

After a long day of wandering
In the magnificent cities of so many surprises
My heart
Full of little girls painting each others' hands
With henna – warm ladies I could have stayed with
For hours – we turned into an alley



And waited for permission.
The local policeman on his beat,
stopped any interference
by keeping his charges in line,
checking a bag or two to make sure
no one was planning something
against the jews walking in line
in some unknown mission
through streets littered

with cats and dogs and all the leavings
of centuries

Then there it was

The shul of the Rambam



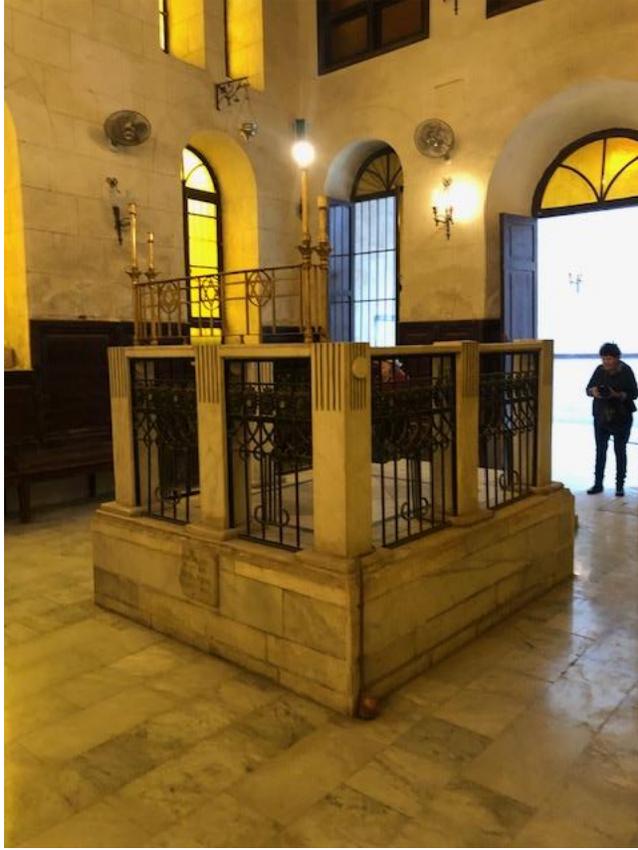
easy to miss, shocking in its discovery

Renewed in past years – the synagogue, the school

Of the renowned rabbi, rambam













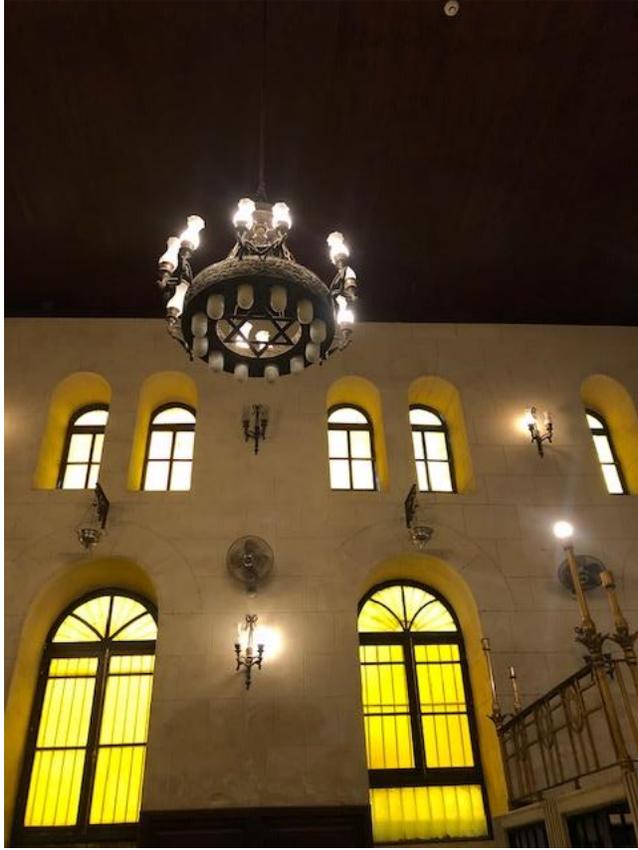
The arc renewed with new scrolls,

The second story rebuilt

Although I shudder from entering

The distant women's section,

So high, so isolated.



Then descending into the school,
where he taught
when the king released him in the evenings
the dark remains of the school
that continues to enlighten my world.

Karen Alkalay-Gut