

El Mouatamid Ben Rochd

**Chomsky &
Sibawaihi - What
Connections?**

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THE BOOK

“Transformation” [=>] is the notion that made all the fame and prestige of famous American linguist Noam Avram Chomsky from the early 60’s onwards. Chomsky explained, in a very elegant way, the relationship between different types of sentences. It was a great innovation of the 20th c. But one day, I heard “transformation” uttered by a scholar of traditional Arabic grammar, who had never heard about Chomsky. “Where was the connection?” I wondered. That was the enigma that kept turning my mind for years. This book will raise the issue: was it a “development”, “plagiarism” or simply an “accident” ?



THE AUTHOR

The author holds a BA in American Civilization (Fez 1978), an MA in French linguistics (York 1982) and a PhD in Arabic linguistics (Dublin 1990). He has produced many publications on different subjects and has given talks and lectures in many countries. He spent one academic year in the Linguistic Department of

the University of Washington, in which colleagues have much appreciated the diversity of his competences. “Dr. Ben Rochd is qualified to teach Arabic and many areas of linguistics: especially introduction to linguistics, syntax and history of linguistics. I met Dr. Ben Rochd personally and find him very knowledgeable, articulate and totally fluent in English.” (Fritz. Newmeyer)

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**BOD
To Ash-Cat**

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PREFACE

“Transformation” is the notion that made all the “fame and name” of famous American linguist Noam Avram Chomsky from the early 60’s onwards. Chomsky explained in a very elegant way the relationship between different types of sentences such as passive (The ball was hit by the boy), raising (John is easy to please) Equi-NP-deletion (John is eager to please), etc. [see appendix] as well as their UG counterparts. I was one of Chomsky’s million fans throughout the world for his amazing personality, which was shown on TV several times, (Radford 1981) and his “transformational” theory of language; almost an ideology. I am still an admirer of his enormous endeavour in several fields and his hundred books and articles. He has further been “the champion” of many causes throughout the world.

But, one day my old father pronounced the word “transformation” in front of me, while explaining some Arabic grammatical phenomenon. Amazing! My father never heard about Chomsky nor his transformational theory. He was a traditional Arabic scholar. “Where was the connection?” I wondered. That was the enigma that kept torturing my mind for years. In this book I will raise the issue: is it a