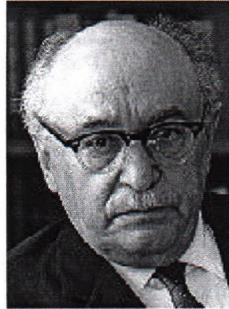# JEWISH VIRTUAL LIBRARY
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Zalman Shazar

(1889-1974)

Zalman Shazar was born in the Belorussian town of Mir as Shneur Zalman Rubashov, a hasidic Habad family. Following a religious education, he became active in the Po'alei Zion movement, organizing Jewish selfdefense units during the 1905 revolution.

He was one of the founders of the Zionist Labor Movement (1916) and of *HeHalutz* [Pioneers of Zion] in Germany.

Shazar settled in Eretz Yisrael in 1924, and became a member of the secretariat of the Histadrut [General Federation of Labor] and joined the editorial staff of its daily paper *Davar*.

Shazar was a member of the Jewish Agency delegation to the United Nations General Assembly in 1947.

Elected to the First Knesset, he became Israel's first Minister of Education and Culture (1949-1951). Continuing as a member of Knesset, he became a member of the Jewish Agency Executive (1952), and from 1956 to 1960 was acting chairman of the Agency's Jerusalem Executive.

In 1963, the Knesset elected Shazar third President of the State of Israel, in succession to Yitzhak BenZvi, and in 1968 was reelected for a second fiveyear term.

Shazar's literary work took many forms, from poetry and autobiographical fiction to scholarly treatises and published articles, in both Hebrew and Yiddish.