



# The Mechanized Landscape

## Statecraft and Environment in the Tennessee Valley

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- The book offers a matrix (statecraft and environment) with which to evaluate large-scale government interventions, through the example of the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)
- A novel contribution that pairs original photographs and newly created maps to provide readers with a graphic appraisal of the Tennessee Valley as it was transformed between 1933-1953
- The book contributes new historical knowledge about the TVA, an iconic New Deal agency, that will be of interest to geographers, planners, architects and landscapes architects
- The book examines the physical and social implications of democratic government decisions and especially the construction of infrastructural power together with infrastructure
- The book adds a new layer to our understanding of how the United States government has facilitated frontier entrepreneurship at the regional and the individual scale

In 1933 the United States government created the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and gave it jurisdiction over a demarcated region – the watershed of the Tennessee. The TVA was authorised to develop the resources in the Valley and promote the welfare of its residents. The TVA pursued these goals by constructing three large-scale operations, referred to as the river, land and power machines. The TVA also invested in social projects, including support for housing and tourist industries in the region. ***The Mechanized Landscape: Statecraft and Environment in the Tennessee Valley*** examines this comprehensive effort as a form of statecraft – the art of government persuasion and diplomacy – manifested through environmental transformation. It follows the TVA's physical transformations and its investment in infrastructural power – programs that extended the state's capacity to reach even the most remote residents. The product of this process, the mechanized landscape, is a testament to the TVA's complex approach to democracy, its racial and middle-class biases, and its technical and managerial acumen. By bringing together original photography, newly created maps, and text, this book offers a well-researched, visually compelling appraisal of the TVA's plans and their implementation. Rather than following a linear textual narrative, readers are invited to explore the complexity of the mechanized landscape through multiple media.

**Micah Rutenberg** is an Assistant Professor at the University of Tennessee's College of Architecture and Design. His teaching and research explore the large-scale infrastructural, technological, and ecological dynamics that shape patterns of settlement. **Avigail Sachs** is a Professor of Architectural History at the University of Tennessee's College of Architecture and Design. Her 2023 book, *The Garden in the Machine: Planning and Democracy in the Tennessee Valley Authority*, examines the work of TVA architects and regional planners between 1933-1953.