In the present article I would like to discuss a unique phenomenon in the material culture of ancient Israel during the biblical period: the lack of painted decoration on pottery. Unlike their neighbors in Philistia, Phoenicia, Cyprus, Ammon, Edom, and others, the Israelites did not decorate their pottery. In the following, I will present the phenomenon and will examine it within the historical context in which it developed.1

The Phenomenon: The Absence of Decoration on Pottery in Iron Age Israel

The absence (or extreme rarity, to be more precise) of decoration on the pottery produced in ancient Israel is well-known to modern scholarship. The lack of painted decoration on the pottery during the period of the Israelite settlement (Iron Age I; ca. 1250–980 BCE) in the highland regions of the country has been noticed by practically all scholars dealing with the settlement phenomenon (fig. 1),2 and has usually been explained by the low standards of living and the hardship of life in the small highland villages of this era.3 The tradition of not decorating pottery persisted, however, and the conspicuous absence of decoration on the pottery produced in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah during the Iron Age II (ca. 980–586 BCE) is also well known to scholars (fig. 2),4 decorating pottery. Furthermore, a functional explanation does not negate a social or cognitive one, and the dichotomy is artificial; see Ian Hodder, Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology, 2d ed. (Cambridge, 1991), 53–54; Siân Jones, The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present (London, 1997), 110–27. For example, cosmological explanations could be given to various types of behavior that could also be explained along functional lines (see Hodder, Reading the Past, 53). The presence of a functional explanation for past behavior makes it very difficult for scholars to ascribe it to any other kind of reasoning. The absence of a functional explanation, however, makes the need for another form of explanation more apparent.

1 This article is based on arguments raised in my book Israel’s Ethnogenesis: Settlement, Interaction, Expansion and Resistance (London, 2006).
3 This argument is very problematic, as even many “simple” societies (much simpler than the Israelite society of the Iron Age I) do decorate their pottery. Furthermore, a functional explanation does not negate a social or cognitive one, and the dichotomy is artificial; see Ian Hodder, Reading the Past: Current Approaches to Interpretation in Archaeology, 2d ed. (Cambridge, 1991), 53–54; Siân Jones, The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present (London, 1997), 110–27. For example, cosmological explanations could be given to various types of behavior that could also be explained along functional lines (see Hodder, Reading the Past, 53). The presence of a functional explanation for past behavior makes it very difficult for scholars to ascribe it to any other kind of reasoning. The absence of a functional explanation, however, makes the need for another form of explanation more apparent.
4 Gabriel Barkay, “The Iron Age II–III,” in The Archaeology of Israel, ed. Amnon Ben-Tor (New Haven, 1992), 354; Yohanan Aharoni, The...
though the reasons behind this remarkable pattern have not been systematically addressed. Notably, unlike the situation in the Iron Age I, it cannot be claimed that a low standard of living was responsible for the lack of decoration in the Iron Age II, as this was in some cases extremely high.5

The lack of decoration on ceramics in ancient Israel is conspicuously unique, and stands in sharp contrast to both the contemporary pottery of the nearby regions of Cyprus, Phoenicia, Philistia, Midian, Moab, and Edom (see fig. 3 for an example of Iron II decorated pottery),6 and the second millennium BCE Canaanite tradition (see figs. 4, 5).7 This


absence must be meaningful, therefore, and one has to search for its explanation along social and cultural lines. In order to understand the reasons for Israel’s tradition of not decorating pottery, one must first understand why pottery is normatively decorated in the first place.

**Decoration on Pottery: What Is Its Purpose?**

Decoration is used to convey various messages, and the significance of decoration on pottery has usually been regarded as meaningful since the beginning of modern archaeological research. Even when the study of style and ethnicity was relegated to the fringes of the archaeological discipline, with the advent of the New (later, Processual) Archaeology, which typically did not consider the topic to be of scientific value (more below), stylistic characteristics were still viewed “as residual formal variation,” and as such, stylistic variation was seen by many processual archaeologists as an indication of ethnic variation.


10 Jones, The Archaeology of Ethnicity, 111.

Variation in decoration, not seen as functional, was therefore regarded by these scholars as a means, probably the most effective one, of studying ethnicity. Not surprisingly, the importance of decoration received much more attention in later, post-processual studies. Michael Shanks and Christopher Tilley claim that “style may be actively used to mark out boundaries of different social groups when there is intense interaction between them.” We will elaborate on this issue below.

It is thus clear that if variation in decoration is meaningful and conveys messages, its absence in an environment in which pottery is normatively decorated is at least of equal importance. Furthermore, in an environment in which pottery is often decorated, not decorating pottery at all is much more conspicuous than using a different style of decoration.

Following Polly Wiessner, messages conveyed by decoration/style can be divided into two coexisting types: emblemic and assertive. The first involves messages concerning members’ identity as part of a group, i.e., with which group people identify themselves, or to which group they belong (e.g., the association with Judaism of wearing a skullcap). The second involves messages about the individual, such as “I’m richer than everyone else” (e.g., by wearing an expensive watch). While messages of difference and conformity within the group might appear contradictory, they coexist, and the two types of messages can be sent by the very same object. We should be aware of the second type of message, but our interest here is in the first: the emblemic style.

Societies use various kinds of artifacts, such as clothes, utensils, house design, and others, to convey messages concerning identity. As has been observed by many, pottery – and especially decoration on pottery – was used during many periods and in various cultures, whether directly or indirectly, as a major vehicle for such messages.

Indeed, a number of studies have found that stylistic differences are the best archaeological indicators of ethnicity. This can also be seen, for example, in Uruk, where Hamrin Polychrome (Jemdat Nasr) pottery comprised as much as 25 percent of the ceramic assemblage in one neighborhood, whereas it was absent in other excavated areas of domestic occupation; it also appears that Philistine pottery was meaningful, as can be seen in its limited distribution, and by its absence from various sites, and even neighborhoods.

Before attempting to apply the above insights to the study of ancient Israelite society, I would like to present a brief summary of the question of ethnicity and its identification in the archaeological record.

The Archaeology of Ethnicity: The Importance of the “Other”
Identifying ethnic groups in the archaeological record has long been an important theme of archaeological research, but as is clear today, such identifications are notoriously difficult. In the past, scholars tended to equate archaeological cultures with ethnic groups, or peoples, and this is epitomized in the following oft-quoted paragraph written by Vere Gordon Childe: “We find certain types of remains – pots, implements, ornaments, burial rites and house forms – constantly recurring together. Such a complex of associated traits we shall term ‘cultural group’ or just a ‘culture.’ We assume that such a complex is the material expression of what today would be called a ‘people’.”

Various advances in archaeology, however, have changed the approach to the study of ethnicity. The

12 See, e.g., David, Sterner, and Gavua, “Why Pots Are Decorated.”
18 See Colin Renfrew, The Roots of Ethnicity, Archaeology, Genetics and the Origins of Europe (Rome, 1993), 20; for comprehensive summaries, see Jones, The Archaeology of Ethnicity; Emberling, “Ethnicity in Complex Societies”; see also Faust, Israel’s Ethnogenesis.
development of the New Archaeology and its critique of the culture history school and its normative approach to culture, along with the new paradigm’s search for “laws of human behavior,” relegated the study of “unique” phenomena such as ethnic or tribal identity to the fringes of archaeological inquiry. It is further likely that disinterest in the study of ethnicity also resulted from the horrifying outcome of the racial archaeology so prevalent in Europe until the Second World War.

Simultaneously with the emergence of the New Archaeology, changes in the perception of ethnicity were taking place in the anthropological literature. Following the work of Fredrik Barth, it became apparent that ethnic groups are not “culture-bearing units,” i.e., groups sharing core values that are reflected in cultural forms. Barth defines ethnic groups as, in essence, a form of social organization; its critical criterion is an ability to be identified and distinguished among others, or in his words, allowing “self-ascription and ascription by others.” Ethnic identity here is not determined by biological or genetic factors but is subject to perception and is adaptable.

In this light, it is clear today that ethnicity is too complex to be merely identified with a material or an archaeological culture; it is fluid – merely one of several attributes of an individual’s complete identity – and it is subjective. This has led some scholars to question the ability of archaeologists to identify ethnic groups in the material record of extinct societies. Yet in most cases, clear relationships between material culture and ethnicity can be discerned, however complicated they may be.

The consensus today is that groups define themselves in relation to, and in contrast with, other groups. The ethnic boundaries of a group are not defined by the sum of cultural traits shared by its members but by the idiosyncratic use of specific material and behavioral symbols as compared with other groups. As a consequence, emphasis shifted from the shared elements or characteristics of a group to the features that distinguish it from other groups. It was the contact between groups that was seen as essential for the formation of the self-identity of a group, which is thus clearly manifested in its material culture. Ethnic identity can be identified in certain artifacts that came to carry a symbolic meaning.

23 Ibid., 10–13.
24 Ibid., 10–11.
25 Ibid., 11, 13.
26 For an assessment of Barth’s influence on archaeological thinking, see also Emberling, “Ethnicity in Complex Societies.”
27 See, e.g., Ian Hodder, Symbols in Action: Ethnoarchaeological Studies of Material Culture (Cambridge, 1982).
33 See also Cohen, The Symbolic Construction of Community.
34 McGuire, “The Study of Ethnicity”: 163; Hodder, Reading the Past, 3.
or by identifying “ethnically specific behavior,” or more accurately, the material correlates of such behavior.35

It is now time to return to Israelite society and try to understand the context in which the tradition of using simple, undecorated pottery evolved.

The Emergence of Israel in Canaan: A Summary

Although the question of the beginnings of Israel has many facets, it has been, in one way or another, at the focus of the archaeological and historical study of the Land of Israel since the 1920s. Although a topic of heated debate in the 1990s and early 2000s, it is becoming increasingly accepted today that an ethnic group by the name of Israel already existed during the Iron Age I.36

Recently, I suggested that Israel’s ethnogenesis was a complex and gradual process, beginning in the second half of the thirteenth century BCE, when the new settlers in the highlands defined themselves in contrast to the Egypto-Canaanite system of the time.37 It appears that the beginning of the settlement process in the highlands (on both sides of the Jordan River) in the second half of the thirteenth century BCE was accompanied by hostile relations between the highland settlers on the one hand, and the Canaanite city-states of the lowlands and their Egyptian overlords, on the other. The former were apparently pushed (or restricted) to the highlands by an Egyptian administration that was strengthening its hold over Canaan at the time.38 The highland settlers maintained an asymmetrical relationship with the

37 Faust, Israel’s Ethnogenesis.
powerful Egyptian overlords and the Canaanite cities. Asymmetrical relations between groups typically result in the creation of distinct ethnic identities, and it is therefore likely that the highland settlers would have developed a separate identity under these circumstances. This is the Israel that is mentioned in the Merneptah Stele.

This highland group defined itself as egalitarian in contrast to the highly stratified and diverse Canaanite society. Decorated and imported pottery was very prevalent in Canaan at the time and was widely used (figs. 4–5), as it served (along with the large and diverse ceramic repertoire) to transmit various kinds of nonverbal communication and to manifest the differences that were important to the various groups living there at the time, probably signifying both status and affiliation. In such a context, if the highlanders wanted to demarcate the differences between themselves and the Egypto-Canaanite system of the lowlands, they followed the (probably existing) tradition of not decorating pottery (many of the settlers probably had semi-nomadic origins) and attached more importance to this habit. It marked the difference between them and the Canaanites. After all, complete avoidance of imported and decorated wares—more than any different type of decoration—transmitted a strong message of difference.

During the twelfth century BCE the Egyptian rulers withdrew from the Canaanite territories, but in the course of the eleventh century BCE the highland population once again confronted a powerful external “other” – the Philistines. By that time the Philistines held an economic interest in various regions of Judah and probably also in southern Samaria (fig. 6). This strong external pressure

40 The stratified nature of Canaanite society is reflected not only in the archaeological finds, but also in the textual sources; see, e.g., Yohanan Aharoni, *The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography* (Philadelphia, 1979), 168–69; see also Anson E. Rainey, “Amarna and Later: Aspects of Social History,” in *Symbols, Symbolism and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palestine*, eds. William G. Dever and Seymour Gitin (Winona Lake, 2003), 172–76.
41 Killebrew, *Biblical Peoples and Ethnicity.*

Once again led the highlanders to renegotiate their ethnic identity, this time in relation to the Philistine “other.” In the new ethnic negotiation that ensued, many of the former ethnic traits were renegotiated and stressed anew (i.e., undecorated pottery, avoidance of imported...
pottery, and even the egalitarian ethos) along with new components that were deemed appropriate in the new context (e.g., circumcision and the avoidance of pork, which are not relevant to this study). Clearly, the trait of not decorating pottery was very suitable, and the Israelites therefore continued to refrain from decorating their pottery (figs. 1–2). This left its mark on Israelite identity for hundreds of years or more, often through a repetitive process of negotiation and renegotiation.

Discussion: Internal and External Messages

While it is clear that decoration on pottery could convey messages regarding ethnicity, and that the absence of decoration should also be interpreted in this light, deciphering the actual message and establishing its relation and importance to ethnicity (if there is any) is much more complex. Did the Israelites consciously not decorate pottery in order to show they were not Canaanites or Philistines? Or was this process more complex?

Notably, messages carried by decoration are in many – if not most – cases directed to the group itself. In such cases, pottery decoration, like other elements, could be used as a means, for example, to affirm the social order, send messages concerning relations between ages or sexes, or reaffirm society’s values and ethics. As stated by David et al., “Designs on pottery, far from being ‘mere decoration,’ art for art’s sake, or messages consciously emblemic of ethnicity, are low-technology channels through which society implants its values in the individual – every day at mealtimes.”

Hodder, for example, presents a detailed discussion of the importance of calabashes decoration in the Ilchamus (Njemps) society, which he interprets as relating to male-female relations inside the groups. Interestingly, apart from simple beaded items, the Ilchamus are the only cultural group that produces decorated artifacts in the region. Hodder explains this uniqueness by the fact that the calabashes are manufactured for tourists, and the income that they bring the women further changes gender relations in Ilchamus society. We should also acknowledge the importance of this practice for the study of ethnicity, as a good example of the way in which messages that are primarily internal also carry external messages, if only as a by-product. After all, in this region decorated items were manufactured only by the Ilchamus, and finding them can teach us about the identity of the users. But it is clear now that there is more to this phenomenon than a simple index of ethnicity.

The situation described by Hodder is not unique. In summarizing their study of pottery decoration among several groups in Cameroon, David et al. write that the Mafa and Bulahay peoples engage in pottery decoration as a means of transmitting messages within the group. They continue:

Mafa society is characterized by a high degree of order in social relations and by considerable social pressure on the individual by the group [...] we find that respect for roles is the cardinal virtue; the body is assimilated to the social body [...] In such societies [...] decoration and the persistence of designs through social time and space are to be explained by their mnemonic visual expression of underlying structures of belief and thought that most distinctively constitute the societies’ unique identities. This being the case [...] pottery decoration and, indeed, the structured system of ceramic types are likely to offer not only good but the best evidence of “ethnicity” generally preserved in the archaeological record.

In this respect, pottery decoration, and even forms, can be seen as resulting from an ethnically specific behavior or from a “mind-set.” The resulting pattern is, therefore, unique to a certain ethnic group. Indeed, according to

43 David, Sterner, and Gavua, “Why Pots are Decorated”: 379.
44 Hodder, Reading the Past, 109–19.
45 Ibid., 109, 118.
46 Ibid., 118–19.
48 See Deetz, In Small Things Forgotten.
David et al., “[W]hat the outsider reads as ‘ethnicity’ is the incidental by-product of the interplay of Mafa and Bulahay cognition and society.”

What, however, was the message transmitted by the simple ceramics? What did it convey to the Israelites?

The Lack of Decoration on Israelite Pottery

It seems that the message was one of simplicity (and perhaps also part of a broader message of equality; more below). A similar phenomenon of lack of decoration, though in a completely different time and place, was observed, for example, by Ivor Noël Hume. He noticed that the earliest English delftware, in London, was usually elaborately decorated. After the civil war, potters began to produce undecorated plain vessels. Only after the restoration in 1660 did decorated pottery become popular again. Deetz summarized this trend: “Puritan attitudes toward decoration of everyday objects might have had an effect on the delftware industry in the London area in the form of reduction of the amount of decorated pottery before the restoration.” He furthermore attributes the lack of decoration on various artifacts in Anglo-America to Puritan attitudes. It appears that the situation in the case of the Israelites was similar.

Interestingly, various scholars, on the basis of biblical texts, have claimed that Israelite society had such an ideology. While the texts are problematic sources, and each interpretation meets with counter-interpretation, the ancient Israelites’ material culture seems more straightforward. An ethos of simplicity and egalitarianism is expressed by many material traits, which I shall discuss in the following section.

The Lack of Decoration in Context

Imported Pottery

Another well-known Israelite ethnic trait, already hinted above, is the lack of imported pottery in the highlands. Obviously, this trait is much more significant in the Iron Age II, following the resumption of trade in the eastern Mediterranean, but is manifested in the Iron Age I by the almost total absence of Philistine pottery (fig. 7) in the highlands. The lack of imported pottery, and for the Iron Age I we are referring to the lack of Philistine bichrome pottery as no significant international trade seems to have taken place at the time, also may reflect the same ethos of simplicity.

Pottery Repertoire

Much has been written in recent years about the continuity of pottery forms from the Late Bronze Age to the Iron Age. It is clear, however, that the ceramic repertoire

49 David, Sterner, and Gavua, “Why Pots are Decorated”; 378; see also Hodder, Symbols in Action, 54.
51 Deetz, In Small Things Forgotten, 81.
52 Ibid., 81–82.
54 Such accordance between various facets of culture is expected; see Deetz, In Small Things Forgotten; David, Sterner, and Gavua, “Why Pots are Decorated”; 378; Hodder, Reading the Past.
55 See, e.g., Dever, “Ceramics, Ethnicity, and the Questions of Israel’s Origins”; 204; Bloch-Smith and Alpert Nakhai, “A Landscape Comes to Life”; 76.
in the Israelite settlements in the highlands (fig. 1) is extremely limited when compared to both Iron Age I lowlands (fig. 7) and the Late Bronze Age throughout the region (figs. 5–6). It is interesting to quote Bunimovitz and Yasur Landau, who also observe the “poorness and isolation reflected in the Israelite assemblage.” They raise the possibility that this might “hint at ideological behavior” (emphasis in original). While the issue is not elaborated, it is clear that in contrast to the use of an elaborated assemblage, a limited repertoire can be easily used to convey similar messages of simplicity and egalitarianism.

Absence of Temples
The absence of temples in the Iron Age I highland villages is also very noticeable. While temples are abundant practically everywhere during the Late Bronze Age, they disappear from the archaeological record of the Iron Age highlands. It should be stressed that this cannot be attributed to the rural nature of the highland sites, as temples in villages existed in many periods, both before and after the Iron Age I; furthermore, temples are also absent from most cities in Israel and Judah. The lack of real temples and, probably, temple personnel (it is likely that there were local priests, etc.), might also be a result of an egalitarian ideology that rejected overt signs of hierarchy.

Four Room House
As maintained elsewhere, an egalitarian ideology is reflected in the plan of the four room house. This can be seen most clearly in an analysis of movement within this house. The four room plan enables easy access to every room and is lacking any hierarchy in the structuring of the rooms: unlike other dwellings, there are hardly any movement restrictions, and once in the central room, one can go directly to the desired space. Again, this seems to reflect and ideology of egalitarianism.

59 Note that the limited repertoire is relevant only for the Iron Age I, and this specific trait disappears in the transition to the Iron Age II, when Israelite society became more stratified.
61 See, e.g., Bloch-Smith and Alpert Nakhai, “A Landscape Comes to Life” 76; Mazar, “The Iron Age I,” 298.
64 See also Dever, “Ceramics, Ethnicity, and the Questions of Israel’s Origins”: 205.
Absence of Royal Inscriptions

A phenomenon that has been little discussed in the past is the absence of royal inscriptions in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah (unlike previous traits, this one is relevant only for the Iron Age II). The territories of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were excavated to a much larger extent than any other polity in the region, and have indeed yielded much larger quantities of finds of various sorts. For example, Israel and Judah produced more ostraca than any other state in the region. When one examines the quantity of royal inscriptions, however, the situation changes dramatically. Although not abundant in any polity, the quantity of royal inscriptions, however, the absence of royal inscriptions in the kingdoms of Israel and Judah (unlike previous traits, this one is relevant only for the Iron Age II). The territories of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah were excavated to a much larger extent than any other polity in the region, and have indeed yielded much larger quantities of finds of various sorts. For example, Israel and Judah produced more ostraca than any other state in the region. When one examines the quantity of royal inscriptions, however, the situation changes dramatically. Although not abundant in any polity, the quantity of royal inscriptions, however, the exception of Israel and Judah. We thus witness a strange pattern, in which the polities that were excavated much more intensively than all the others, and whose finds are much more numerous, are lacking royal inscriptions.

This pattern cannot be accidental, as the large number of excavations indicates. I believe that in accordance with the above mentioned traits, the society under discussion did not generally approve of this genre.

The Absence of Burials

There are virtually no known Iron Age burials from the highlands dating prior to the ninth–eighth centuries BCE, an issue recently discussed at length by Kletter and Faust. This stands in sharp contrast to the Late Bronze Age in all parts of the country, highlands and lowlands, and to the Iron Age I in the lowlands. Tombs and burials are an important channel for the transmission of messages of social difference and status, and they certainly served this purpose in the Late Bronze Age. While there was a variety of burials in Late Bronze Age Canaan, which could result from several reasons of which social hierarchy regions of the kingdom of Israel, etc. (Note that Na‘aman [The Past that Shapes the Present, 94], expects that such inscriptions will be found in the future.) The general pattern, however, is clear.

is but one, the Iron Age I lacks even the “multiple cave burials” that characterized the highlands throughout most of the second millennium BCE, therefore breaking a continuity that had prevailed in wide segments of Canaanite society for almost 800 years. Even if a few Iron Age I burials are identified in the highlands, the general pattern is striking: during the Late Bronze Age the highlands were only sparsely settled but many tombs are known, while during the Iron Age the area was filled with settlements, but such burial practices are practically absent.

It is likely that all individuals during this period were buried in simple inhumations. The absence of any observable burial sites is a clear reflection of an egalitarian ideology and exhibits a sharp contrast to Late Bronze Age Canaanite traditions. As burials play an important social role, they are a chief vehicle through which such an ideology can be channelled or expressed.

The present article does not discuss any of these traits in detail, as each of them deserves an article of its own, but notes the importance of the fact that they all point in the same direction. The highland population of the Iron Age I had an ideology of egalitarianism and simplicity, and this ethos continued well into the Iron Age II.

It is likely that this behavior was ethnically sensitive, and that the Israelites defined themselves as such in contrast to their neighbors. The lack of decoration was therefore a result of ethnically specific behavior, and although it was directed to a large extent toward the society itself, implanting “its values in the individual – every day at mealtime,” it can also serve to teach about ethnicity.

Summary
Pottery in ancient Israel and Judah was simple and undecorated. This stands in sharp contrast to most other societies in the Iron Age I and II, in which some forms (sometimes many) of pottery were decorated.

It appears that this tradition became meaningful already during the Iron Age I, when the Israelites were negotiating their identity with the Egypto-Canaanite system, and later with the Philistines. As part of this ethnic negotiation, the Israelites asserted their identity in contrast to stronger and more complex societies, and consequently defined themselves as simple and egalitarian. One of the manifestations of this ethos was the meaning that was invested in the lack of decoration on pottery. This “simplicity” accompanied Israeliite society throughout the biblical period, and even beyond.

---

75 Gonen, “The Late Bronze Age,” 245.
79 For the reasons for the emergence of the Judahite tomb in the eighth century BCE, see Avraham Faust and Shlomo Bunimovitz, “The Judahite Rock-Cut Tomb: Family Response at a Time of Change,” IEJ 58 (2008): 150–70. We must note that in Israel the tradition of burying only in simple inhumations prevailed until the destruction of the kingdom in the eighth century BCE.

80 A full discussion of this issue is conducted elsewhere (Faust, “Mortuary Practices”; idem, “Ketiaḥ nibenu ha-yašare’elim?”).
81 For an example in which burial is used to exemplify an egalitarian ethos, although the society is highly stratified, see Peter Metcalf and Richard Huntington, Celebrations of Death: The Anthropology of Mortuary Ritual (Cambridge, 1991) regarding Saudi Arabia, and Michael Parker Pearson, “Mortuary Practices, Society and Ideology: An Ethnoarchaeological Case Study,” in Symbolic and Structural Archaeology, ed. Ian Hodder (Cambridge, 1982), 99–113, regarding England. For a detailed discussion, see Faust, “Mortuary Practices.”
82 See also Faust, “Burnished Pottery”; idem, Israel’s Ethnogenesis; idem, “The Archaeology of the Israelite Cult”; idem, “How Were the Israelites Buried.”
83 It must be stressed that holding a certain ideology does not necessarily mean that reality followed. No society is truly egalitarian, and Israelite society was clearly not, especially during the Iron Age II (the period of the Monarchy). While ideology influenced many things, as we have seen here, reality did not necessarily conform to it.
84 David, Sterner, and Gavua, “Why Pots are Decorated”: 379.