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...
Silius Italicus - Book 1. By Dantius, in 'Reading Latin', Apr 9, 2018. Dantius Homo Sapiens. At least for book one – not sure if I’ll do them for all 17 books. Preface (1-16): ordior arma (1): I saw some article/commentary on Google Books pointing out that with these opening words, Silius indicates his two major sources of Vergil and Livy (arma = Vergil’s arma virumque, and apparently ordior has a Livian tone to it; cf. tantae ordiendae rei from Livy’s preface referring to him beginning his work). Silius (T. Catius Silius Italicus), 25 CE–101, was consul in 68 and governor of the province of Asia in 69; he sought no further office but lived thereafter on his estates as a literary man and collector. He revered the work of Cicero, whose Tuscan villa he owned, and that of Virgil, whose tomb at Naples he likewise owned and near which he lived. His epic Punica, in 17 books, on the second War with Carthage (218–202 BCE), is based for facts largely on Livy’s account.