

BERTRAND RUSSELL AND
LADY OTTOLINE MORRELL

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Ursula Voss. *Bertrand Russell und Lady Ottoline Morrell. Eine Liebe wider die Philosophie*. Berlin: Rowohlt, 1999. Pp. 175. No price stated. ISBN 3-8-7134-310-2.

This book belongs to a series entitled "Pairs", which presents to the general public relationships of note in the past. Here readers will learn about "the philosopher and the high priestess of Bloomsbury", to quote the description given (only) on the back cover. The authoress takes a straightforward chronological approach from the respective births in 1872 and 1873 to Morrell's death in 1938 (Russell's later life is just noted); but they are regularly switched or woven together in a pleasing way. Several of the better-known portraits are also included. She deploys a rich vocabulary to characterize the two personalities; however, the opening characterization of Russell as a "metaphysician" (p. 9) is unfortunate. She notes some of the more technical aspects of Russell's work, such as the abandoned book of 1913 on epistemology; and also various aspects of Morrell's life separate from her connections with Russell. Their differences are brought out, neatly in the word "*wider*" ("against") in Voss's title. Other figures are duly noted, especially Philip Morrell, and including also D. H. Lawrence and T. S. Eliot. The German-reading audience will gain a nice impression of this pair, of whom Morrell may well not be very familiar.

However, the book disappoints on a basic point of information. The authoress does not provide any footnotes or references, but gives a list of her reading at the end, including the standard biographies on both figures (though not the *Collected Papers* edition) and some related writings. But nowhere does she mention the mass of letters between Russell and Morrell, held in the Russell Archives and the Humanities Research Center in Austin, Texas; yet she cites quite a number of them in her account. Has she used the full collection without indication to the reader, or only used passages that happen to have been quoted in the works listed in her bibliography? Neither option is satisfactory.