

Basic Detail Report



Bismar Scale

Date

20th Century

Medium

Wood, metal and fiber

Description

This is a bismar scale used throughout Southeast Asia to measure metals, foodstuffs, medicines and other

commodities. Due to the usage of these scales during colonial rule in the 18th and 19th Centuries, they are often referred to as "opium" scales. Depending on where they are from in Southeast Asia, these scales can be made of many mediums. Examples from Laos have a sturdy wood beam with some lead coating, at least at the tip. Fiber is used for the suspension cord, to attach the plate on which goods are measured, and to secure the slide weight which can be moved up and down the length of the beam to provide an accurate reading of something's weight.

Dimensions

9 1/2 × 3/4 × 3/4 in. (24.1 × 1.9 × 1.9 cm)