
The *Manipulus florum* is an alphabetically-arranged *florilegium* designed for use in writing sermons – a seemingly ordinary handbook which enjoyed extraordinary and long-lasting popularity, extending from its publication in 1306 through its most recent appearance in print in 1877. The Rouses initially set the *Manipulus florum* against a background of the activities and preoccupations of thirteenth-century scholars and preachers, including the creation and development of alphabetical reference tools, a new and urgent emphasis upon the preaching ministry, and the evolution in the form and content of the sermon. In discussing the *Manipulus florum* itself, the authors consider the problem of the work’s disputed authorship, the purposes and methods of its compilation, and the principal sources, many of them previously unstudied, upon which the collection drew.

The *Manipulus* was published in *peciae* by the Paris stationers; and the surviving manuscripts have provided good evidence for a look at the workings of this system of book production. The authors have also traced the use and influence of the *Manipulus florum*, in sermons, in later *florilegia*, and in Latin and vernacular literature; knowledge of the work is displayed by such disparate figures as the canonist William of Pagula and Petrarch. The Rouses have used the *Manipulus florum* as a point of departure for a wide-ranging study of the development and use of *florilegia*, preachers’ manuals, and other alphabetical aids, from the thirteenth-century monastic centers to the Renaissance.

Among the appendixes which conclude the book are Thomas of Ireland’s introduction and the bibliography that he appended to the *Manipulus florum*, edited here for the first time; an author and title index of the 6000 extracts in the *Manipulus florum*; and a detailed catalog of the more than 180 surviving manuscripts.