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Sagi, Avi. *To Be a Jew: Joseph Chayim Brenner as a Jewish Existentialist*. London: Continuum (Robert & Arlene Kogod Library of Judaic Studies), 2011. \$120. cloth; \$34.95 pbk (978144195838; 9781441109736).

This study of Brenner (1881-1921), a major Hebrew literary figure, focusses on his analysis of the nature of Jewish identity. Mr. Sagi is convinced that Brenner, though extremely secular, was committed to the continuation of the Jewish people and that Brenner's analysis of Jewish identity was based upon existentialist philosophy. The author argues that Brenner defined Jewish identity as a combination of genealogy and commitment. Mr. Sagi discusses Brenner's attitude towards the Hebrew language and its consistency, or lack of it, with his views on Jewish identity. As the book progresses, it contrasts Brenner to another secularist, Ahad Ha-Am, who conceived Jewish identity (quite differently from Brenner) in historical/ cultural terms. The book sometimes takes debatable positions but they are always well-argued. An important addition to literary criticism collections.

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