The Date of the Oldest Edition of Deuteronomy

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Abstract

There are several reasons to assume that the oldest edition of Deuteronomy is essentially of post-586 BCE in origin. Especially the oldest text of Deut 12, generally assumed to be the core of the *Urdeuteronomium*, can only have been written in a context where there was no temple, state or monarch, but other parts of the *Urdeuteronomium*, as far as it can be reconstructed, also reveal features that imply a late origin. This paper does not go so far as to offer a precise context for the *Urdeuteronomium*, but it merely argues that the time of Josiah or any other time during the monarchy is improbable.