



Smithsonian

*National Museum of Natural History*

MS 2135 Franz Boas notebook concerning the Nisga'a

National Anthropological Archives  
Museum Support Center  
4210 Silver Hill Road  
Suitland, Maryland 20746  
Business Number: Phone: 301.238.1310  
Fax Number: Fax: 301.238.2883  
naa@si.edu  
<http://www.anthropology.si.edu/naa/>

## Table of Contents

Collection Overview .....	
Administrative Information .....	1
Biographical Note .....	1
Scope and Contents .....	2
Names and Subjects .....	

## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	National Anthropological Archives
<b>Title:</b>	MS 2135 Franz Boas notebook concerning the Nisga'a
<b>Date:</b>	undated
<b>Identifier:</b>	NAA.MS2135
<b>Creator:</b>	Boas, Franz, 1858-1942
<b>Extent:</b>	1 Notebook (8 x 10.25 inches)
<b>Language:</b>	Material is in English and Nisga'a.
<b>Digital Content:</b>	<a href="#">Image(s): MS 2135 Franz Boas notebook concerning the Nisga'a</a>
<b>Container:</b>	Box 2135

---

## Administrative Information

### Provenance

The provenance of the collection is unknown; there is no accession information available.

### Related Materials

The National Anthropological Archives holds additional material by Franz Boas concerning the Nisga'a in MS 348 Niska Manuscript and MS 1823 Nisqa (Niska) Dictionary.

### Preferred Citation

MS 2135 Franz Boas notebook concerning the Nisga'a, National Anthropological Archives, Smithsonian Institution

### Restrictions

The collection is open for research.

Access to the collection requires an appointment.

### Conditions Governing Use

Contact the repository for terms of use.

---

## Biographical Note

Franz Boas (1858-1942) was a German-American anthropologist and pioneer of modern anthropological practice. He studied physics and geography at the universities at Heidelberg and Bonn before completing a doctoral program in physical geography at Kiel in 1881. After graduation, he joined an expedition of Baffin Island (1883-1884), which influenced his decision to him to focus on cultural tradition rather than biological and physical influences. In 1885, Boas emigrated to the United States, where he took an editorial position with the journal *Science* and started what

would become his most famous ethnographic project, working among the Kwakiutl (Kwakwaka'wakw) Indians, in 1886. Boas spent three years teaching at Clark University in Massachusetts, then took an appointment at the Field Museum in Chicago in 1892. Boas then moved to New York, where he joined the American Museum of Natural History (1895-1905) and began teaching at Columbia University in 1896. For 37 years, Boas established himself as an academic and mentored numerous future influential anthropologists, including Margaret Mead, Alfred Kroeber, Edward Sapir, and Zora Neale Hurston. He also served as one of the founders of both the American Anthropological Association and the International Journal of American Linguistics.

---

## Scope and Contents

The collection consists of one (1) notebook containing Franz Boas' notes on the Nisqa'a. The notebook includes a vocabulary and several pages of sketches. There are also two loose pages of notes and pages 3-6 of the newsletter of The New York Society for Ethical Culture (circa 1909).

Please note that the contents of the collection and the language and terminology used reflect the context and culture of the time of its creation. As an historical document, its contents may be at odds with contemporary views and terminology and considered offensive today. The information within this collection does not reflect the views of the Smithsonian Institution or National Anthropological Archives, but is available in its original form to facilitate research.

---

## Local Numbers

NAA MS 2135

---

## Variant Title

Niska notes and sketches

Nisqa Notes

---

## Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

### Subjects:

Nisga'a (Niska)

### Cultures:

Nisga'a (Niska)

### Types of Materials:

Drawings  
Field notes

### Places:

North America