**Vous êtes cordialement invités à une**

communication dans le cadre du Séminaire du CRLAO sur les

**« Recherches actuelles en linguistique»**

présenté par

**GONG Xun**

INaLCO – CRLAO

**«Gradual feature loss in the evolution of initial clusters**

**in Eastern Tibetan»**

**le mercredi 4 mars 2015**

**de 16h à 18h**

**INaLCO**

**Salle des Plaques**

**2, rue de Lille**

**75007 Paris**

**Abstract**

Old Tibetan initial consonant clusters like *bsgr-* are simplified into /dʐ-/ (or /tʂ-/) in the most reduced Central dialects of Tibetan, while peripheral dialects often preserve a more archaic situation.

In this study, I will examine the phonological evolution from Old Tibetan to the modern dialects in Eastern Tibet. The situation for the syllable onset can be organized into a series of typological “steps of evolution”. Most importantly, I will show that among initial clusters with non-rising sonority, what has happened is a gradual loss of feature contrast.

The reduction of Old Tibetan clusters can be partially causally attributed to the synchronic *phonological representation* of Old Tibetan. In the last stage of evolution, the cluster *bst-* [pst-] merged with most /Ct-/ clusters into pre-aspirates /ʰt-/. I hypothesize that in the mental grammar of Old Tibetan speakers, *bst-* was represented as a pre-aspirated /ʰt-/ with additional featural specifications on a well-defined feature geometry.

This phonological representation would be inferred by native speakers from the paradigm of attested clusters, which, in turn, has its origins in an earlier historical evolution that is “blind” in a more typical neogrammarian way.

*Pour information :*

Les séminaires du CRLAO sont organisés par Hilary Chappell (CRLAO-EHESS) commenceront le 14 janvier 2015 et se dérouleront les mercredis du 16h à 18h jusqu’en fin juin.

Pour toute information complémentaire, veuillez contacter Hilary Chappell sur [hmchappell@gmail.com](mailto:hmchappell@gmail.com" \t "_blank) ou au CRLAO, 131 bd St Michel,  M. Hugues Feler au [01 53 10 53 71](tel:01%2053%2010%2053%2071" \t "_blank).