

the hallways, which are often the most memorable part of a meeting like this.

The topic for my formal presentation this morning is Religion and Modern Science. Let's begin with a picture, courtesy of Richard E. Rubenstein in his recent book, *The Children of Aristotle*:

The time is the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The place is Toledo, Spain. Picture a broad table, well lit by candles, on which are spread out dozens of manuscripts written in Syriac, Aramaic, Arabic, Hebrew, and Greek. Around the table, poring over the manuscripts, taking notes, or conversing animatedly, are bearded Jews, tonsured Christian monks, turbaned Muslims, and dark-haired Greeks. The table occupies the center of a hall in the city's cathedral, whose archbishop, Raymund I, stands to one side. In his hand he holds a book written by Aristotle, a thinker the Christians are just beginning to rediscover thanks to the Muslims --a thinker who taught that the natural world was to be studied and understood.

As you all know, that picture comes from a time when Europe was just emerging from centuries of poverty and social strife, and al Andalus, was a land in which intellectuals were admired for their achievements in law, philosophy, mathematics, and the natural sciences. It was the cultural interpenetration of that period which led to the beginnings of the scientific revolution that would ultimately change our world.

O.K. You say. That is a very nice image, but what does it have to do with today? The truth is, each one of our traditions has had a long and complex history from that scene in Toledo to this day. Learning about how Christian thinkers have dealt with science over the centuries has been enlightening for me as a Jew. I do not know nearly enough about the way in which Muslims have approached the challenges of modern science, so in my very brief remarks today I will limit myself to Jewish and Christian examples. I know that I will benefit by expanding my knowledge to include