The main part of the thesis is a commentary on Silius Italicus Book 1, concentrating on the poet’s attempts to blend history into epic. Close scrutiny of his language reveals his awareness of the problems involved in writing historical epic, as he varies his diction and conventions at different stages of the book. The commentary also examines his manipulation of the historical tradition.

Excursus 1, The Structure, examines Silius’ solution of the largescale problem of shap...
Select an issue. Silius Italicus, in full Tiberius Catius Asconius Silius Italicus (c. 28 – c. 103 CE), was a Roman consul, orator, and Latin epic poet of the 1st century CE (Silver Age of Latin literature). His only surviving work is the 17-book Punica, an epic poem about the Second Punic War and the longest surviving poem in Latin at over 12,000 lines. The sources for the life of Silius Italicus are primarily Letter 3.7 of Pliny the Younger, which is a description of the poet’s life written on the occasion of his Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2012.07.08 Frances Muecke, John Dunston (ed.), Domizio Calderini: Commentary on Silius Italicus. Travaux d’Humanisme et Renaissance 477. Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2011. The physical book itself is not especially sturdy—the glue along the spine of my copy has already given way, and the cover for such a hefty tome perhaps ought to have been hard rather than soft. Nevertheless, even at the understandably high price, the volume is worth every penny.