

Preface:

“The **Leipzig Debate** ([German](#): *Leipziger Disputation*) was a theological [disputation](#) originally between [Andreas Karlstadt](#) and [Johann Eck](#). Eck, a defender of [Catholic](#) doctrine and a highly respected Dominican friar, had challenged Karlstadt, a [Christian theologian](#), to a public debate concerning the doctrines of [free will](#) and [grace](#). The Leipzig Debate took place at June and July of 1519 at [Pleissenburg Castle](#) in [Leipzig](#)

Eck invited [Martin Luther](#) to join the debate, and when Luther arrived in July he and Eck expanded the terms of the debate to include matters such as the existence of [purgatory](#), the sale of [indulgences](#), the need for and methods of [penance](#), and the legitimacy of [papal authority](#)”  
from Wikipedia

## **The Leipzig Debate**

### **The Breakthrough for Reformation**

**The reforming ideas of Martin Luther could still be repulsed in 1518. Therefore Johann Eck intended a Debate between him and Martin Luther in Leipzig. Obviously Eck was quite sure that he had nothing to fear in Leipzig.**

However: while the University of Leipzig had agreed with this suggestion the Theological Faculty refused it. Only by the intervention of Duke “George the Beardy” could then take place in Leipzig. Johann Eck arrived on June, 21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup>, in 1519 in Leipzig. One day later M. Luther’s delegation came, accompanied by 200 armed students. One was warned, after a Johann Hus was burnt 1415 in spite of the consent of the “Council of Constantinople” Luther was hidden in the house of the

printer Melchior Lotter (today Hotel Polognia) in the Hainstr. Leipzig.

The Debate began on July, 4<sup>th</sup> in 1519. On the one side Martin Luther – and the other Johann Eck. While Luther was supported by the alert and astute thinker Philipp Melanchthon, J. Eck relied more on the professors of the Theological Faculty – however: they let him down! J. Eck complained that these professors mostly slept during the Debate!

After the end of the Debate both parties declared themselves winners. But that didn’t change on the fact that Luther’s thesis were quickly disseminated : neither the Pope nor the “Council of Constantinople” had the highest authority any longer in matters of believing – and not all thoughts of Johann Hus were heretical and justified his murder. From then on the break between Luther and Rome began. So Leipzig became the place, where the Reformation, the renewal of Church developed as an irresistible process.

Translated from German into English . Herbert Mühlenbrink, and Dr. David Rhyne, South Carolina , USA Leipzig, June 2015