PART SIX

CONCLUSIONS
CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS

28.1 THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PRESENT STUDY

The subjects addressed in the present study are at first sight very heterogeneous: Quotations from Syr in early Syriac literature, the question of whether the translator of Syr used a Greek version, the eschatological outlook of Syr, the computer programs that have been used in the analysis of which the present monograph is the result, a new model for the analysis of Syriac phrase patterns with a 'maximum matrix of phrase structure', a discussion of the debate between Muraoka and Goldenberg about the nominal clause in Classical Syriac and an attempt to apply insights from general linguistics regarding text linguistics to a North-West Semitic language. All these issues, however, served the larger aim of establishing how Language and Interpretation interact in Syr: What elements are the results of the requirements of the target language? What is the linguistic profile of Syr? How does this profile relate to the linguistic profile of the Hebrew witnesses? What elements in the translation are not required by the target language, and how can we account for them? Where did the Syriac language allow various alternative renderings of a construction in the source text and what are the motivations behind the translator's choices?

For the linguistic analysis that is necessary to address these questions we have followed a computer-assisted approach. This decision was based on the insight that a systematic and consistent analysis of the language system is a conditio sine qua non for addressing the questions mentioned above and that a computer-assisted approach can contribute considerably to such a linguistic analysis. This was an experiment in itself, because the application of corpus-based computer linguistics to Syriac is still in its infancy. The experiment concerned not only technical and linguistic aspects, but also the methodological challenge to find a balance between the new possibilities provided by