Often labelled a neo-slave narrative, *Crossing the River* is emblematic of an interest in slave history and slave narratives which has manifested itself in recent decades. As such it invites a reflexion on the nature and workings of collective memory, and in particular the socio-historical workings of memory formation – which includes forced obliterations – as well as the need for mnemonic vigilance.

The conference proposes to look at the work of Phillips beyond the scope of traditional post-colonial themes such as identity, belonging, unbelonging, to envisage the formal characteristics of Caryl Phillips’s novels, in particular those juxtaposing various narratives, such as *Crossing the River*, *Higher Ground*, *Foreigners: Three English Lives*, as well as his latest novel *The Lost Child*. These multi-entry novels, which span various locations and historical contexts, set the reader off on different narrative paths whilst inviting him/her to reflect on the themes which reverberate at the heart of the novels through reiterations and reworkings of common patterns.

Built around ellipses and narrative voids they partake of an aesthetic which summons the reader into mnemonic vigilance. Although Caryl Phillips reworks the problematics of precarious narratives and subaltern histories, he refrains from substituting a fixed narrative for a void and chooses to generate pathways towards elusive trajectories which the reader has to follow. Rather than interrogate forms in a post-modern way his aesthetics reconnects with some aspects of the agenda of the great modernists. In terms of literary history, this distinctive quality of his work has set him apart, on the edge of postcolonial literature as it were, but in dialogue with literature at large.

**SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE:**
Françoise KRAL (Université de Caen)
Anne-Laure TISSUT (Université de Rouen)
INHABITING THE VOIDS OF HISTORY

A Conference on Caryl Phillips

TUESDAY 23 MAY
MRSH amphithéâtre - campus 1

9.00-9.15 Registration
9.15-9.30 Opening address
Françoise KRAL: Inhabiting the Voids of History

9.30-10.45 PANEL 1
CHAIR: Kathie BIRAT
Françoise CLARY (University of Rouen)
‘Extending intersectionality theory to the perception of blackness and otherness, or how to reconnect to the past by bridging Colour me English and Crossing the River’
Justine BAILLIE (University of Greenwich, London)
‘There are no paths in water’: History, Memory and Narrative Form in Crossing the River and Foreigners: Three English Lives’

10.45-11.00 Coffee break

11.00-12.30 PANEL 2
CHAIR: Françoise CLARY
Catherine LANONE (University Paris III Sorbonne Nouvelle)
‘A bunch of daffodils: (un)belonging in Caryl Phillips’s Crossing the River’
Heliane VENTURA (University of Toulouse)
‘The Final passage in Crossing the River’

12.30-13.30 Lunch

13.30-14.30 Caryl PHILLIPS in conversation with John McLEOD

14.30-15.00 Coffee break

15.00-16.30 PANEL 3
CHAIR: Bénédicte LEDENT
Bruna MANCINI (Università della Calabria)
‘Spaces of memory and identity in Crossing the River and A Distant Shore’
Kathie BIRAT (University of Lorraine)
‘Historicising emotion in the fiction of Caryl Phillips’

16.30-17.45 PANEL 4
CHAIR: Bruna MANCINI
Giulia MASCOLI (University of Liège)
‘Haunting memories Voiced through Mnemonic Prose in Caryl Phillips’s The Nature of Blood’
Maria FESTA (University of Torino)
‘The nature of blood and fragmented history’

18.00-19.00 Drinks party

WEDNESDAY 24 MAY
MRSH amphithéâtre - campus 1

9.00-10.30 PANEL 5
CHAIR: Anne-laure TISSUT
Josiane RANGUIN (University Paris XIII, Sorbonne Paris Cité)
Chloé DEBART (University of Caen)
‘Voice(s) and silence(s): Caryl Phillips’s reshaping of the slave narrative’

10.30-11 Coffee break

11.00-12.30 PANEL 6
CHAIR: Catherine LANONE
Eri KOBAYASHI (Seikō University, Japan)
‘Literary intertexts and its effects in Caryl Phillips’s The Lost Child’
Arijana Luburic CVIJANOVIĆ (University of Novi Sad)
‘From Crossing the River to The Lost Child: A genealogy of liminal space’

12.30-14.30 Lunch

14.30-16.30 PANEL 7
CHAIR: Françoise KRAL
Hajer ELAREM (Higher Institute of Applied Languages of Moknine)
‘Places of memory and cultural trauma in the work of Caryl Phillips’
Maxim FARRAR (Leeds Beckett University)
‘Radical dislocation, multiple identifications, and the subtle politics of hope in Caryl Phillips’s novels’
Bénédicte LEDENT (University of Liège)
‘Caryl Phillips’s Crossing the River and the Chorus of Archival Memory’

16.30-17.00 Coffee break

17.00-17.45 Conclusion with Caryl PHILLIPS
CHAIR: Kathie BIRAT