

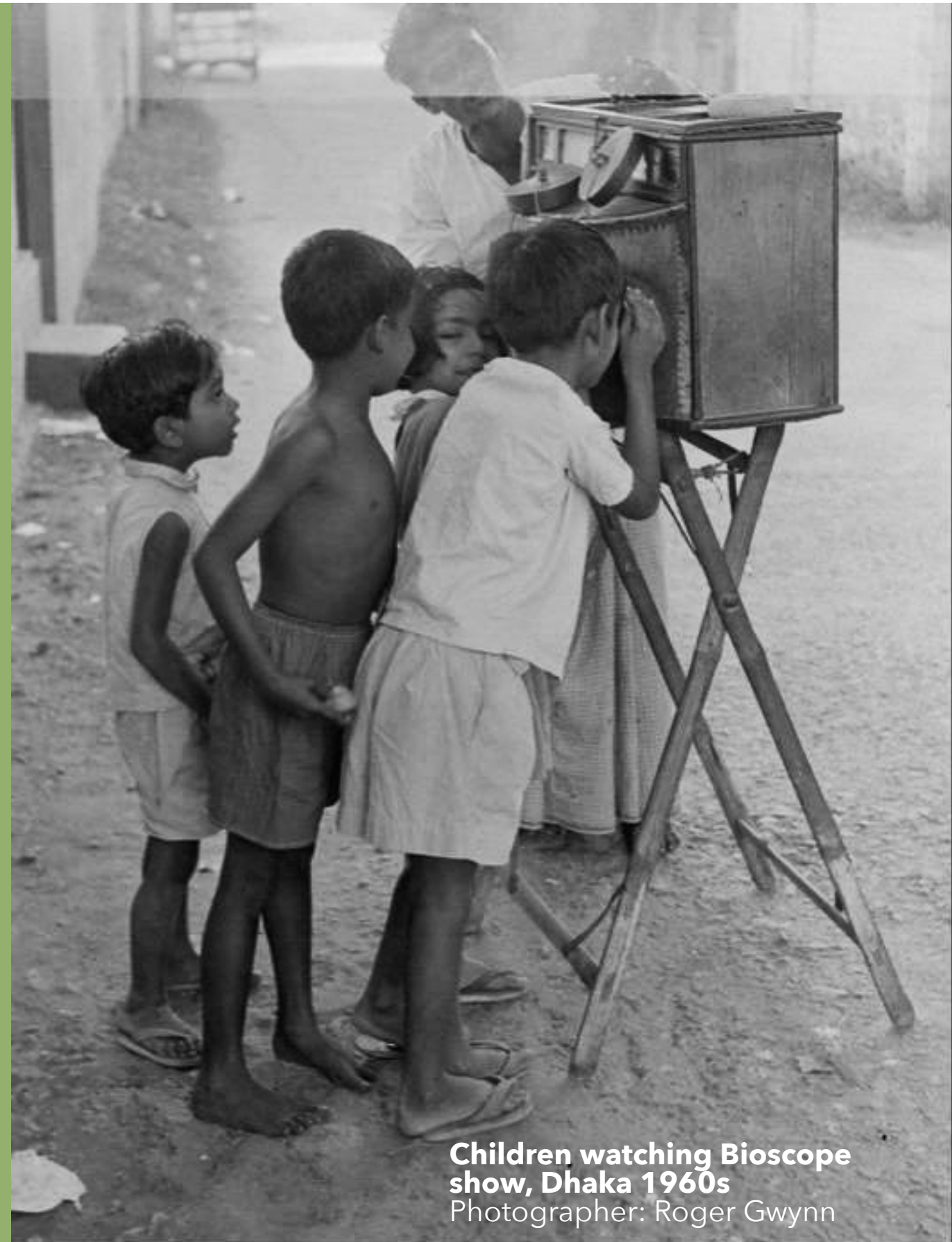
BIOSCOPE,

the Bangladeshi peepshow:
colonial past, traditional roots and digital media



Bioscope is a peepshow operated with a hand-cranked peep-box made with wood, metal, optical glasses, and a picture role inside.

- The showman is called **Bioscopewala**.
- This used to be a popular travelling peepshow during the early age of cinema in Indian subcontinent.
- Catered both for children and adults with its
 - **visual** and
 - **oral performance**.



Children watching Bioscope show, Dhaka 1960s
Photographer: Roger Gwynn

This traveling peepshow is still a **living practice** in Bangladesh.



We have found at least 6 working showmen (**Bioscopewala**) in different parts of Bangladesh.

This kind of optical show is believed to be introduced in Bengal by the Europeans at the end of the nineteenth century.

However, Bioscope has its roots in a traditional scroll painting performance in Bengal known as **Poter Gaan**.



Features of **Digital Media**

MAGNIFICATION

The peepholes of the Bioscope have convex lenses to magnify the view inside.



SCROLLING

The showman scrolls the reel inside by cranking a handle.



This research will include an **archive research** in Bangladesh and in the Bengal part of India to find out :

- if there was a local variant of similar optical box that precedes the European peep-boxes.
- How the European optical media dialogue with its Bangladeshi (and Indian) counterpart.

Thank You

