



**MODSCAPES - Modernist reinventions  
of the rural landscape**

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MODSCAPES explores rural landscapes produced by large-scale agricultural development and colonization schemes planned in the 20th century throughout Europe and beyond. Such schemes were pivotal to nation and state-building policies, and to the modernization of the countryside. They provided a testing ground of ideas and tools for agronomists, environmental and social scientists, architects and artists, which converged around a shared challenge. Their implementation produced new rural landscapes which have seldom been considered as a transnational research topic. MODSCAPES aims to raise awareness of this largely underestimated shared cultural heritage which stands today as a tangible evidence of recent European history.

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Front image: "L'atelier mobile" or Mobile design studio set by the national Department for Urban Planning headed by the French urbanist Michel Écochard to develop participatory rural development plans in the Moroccan Gharb plain during the last decade of the French Protectorate in Morocco, and the first decade of independence. In the picture, the French landscape architect and urban planner Élie Mauret discusses a scheme with the local settlers, mid-1960s?. Source: Élie Mauret, Pour un équilibre des villes et des campagnes, Paris, Dunod, 1974.