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Steffen, Charles. *The Mechanics of Baltimore: Workers and Politics in the Age of Revolution, 1763-1812*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984. Pp. xv, 296. Maps, tables, notes, index. \$24.95 (U.S.)

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The Mechanics of Baltimore is the tenth volume in Illinois' distinguished series, *The Working Class in American History*, and the first to address questions about urban artisans in the Revolutionary and Early Republican period. Charles Steffen's account of labour and politics in Baltimore in the decades surrounding the revolutionary conflict is all the more welcome given the flurry of recent attention to the theme of artisan republicanism (Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic*, 1984) and to Baltimore's role in Maryland's development (Whitman Ridgeway, *Community Leadership in Maryland, 1790-1840*, 1979 and articles by Frank Cassell and Gary Browne). Where others have positioned craftsmen and masters on the edges of political battles dominated by merchants and planters, Steffen finds them at the centre, vocal, contentious and at times militant. Where some, following Bernard Bailyn, find a unitary republican ideology traceable to the "English Commonwealth tradition," Steffen locates in local political contests rival versions of the shape and role of the state, each linked to the interests of differently placed social groups. Thus, "Historians should . . . shift their focus from republicanism to republicanisms," a conclusion that resonates with Wilentz' work on New York (p. 281).

The structure of the book is straightforward. After two introductory chapters sketching the rise of Baltimore as a major port for agricultural exporting and the parallel emergence of a flourishing artisanal sector, the rest of the work deals first with the making and then with the crisis of the mechanic community. In the first period, 1763-1800, local craftsmen "transformed themselves into a politically conscious community," often in alliance with merchant interests (p. 53). Forged in revolutionary activism, these links continued in the later 1780s as Baltimore mechanics pressed unsuccessfully for a state tariff during the Confederation period, enthusiastically backed Constitutional ratification and soon "led a nationwide drive" for the federal protective tariff of 1789 (p. 82). Battling to broaden the initially-elite city charter, shouting their support for the French Revolution, and voting their opinions with fair consistency, Baltimore workingmen formed the base of the Republican party by 1800. Master craftsmen assumed leadership positions in militia companies and the mechanical Society, and campaigned for Republican candidates whose Federalist opponents were increasingly supported by merchants, lawyers, and the like.

Having defined a distinct "mechanic interest," the craftsmen's unity proved ephemeral. In the dozen years before the War of 1812, efforts to place workingmen or masters in office, to create a Mechanics Bank, and riotous responses to British or Federalist "outrages" exposed deep fissures within the

artisan community. On local and national issues, the goals of masters clashed with those of militant journeymen. After a few heady successes, independent Republican candidates lost out to men nominated by party "conferees," and prominent masters absented themselves from increasingly violent crowd actions. Many Baltimore journeymen had participated in early and surprisingly successful efforts at union organization, outlawed as conspiracy in 1807. These rougher types "now stepped forward as crowd leaders" (p. 250). The mechanic interest was splitting into camps of proprietors and workers, and among workers, with Methodism as a litmus test, into respectable and disreputable fractions.

In assembling this chronicle of artisan republicanism, Steffen has ably used the full range of social history raw materials: newspapers, pamphlets, city directories, assessment lists, church registers and the like. His close attention to the minutiae of alternative city charter plans or drafts of Articles for the Mechanics Bank underscores the emergence of variant republicanisms. He also provides a satisfying treatment of the role of slave labour and slaveholding in the mechanical trades, and of the spatial dimension of industry and politics in Baltimore. The prose is workmanlike, and each chapter has both an introductory and concluding summary of its themes. However, these summaries do rob the text of momentum and drain much of the drama and surprise from the flow of events. Further, Steffen chooses to segregate the core historiographic challenges his work poses into passages in the Introduction and Conclusion, rather than integrating them into the exposition. The chapter on Methodism is tucked in a bit uncomfortably between the forceful discussion of the post-1800 "crisis of Republican Politics" and the Conclusion. Nonetheless, these stylistic matters little diminish Steffen's achievement, a careful linkage of Baltimore's craftsmen, their militias, societies and early unions with the dynamics of party politics and the formation of republican ideology. Urban, political and industrial historians will all find this solid monograph of genuine interest.

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Kostof, Spiro. *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals*. Oxford University Press, New York, 1985. Pp. 788. More than 885 illustrations including numerous original drawings, maps, a glossary of architectural terms, bibliographies, index. \$39.95 pb.

A History of Architecture is in the great tradition of James Fergusson, *History of Architecture*, 6 vols. (1893); F. M. Simpson, *A History of Architectural Development*, 3 vols. (1905); Russell Sturgis and A. L. Frothingham, *History of Architecture*, 4 vols. (1913), and Bannister Fletcher, *A His-*