

Historicus practicus: Calvin's use of Josephus in the commentaries and lectures / William Den Hollander

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Abstrak

This article contributes specifically to the filling in of a lacuna in scholarship regarding the reception of Josephus's writings among the Reformers and contributes generally to investigations into the humanist scholarship of the Reformation. It analyzes the use of Josephus's writings in Calvin's Commentaries and Lectures in order to bring about a better understanding of both the nature of his reception of Josephus and the character of his historical enterprise. The picture that emerges is of Calvin as *historicus practicus*: i.e., his role as historian was subordinated to his responsibility as theologian to edify the church. Calvin's specific attitude towards the writings of Josephus is best explained by competing historical factors, especially Josephus's earlier positive reception by the early church and the negative attitudes toward Jews present in the sixteenth century.