, address: Młynarska 60 St., Wola district

<https://goo.gl/maps/7TJ22Q3GiDvbWMH96>

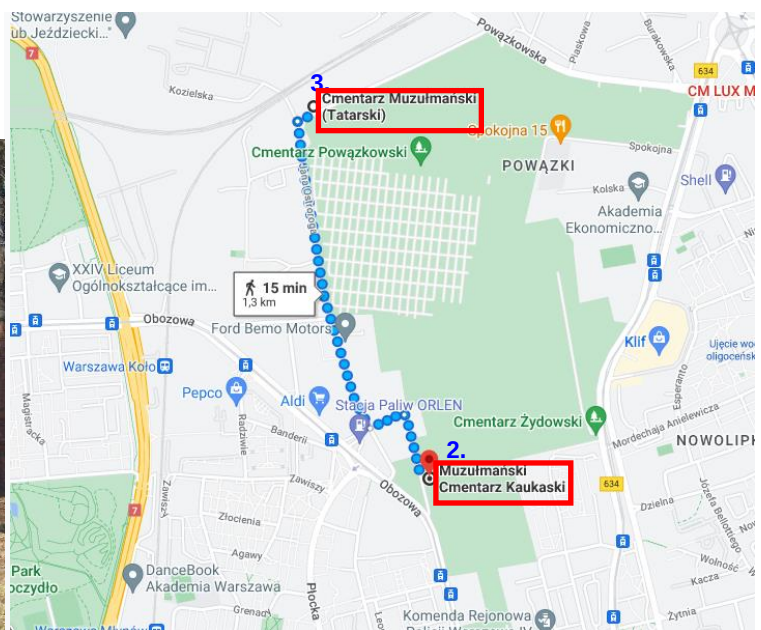
This historic cemetery (mizar - Polish Arabic word "mezar", meaning cemetery) is 1000 m² big and is situated between the Jewish and the Evangelical-Augsburg cemeteries. It was founded in 1830 and was used until 1867. It was then closed for many years, due to the lack of places for burial. In the Muslim tradition, it is not possible to bury the dead in the same place again.

In the 19th century, Muslim soldiers from the Russian army as well as visiting merchants and other residents of Warsaw were buried there. During the Warsaw Uprising in 1944, the cemetery, along with the neighboring Evangelical cemeteries, was the scene of heavy fights.

Currently, the Caucasian Muslim cemetery is fenced with a brick wall with a large steel gate. It resembles an empty field and is not open to the public. The only element that attracts attention is the high sandstone tombstone column of General Zachariasz Kieński (who died in Pisa in Tuscany) and his wife Wilhelmina Kieńska née Pahlen. This column is decorated with a characteristic Tatar coat of arms, the so-called tamga. Jan Buczacki (the first translator of the Koran into Polish) is also buried at the Caucasian cemetery.

Among the bushes, by the wall, small hills with wooden and stone tablets attract attention. These are the graves of Chechen refugees living in Poland, who were buried here in the last 20 years. It is declared a historical monument. The cemetery is open only on religious occasions and is closed to visitors. You can only look through the gate.

[source: wikipedia.org]



The Muslim Caucasian Cemetery, Kieński's tombstone, author: Adrian Grycuk, Creative Commons 3.0 Polish Licence, source: wikipedia.org

You can walk from the Muslim Caucasian Cemetery/Muzulmanski Cmentarz Kaukaski (2) to the Muslim Tatar Cemetery/Muzulmanski Cmentarz Tatarski (3) within 15 mins.

3. The Muslim Tatar Cemetery

in Polish: Muzulmanski Cmentarz Tatarski, address: Tatarska 8 St., near the Old Powązki cemetery, Wola district

It is a historic mizar. The Muslim Tatar Cemetery was established in 1867 on the initiative of the Warsaw imam Seifetdin Chosianow Sinnajew, after the Muslim Caucasian Cemetery (2) was closed. It covers about 1 ha.

Initially, mainly Muslim soldiers of the Russian army who stationed in Warsaw were buried there. Later, other Muslims began to be buried here. It is the resting place of many Polish Tatars, mainly from the territory of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania.

At the end of the 19th century, the cemetery was divided into a part for the richer (to the right of the entrance) and a part for the poorer (to the left of the entrance). Later this division was abandoned, but you can still see some historic traces of that.

During World War I, Russian soldiers of Islam faith, who died in German captivity, were buried here.

The left side is deserted. Only a few tombstones have survived here (of Princess Lejla Chanum née Glebowe Tarkowska, Halifa Ibrachima of Fazlejew and Lieutenant General Stefan Sobolewski). This is the result of the warfare of World War II. The Nazis destroyed many graves in 1942, when their tanks hid here from a Soviet air raid. However, the apogee of the destruction occurred during the Warsaw uprising in 1944, when the nazis shelled the positions of the insurgents.

The cemetery is a historical monument. The most interesting graves can be found when you are walking along the main alley of the cemetery. One of them is a high tombstone in the shape of a minaret of Abdul Halik Usmi (a film double and a voltager) who died tragically in 1932 (at the age of 29), dueling in defense of the honor of the famous Polish actress Jadwiga Smosarska, whom he admired. Apparently, the tombstone was made by Smosarska herself, who visited his grave after the war.



The Muslim Tatar Cemetery, author: Adrian Grycuk, Creative Commons 3.0 Polish Licence, source: wikipedia.org

<https://goo.gl/maps/BJ3LT4TWZ1VzJtze9>

There are also many graves of Tatar soldiers who faithfully served Polish army, incl. Ali Woronowicz (imam of the capital city of Warsaw, chaplain of the armed forces), prince Rustem Murzicz (officer of the Tatar Ride Squad of the 13th Vilnius Uhlans Regiment, Knight of the Virtuti Militari), Major Aleksander Jeljaszewicz (the last commander of the Tatar Ride of the 13th Regiment, Cavaliers of Vilnius Virtuti Militari). There is also a symbolic grave of Ibrahim Bajraszewski (soldier of the Polish Armed Forces in the West, hero of the Battle of Narvik during the World War II).

On the now empty grave of General Safar-Bek Malaga (exhumed a few years ago) we can read the inscription "Sleep well and dream of Caucasus". There are also buried here, among others: lawyers, politicians and diplomats, scientists, social activists, doctors, officers of the Polish army, imams from the interwar period and recent decades and years. The cemetery is still in use.

The oldest preserved tombstones are now to the left of the entrance, in front of the administrative building. In the territory of the cemetery there is a small mosque - Muslim House of Prayer in the Tatar Cemetery.
source: wikipedia.org

Opening hours:

Monday 10: 00-17: 00

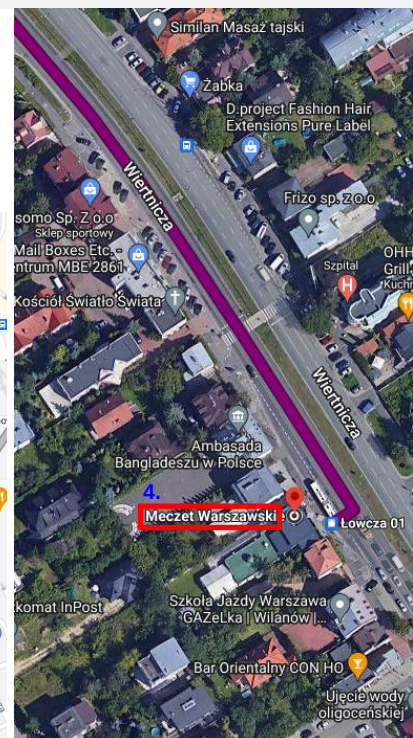
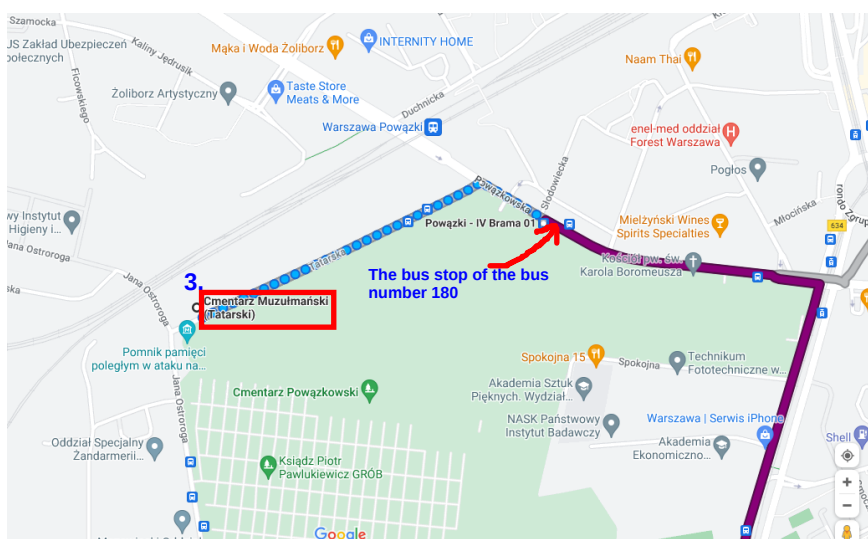
Tuesday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

website: www.mzr.pl/mizary/

More on the Tatars in Poland: <https://culture.pl/en/article/in-the-footsteps-of-the-tatars>

You can get from the Muslim Tatar Cemetery/Muzulmanski Cmentarz Tatarski (3) to the Mosque/ Meczet (4):

From the Tatar Cemetery walk ca. 9 mins to the Powązki - IV Brama 01 bus stop, get on the bus number '180', ride 30 bus stops (for around 50 mins.) and get off at Lowcza bus stop (a few steps from the Mosque).



4. The Mosque

In Polish: Meczet, address: Wiertnicza 103 St., Wilanów district

It is currently one of the five active mosques in Poland. The idea of building a mosque in Warsaw existed even before the outbreak of World War II. The initiators of building the mosque were Polish Tatars. The facility was to have at least one minaret, a dome, and in front of the entrance, the so-called haram with water, that is, a fountain or a spring. The main prayer room should have accommodated 350 men. A gallery for 100 women has also been planned. The winning design from 1936 by Stanisław Kolenda and Tadeusz Miazek envisaged the erection of a building with an onion-shaped dome, surrounded by four 20-meter minarets.

Ultimately, these plans were not implemented. The war and then the communists regime that came afterwards changed everything.

The present mosque in Wilanów is not a typical Muslim house of prayer, but a villa adapted in 1993. There is no minaret. The building also houses a few Islamic cultural institutions and the offices of the Muslim Religious Community in Warsaw.[source: [https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meczet_w_Warszawie_\(Wilanow\)](https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meczet_w_Warszawie_(Wilanow))]

Prayers are held on Fridays at 12:00

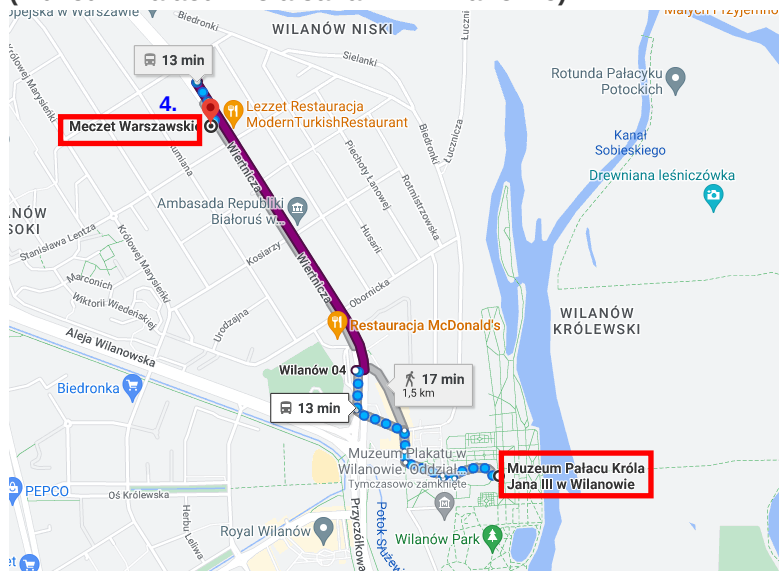
<http://www.centrumislam.pl/>



<https://goo.gl/maps/K1zyLvTJ4j1asyyf9>

The Mosque by Wiertnicza 103 St., Warsaw, author: Adrian Gryczuk, Creative Commons 3.0 Polish Licence, source: wikipedia.org

This is the end of the Muslim traces route. You can come back to the city center or continue sightseeing – in you continue with bus number 180 it will take you to the baroque Wilanow Palace and gardens (Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie) ...



<https://goo.gl/maps/aGHacCCWG5JiA9VF>

