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“Will anyone who reads this remember that?” *Re-Orientation in E. M. Forster’s Encounter with John Addington Symonds’ Memoirs*

In 1961, after fifty years of trying without success to access them, E.M. Forster was finally given permission to read John Addington Symonds’ *Memoirs*. The Victorian writer, critic, and early homosexual activist’s complete memoirs had been kept sealed ever since Symonds’ death in 1893. The reason why these memoirs were not published in their entirety until many years after Symonds’ death is clear: they were written, according to their author, to record the life of a man who loved and desired men in an age where it was considered a taboo. Their truthful accounts of same-sex desire and romance, and their detailed attention to the psychological and physical consequences of this desire ensured the document’s impossibility to be published.

In this short paper, I will briefly illustrate, through Forster’s fortunate encounter with Symonds’ life record, how the theoretical concepts of “Orientation” and “Recognition” might contribute to a better understanding of the processes through which queer historiographies are produced. These historiographies, whose genealogies are an important part of my wider PhD thesis, have played a crucial role in the development of both LGBTQ+ identities and of queer criticism at large.