



Itinerary of a Child of the Trade Winds: Memories of a Child Born and Raised in French African Colonies and Educated in the World

AUTHOR Gerard Georges Pigeon
COLLECTION EDITED BY Christopher McAuley

COLLECTION
Black Studies

EDITION
1st edition

MARKET
College/higher education
and Professional and
scholarly

This course reading...

- Provides a firsthand account of daily life in French African colonies during and after World War II.
- Traces a transcontinental journey from Senegal to Paris and the United States, highlighting themes of migration, adaptation, and cultural identity.
- Offers personal insights into major historical events, including decolonization movements and the social transformations of the mid-twentieth century.
- Chronicles the author's role in the development of Black Studies in American higher education.
- Ideal for readers interested in memoir, colonial and postcolonial history, African and diaspora studies, migration studies, and the global Black experience.

What does it mean to grow up between continents, cultures, and political movements during one of the most transformative periods of the twentieth century?

Itinerary of a Child of the Trade Winds: Memories of a Child Born and Raised in French African Colonies and Educated in the World by Gerard Georges Pigeon is a powerful memoir that traces a life shaped by colonialism, migration, and global change.

Born in Senegal to West Indian parents, Pigeon offers a vivid account of daily life in the French African colonies during and after World War II. Through personal memories, he portrays the realities of colonial society—its routines, aspirations, contradictions, and cultural resilience—while capturing how individuals navigated identity and belonging under colonial rule. The narrative then follows his formative years in Paris, where he matured intellectually and politically amid the tensions surrounding the Algerian War and the broader struggles for independence and social justice.

The journey continues to the United States, where Pigeon builds a new life as a husband, father, and immigrant confronting the complexities of a deeply divided society. His story culminates in his involvement in the development of the Black Studies Department at the University of California, Santa Barbara, reflecting his commitment to education, cultural awareness, and social transformation.

Blending personal testimony with historical insight, this memoir offers a unique perspective on colonial Africa, postwar Europe, and the United States during a period of profound political and cultural change. It is both a story of migration and adaptation and a reflection on identity, education, and resilience across continents.

Ideal for readers interested in memoir, colonial and postcolonial history, African and diaspora studies, migration studies, and the global Black experience.

Gerard Georges Pigeon is Professor Emeritus at the University of California, Santa Barbara, whose work explores Black cultural history through teaching, research, and documentary film projects in the Americas.

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