

SOME IDEAS REGARDING MUSICAL PERFORMANCE IN ANCIENT ISRAEL

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Abstract

Archaeological and textual data demonstrate that ancient cultures shared many distinct similarities and differences. Architecture, pottery, and figurines help define elements of these enigmatic groups. Scholars work diligently with fragmented, complex puzzle pieces to understand subtle and overt intricacies in these areas. Music is also one of those fascinating, yet challenging realms. Although the precise sounds of music from the past are lost to us, archaeological and textual data show that ancient Near Eastern cultures possessed distinct characteristics and differences in musical instruments and performance. This paper offers unique questions to the available data in an effort to further our understanding of musical practices in antiquity among these complex groups/cultures/societies. 1) Did musicians perform melodies but interject them with regional or cultural flavor? 2) Did musicians improvise?

Introduction

It is clear that music is an incredible, powerful, ubiquitous medium, when it commands power and study in its silence. Artifacts, ancient texts, and iconographic depictions reveal that music was a part of many aspects of past Near Eastern cultures. Yet, there are many unanswered questions regarding the sounds of the music, construction of musical instruments, and musical performance. This paper will briefly explore two ideas regarding musical performance.

The first examines the available archaeological data to consider the possibility that musicians in Iron Age Israel (1200-586 BCE, with some brief discussion of periods just before this time) conceivably performed known melodies differently in various regions of the country.

The second builds upon the first and examines how the available data may also reveal that musicians during the same period employed musical improvisation. Improvisation and performing known melodies in slightly different ways may have been mainstays in Israelite music culture and among other Near Eastern groups as well.

Methodology and Theory

The research approach is interdisciplinary. Archaeology, textual analysis, performance experience, anthropological and archaeological theory and method, in addition to ideas from other fields of study contribute. Interdisciplinary methodology helps to develop essential questions and perspectives and is essential in studying material culture through unique viewpoints¹. Artifacts include but are not limited to: architecture, pottery, seals, figurines, iconography, and texts. Most importantly, it should be understood that ancient texts in general, the Bible in particular, are curated artifacts. A curated artifact is an “item that originally functioned in one social context but has subsequently been used in other ways and settings².” These types of objects require special queries and consideration.

Artifacts found in the archaeological record were conceived by human thought and created by human hands. Both have altered them as well. Moreover, artifacts are intricately connected and indelible parts of past cultures. Artifacts and cultures are linked like the intricate, powerful, yet delicate strands of a spider’s web. When a single strand is touched, changed, or disturbed, the entire web is affected³. The complex bonds established between artifacts and culture demonstrates that none of the threads can be completely separated from the enigmatic past we wish to comprehend. Lastly, archaeomusicologists, archaeologists, biblical scholars, and lovers of the past, must constantly remember that we are attempting to re-construct and interpret lost

cultures of ancient peoples in the present. We work to do this with fragmented puzzle pieces and missing parts. We try to fill in the blanks for groups that can no longer speak for themselves. Through carefully developed theory and method and interpretations and perceptions of artifacts, we determine what we think were proper societal roles, decide what was sacred or secular, and religious or non-religious, among peoples who had no words for these designations and categories. Nevertheless, our work is admirable and necessary, but we must constantly remember how all of this affects our understanding, perceptions, and presentations of the past.

How does the available archaeological data suggest that the ancients possibly shared or played different versions of known melodies?

Although there is much about many ancient peoples that remains unknown, the available artifacts have revealed that most groups had specific distinguishing characteristics, particularly when it comes to material culture. Often, the distinctive features appear in universals—those objects and practices that nearly every culture makes or does, but each has specific ways of doing them. Ancient Israel is no exception. Archaeological remains reveal particular attributes in pottery, burials, and figurines among the Israelites. These features provide insight into this captivating culture.

Pottery, Burials, and Figurines

Scholars have established distinctive features in various forms of pottery⁴. They have used these to study chronology, stylistic seriation, and to build typologies. To do this effectively, they observe and document specific shapes, vessel openings, rim and handle construction, and other features. They have learned that these elements change in different ways over time. Spouts, handles, and other attributes, appear, shrink, or fade. Some pottery types disappear altogether or others morph into new varieties. But interestingly, many pottery types have connections to or serve as indicators of chronological periods and markers for cultures in geographical regions within Israel. Note the following features in Iron Age Israelite pottery:

Variations in Early Bronze Age Pottery Examples

Early Bronze Age examples include: Grey-burnished/Esdraelon ware with various slips from Northern Israel; Bab-edh Dhra in Southern Jordan; and Khirbet Kerak Ware: So. Tip of Sea Galilee.

Variations in Middle Bronze Age Pottery Examples

Middle Bronze Age examples include: Tel Yehudiyeh ware from the Northern Israelite coastal region:

MB-IA: B: various examples of bi-chrome ware found throughout Israel

MB-IA: Cypriote Milk Bowls, Cypriote/Mycenaean Imports, Philistines vessels also found along the coastal region and throughout Israel.

Late Bronze Pottery Examples

Late Bronze Age Oil lamps display variation. These kinds of lamps were ubiquitous, but varied in form. Some had more pronounced rims; others displayed more narrow opening, deeper bowls. Lamps appeared throughout the region.

Burials, Burial Customs Examples

We take the same approach with burials and burial customs. Burials are omnipresent, but they are often unique in their construction and the items they contain. Many show that persons were buried with various types of grave goods, which often included personal items and assorted kinds of pottery.

Following are various types of burials and burial customs found throughout Israel⁵. The chronology spans from the Middle Bronze Age into the Iron Age:

Cist Burials (MBA-IA) Kabri in Northern Israel
 Cave Burials Tombs (MA-IA) Khirbet Beit Lei in Central Israel
 Shaft Tombs (EBA-IA) Jebel Qa-qir in Southern Israel
 Dolmens (MBA-IA) Transjordan and Golan
 Anthropoid Coffins (LBA-IA) Deir el-Balah in the Southern coast of Israel.

Figurines

Figurines were also produced throughout the country during this time, and they too show distinct varieties and styles. There are three primary or general forms throughout ancient Israel during this period:

Plaque (molded from clay; image is on the front; in bas-relief or raised; would have leaned against something)

Mold-made (made from a mold; similar to the plaque, but has no border. The image is typically human, female.)

Figurines-in-the-round (literally a figure you can walk around; clay is often added for arms, head, etc. Sometimes called the snowman technique.)

Many display what appear to be women. Some present specific poses holding objects; others hold objects such as musical instruments. Their constant appearance in the archaeological record demonstrates their importance and connection to Israelite culture. It should be noted that although there are similarities among the three primary styles. No two figurines are exactly alike.

Textual Data

Other papers will focus on aspects of the biblical text in detail, so I will not spend much time here. However, the text provides descriptions of musical activities, combinations of instruments, and performing musicians. While select passages may give insight regarding instrument types and activities, the psalter in particular may share information about possible known melodies in Israelite culture. A number of the psalms include headings or superscriptions that mention musical terminology, and may have more clues than realized. Claus Westermann and others have shared perspectives regarding issues and concerns with the superscriptions, and they are considered with this in mind⁶.

Following are examples of superscriptions from the Psalter:

(Psalm 4) To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Psalm of David; (Psalm 5): To the leader: for the flutes (chalil). A Psalm of David (Psalm 6): To the leader: with stringed instruments; according to The Shemenith; (Psalm 7): A Shiggaion of David, which he sang to the LORD concerning Cush, a Benjamite; (Psalm 8): To the leader: according to The Gittith. A Psalm of David. (Psalm 9): To the leader: according to Muthlabben. A Psalm of David. (Psalm 16): A Miktam of David. (Psalm 32): Of David. A Maskil. (Psalm 39): To the leader: to Jeduthun. A Psalm of David. (Psalm 42): To the leader. A Maskil of the Korahites. (Psalm 45): To the leader: according to Lillies. Of the Korahites. A Maskil. A love song. (Psalm 46): To the leader. Of the Korahites. According to Alamothe. A Song. (Psalm 53): To the leader: according to Mahalath. A Maskil of David. (Psalm 54): To the leader: with stringed instruments. A Maskil of David, when the Ziphites went and told Saul, 'David is hiding among us.' (Psalm 56): To the leader: according to The Dove on Far-off Terebinths. Of David. A Miktam, when the Philistines seized him Gath. (Psalm 60): To the leader: according to The Lily of the Covenant. A Miktam of David; for instruction; when he struggled with Aram-naharaim and with Aram-zobah, and when Joab on his return killed twelve thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt. (Psalm 69): To the leader: according to Lilies. Of David. (Psalm 81): To the leader: according to The Gittith. Of Asaph. (Psalm 84): To the leader: according to The Gittith. Of the Korahites. A Psalm. (Psalm 88): To the leader: A Song. A Psalm of the Korahites. To the leader: according to Mahalath Leannothe. A Maskil of Heman the Ezrahite.

Within Psalm 92:5 (5), there is the use of *haigayown*⁷.

Familiar Melodies

In addition to questions regarding dating superscriptions, there are debates whether some of the terms are the names of specific instruments, melodies to which the song was to be sung or played to, or certain scale degrees. I offer that each interpretation has validity, but for this discussion, we will entertain and explore that some of them are names of melodies to which a song was to be sung or played. The tunes of these ancient melodies are uncertain, but it is apparent that at some point they were familiar to Israelite communities. The instructions usually discussed or described:

According to The Sheminth⁸
 According to Muthlabben⁹
 According to Mahalath¹⁰
 According to The Gittith¹¹

Like most Near Eastern cultures, Iron Age Israel communicated a great deal of information orally for the most part. Many, especially those interested in music, knowing cultural practices, etc., would have known the names of these melodies and tunes. The hearers or in certain instances, possibly readers of these instructions would have known how to sing or play according to the names of the melodies. A question that comes to mind however, is were these known melodies taught, performed, and remembered in the exact same manner throughout all of Israel? If we consider that certain melodies (or musical instructions) were known in the culture, I offer that they, like the material culture produced by Israelites, would have varied throughout the land. I'm sure that we have all played the game "Telephone." Briefly, this is when a group of people tries to convey a message among themselves, say in a group of 20-30 persons. A message is started with an individual and is passed person to person. By the time the message reaches the last person in the group or the other side of the room, it has changed in some way. It's a fun game. It doesn't matter if one views this activity as good or bad, but it is a fact that the message changes in some way during its delivery. I suggest that this was the case with known melodies in ancient Israel. Melodies would have been taught primarily by singing, humming, or playing, and they would have at some points in their transmission

varied, if only slightly. We have seen this in pottery, burial, and figurine examples. The reasons for variations could be vast—political, artistic choice, style, outside influences, chronological time period, etc. But to say that all melodies would have remained pristine for centuries without being written down—and there are questions with that as well—is asking a lot.

To use a more modern example and personal experience, one can take the ubiquitous church hymn, "Amazing Grace," composed by slave trader and eventual Anglican priest John Newton, and note the plethora of variations from the original. I have performed this hymn many, many times in a number of scenarios, with various combinations of musicians, and among different church congregations. There have been differences with tempos, different time signatures, and alterations of melodic notes, repeating of certain phrases of the song, instrumental breaks, and repeated sections. Yet, it is a widely known melody. People simply sing and play the song differently. I noted the following differences when I have played the song in different regions of the United States:

- Southern United States: Traditional (3/4); also played/sung it in 4
- Northern United States: Traditional (3/4); with instrumental break
- Southwest United States: Traditional (3/4); also played in 4; with instrumental break

Lyricists have used the wonderful melody, Londonderry Aire, to compose a variety of songs. Depending on geographical location, one's initial introduction to the song, culture, etc., this melody may be associated with a specific song or activity. Londonderry Air has its own lyrics, but there are many other songs that use the melody, sometimes with slight variations (e.g., rhythm).

Would God I were the tender apple blossom
 That floats and falls from off the twisted bough
 To lie and faint within your silken bosom
 Or would I were a little burnish'd apple
 For you to pluck me, gliding by so cold
 While sun and shade you robe of lawn will dapple
 Your robe lawn, and you hair's spun gold

Other songs that employ the Londonderry Aire melody include: 'He Looked Beyond My Faults' (Lyrics by Dottie Rambo) also sometimes called 'Amazing Grace'; 'O Danny Boy' (Lyrics by Fredric Weatherly; non-hymn); 'I Cannot Tell' (Lyrics by William Young Fullerton); 'What Grace is Mine' (Lyrics by Keith and Kristyn Getty); 'Lord of the Church We Pray for Our Renewing' (Lyrics by Timothy Dudley-Smith); 'Above the Hills of Time the Cross is Gleaming' (Lyrics by Thomas Tiplady) and others.

This melody may differ slightly, yet people are familiar with the tune and make connections with the song or songs that use it.

Summary and Conclusions

We have discussed various types of Israelite pottery, burials, and figurines that span many centuries. There are approaches in each area that are unique to Israel, and moreover, unique to geographical regions within the country. These visible manifestations demonstrate that while there were general universals throughout the land and people, there were distinct differences in these practices. Music would have also been affected in the same manner. It is difficult to trace and comprehend much of this in the archaeological record and even textual data, but there are nevertheless glimpses of the diversity and uniqueness in Israelite culture. People shared visible cultural bonds but appear to have had no problem in expressing themselves differently in certain areas.

By the end of the Neolithic period the advent of pottery was quickly making its way through Israel, and even then regions displayed notable differences. From EBA cemeteries at Bab-edh-dhra to Iron Age cave burials at Beth Shemesh, the Israelites chose different ways to inter bodies. Artisans also made figurines that captured images of people displaying musical and conducting other activities. They too differ.

These snapshots of Iron Age Israelite culture demonstrate the multiplicity of ways in how people navigated daily life. These objects also shed light on how they may have viewed themselves in connection to the world in which they lived. They may also share perspectives regarding what they considered valuable. Yet, in their sameness, artifacts share special differences. As the glorious past of

Israel continues to come into view, we begin to see more regional features and individualism that would have been part of ancient musical performance and the unique rendering of melodies. It is these things that make ancient Israel special.

How does the available data suggest that the ancients possibly improvised in their music?

Speaking of special, music is one of the most spectacular gifts we have. It permeates nearly every facet of life. I enjoy seeing and hearing groups using music to express themselves. However, I relish hearing individual performers share ideas through musical improvisation. Improvisation, no matter the genre, it is challenging, magical, and special. I consider music to be sacred.

Improvisation requires musicians to create music instantaneously within a set of guidelines. The player uses all that is available to generate and develop musical ideas on the spot. It is a skill that comes easy to some, but with work, it can be developed to some degree by others.

Jazz, baroque, folk, bluegrass, Indian, rock, and other genres employ improvisation. The standard for most of these types of music is to have a player or vocalist state the melody of the song and then improvise using specific notes, modes, scales, chord changes, etc. I offer that Israelite musicians may have taken a similar approach in their music culture.

Questions regarding improvisation in ancient Israel developed after reading Amos 6:4-6:

4 Alas for those who lie on beds of ivory, and lounge on their couches, and eat lambs from the flock, and calves from the stall;

5 who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp, and like David improvise on instruments of music;

6 who drink wine from bowls, and anoint themselves with finest oils, but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph! (emphasis mine.)

Here, the prophet is chastising those who are doing well with blatant disregard for what is happening around them and their lack of compassion. He tells them that because of their actions, they will be the first to go into exile (6:7).

The focus for discussion is on verse 5. I translate *hashvu* from the root *hoshev*, meaning to think, account. Other versions of the Bible present various translations, which affect understanding and interpretation of the action¹²:

Other Translations of Amos 6:5

ASV: 6:5: that sing idle songs to the sound of the viol; that invent for themselves instruments of music, like David (*emphasis mine*); JV: 6:5: That chant the sound of the viol, and invent to themselves instrument of musick, like David (*emphasis mine*); WEB (Word English Bible): 6:5: Who strum on the strings of a harp; who invent for themselves instruments of music; like David (*emphasis mine*); LXX-B: 6:5: who *excel* in the sound of musical instruments; if they have regarded them as abiding, not as fleeting pleasures (*emphasis mine*); JPS (Jewish Publication Society): 6:5: They hum snatches of song to the tune of the lute—they *account* themselves musicians like David (*emphasis mine*).

Note that it is only in this passage and context that the phrase *hashvu* is used in describing musical performance.

Instrumentation

Some of the above passages are somewhat ambiguous when it comes to naming specific musical instruments, i.e., “the instruments of music,” but the archaeological data, including texts show that Iron Age Israelite musicians often played lyres, harps, pipes, rattles, frame drums, cymbals, and possibly others (e.g., lutes, sistra). Given some of the ideas and interpretations of musical activity, a question arises regarding the use of drums, frame drums in particular. Were these membranophones used in all facets of Israelite music culture during the Iron Age? The biblical writers present drums played alone (Judges 11:1-38) and with other instruments.

And Jephthah made a vow to YHWH, and said, ‘If you will give the Ammonites into my hand, then whoever comes out of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return victorious from the Ammonites, shall be YHWH’s, to be offered up by me as a burnt offering (Judges 11:30).

Then Jephthah came to his home at Mizpah; and there was his daughter coming out to meet him with *frame drums* and dancing. She was his only child; he had no son or daughter except her (Judges 11:35 *emphasis mine*).

Drums were a part of everyday life and also used in Temple activity. Take a look at Psalm 68:24-25:

Your solemn processions are seen, O God,
The procession of my God, my King, into the sanctuary—
The singers in front, the musicians last,
Between them girls playing frame drums (*emphasis mine*):

According to the textual data, the instrumentation used by the general Israelite populous is heavy on the rhythmical side. There are melodic instruments (voices, lyres, harps, pipes), but the consistent mentioning of frame drums, rattles, and cymbals suggest that rhythm was important. The description in Ps. 68 and the constant appearance of figurines with frame drums in the archaeological record may shed light on the use of percussion instruments in Temple music during this time.

As mentioned, the biblical writers also present phrases that remain unclear when it comes to instrumentation, for example, “the instruments David has made” (2 Chr. 7:6) and David speaking, “The instruments I have made” (1 Chr. 23:2-5) What instruments are to be included in this corpus? Are there instruments not yet discovered or understood? Could players improvise with all of them?

How does this possibly connect or say more about the te’amim?

To further explore thoughts about improvisation, I use ideas from Haik-Vantoura and her development of the *te-amim*. Other papers present more detailed discussion regarding her contributions, so I will move to briefly explain how a system something like this could have been used to illustrate an idea regarding possible improvisation in ancient Israel.

Employing Haik-Vantoura explanation of the Prosodic System, one can develop and employ modes. Musicians may have used modes like this for improvisation¹³. In jazz and Indian music, musicians often use specific modes as a base. In one of the examples Haik-Vantoura explains that the tonic or root is the third degree of the scale. In jazz, this would be the Phrygian mode—essentially playing from E to E using the key signature of C. A musician could have used this mode to improvise before, during, or after the melody was introduced.

Other Indicators of Possible Improvisation in Israelite Culture

Are there possible indicators of improvisation outside of musical examples in Israelite culture? Textual examples describing Israelite culture had parts of activities that appear to have been specifically choreographed and timed, as well as improvised:

Choreographed or Timed.

The shofar is blown (sometimes in a specific manner) for specific events in Israelite culture (Lev. 25:9 The Day of Atonement; Josh. 6:4-20 War)

Improvised.

Noah constructs an altar following the flood—no instructions. No previous altars constructed; no prototypes, etc. He just does it (Gen. 8:20).

Jacob erects a standing stone after a divine encounter. No instructions. He just does it (Gen. 28:18)

Miriam leads women in victory celebration song. They all play drums, dance, and sing. Was this improvised (Ex. 15:20-21)?

One of the most interesting scenarios involving improvisation is with David, as he and the people of Israel arrive in Jerusalem with the Ark. As the music plays, David dances ecstatically (2 Sam. 6:14). His intensity brings him out of his clothes, down to his linen ephod. This action appears to have been spontaneous and improvised. Moreover, I offer that the music to which he danced was also some form of improvised music or an extended section of a known song so he could do this. If these and other incidents are any reflection of the culture, they display parts of Israelite life that were structured, timed, and repeated in the same manner at designated intervals. Yet, there are aspects that show there was room for improvisation. I offer that this would have been the same with Israelite music culture. (I can share an mp4 of my ideas regarding improvisation upon request.)

Summary and Conclusions

There is much to explore in the music culture of ancient Israel specifically and the cultures of the Near East in general. It is my desire that scholars will continue to develop questions and establish ways to work with the available data. Moreover, I hope that scholars and musicians will continue

with creative endeavors using the information revealed about these wonderful groups of the past. Permitting scholarly work to influence and generate artistic creations will prove to be rewarding. While the precise sounds of ancient music remain in question, we should strive to make useful work of the data. As often as possible, we should aim to bring our studies out of the ivory towers and present them in creative ways with those who share our interests.

Notes

1 Burgh, T. *Listening to the Artifacts: Music Culture in Ancient Israel/Palestine*. New York: T&T Clark, 2006. 1-6.

2 Dever, William, G. "Archaeology, Texts, and History-Writing: Toward an Epistemology," In *Uncovering Ancient Stones: Essays in Memory of H. Neil Richardson*, edited by Lewis M. Hopfe, 109, Winona Lake. Eisenbrauns, 1994.

3 Gibbon, Guy. *Anthropological Archaeology*. New York. Columbia. 1984. 8.

4 Amiran, Ruth. *Ancient Pottery of the Holy Land: From Its Beginnings in the Neolithic Period to the End of the Iron Age*. Rutgers, 1970.

5 Assaf, Yasur-Landau, Jennie R. Ebeling, Laura B. Mazow. *Household Archaeology in Ancient Israel and Beyond*. Brill, 2011.

6 Westermann, Claus. *The Living Psalms*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1989,19.

7 From Strong's Concordance: intensive from 1897; a murmuring sound, i.e. a musical notation (probably similar to the modern *affettuoso* to indicate solemnity of movement); by implication, a machination:—device, Higgaiion, meditation, solemn sound.

8 Orr, James. "Sheminith." *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. 1915. "Eight; octave, a musical term, supposed to denote the lowest note sung by men's voices (1 Chronicles 15:21; Psalm 6 title). "Maurer and apparently others, regard Sheminith as an instrument of deep tone like the violoncello, while Alamothe is compared to the violin." In "Musical Terms," in *The People's Bible Encyclopedia: Biographical, Geographical, Historical, and Doctrinal*. Volume 2. Ed. Charles Randall Barnes. Chicago. The Peoples' Publication Society, 1912, 769.

9 Occurring only in the title of Psalm 9. Some interpret the words as meaning 'on the death of Labben,' some unknown person. Others render the word, 'on the death of the son,' i.e., of Absalom (2 Sam. 18:33). Others have taken the word as the name of a musical instrument, or as the name of an air to which the psalm was sung. Easton, M.G., *Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, Third Edition. City? Thomas Nelson.

10 "The word is found in the titles of Psalm 53 (the *Revised Version, British and American*) 'set to Mahalath' and Psalm 88 (the *Revised Version, British and American*) 'set to Mahalath Leannoth, 'margin 'for singing'). Probably some song or tune is meant, though the word is taken by many to denote a musical instrument. Hengstenberg and others interpret it as indicating the subject of the Psalms. From the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia Online*. <http://www.internationalstandardbible.com/M/mahalath.html>

11 A stringed instrument. *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia Online*. <http://www.naves-topical-bible.com/MUSIC.html> Also, "A musical instrument mentioned in Ps. *Viii. 1, lxxxiv. 1*. The word is explained by Gesenius as meaning 'striking instrument,' but it is now generally held to denote a zither. Rashi, following the Targum, derives the name from 'Gath'; it would then mean 'fabricated by the people of Gath.' He also quotes Talmudic saying that 'Gittith' is an allusion to Edom, which will be trodden down like a wine press, and combats this view by arguing that the context of the chapter has nothing to do with Edom. Ibn Ezra explains the name 'Gittith' as referring to the fact that the above-mentioned psalms were composed for the sake of the descendants of Obed-edom the Gittite, who was a Levite. The interpretation (also found in the Septuagint) that 'Gittith' means 'to be sung to the tune of the wine-presses' is ridiculed by Ibn Ezra." Hirsch, E.G., and M. Seligsohn in *JewishEncyclopedia.com* <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/6693-gittith>

12 From Strong's *Concordance: 2803. chashab, khaw-shab*'; a primitive root; properly, to plait or interpenetrate, i.e. (literally) to weave or (gen.) to fabricate; figuratively, to plot or contrive (usually in a malicious sense); hence (from the mental effort) to think, regard, value, compute:—(make) account (of), conceive, consider, count, cunning (man, work, workman), devise, esteem, find out, forecast, hold, imagine, impute, invent, be like, mean, purpose, reckon(-ing be made), regard, think (emphasis mine)

For this passage, *BDB*, note number five renders the translation and explanation, invent ingenious and artistic things, (*wbvj* Am. 6:5) invent for themselves instruments of music; (*bvj hvom*) invent cunning work (of artistic devices in construction of the tabernacle) Ex 31:4 35:32,35 (all P), so 2 Chr. 2:13; (*bwvj tbvjm*) work of the cunning work (ingenious, inventive) workman (of artistic devices in weaving; see esp. *VB* and *D*) Ex. 26:1, 31; 28:6,15; 36:8, 35; 39:3,8 (all P).

13 Haik-Vantoura, Suzanne. *Music in the Bible Revealed*. North Richland Hills: Bibal Press. 1991, 38.

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