



Excavating the Liturgy of the Davidic Monarchy's Mortuary Cult

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Long before Israel and Judah emerged, and throughout the period of their existence, kings in the Levant imagined an afterlife in which they would live forever, rising at regular intervals from peaceful repose to dine and drink in the presence of their divine lords. In time, the authors of the Hebrew Bible rejected those beliefs, but the Bible we read today reflects both the rejection and the earlier religious ideas that were finally excluded. This paper argues that it is possible to excavate from the Psalter fragments of a liturgy for the royal mortuary cult of the Davidic kings.