

three cultures, a gifted organizer and legislator and the possessor of a deep mystical sense of the numinous. Moses was also a man with a mission given to him by God, one who bore the unmistakable mark of a genuine confrontation with the divine.

In the view of the present writer the achievements which could realistically be attributed to Moses are as follows, with the omission of the Exodus and the Red Sea Crossing, which are taken for granted.

A. *The foundation of a national consciousness*

(i) *The organization of a group of tribes into a unity bound by a religious covenant*

This included the introduction of a covenant ceremony and rite of membership (circumcision). Ex 19 may well be the record of the first covenant of some tribes, while Ex 24 may represent a further stage when other tribes joined the covenanting group. The genealogy of the twelve tribe structure has already been mentioned. The passage in Ex 18¹⁴⁻²⁷ may be the record of Moses' systematic organization of the tribes. The ark, of course, became a symbol of unity, but there were others. The twelve tribal rods kept in the sacred tent, for example, could well have been a Mosaic device to promote unity (cf. Num 17¹⁻¹¹).

(ii) *The formation of a disciplined group with an adequate fighting force*

While the numbers of the tribes given in the narrative may represent later censuses, it seems necessary to accept that Moses did have a substantial force in order to envisage the invasion of Canaan. The order of march for the tribes as described in Num 2 represents an ancient tradition which could go back to Moses himself. Surely a force that was hoping to invade a new country would need such an order. Also, of course, the techniques of survival in desert country were passed on by Moses to his followers, for example, where to find manna and exhausted quails, how to obtain water, how to sweeten brackish water. Undoubtedly, Moses was also a practical psychologist. The provision of the bronze serpent as an anti-snake device would, at the very least, deal with the panic aroused by fears of snake bites (cf. Num 21⁴⁻⁹).

(iii) *The foundation of a country*

Moses was not satisfied with the formation of a nomadic group of tribes as his life's achievement. He seized upon the typical nomadic dream of a promised land, passed down from ancient times, and transformed it into a reality. The formula in Ex 33¹⁻³ was the motivating factor in Moses' grand design for an Israelite land. While it is true that he did not

enter the new country, it was certainly in his mind from the early days of his leadership.

B. *The foundation of a new religion*

(i) *Basic religious statements*

There are certain statements or accounts of experiences which can only go back to Moses himself. There are others of which the most likely explanation is that they are Mosaic, though other explanations are possible. An example of the former is the account of the burning bush incident, the best analogy for which is St. Paul's conversion on the Damascus road. An example of the second is the Aaronic blessing of Num 6²⁴⁻²⁶. It is ridiculous to suppose that Moses was *incapable* of writing anything substantial. The fact is he may not have done so because of practical difficulties. However, that does not mean that no passages from the tradition are of Mosaic origin for, by the nature of things, great men like Moses and the Buddha probably put forward their teachings in an easily remembered oral form. Consequently, it is postulated that the following selection of passages at least, could well be of Mosaic origin, which is not to preclude minor alterations or additions of a later period.

Revelation of God's name	Ex 3 ¹³⁻¹⁵
Call to leadership	3 ^{16-4¹⁷}
Covenant statement	6 ⁶⁻⁸
Passover recital	12 ^{1-28, 43-50}
Consecration of first born	13 ¹²⁻¹⁶
Covenant statement	19 ⁴⁻⁶
Instruction about the holy mountain	19 ¹⁰⁻¹³
Decalogue	20 ¹⁻¹⁷
(Some additional laws from Ex 20 ^{21-23 33})	
Covenant rite	24 ⁸
Promise of a country	33 ¹⁻³
God's assurance	33 ¹²⁻²³
Nature of God	34 ⁶⁻⁹
Order of march	Num 2
Camp regulations	5 ¹⁻³
Aaronic blessing	6 ²⁴⁻²⁶
Sayings about the ark	10 ³⁵⁻³⁶
The seventy elders	11 ¹⁰⁻²³
God's speech with Moses	12 ⁶⁻⁸
Moses' reply to complaints	14 ¹¹⁻³⁵
Twelve tribal rods	17 ¹⁻¹¹
Choice of Joshua	27 ¹⁵⁻²¹
Family relationships	30 ¹⁻¹⁵