The Requerimiento or ‘Requirement’ was a document proclaiming Spain’s legal right to possess the Americas. It was read aloud in territories invaded by the Spaniards to inform uncomprehending local inhabitants that they would alone be responsible for their own death or enslavement if they chose to resist Christian rule. This talk will use the text of the proclamation to explain some unusual early accounts of exchanges which conquistadors and missionaries had with native groups in Mexico shortly after the conquest, and suggest that the contradictions of the Requerimiento continue to bear on intercultural encounters today.

Friday, November 6th
4:00pm, 84 Prospect Street
Rochambeau House, Music Room
Followed by a reception in the Library