I will be a fellow at the National Humanities Center next year writing a transcultural history of the fullest elaboration of imperial bureaucracy attempted by the United States outside the Americas: the fifty-year enterprise of military conflict, collaborative governance, industrial development, and intercultural education between Americans and Asian Muslims in the Philippines. My scholarship unfolds a chronological and thematic analysis of confrontation and collaboration between Americans in the Philippines and the half-a-million Muslim Moros in the southern islands of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago. Their homelands constituted a dynamic contact zone of “Oriental America” where the frontier of American national territory at its furthest, “wildest,” and most tropical “southwest” encountered the extreme easternmost expansion of the Islamic diaspora into the Pacific. Scholarly study of this intercultural encounter has been eclipsed because of their minority status within both Filipino history and Islamic and South East Asian studies. Situating this contested encounter at the center of my inquiry turns the axis on the distorted centrality of the Arab Middle East by revealing underexplored transpacific latitudes of U.S. involvement with Muslim Maritime Southeast Asia. My analysis contributes to the globalization of American ethnic studies by examining colonial encounters with indigenous Asians as (trans)national “subjects” largely excluded from scholarship on more established exchanges with Indians, Africans, Latinas/os, and immigrants within the manifest boundaries of the continental Americas. Importantly, my study measures the most sustained intercultural engagement between Americans and tribal Asian Muslims in a way that exposes both a forgotten insular heritage of endeavors to democratize occupied Islamic places and cultures and an alternative history of Muslim resistance and accommodation to American power. The focus on my paper for CASAR’s Transnational American conference focuses on the transnational case study of the Najeeb Mitra Saleeby – a doctor who received his medical training at American University in Beirut, became a naturalized American citizen, and established a successful career serving the American imperial archipelago in the Philippines. Saleeby was appointed as the Superintendent of Schools for the Moro Province and in that capacity was part of the US colonial leadership in Mindanao. Saleeby’s careful study made him into the foremost American expert on the Moros in the islands and was instruments in translating the history, culture, and laws of Mindanao and Sulu in several works of influential scholarship. He encouraged a pan-Muslims identity in the different Moro tribes – manifest in the school readers on their own languages – as a means of opening them to accept the reality of American power. Saleeby later moved to Manila to run one of the most important American hospitals in the islands and was seen by Americans as a trustworthy intercultural interpreter of what was known as the “Moro Problem” – how to “civilize” unconquered Muslim groups so that they would join with Catholic Filipinos in the emergent process of evolving democratic self-government. My paper traces the complex transnational career of a Lebanese Christian doctor who immigrated to American and then dedicated his life to educating and doctoring the US imperial enterprise in the Philippines.