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French Wine Expert Huetz de Lemps Passes Away at 98

Renowned Geographer and Wine Expert Huetz de Lemps Leaves Lasting Legacy

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Alain Huetz de Lemps in his office in Bordeaux

Alain Huetz de Lemps, a prominent French geographer and expert in viticulture, passed away in Bordeaux at the age of 98. He is known for his extensive research on the history and geography of wine, particularly in Spain, where he documented the development and characteristics of vineyards in the country's northwest regions. His work, notably the study *Vignobles et vins du Nord-Ouest de l'Espagne*, is considered a seminal reference in the field, offering detailed insights into Spain's wine landscapes and traditions. This project emerged from his time in Spain during the 1950s and 1960s, where he traveled extensively, conducting fieldwork that included visiting numerous rural areas and analyzing historical archives.

Huetz de Lemps's academic journey was closely linked to the University of Bordeaux, where he served as a professor of human and rural geography until his retirement in 1995. He had earlier received a scholarship to the Casa de Velázquez, a French cultural institution in Madrid, which fueled his passion for Spanish viticulture. He navigated the difficult post-war conditions of Spain, conducting on-the-ground research and assembling a comprehensive view of the region's viticultural history. This research culminated in his 1967 dissertation, which was later published and acclaimed as a thorough exploration of Spain's wine regions, revealing historical and geographical connections between the vineyards and local economies.

Beyond his contributions to Spanish viticulture, Huetz de Lemps was also involved in other geographical studies, such as his work on the history of sugarcane in various regions and contributions to the understanding of agriculture in Oceania. His studies highlighted how geographical factors, such as climate and soil, intertwine with historical events to shape the production and trade of wine and other agricultural products.

Huetz de Lemps's work has been instrumental in shaping the academic study of wine geography, emphasizing the relationship between landscape and wine production. His thorough approach to documenting the specifics of vineyard areas, along with his integration of historical records, provided an invaluable resource for understanding the evolution of wine regions like Castile and León. Even into his later years, Huetz de Lemps remained a respected figure in the academic and wine communities, continuing to influence scholars and enthusiasts. In recognition of his contributions, he received honors such as an honorary doctorate from the University of Valladolid in 1999,

solidifying his legacy as a key figure in the field of viticulture research.