

Matthew Ryan Robinson

## Redeeming Relationship, Relationships that Redeem

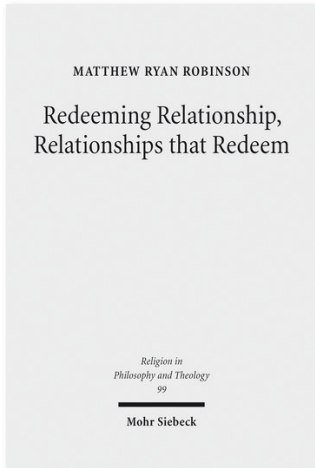
### Free Sociability and the Completion of Humanity in the Thought of Friedrich Schleiermacher

[Beziehungen, die erlöst werden und erlösen. Freie Geselligkeit und die Vollendung der Menschheit im Denken Friedrich Schleiermachers.]

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A renewed focus on the role of interpersonal relationships in the cultivation of religious sensibilities is emerging in the study of religion. Matthew Ryan Robinson addresses this question in his study of Friedrich Schleiermacher's notion of »free sociability«. In Schleiermacher's ethics, the human person is formed in and consists of intimate, tightly interconnecting relationships with others. Schleiermacher describes this sociability as a natural tendency prompted by experiences of physical and existential limitation that lead one to look to others to complete one's experience. But this experience of incompleteness and orientation to »the completion of humanity« also constitute the fundamental structure of religion in Schleiermacher's theory of religion as orientation to »the universe and the relationship of humanity to it.« Thus, Schleiermacher not only presents sociability as basic to human nature, but also as inherently religious – and, potentially, redemptive. What making such a claim means and the implications it raises are central considerations of this study of Schleiermacher's ethics, theory of religion and ecclesiology.

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