series in 1959. His approach follows a traditional descriptive pattern, through chapters on the writing system and phonology, nouns, particles, pronouns, and so on, to reach ch. 12, the Verb, which occupies the next 84 pages. Each element is presented logically, with at least one example for almost every one and clear charts of related forms. Various notes in small type cite illustrative analogies from a wide range of other languages, or offer different interpretations and note uncertainties. The author readily admits there are constructions, which remain obscure, and that he has not written a 'historical' grammar. A brief chapter summarizes the question of the Emesal, 'women's' language and a slightly longer one the fascinating situation of the 'convergence area' where Sumerian and Akkadian co-existed, influencing each other. E. is skeptical about the existence of a 'substrate' language. A detailed table of contents and an extensive index guide the reader to each grammatical form. This should serve for long as a concise reference grammar for anyone wishing to know about the Sumerian language or trying to read a Sumerian text.

A.R. MILLARD

FOX, JOSHUA, *Semitic Noun Patterns* (HSS, 52; Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), pp. xix + 361. $39.95. ISBN 1-57506-909-1.

The first ten chapters deal with introductory topics such as previous studies (beginning with J. Barth's pioneering work in 1889), terminology, the definition of pattern, reconstruction, statistics, isolated nouns, internal inflection systems and rearrangements of the patterns. Then come 28 chapters on the various internal noun patterns for Akkadian, Arabic, Ge'ez, Mehri, Hebrew and Syriac (where applicable). Ugaritic is only mentioned in passing, and for nominal patterns it is necessary to consult J. Tropper's *Ugaritische Grammatik* (Münster, 2000), pp. 247-77. After a chapter on patterns that cannot be reconstructed (notably Heb. עולם) come the conclusions and summary, and finally a bibliography and indexes for words in the various languages and for topics are provided. There is no comparable modern work on such a scale.

W.G.E. WATSON

FUTATO, MARK D., *Beginning Biblical Hebrew* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), pp. xi + 351. $35.00. ISBN 1-57506-022-1.

As part of a growing number of grammars focused on assisting the beginning student of biblical Hebrew, F.'s introduction provides a fine addition. Although the size is rather cumbersome, it allows for lessons to be set out clearly along with eye-catching charts and inserts. Each lesson is accompanied by a series of exercises, which are designed to deepen the knowledge gained from the current chapter and to test the recognition of earlier material. They challenge a variety of skills and notably deepen the recognition of the Hebrew roots. In addition, the incorporation of biblical sentences and passages in the exercises from the first lesson onwards provides the student with immediate application. In terms of structure, the grammar benefits from introducing the qal of the strong verb early. It further benefits from user-friendly features such as the ability to cross-reference vocabulary with pub-