

From Practice To Theory: Analyzing the Conceptual Roots of Moholy's Photographic Thought



Moholy: 2016 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Vild-Kunst, Bonn

Image Source: Bauhaus-Archiv Berlin

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I Introduction

Women's contributions to the Bauhaus have historically been overshadowed, despite their significant impact on its visual and theoretical legacy. One such figure is Lucia Moholy, whose work in both photography and photographic theory shaped the movement's visual identity and left a lasting mark on the history of photography, while navigating a male-dominated artistic landscape, often overshadowed by her husband, László Moholy-Nagy. While her photographic practices during the Bauhaus period (1919–1933) have been celebrated for their precision and modernist aesthetic, her later theoretical work, particularly in *A Hundred Years of Photography (1839–1939)*, offers critical insights into the cultural, historical, and technological implications of photography. This thesis aims to explore how Moholy's photographic practices during her time at the Bauhaus informed her theoretical perspectives in her book.

By tracing Moholy's journey from practice to theory, this thesis investigates the conceptual roots of her photographic thought. The main question for this research is: How do Lucia Moholy's photographic practices during the Bauhaus period (1919-1933) reflect in her later theoretical perspectives on photography in *A Hundred Years of Photography*?

Lucia Moholy successfully shaped the presentation and reception of Bauhaus by her product and architectural photographs (Jaeggi, 2016). But for many years, Moholy's work has been underrecognized. Therefore, it is not surprising that there are relatively few articles written about her and her work. Most of the written articles are about Lucia Moholy's photography (Molano & Amendola, 2022; Troeller, 2020), her writings (Forbes, 2016) and that she had to leave her negatives (Schuldenfrei, 2013). It is especially surprising that little has been written on her book '*A hundred years of photography 1839-1939*'. This is surprising, as a book that Moholy wrote herself can say a lot about who she is and her perspective on themes. In the book 'Lucia Moholy: Exposures', an article from Steffen Siegel about Moholy's book is published. Siegel's findings indicate that Moholy explored a new perspective on photography, but the text misses the chance to examine her book more closely and connect it to her earlier life practices. Using Steffen Siegel's article as a foundation for further exploration presents a valuable opportunity to deepen our understanding of Lucia Moholy's ideas on photography (Siegel, 2024).

This study takes a biographical and intellectual history approach, examining how Moholy's theoretical work reflects her earlier photographic practice at Bauhaus. It uses Moholy's book *A Hundred Years of Photography 1839-1939* as a primary source. While the closure of the Bauhaus archive limits access to Moholy's unpublished, personal writings, it also relies on secondary sources, including published works by historians who have examined her life and contributions. In addition to textual analysis, this study examines selected photographs from Moholy's Bauhaus period to identify recurring themes that reflect her later theoretical perspectives.

Chapter 1 provides an introduction to Lucia Moholy and establishes Moholy's biography, situating her within the Bauhaus movement. Chapter 2 explores the Bauhaus movement and Moholy's role within it, analyzing her practices and highlighting key themes that emerge from her work. Chapter 3 focuses on her book *A Hundred Years of Photography 1839–1939*, introducing its content and defining her theoretical perspective. Finally, Chapter 4 brings together her practical work and theoretical views, discussing the challenges she faced and the ways her ideas anticipated future developments.

II The life of Lucia Moholy

Born and raised as Lucia Schulz in Karlin, Prague on 18 Januari 1894, she was a girl growing up German in a non practicing Jewish family. By the age of 18, in 1912, Lucia became a qualified teacher for German and English and started studying history and philosophy at the University of Prague. From 1915 until 1918 she was an editor and copy-editor at several Berlin publishing houses and she wrote her first reviews and critiques. In 1919, Lucia relocated to Hamburg, the center of the Youth Movement's publishing efforts, where she began working for bookstore owner and publisher Adolf Saal. This is where she published expressionist literature under the pseudonym Ulrich Steffen.

In 1920, Lucia quit her job and moved to Berlin. Here, Friedrich Vorwerk became her partner who had taken up a position with the German student body, an aid organization that emerged from the Jugendbewegung. This is where Lucia met the young László Moholy-Nagy, where he was staying due to illness. Later, as an editor at Rowohlt-Verlag in Berlin, she recalled having to choose between Vorwerk, whom she saw as a "Pathetiker," and Moholy-Nagy, a "Pragmatiker." Reflecting on this period, she wrote in her diary: "Thus it became clear to me that I had left the time of the pathetic behind me but had not yet taken up a new attitude. And so, I was thoroughly open to new impressions."

In 1921, Lucia Schulz married László Moholy-Nagy, taking the name Lucia Moholy. Their marriage is believed to have happened quickly to help László secure permission to stay in Berlin, where he had arrived from Budapest via Vienna after the war (Forbes, 2016). Between 1922 and 1923, the couple collaborated closely on art theory and photography. In the early years of their marriage, Lucia supported them financially through her work in publishing. This continued until László was invited to the Bauhaus in 1923, prompting their move to the original Bauhaus location in Weimar, Germany. Lucia later described their working relationship as "unusually close". In her book *Moholy-Nagy, Marginal Notes* she wrote "*the wealth and value of the artist's ideas gaining momentum, as it were, from the symbiotic alliance of two diverging temperaments*" (Forbes, 2016). A key aspect of this alliance was Lucia's role in writing and editing his essays. As a Hungarian native, László had not fully mastered German, whereas Lucia had been fluent in multiple languages from a young age. She reflected on this in her writings: "I was, over a number of years, responsible for the wording and editing of the text that appeared in books, essays, articles, reviews, and manifestos." Forbes (2016) describes her as the woman who was able to articulate Laszlo's thoughts and craft them into the treatise with which only he is now associated.

However, the extent of her contributions raises questions about credit and recognition. If this collaboration was so crucial, what did Lucia gain from it when her role remained unacknowledged? Moreover, why did they keep this alliance quiet? It seems logical that she would have helped him with a language he had not yet mastered, yet she wrote: "All those years we had kept quiet about the extent and manner of our collaboration." Her diary also reveals that their friends and colleagues were unaware of these circumstances. Was this secrecy deliberate? And if so, could it be linked to Bauhaus principles? What were the Bauhaus attitudes toward women, and how might they have influenced Lucia's later life?

III The Bauhaus period and Moholy's role

A Introduction to Bauhaus and their perspective on gender

In the Bauhaus Manifesto, Gropius emphasized that artists and craftsmen should work together to create the "building of the future," uniting architecture, sculpture, and painting as one, with craftsmanship integrated into the curriculum in 1919 to give deeper meaning to "building." (Droste, 2002, p. 17-18).

However, Bauhaus was a male dominated movement, and many men even believed women should be excluded from architecture entirely, because of the fear that women would threaten that area, Bauhaus' primary objective. Baumhoff (2021) shows that Bauhaus policies were dominated by a 'hidden agenda' of Gropius and the Master's Council to reduce the high number of female students. In the first budget for the Bauhaus, Gropius stated that '50 ladies' and '100 gentlemen' were accounted for, but due to the new constitution of the Weimar Republic, in reality, there were as many women as men. This constitution made it possible for women to have unlimited access to education. Many women took advantage of this opportunity. Gropius' notes show that in his first speech, he responded to this by saying, "*No consideration for women, in the work, all are craftsmen,*" and "*absolute equality, but also absolutely equal duties.*" (Droste, 2002, p. 40). At the same time, a special women's class was established in 1920, which Baumhoff describes as a "soft" area designed to keep women away from the more physically demanding work in traditionally male-dominated media. This "soft area" referred, for example, to the weaving workshop.

B Her career and practices at Bauhaus

Lucia Moholy's career at Bauhaus started in 1923 when her husband Moholy-Nagy was invited to teach at Bauhaus. It feels ambiguous to call these activities at Bauhaus a career, since Moholy never held an official, regularly paid position at the school. Collegial recognition was never forthcoming from the Bauhaus masters (Otto & Rössler, 2019). Next to helping Moholy-Nagy with writing and photography, Lucia developed her professional career in photography while "working with a local photographer and [extending] my knowledge of photomechanical subjects by enrolling as a student at the Akademie für graphische Künste und Buchgewerbe in Leipzig." (Forbes, 2024a, pp. 242–249) After moving to Dessau, Bauhaus' new location, Moholy had the use of a darkroom, which was "first and foremost equipped for my work as a photographer of art, design, and architecture [but...] also served us for experimental endeavor." (Forbes, 2024a, pp. 242–249). This quote in her diary feels like the 'art, design and architecture' is something linked to Bauhaus, but besides she could explore within photography, for example through portrait photography. And that is what she did later on. Between 1925 and 1926, Moholy created a series of photographs of the Bauhaus's new building and the Master's houses for the press, but she also worked on documentary photography and portraits. During this period in Weimar, Moholy had been, most of the time, credited when her photographs were published.

Moholy's photographs played various roles within Bauhaus during its operation. Many of the product photographs were used to illustrate the school's sale catalogue, through which the Bauhaus marketed its products. Her photographs were reproduced in the Bauhaus journal and in the Bauhaus book series, especially the 1925 volume, which featured at least thirty-eight of Moholy's photographs. Though not paid for her work, Moholy also made prints for Bauhaus members, the school's publications, and other uses. These prints also included many portraits that she took of students, teachers, and affiliates (Schuldenfrei, 2024).

Thus, Moholy's photographs played a crucial role in shaping the artistic and visual identity of the Bauhaus. Beyond serving as publicity materials, they helped establish the modern design standards of the school, influencing its contemporary image and long-term legacy. Her work was essential in securing the Bauhaus's iconic status, highlighting the significance of her photography.

If we focus more on her practices, the first key theme that emerges in Moholy's photography was the didactic function and that her photography was not just artistic but also meant to document and systematize Bauhaus designs. Her photographs are not neutral entities but rather helped express the modernist goals of the school (Schuldenfrei, 2024).

Additionally, as a photographer associated with the New Objectivity movement, Moholy's approach can be traced back to her early curiosity as a young woman. Her diary entries reveal that she was a keen observer who wanted to perceive people, things, and ideas exactly as they were and understand them inside and out. This can be described as straightforward photography. Aligning with the New Objectivity movement, her photographs are described as razor-sharp architectural lines and diagonals. With the use of black-and-white photography, light and dark sides and dark shadows, Moholy aimed to document the form, structure, and mentality of her subject (Otto & Rössler, 2019).

Furthermore, Lucia Moholy's Bauhaus photography spans a range of genres, including architectural photography (exterior, interior, detail, and night shots), product and design photography, as well as portrait and self-portrait photography. While many Bauhaus photographers focused on abstract and industrial subjects, Moholy also captured Bauhaus members in a documentary style, emphasizing their roles in the school's environment.

C Life after Bauhaus

In the final moments of the Bauhaus it was difficult to maintain the school. The institution relocated to an abandoned factory in Berlin, attempting to function as a private school until the Nazi regime took control of Germany in 1933. This is when the school was closed as a result of political pressure from the emerging Nazi regime in Germany. The Bauhaus movement became a global movement due to members being cast all over the world. Under Nazism, especially Bauhaus women had a more difficult time finding work and safe haven. Moreover, rebuilding destroyed careers in new countries or after the second world war often proved difficult or impossible for these women.

Lucia also experienced this after Bauhaus, partly because after 1933 she lost control of her negatives, and her name began disappearing from photographic credits. Contrasting with her Weimar period where she had been, for the most part, credited for her images when they were published. In 1928, she had taken the negatives to Berlin in 1928 after leaving the Bauhaus with her husband, László Moholy-Nagy. Following their divorce in 1929, she left the negatives in his care when she fled Germany in 1933. In 1940, she began searching for the negatives, eventually believing they had been bombed, unaware that Gropius had kept them and used them with his own architecture stamp. After a long and tragic history of exile, her collection of negatives is now preserved by the Bauhaus archive.

At the same time, Moholy tried to emigrate to the United States for a long time, these attempts began in the months following the outbreak of World War II. Meanwhile, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy had settled in Chicago with his new wife, Sibyl Moholy-Nagy. He wrote to her with a formal offer of employment: "This is to confirm our agreement that the School of Design in Chicago appoints you as a teacher of photography, with a salary of 200 dollars per month. This contract starts September 15, 1940 and ends September 15, 1943." Laszlo also wrote directly to the American Consulate in London, emphasizing Moholy's value as "one of the most valuable members of this community" and her potential impact on US photographic pedagogy (Forbes, 2024b., pp. 238–241). Here, he acknowledged her importance that really contrasts what is known about the Bauhaus period. Even though Moholy had support, her visa was denied because the authorities did not consider her previous main job to be that of a professor under the relevant immigration laws. This highlights the consequences of the Bauhaus's policies toward women, showing that the Bauhaus principles shaped Moholy's later life.



*LUCIA MOHOLY, Florence Henri, 1927.
RESIN-COATED PAPER, 40.1 x 30.3 CM. BAUHAUS-ARCHIV, BERLIN.*



bauhaus-archiv berlin

7676_r.jpg

LUCIA MOHOLY, Dessau Masters' Houses, house of László Moholy-Nagy and Lucia Moholy, studio window, C. 1926.

GELATIN SILVER PRINT, 18 x 24 CM. BAUHAUS-ARCHIV, BERLIN.

Metallwerkstatt



gesch.
Höhe ca. 35 cm

AUSFÜHRUNG

Kristallspiegel-Glasplatte, Felsenglasrohr, Glasschirm, Zugfassung



TISCHLAMPE AUS GLAS

VORTEILE

- 1 beste Lichtzerstreuung (genau erprobt)
- 2 sehr gefällige Form
- 3 besonders schönes Licht
- 4 praktisch für Schreibtisch, Nachttisch usw.
- 5 Glocke festgeschraubt bleibt in jeder Lage unbeweglich

bauhaus-archiv berlin

2005_42r.jpg



bauhaus-archiv berlin

7369_2.jpg

LUCIA MOHOLY, Chair for the director's office of Walter Gropius at the Bauhaus Weimar, C. 1924. GELATIN SILVER PRINT, 21,2 x 16 CM. BAUHAUS-ARCHIV, BERLIN.



LUCIA MOHOLY, Photo postcard, Bauhaus building Dessau, view from the northeast, C. 1925-1926.
GELATIN SILVER PRINT, 9x 13,7 CM. BAUHAUS-ARCHIV, BERLIN.

IV Theoretical perspective on photography in A Hundred Years of Photography

A Introduction to the book

The first hundred years anniversary of photography in 1939 offered publishers an opportunity to release books that dealt with the first century of the medium. Penguin Books of Harmondsworth was one of the publishers, specializing in launching literature to a broad public through inexpensive produced books. Moholy read a lot of existing literature on the history of photography, and comments: "Up until now, photography has been represented only through historical-technical accounts; every 'history of photography' was a history of its applications, but even then only to a certain degree [...] in the last ten years, a few artistic aspects have been added to this technical approach - quite suddenly, a desire for renewal." She adds that written history of photography should also be about the changing context where photography plays an active role: 'The fact that photography had a major influence on the life of the century cannot be overlooked' (Siegel, 2024).

Steffen Siegel (2024) explored Lucia Moholy's preparatory work from her time in Weimar, Dessau and Berlin. This indicates that Moholy had been considering a comprehensive theory of photography for many years. During the period 1929-1933 Moholy used to work on a project that had obviously been close to her heart for a long time: a survey of photography. The extensive preparing notes document that she searched for how photography can be conceptualized as a medium of modernity. Her notes reveal a recurring emphasis on a familiar point of view:

*"art' history of photography? no, rather: cultural history."
"Cultural history of photography means the culture within photography; a development.
However, the cultural history of photography can also mean: the culture of time, reflected in photography."*

Siegel (2024) claims that Moholy thus formulates a double perspective: 1) The history of the medium; the development over the course of almost a hundred years at the time she was sketching these ideas. And 2) The contingency of such developments in the era that encompasses them. He also claims that: 'Regarding Moholy's notes as a whole, it becomes clear that it is precisely the connection between these two perspectives that captures her interest the most.'

Moholy read a lot of existing literature on the history of photography and notices that the relationships surrounding photography have not been investigated. From this, she concludes that the overall aim should be to write about "the position and function of photography within modern contemporary history". While photography as a technique may have its own historical narrative, its significance in a broader historical sense remains not only underexplored but largely undefined. As Moholy wrote in her preface, the goal of this writing was to ask: To what extent has the medium played a role in people's life and in society?

B Main principles in the book

Moholy starts explaining the technical history of photography in chronological order. The technical history of photography refers to the technology behind the medium and its evolution and inventions. Later, Moholy starts jumping through time within a specific theme, focussing on evolutions of different themes.

The first jump to a specific theme is the link between photography, social movements and society in chapter 4. Highlighting that the Daguerreotype was a technique accessible for everybody, but Moholy writes "The great majority of daguerreotypists were men; the number of women who took it up was very small; Madame Giroux, wife of the manufacturer of Daguerre's camera was one of them."

Later she mentions the start of using documentary photography as durable images to be part of historical archives. Also the use of photography in daily life through its position in news reports and troubles in documentary photography are written down through different stories and also a poem.

In the following chapters Moholy mentions the use of photography in several new fields: military photography, aerial photography and criminology. In chapter 13 about criminology, Moholy states that the hands are as important as the face. A subject she also talks about in chapter 10, where she tells the story of three portrait photographers: Nadar, David Octavius Hill and Julia Margaret Cameron.

- The heads in Nadar's portraits asserted themselves as independent;
- David Octavius Hill portraits heads and hands as inseparable parts in the totality of the picture;
- Julia Margaret Cameron focuses on the head in her portraits, Lucia writes that in Mrs. Cameron's portraits of the head, and the head alone, has become the perfect incarnation of mental and intellectual capabilities, almost too powerful to stay within the bounds of the picture.

Besides, it is important to mention that an art movement anticipated from Mrs. Cameron's portraits, which can be linked to the strong bond between arts and photography.

"All art movements, in their time, have become linked with photography. While painting and photography are independent, each following its own laws, they are shaped by similar external forces and share a mutual connection."

Later, in chapter 26, Moholy dives deeper in the connection between arts and photography. She talks about Neo-Impressionism, Expressionism, followed by Constructivism, Futurism, and Dadaism. Dadaists incorporated photography, and artists like Man Ray and Moholy-Nagy explored it to express balance through photogenic drawing. Futurist picture effects were obtained by printing one photograph on top of the other.

A mixture of impressionist and expressionist ideology emphasized the balance of tones over the subject itself. This idea was exclusively aesthetic and overlooked the part of the object in the picture. Then, Moholy starts talking about a counter-movement that she was part of: New Objectivity. It focused more on the object, rejecting impressionist techniques in favor of highlighting texture and using unusual angles. Picasso did the same together with other cubist painters. This approach also influenced portraiture, where details like skin, hair, and clothing became key subjects. Here, Lucia (1939) mentions herself in the book by writing "Typical representatives of a more realistic line are [...] Lucia Moholy (London)."

And then she goes back to developments within the technical history of photography, and that trying to improve the technique is needed, because of the risk and difficulties of the preparations.

In chapter 15, the images she uses in her book show the evolution of portrait photography through the years. She used a portrait made by herself to show the latest evolution, showing a big contrast with the decorated and posed earlier portraits, but without providing any text for them.

To end the book, Moholy (1938) summarizes that the aim of the book has been to establish the connection between photography and life, and to describe a development from art to the status of a world power which it has now reached. In her last sentence, she refers to photography when saying "They are in our lives, as our lives are in them" showing the strong link photography and life developed over the years. The sentence also links to the duality Steffen Siegel claims about the double perspective Moholy formulates.

By exploring the origins of photography in new fields, technical advancements, personal anecdotes, and the contributions of women, she provides a nuanced perspective that spans various scales. From broader contexts to the intimate stories of individuals, her approach captures the evolution of the

medium both in technical and human terms. To conclude, she leaves with this powerful quote: "They are in our lives, as our lives are in them."

V Analyzing Moholy's practices in her theoretical perspective

When analyzing the key themes in Moholy's practices alongside those in her book *A Hundred Years of Photography 1839-1939*, both interesting parallels and layered contrasts emerge which are subdivided in three types of connections:

- A. Direct links between practices and the book
- B. Links in overarching themes;
- C. Links to personal stories behind photographs;

Direct links between practice and book

To start with, there is a direct connection between her book and her artistic practices. In Chapter 15, she includes a self-made portrait as part of a series of portraits, each showcasing unique perspectives and shaped by contextual factors. Among them, Moholy presents her 1935 portrait of the Countess of Asquith and Oxford, taken in London, as the most recent in the collection. Additionally, in Chapter 26, she refers to herself as a typical representative of New Objectivity. These references highlight how she integrated her own artistic practices into her theoretical framework and how she placed herself in the history of photography.

Links in overarching themes

- Theme of subjectivity and objectivity

Moholy's Bauhaus-era work was deeply embedded in the principles of this movement, which emphasized clarity, precision, and neutrality in photographic representation. She sought to document Bauhaus architecture, objects, and people in a seemingly detached, neutral way.

However, in Chapter 10 of *A Hundred Years of Photography*, Moholy discusses how different photographers interpret portraiture in distinct ways, shaping how their subjects are perceived. This shows that all photographs are influenced by the photographer's choices, challenging the notion of true objectivity. While her Bauhaus-era work appeared to align with objectivity, her later theoretical perspective problematizes this idea, suggesting that even documentary photography is shaped by subjective and contextual factors.

Yet, in Chapter 26, Moholy traces photography's evolution alongside artistic movements, showing how each period influenced photographic approaches. From Neo-Impressionism to Expressionism, photography initially focused on the subject, but later movements, including Straight Photography and New Objectivity, emphasized technical precision and object-conscious imagery. She positions her own work within this lineage, and by doing this, she is acknowledging that objectivity in photography is not an absolute but a concept shaped by artistic and ideological shifts.

Thus, rather than a stark tension between her Bauhaus-era photography and her later writings, her book recontextualizes her practice, moving from practitioner to theorist. She does not reject objectivity but situates it within a broader historical and artistic framework, demonstrating that even "neutral" photography is embedded in a cultural discourse.

- Women in Modernism

Following by writing about women in modernism, in *A Hundred Years of Photography*, Lucia Moholy makes a conscious effort to highlight the contributions of early female photographers such as Madame Giroux and Julia Margaret Cameron. By writing about Madame Giroux as one of the few daguerreotypists and Julia Margaret Cameron as the most important portrait photographer for England, she acknowledges their role in shaping the field. This resonates with her own role as a female photographer at Bauhaus, where she documented the work of Bauhaus masters and photographed many of the women at Bauhaus. However, her contributions were often attributed to others, particularly László Moholy-Nagy.

While Moholy does place herself within the New Objectivity movement, she does not explicitly position herself within the lineage of female photographers she discusses. She asserts her place in modernist photography but does not engage in a gendered reflection on her own experience, even though she highlights the historical marginalization of other women. This difference between her recognition of historical female figures and her own erasure highlights a key tension in her work.

One of the most striking aspects of *A Hundred Years of Photography* is that Moholy does not directly connect her own struggles to the broader history of women in photography. Instead, she allows historical figures to carry the argument, without making an explicit link to her own position as a woman whose work was often overlooked. This is likely a strategic choice to maintain a historical tone rather than turning the book into a personal narrative.

In chapter 19, she also made a choice when citing: “ladies are cheaper, more industrious and more persevering than men usually are”. This could be strategic, or maybe a personal choice, because it feels like she makes sure that this is not something Moholy said herself, but that it is quoted. The quote itself sets the tone by saying that ladies are cheaper first, following with words as industrious and persevering.

Link to personal stories behind photographs

- Moholy's Idle Hands

It stands out that Moholy repeatedly discusses the subject of hands in her book. In chapter 13, Moholy states that the hands are as important as the face in criminology photography. The focus on hands is also visible in chapter 10, where Nadar, David Octavius Hill and Julia Margaret Cameron are being compared. Their focus on head and hands relate to the portraits and photographs Moholy herself made of hands. Troeller (2020) wrote an article about the Idle Hands Lucia Moholy photographed, but instead of focussing on the photographs, Troeller linked the term 'Idle Hands' to Moholy's labor as the author of the photographs. Troeller states that “(...) her career as a photographer is all too often reduced to those iconic views of Bauhaus architecture and its design objects, which she took as the school's official photographer in all but name”. With this saying, Troeller compares Moholy's labor to housework “that was real but negated in its recognition —rendered as idle, in the sense of nonproductive, and thus unpaid.”

Thus the subject of hands in her book is reflected in her photography, but a deeper relationship emerges between Moholy's photographs, her book, and her personal history. This connection reveals that hands take on a dual meaning, just like the history of photography had two meanings for Moholy.

VI Conclusion

In conclusion, this thesis has explored how Lucia Moholy's photographic practices during the Bauhaus period (1919-1933) influenced her later theoretical perspectives in *A Hundred Years of Photography*. By tracing the connections between her visual work and her written reflections, this study reveals a nuanced interplay between practice and theory that has been overlooked on Moholy and the Bauhaus. Through an in-depth analysis of Lucia Moholy's life, her practices during Bauhaus and her book, this research enhances our understanding of Moholy's contributions by providing new insights on the link between practice and theory.

The findings of this study indicate that Lucia Moholy's contributions, as a talented writer, editor and photographer, played a crucial role in shaping Bauhaus's visual legacy and László Moholy-Nagy's work, but these contributions remain largely unacknowledged. After the Bauhaus's closing, she faced significant challenges probably due to the school's gendered policies. Furthermore, her history of photography approach in the book demonstrates how photography has been interwoven with modern life in complex and meaningful ways by jumping across time to connect photography with social movements, documentary practices, personal stories and more. By including these personal stories the link between people and history is shown on a smaller scale. Her concluding statement, "They are in our lives, as our lives are in them," reinforces a dual perspective on the cultural history of photography, echoing the ideas of Steffen Siegel.

By linking her practices and her book a nuanced interplay is uncovered between theory and practice, structured in three divisions:

- A. Direct links between practices and the book;
- B. Links in overarching themes;
- C. Links to personal stories behind photographs.

Firstly, her self-referential moments within the book demonstrate a conscious effort to integrate her work into photography's historical and ideological evolution. Furthermore, rather than a stark contradiction between her Bauhaus-era commitment to New Objectivity and her later theoretical reflections, Moholy's writings reposition objectivity as a fluid concept shaped by cultural and artistic shifts. Lastly, her recurring focus on hands, both in imagery and theory, takes on deeper meaning when viewed through the lens of gendered labor.

While this thesis has focused primarily on Moholy's Bauhaus-era practices, future research might explore how her later work further shaped her theoretical contributions, offering a broader perspective. Comparative studies with other marginalized female figures in photography or Bauhaus could also deepen our understanding of how women's contributions have been marginalized in history.

Further research into Moholy's work will help secure the recognition she deserves, not only for her practical contributions and theoretical insights but also as part of a broader effort to rewrite photographic history. If, as Moholy wrote, photography is "in our lives," then so too are the overlooked stories that must be seen, acknowledged, and reclaimed. Only by rewriting history can we fully recognize the women who helped shape culture and move toward a more inclusive history of art and photography.

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