Filipinos in Imperial America
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Abstract:
Filipinos comprise a large portion of the population of migrant nannies, domestic workers, and nurses worldwide. High levels of job insecurity and poverty in the Philippines partially account for this. However, American imperialism in the Philippines and racism have also contributed to this over-representation. Although the Philippines has gained independence from direct American rule, many Filipinos today still endure racism and servitude in the United States and beyond.

Thesis:
The over-representation of Filipinos as migrant nannies, domestic workers, and nurses is a consequence of the American imperialist and racist idea that Filipinos were 'inferior' beings whose value was restricted to servitude. The marketing of Filipinos by Filipinos as 'subservient' and as 'natural' caregivers has reinforced this colonial belief and perpetuated servitude.

Methodology:
Information for this research was obtained from secondary sources including peer-reviewed scholarly books and journals.

Key Findings:
1) American Imperialism in the Philippines
   - Began in the late 1800s
   - The Philippines was seen as a 'gateway' to other Asian markets and a source of natural resources and cheap labour.

2) Racism
   - Former U.S. Presidents T. Roosevelt and W. McKinley described Filipinos as "sub-human, savages, uncivilized", and like animals.
   - Filipinos were also seen as 'unhygienic.'

3) Migrant Plantation Workers and Nurses During Colonization
   - Approximately 120,000 Filipinos worked in American plantations from 1906 to 1935.
   - Filipino plantation workers performed some of the most difficult and undesirable tasks: paid the lowest wages; given substandard housing with no privacy; regularly experienced racism, humiliation, violence, and threats of deportation.

4) Migrant Nannies, Domestic Workers, and Nurses After Colonization
   - Filipinos continue to migrate to and work in the United States and beyond mainly as nurses and nannies.

5) Filipinos' Complicity to Servitude
   - Filipinos brand fellow Filipinos as ‘natural’ caregivers.
   - The Philippine government and vocational schools encourage Filipinos to become nannies and domestic workers abroad.
   - Lack of sustainable housing, employment and wage mobility, and welfare programs especially for working class and poor Filipinos have forced many of them to pursue work abroad.

Conclusions:
- It is not an ‘accident’, a ‘preference’, or ‘natural’ for Filipinos to pursue work as nannies, domestic workers, or nurses.
- The employment of many Filipinos as migrant caregivers and servants is not a new phenomenon. In fact, it has its roots in American imperialism and in racism.
- Filipinos, too, are responsible for perpetuating such servitude.

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References: Available upon request

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