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978-0-521-04055-6 - Fifteen Generations of Bretons: Kinship and Society in Lower
Brittany, 1720-1980

Martine Segalen

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The Bigouden region in south-west Brittany may appear to be extremely 'traditional', but over the centuries it has witnessed much social and economic change, with the introduction of commercial fishing and a canning industry in the 1880s and, more recently, the development of tourism and restructuring of agriculture. Following a community of Breton peasants over fifteen generations, Martine Segalen traces the effects of these economic changes on family life and analyses the strategies of marriage alliance and inheritance which were used to shore up social hierarchies. She thus reveals the importance of kinship networks in social intercourse, both today and in the past.

The value of Dr Segalen's study lies both in the case material, which is of interest for what it reveals about the social history of the French peasantry and peasants in general, and, more particularly, in the methodology she applies which combines anthropological, historical, and demographic approaches.

Dr Segalen is the author of *Historical Anthropology of the Family* and several ethnographic studies of French rural society. She has been the Director of the Centre d'ethnologie française since 1986.

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FIFTEEN GENERATIONS OF BRETONS

*Kinship and society in Lower Brittany,
1720–1980*

MARTINE SEGALEN

translated from the French by J.A. Underwood

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