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Race and International Organizations

Kseniya Oksamytna 🆔
City, University of London, UK

AND

Sarah von Billerbeck 🆔
University of Reading, UK

While International Relations scholarship has increasingly addressed questions of race, the literature on international organizations (IOs) has been slower to do so. In particular, it has neglected how race functions within IO workforces. Building on sociological theories of racialized organizations, we develop the concept of racialized IOs. Like domestic organizations, racialized IOs are characterized by enhanced or inhibited agency of racial groups, racialized distribution of resources, credentialing of whiteness, and decoupling of formal rules and informal practices along racial lines. However, there are also two important differences. First, since IOs rely on member states for resources, their secretariats need to accommodate powerful white-majority countries (macro-level pressures). Second, since IO workforces are diverse, their employees may bring a range of racial stereotypes that exist in their societies into their professional practice (micro-level pressures). Using the case of UN peacekeeping, we demonstrate how the four features of racialized organizations operate in light of these macro- and micro-level pressures. We show that locally hired peacekeeping staff face constraints on exercising agency; that non-white peacekeepers perform more dangerous jobs than their white counterparts; that whiteness serves as a proxy for desirable skills while non-white peacekeepers' knowledge is devalued; and that peacekeepers from white-majority countries receive special treatment or deviate from UN-wide procedures.

Si bien los estudios en el ámbito de las Relaciones Internacionales han abordado cada vez más cuestiones raciales, la literatura acerca de las organizaciones internacionales (OOII) ha sido más lenta en hacerlo. En particular, ha descuidado el papel que juega la raza dentro de las fuerzas de trabajo de las IIOO. Desarrollamos, partiendo de la base de las teorías sociológicas de las organizaciones racializadas, el concepto de OOII racializadas. Al igual que las organizaciones nacionales, las OOII se caracterizan por: la agencia, reforzada o inhibida de los grupos raciales, la distribución racializada de los recursos, la necesidad de acreditar el ser blanco y la disociación de las reglas formales y de las prácticas informales a lo largo de las líneas raciales. Sin embargo, las OOII muestran dos diferencias importantes. En primer lugar, las OOII dependen de los Estados miembros para obtener recursos, lo que requiere acomodar a los poderosos países de mayoría blanca (presiones a nivel macro). En segundo lugar, dado que las fuerzas de trabajo de las OOII son de carácter diverso, sus empleados poseen o desarrollan una serie de estereotipos raciales (presiones a nivel micro). Utilizamos el caso de las operaciones de mantenimiento de la paz de la ONU, con el fin de demostrar cómo operan las cuatro características de las organizaciones racializadas a la luz de estas presiones a nivel macro y micro. En este artículo demostramos lo siguiente: cómo el personal de mantenimiento de la paz contratado localmente en África, Asia y el Caribe se enfrenta a ciertas limitaciones para ejercer su capacidad de acción, cómo las fuerzas de mantenimiento de la paz no blancas realizan trabajos más peligrosos que sus homólogos blancos, cómo el mero hecho de ser blanco sirve como un indicador de las habilidades deseables mientras que el conocimiento de las fuerzas de mantenimiento de la paz no blancas se devalúa y cómo el personal de mantenimiento de la paz de los países de mayoría blanca recibe un trato especial o se desvía de los procedimientos de las Naciones Unidas.

Bien que les travaux de recherche en relations internationales s'intéressent de plus en plus aux questions raciales, la littérature sur les organisations internationales (OI) est en retard sur la question. Elle a notamment omis le fonctionnement des questions raciales au sein de la masse salariale des OI. En nous basant sur les théories sociologiques des organisations racialisées, nous développons le concept d'OI racialisées. Comme les organisations nationales, les OI se caractérisent par une accentuation et une inhibition du rôle des groupes raciaux, de la distribution racialisée des ressources, de l'importance de la blancheur et de la distinction entre les règles formelles et les pratiques informelles dans le domaine racial. Néanmoins, les OI présentent deux différences importantes. D'abord, les ressources des OI dépendent de leurs États membres. Il faut donc satisfaire de puissants pays majoritairement blancs (pressions au niveau macro). Ensuite, au vu de la diversité de la masse salariale des OI, leurs employés possèdent ou développent tout un éventail de stéréotypes raciaux (pressions au niveau micro). À l'aide du cas du maintien de la paix de l'ONU, nous démontrons le fonctionnement des quatre caractéristiques des organisations racialisées à la lumière de ces pressions aux niveaux macro et micro. Nous montrons quelles sont les contraintes auxquelles est confronté le personnel recruté en Afrique, en Asie et dans les Caraïbes quand il doit exercer son rôle. Nous montrons par ailleurs que

les forces du maintien de la paix non blanches effectuent des tâches plus dangereuses que leurs homologues blancs, que la blancheur est associée à des capacités désirables tandis que les connaissances des troupes de maintien de la paix non blanches sont dévalorisées, et le traitement de faveur des officiers du maintien de la paix issus de pays majoritairement blancs ou leur manquement aux procédures onusiennes.

Most international organizations (IOs) have a declared commitment to racial equality. Many also have highly diverse workforces. In spite of this, only some IOs have begun to address the question of racial inequalities within their own ranks. In parallel, the academic literature has not systematically examined whether and how race-based inequalities affect IO workers. Accordingly, in this article, we develop the concept of *racialized IOs*, arguing that IO workforces are simultaneously affected by inequalities between states in the international system, where power and wealth are distributed unequally along racial lines; racial hierarchies that exist in societies from which IOs draw their personnel; and meso-level organizational processes, which can reproduce racial inequalities.

Specifically, we extend Ray's (2019) theory of racialized domestic organizations to develop the concept of racialized *international* organizations. We argue that the four characteristics of racialized domestic organizations that Ray identifies—enhanced or inhibited agency of racial groups; unequal distribution of resources; the credentialing of whiteness; and decoupling of formal rules and informal practices along racial lines—exist in IOs as well, with two important differences. First, IOs rely on member states for resources and political support, which necessitates accommodating the white-majority countries that dominate most global IOs. Second, many operational IOs are headquartered in white-majority countries, but most of their work takes place overseas, usually in regions with non-white populations, where locally hired staff work under less privileged conditions than other IO workers.

We support our argument with a case study of UN peacekeeping, drawing on three types of primary materials—semistructured interviews with current or former UN officials, archives of the Yale-United Nations Oral History Project, and official UN documents and staff statistics. The UN peacekeeping workforce, which we define as including civilian staff and military and police personnel temporarily seconded to UN operations, exhibits all four features of racialized organizations. First, locally hired staff, who are citizens of the countries in Africa, Asia, or the Caribbean where contemporary UN peacekeeping operations take place, are underprivileged in terms of the prestige of their work, pay, and access to decision-making, which poses a barrier to the equal exercise of agency by all racial groups. Second, in contemporary UN operations, both locally hired civilian staff and non-white peacekeepers are exposed to greater risk than their counterparts from white-majority countries, and personnel from white-majority countries have greater access to resources to protect themselves. Third, generic expertise and the ability to transmit liberal values, which are often associated with whiteness, are valued more in UN peacekeeping than "local" knowledge that personnel from Africa, Asia, or the Caribbean are assumed to have. Finally, whitemajority member states and thus personnel from those countries benefit from special treatment through particular deployment and command-and-control arrangements and tacit acceptance that they do not always follow UN-wide procedures.

The article has three parts besides the introduction and conclusion. First, we define key terms and present our theoretical framework. While our analysis focuses on the meso or organizational level, we show how racial inequalities in IOs are influenced by both the macro and micro levels, that is, racial hierarchies within the broader international system and the individual racial stereotypes of IO personnel. Second, we elaborate on our methodology and data. Third, we present our case study, demonstrating how the four elements of racialized organizations operate within the UN peacekeeping workforce. In the conclusion, we outline a new research agenda on race and IOs.

Racialized International Organizations

Harper-Shipman and Melchor Quick Hall (2021, 2021)define race as "othering and rank-ordering of groups that translates into material conditions." Groups that are othered and rank-ordered are assumed to have shared and immutable characteristics that form the basis for "a set of hierarchal social relations that sustain unequal material and political access" (Harper-Shipman 2021, 2023–4). Race is thus different from "nationality, ethnicity, [or] regionalism" (Harper-Shipman 2021, 2023), in that national, ethnic, or regional differences do not always result in racial domination—only when they are accompanied by othering and rank-ordering and are used to sustain unequal access to wealth, mobility, or status do they do so.

Compared to fast-growing academic discussions of race in the International Relations discipline (e.g., Henderson 2013; Vitalis 2015; Sabaratnam 2020; Shilliam 2020; Freeman, Kim, and Lake 2022; Gani and Marshall 2022; Zvobgo et al. 2023), the question of race has only recently emerged as a topic of study within the IO literature. Scholars have acknowledged the racial origins of informal institutions, such as the G7 (Viola 2020). They have also explored the role of racial hierarchies during negotiations on IO founding treaties or in IOs' treatment of different states (Hemmer and Katzenstein 2002; Acharya 2022; Mukherjee 2022). However, they have not examined race in IO workforces.

This lack of attention to race and IO personnel renders our understanding of how IOs may perpetuate racial inequalities incomplete. To address this gap, we build on work on racialized *domestic* organizations to develop the concept of racialized *international* organizations. IO workforces both are made up of employees from around the world and exist in a broader global institutional environment. We therefore extend Ray's (2019) theory to account for the unequal distribution of power, wealth, and status in the international system along racial lines (macro-level pressures) and the individual racial stereotypes of IO personnel (micro-level pressures), thus enabling us to show how racial inequalities operate in *international* organizations specifically.

At the macro-level, the rules of the post-WWII order, with the UN at its heart, were designed "in a manner consistent with Western domination" (Grovogui 1996, 147). As such, political power rests disproportionately with a privi-

leged group of white-majority countries located in North America, Western Europe, and Oceania. In economic terms, global wealth and debt are also unequally distributed along racial lines (Tilley and Shilliam 2018). As Búzás (2021, 454) argues, "material inequality cannot be reduced to race, but it has been racial in two main senses: most of the wealthy have been white and most of the poor have not; and a considerable part of this inequality is the cumulative effect of centuries of slavery and imperialism justified by white supremacy." The same is true of status: As Du Bois (2005 [1906], 33–4) observed, "the white races have had the hegemony of civilization—so far so that 'white' and 'civilized' have become synonymous in everyday speech." Because the international system constitutes the institutional environment in which IOs operate, these inequalities exert macro-level influences on organizational processes (Fehl and Freistein 2020; Coleman 2020b).

These macro-level influences are complemented by micro-level ones, that is, the individual racial stereotypes of IO staff, which reflect and reproduce the societal structures that uphold racial inequalities and therefore also shape organizational processes. Importantly, while these may be predominantly held by white individuals, both white and non-white personnel can espouse racial stereotypes. As Abu-Bakare (2022, 240) reminds, "phenotypically 'non-white' people can also uphold whiteness." For example, Hor (2022, 379) discusses how an Asian locally hired staff member of an international humanitarian NGO "[i]nternalized racism and aspirations to whiteness." Relatedly, non-white IO officials or diplomats may attempt to "claim" some of the credentials associated with whiteness through education in or cultural affinity with white-majority countries (Nair 2020; Weaver et al. 2022), thus perpetuating rather than dismantling the association of whiteness with competence. For instance, Huju (2023, 712) demonstrates how the valorization of the "cultural capital of Oxbridge degrees, eloquent English, and familiarity with dominant European cultures" has persisted among Indian diplomats. Therefore, in our discussion of stereotypes that dominate the UN peacekeeping workforce, we assume that they are shared by at least a proportion of white and non-white peacekeepers.

These two levels, macro and micro, exert important influences on racialization at the meso or organizational level, which is our focus. Ray (2019) identifies four features of racialized organizations. First, racialized organizations enhance or inhibit the agency of racial groups through the concentration of white members at the top of organizational hierarchies and of non-white members at the bottom—both a result and a cause of racialized exclusions, pay inequality, and tokenistic placements. Non-white members are often "stuck" in so-called "race-typed jobs" (Ray 2019, 40), while white members have greater mobility and choice. Second, racialized organizations legitimize the unequal distribution of resources, both material and non-material, along racial lines. Third, whiteness operates as a credential in racialized organizations, while stereotypes linking non-white employees to (allegedly) poor work ethics and limited competence result in discrimination in hiring and promotions. Fourth, decoupling of formal rules and informal practices along racial lines enables deviation from supposedly universal organizational rules by white members (Ray 2019, 42). These four features should not be viewed in isolation and, in fact, can and do reinforce each other. For example, the credentialing of whiteness expands the agency of the white racial group and provides access to organizational resources. Decoupling along racial lines, in turn, reinforces the notion that whiteness is a credential when white rule-breakers are

shielded from accountability for non-compliance or under-performance due to being perceived as "especially valuable" members of the organization.

After presenting our methodology in the next section, we explore how these four features operate in IOs. In doing so, we develop the concept of racialized IOs by examining how meso-level processes are informed by the macro and micro levels discussed above.

Methodology

We have conducted an in-depth qualitative case study of the workforce of contemporary multidimensional UN peacekeeping operations, which includes civilian, police, and military personnel. There are several reasons why this constitutes an important and theoretically informative case of racial inequalities in IOs. First, UN peacekeeping is one of the most visible expressions, and physical instantiations, of international cooperation. Troops, police, and civilians from almost all countries in the world participate in it, and the UN peacekeeping workforce is not only diverse but also sizeable.[1] While each peacekeeping operation has unique internal dynamics (Oksamytna et al. 2023), the workforce of all UN peacekeeping operations can collectively be viewed as constituting the organizational (as opposed to diplomatic) peace and security pillar of the UN.

Second, while the UN's main headquarters is in New York, its contemporary peacekeeping activities take place primarily in regions with non-white populations. Among forty-two multidimensional UN peacekeeping operations launched since 1989, all have been outside the white-majority core: twenty-five in Sub-Saharan Africa, six in the Caribbean, six in Southeastern Europe, four in Southeast Asia, and one in Central America (table A.1).[2] In the past twenty-four years, all new missions have been in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Caribbean.

Third, views on diversity in peacekeeping have remained largely positive.[3] Scholars have debated whether peacekeeping can "socialize soldiers to become more liberalized and civilianized" through coparticipation in missions with consolidated democracies (Sotomayor 2014, 5), but less attention has been devoted to understanding how such discourses reflect and reproduce hierarchies that place countries in "advanced" and "catching-up" categories. Moreover, the fact that most military and police peacekeepers come from Asia and Africa, along with the high numbers of civilian peacekeeping officials from those regions, is sometimes taken as evidence of representativeness and fairness. However, as Cunliffe (2013, 154) notes, the UN's celebration of Asian and African troop and police contributions conceals the fact that "economic inequality, diplomatic pressure, and institutional asymmetry" are often behind them.

Fourth, UN peacekeepers have a deep and abiding self-perception of themselves as tolerant, dedicated to justice, and working for equality (von Billerbeck 2020). International officials in peacekeeping missions are anxious to

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[1] In 2021, approximately 11,500 civilian officials worked across UN peacekeeping missions. Including military and police personnel would increase that number to over 90,500. For comparison, the World Food Programme employed 21,800 officials and the World Bank Group 12,528. This is a snapshot of the data for one year. In just one peacekeeping mission, the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), 24,000 civilian staff have worked over the fourteen years of its existence.

[2] On the ambiguous place of Southeastern Europe in global racialized hierarchies, see Stavrevska et al. (2023).

[3] However, Bove, Ruffa, and Ruggeri (2020) acknowledge inequality between military peacekeepers from Europe and Africa. Other exceptions are Cold-Ravnkilde, Albrecht, and Haugegaard 2017a, 2017b) and Albrecht and Cold-Ravnkilde (2020).

avoid an impression of "arrogance, racism, or other biases" toward locally hired colleagues (Coleman 2020a, 713). In the words of one interviewee, "in my experience, there is a higher proportion of decent people at the UN than in the general population, fewer racists."[4] At the same time, there is evidence not only of instances of individual discrimination (Deen 2020), but also of "unspoken hierarchies" in UN peacekeeping (UN 2021, 12). UN peacekeeping is thus a theoretically and substantively important case, and as we outline later, the framework we develop here can help guide future comparative studies of race in different IOs.

We draw on three types of primary material: 242 semistructured interviews with current or former UN officials conducted between 2017 and 2021 (table A.3), archives of the Yale-United Nations Oral History Project (table A.2), and official UN documents. The interviews derive from projects that examined organizational culture and decision-making in the UN peacekeeping bureaucracy. Interview questions concerned staff understandings of the role(s) of the UN, organizational identity and values, formal and informal lines of authority, interactions between member states and UN personnel, the role of staff nationality, and peacekeepers' relations with local actors. To protect the anonymity of interviewees, we do not include specific information about interview dates, locations, or participants' ranks or roles.

Regarding our positionality, we are both white women with educational backgrounds and academic careers in Europe and North America. One coauthor is from Ukraine, which has been subjected to a re-colonization attempt (Oksamytna 2023), but during interviews has been perceived as coming from "the West." The other coauthor is from the US and has previously worked for a UN peacekeeping mission and thus enjoys "insider status," making access to UN officials easier. Our positionality further facilitated access during fieldwork: entering UN compounds is more straightforward for people who "appear international," and because discussions of race happened mostly (though not exclusively) during interviews with European or North American officials, perceived commonalities may have enabled candid conversations.

Racial Inequalities in the UN Peacekeeping Workforce

In this section, we examine how racial inequalities permeate the work of UN peacekeepers through the four features of racialized organizations—the enhanced or inhibited agency of racial groups, the unequal distribution of resources, whiteness as a credential, and the decoupling of formal rules and informal practices along racial lines. Though our focus is on the meso or organizational level, we highlight the macro-level influence of the unequal distribution of power in the international system and the micro-level influence of the racial stereotypes of individual staff in order to develop the concept of racialized IOs.

Enhanced or Inhibited Agency of Racial Groups

In racialized organizations, members from dominant racial groups are often concentrated at the top of organizational hierarchies, while members from other racial groups tend to be at the bottom, which results in an unequal ability to exercise agency in the organization. In contemporary UN

peacekeeping, this is particularly apparent in the distinction between international and locally hired staff, where the latter usually fill lower-status "supporting" roles for the former. International civilian staff are recruited from all countries except for the country hosting the operation, while locally hired staff are citizens of the host country. In UN peacekeeping operations for the past quarter of a century, as mentioned, this has entailed citizens of countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, or the Caribbean, which are majority non-white. The distinction between international and locally hired staff is important as it helps to demonstrate how both macro-level inequalities and micro-level stereotypes influence staff agency within the UN. Specifically, we argue in this subsection that the agency of non-white members of the UN peacekeeping workforce is inhibited because they: (i) are concentrated in the less prestigious tiers of the organization, with lower pay; (ii) are distrusted and often excluded from organizational processes; and (iii) tend to be appointed tokenistically to high-ranking posts.

First, the differential agency of international and locally hired staff relates partly to their functions within UN peacekeeping missions and the status associated with their work. While UN figures suggest ample representation and even overrepresentation of staff from Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, or the Caribbean in UN peacekeeping, these numbers mask the fact that most of them work as locally hired staff in the general service category, which involves "supporting" roles such as drivers, cleaners, or clerical workers, usually on fixed-term contracts. For example, in 2021, the country with the second highest number of citizens working for the UN Secretariat after the United States was the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).[5] However, this was due to the fact that the country was hosting a peacekeeping operation (MONUSCO) with a very large civilian component, and of 1,796 Congolese employees, 1,654 (92 percent) were in the general service category. Among the rest, only seventeen had a permanent contract in the professional category. Similarly, 931 citizens of Mali worked for the UN Secretariat, but 895 (96 percent) were in the general service category, and only 8 Malians had a permanent contract in the professional category. By contrast, staff from white-majority countries work overwhelmingly in the professional category, which involves substantive roles such as political affairs or human rights officers. For example, of seventy-four Norwegians who worked for the UN Secretariat, twenty had permanent contracts in the professional category, and only five (6 percent) were general service staff. Among 565 Germans, 196 had permanent contracts in the professional category, and only 54 (less than 10 percent) were general service staff (UN 2022). In peacekeeping, international staff can of course be from white-majority or non-white-majority countries,[6] and we address the working conditions of non-white *international* officials toward the end of this subsection,[7] but it remains the case that locally hired staff in UN peacekeeping for the past quarter of a century have almost always been Black or Asian. Moreover, the UN sets "desirable ranges" for staff from different countries, and due to large numbers of locally hired citizens from countries that host peacekeep-

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[4]Interview, July 2019. They clarified subsequently that they "did not mean to suggest that there is no racism in the UN, both individual and institutional," only that it was less prevalent than elsewhere.

[5]Staff statistics include employees of the Secretariat in New York, regional hubs, and political and peacekeeping operations. The spikes in the number of staff, almost exclusively general service staff, from countries hosting large peacekeeping operations *while* they host such operations strongly suggest that locally hired personnel drive this pattern.

[6]The UN does not provide statistics on civilian staff in peacekeeping operations by race, region, or nationality.

[7]An international official from Sri Lanka felt like a "'second class' international given the European clique that was predominant" (Deen 2020, para. 16).

ing operations, it is not obliged to take steps to correct the underrepresentation of citizens of such countries in higher-ranking and more secure posts. Non-white groups thus remain concentrated in general services posts where they have limited access to organizational decision-making.

Moreover, general service jobs are usually ascribed lower status than those in the professional category and are largely considered "enablers" for other types of work rather than constituting substantive work in their own right. In reality, general service staff are critical for the work of the organization: For instance, interpreters hired locally for a UN disarmament program in the DRC undertook "a wide range of difficult and dangerous tasks, chief among them trying to convince local combatants to surrender" (Fahey 2019, para. 7). However, such work does not have the same prestige as that of their international supervisors in the professional category. Furthermore, when locally hired staff provide such services (for example, as drivers or cleaners), it reinforces the "assumption of menial status for people of color" (Ray 2019, 38) and, through that, racial stereotypes at the micro-level. Locally hired staff are thus concentrated in race-typed jobs in "the lower tiers of organizational hierarchies," which inhibits their "ability to influence organizational procedures and the larger institutional environment" (Ray 2019, 36).

This is exacerbated by pay differences between locally hired and international staff. Salaries for locally hired staff reflect the economic conditions in the host country, while international officials are compensated at the level of the world's best-paid domestic civil service. For example, during the planning for the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor, the Secretariat budgeted $200 *per month* for Timorese staff's salaries and $109 *per day* in mission subsistence allowance for international officials, which came on top of their monthly salaries of several thousand dollars (UN 1999a; see also Lemay-Hébert 2011). Not only does this reinforce inequalities in the perceived value of different staff members' work, but it also shows how macro-level inequalities in wealth affect IOs: The countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Caribbean that have hosted contemporary UN peacekeeping operations are among the world's poorest. While international officials argue that the UN offers above-market rates to locally hired peacekeepers, the latter find their pay "still not really enough to live [on], especially at the international social standard" (as cited in Jennings 2015, 300). The UN acknowledges the differences between "staff in terms of compensation and security," but claims that "it may not be entirely possible to alter these dynamics," and instead encourages international staff "to be more sensitive to them by, for example, avoiding excessive displays of consumption and considering the security implications of [one's] actions for national colleagues" (UN and ACCORD 2012, 81–2). This, however, simply displaces the work of ameliorating the effects of inequality onto individual officials without addressing the underlying hierarchies, and instead merely calls for them to be better concealed.

Second, international staff are able to exercise greater agency in UN peacekeeping by regulating locally hired staff's access to organizational processes. A fraction of locally hired staff work in professional, albeit race-typed roles, yet, as Coleman (2020a) notes, credit for their work is often claimed by their international supervisors, who are the interface with UN headquarters. Furthermore, international staff often express mistrust of their locally hired colleagues, using this as a pretext to exclude the latter from decision-making. A recent UN audit found that locally hired staff across several missions reported "that they were not trusted, were seen as incompetent and that their full potential was

not utilized…[and that they had] limited influence over decision-making and access to information" (UN 2021, 18). An interviewee from a Western European country working in an African mission confessed that "you never know whether your national staff are 100 percent trust[worthy] or [whether] they work from 8 to 5 for the mission, from 5 to 8 against the mission."[8] Likewise, in the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), Malians were hired for race-typed work—helping international staff understand rumors—but there was still a lot of "mistrust in Malians working for the mission and how they interpret[ed] the country's conflict dynamics" (Sandor 2020, 919–20). Indeed, international officials frequently complained that national staff leaked information or engaged in corruption (Jennings 2015), while finding it hard to believe that some international staff did so, too (Wallis 2023).

These sentiments, which reflect individually held micro-level prejudices toward citizens of countries subject to international interventions, were not lost on locally hired staff. Congolese staff in MONUSCO, for example, "believed their opinions were not valued…[and that] speaking up could affect their job security" (Titeca and Fahey 2016, 1204). Locally hired UN staff complained about being placed in "clearly the sub-par group of lesser individuals," asserting that such "categories are simply vehicles for creating privileged and not privileged groups in the organization" (Eckhard and Parízek 2022, 268). This does not mean that locally hired staff do not exercise agency: As one locally hired staff member noted, they have the ability to use their local connections "to make things difficult for international staff" (Coleman 2020a, 713). At the same time, this demonstrates that locally hired staff see themselves as a distinct group in their organization, sometimes at odds with the rest of the workforce.

Third, the agency of non-white groups is also inhibited through tokenistic "placement" in specific posts. While this may increase diversity, albeit in a superficial rather than transformative way, it nevertheless highlights how white and non-white personnel participate in UN peacekeeping with differing levels of agency and control. For example, a white official recalled "deliberately employ[ing] a lot of…African guys" because he perceived it as important "that it wasn't just the white boy making the decisions" (Hogan 2008, 7). In a different case, an African Force Commander was appointed through a similar process:

> We have a Western SRSG [Special Representative of the Secretary General]…He's white. We have a Deputy SRSG…He's white. We have a Police Commissioner…He's white. We have a Director of Mission Support…He's white. We cannot have a white Force Commander. We need an African…So we got an African Francophone Force Commander who did the political interface.[9]

The hiring of Africans to "do the political interface" or to avoid an impression that it was "just the white boy making the decisions" suggests that such appointments are driven more by the need to project an outward image of diversity than a willingness to recognize non-white officials' agency. This practice not only instrumentalizes non-white personnel, but can also cause others to assume that these individ-

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8Interview, March 2021.
9Interview, May 2021.

uals made it to their positions not on merit but because of the optics of their appointments.[10]

Tokenistic appointments may also manifest themselves in the "glass cliff" phenomenon, whereby minorities are only offered leadership positions during crises. For example, in the UN Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia, only after the mission almost collapsed did the Secretary-General agree to appoint "an African [Deputy SRSG to]…help the Special Representative understand the situation" (Legwaila 1999, 26–7). In this case, an African official was appointed to salvage a failing mission by contributing "local" knowledge, a point to which we return below. Likewise, in the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), an Asian SRSG was appointed to "a country that had been at civil war for 20 years…[because] they thought that he would have the same Asian approach, that he would smile even though things were…really awful."[11]

Importantly, where non-white personnel are appointed tokenistically, they may find it difficult to access organizational decision-making and thus exercise agency. As one official described:

> In most of these missions, the UN peacekeeping missions in Africa, you have a very strange phenomenon, in which there are two things in parallel. It's the core team that works with the senior leaders—and these are people that are in communication with Washington, DC, and international diplomats and stuff—and then you have big pillars, which are in the hands of senior officials from the region…[W]hatever would come out of analysis, reporting, discussions, and recommendations of these pillars would not much transcend to the core of the mission.[12]

In this way, while formally non-white officials may occupy visible and high-ranking positions, this does not necessarily translate into decision-making power. This, together with meso-level organizational policies that result in rigid divisions in the status and pay of international and locally hired staff, limits the opportunities for non-white members of the UN peacekeeping workforce to exercise agency within the organization.

Unequal Distribution of Resources

Racialized organizations distribute resources unequally along racial lines. Since peacekeepers operate in conflict zones, one of the most important resources they require is physical security. Because the UN allocates this resource unequally across racial groups, locally hired civilian staff and non-white military or police peacekeepers in contemporary UN missions are frequently exposed to heightened risk. By contrast, international staff (the category to which members of the white racial group belong) and military or police peacekeepers from white-majority countries have greater access to safety. These are reflective of both macro- and micro-level inequalities, and some of UN's meso-level processes may exacerbate rather than counter them. More specifically, in this subsection, we argue that: (i) racial groups in the UN peacekeeping workforce have unequal access to physical security; (ii) the UN provides limited resources to non-white personnel for mitigating such risks; and (iii) risk expo-

sure reinforces stereotypes linking non-white peacekeepers to difficult and dangerous work.

First, non-white peacekeepers have less access to security than their white colleagues due to differences in tasks and deployment locations. Locally hired civilian officials in contemporary multidimensional peacekeeping missions often perform especially dangerous work. Several categories of locally hired staff, such as community liaison assistants who "connect" with the local population to gather information on armed groups or staff who investigate human rights abuses, are vulnerable to harassment by state and non-state actors during the mission's presence in their country and in its aftermath (Müller 2020). For example, an official from New Zealand recalled the preparations for UNTAC's withdrawal, noting that "[w]e had very loyal, trusted Cambodian interpreters…who were in on all of the interviews, who helped us in the raids we made on prisons, who interviewed the victims of atrocities, and they were very, very afraid" (McNamara 1998, 15). Locally hired staff are also targets of criminal violence: Known in their communities for making money through their UN jobs, yet unable to afford the same level of home security as international officials, they often experience theft or robbery (Jennings 2015). Reflecting upon the murder of a Congolese colleague, an American UN expert acknowledged that "local staff may be misclassified, inadequately compensated, exposed to high levels of stress and danger, and even killed" (Fahey 2019, para. 14).

For military and police peacekeepers, the unequal exposure to risk along racial lines is even more pronounced: In many contemporary peacekeeping missions, macro-level economic inequality has informed the delegation of tasks and thus access to physical security. In MINUSMA, the only contemporary mission to which white-majority countries contributed more than a handful of personnel, peacekeepers from Europe and Canada were equipped with far greater material resources than those from Africa and South Asia. This subsequently shaped the functions that they took on. Sweden, Norway, and the Netherlands provided reconnaissance and intelligence (Rietjens and Ruffa 2019; Karlsrud and Novosseloff 2020), while African soldiers, lacking such capabilities, were left with the dangerous task of patrolling. This made African peacekeepers vulnerable to death and injury from ambushes and explosive devices (Cold-Ravnkilde, Albrecht, and Haugegaard 2017a, 2017b).

Second, the UN provides limited resources for mitigating security risks for non-white staff. Security protocols for international and locally hired staff usually extend greater protection to the former. For example, when UNTAC supervised elections, "[f]oreign electoral officials were issued with flak jackets and helmets when the security situation deteriorated, while Cambodian employees were not" (Findlay 1995, 148). Furthermore, locally hired staff are less able to mitigate risks associated with harassment or violence than international staff because their ability to escape danger by moving abroad is restricted by the border regimes of white-majority countries. For example, during the Rwandan genocide, international staff of the UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR) were promptly evacuated by France, while Rwandan staff were left behind and many were killed. The UN itself recognizes that locally hired staff are "at greater risk than others as a result of their employment with the organisation" (UN 1999b, 46), but provides little assistance to such employees. Not only does this show how locally hired staff are exposed to greater risks, but also how macro-level influences from the international system, in the form of unequal access of racial groups to cross-border mobility,

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[10]For example, when the International Monetary Fund (IMF) "reserved positions in a Special Entry programme for economists from underprivileged African states…the Special Entry staff were often stigmatised as incompetent" (Momani 2005, 177).

[11]Interview, March 2021.

[12]Interview, March 2021.

shape the distribution of risk within the UN peacekeeping workforce.

The UN also provides unequal access to physical security for military peacekeepers from different racial groups. For example, MINUSMA's Gao Super Camp, where British, Canadian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, German, and Irish peacekeepers were stationed, was protected by several initiatives by European governments on top of the standard UN security measures, such as a German airspace sense and warning system. Such security measures were not available to troops like those from Chad stationed at smaller bases in the northernmost region. (Chad was the only country that deployed soldiers to the unstable and inhospitable northern region of Mali.) Additionally, European countries and Canada negotiated bilateral arrangements for casualty evacuation and medical treatment with forces that operated in parallel to the UN operation, such as the French anti-insurgent deployment and the EU training mission. This improved access to physical security for European and Canadian personnel compared to African and Asian colleagues (Boutellis and Beary 2020, 6). In addition, where peacekeepers from other regions shared bases with them, European and North American contingents stayed in "camps within camps," physically "segregating themselves from the mission" (Boutellis and Beary 2020, 18; see also UN 2021, 15). In some instances, European peacekeepers protected only their own camp but not the entire base during attacks, thus hoarding physical security. Overall, an internal UN evaluation concluded the following:

> The risks of operating in an asymmetrical environment were not equally borne. Deployment patterns, and the number of casualties suffered by TCCs [troop-contributing countries] showed the extent to which the risks differed. No military personnel from two permanent members of the Security Council and other European TCCs contributing to MINUSMA were permanently based in Sector North. (UN 2017, 19)

Indeed, Chad accused the UN of not relieving its soldiers in northern Mali, arguing that they were "a shield for the other contingents positioned further back"—mostly European and North American ones—and that such "precarity and discrimination" signaled the UN's failure "to ensure fair and equal treatment" (Nako 2014, paras. 5, 8).

Third, this distribution of tasks in turn reinforces micro-level stereotypes, suggesting that peacekeepers from non-white regions are particularly suited to serving in difficult and dangerous locations and undertaking high-risk work. Chadian soldiers in MINUSMA served in northern Mali for two to three years without a break (Cold-Ravnkilde, Albrecht, and Haugegaard 2017b), even though the standard peacekeeping tour is six months for Europeans and Canadians and a year for troops from other regions (Boutellis and Beary 2020). Chad has suffered 27 percent of the fatalities in the mission while contributing just 10 percent of its troops and police. While Chadian peacekeepers' willingness to take risks, incur casualties, and endure hardship earned them respect for their bravery, they were also perceived as being especially suitable for dangerous work and characterized as "either on low gear or fast, violent and aggressive gear, but there is nothing in between" (Cold-Ravnkilde, Albrecht, and Haugegaard 2017a, 35). This is similar to stereotypes of Black populations in the United States as either "lazy" or "violent" (Weber et al. 2014). A member of special forces from a European country reported minimal interaction with Chadian and Guinean units at the same UN base because of the perception that

African peacekeepers "have another way of reacting to complex attacks; *other values*" (Cold-Ravnkilde, Albrecht, and Haugegaard 2017a, 47; emphasis ours).

Importantly, organizational-level processes have exacerbated the hoarding of security by contingents from white-majority countries and contributed to the perception that dangerous work should be performed by non-white peacekeepers. Since the UN needs peacekeepers who are willing to undertake dangerous kinetic operations, it has introduced a "risk premium"—a top-up to the monthly reimbursement rate to "incentivize" risk-taking. To qualify for it, troops must accept "exceptional levels of risk" (International Peace Institute 2020). In practice, the premium of $143 per soldier per month is financially attractive only to very low-income troop contributors, which are concentrated in non-white parts of the world. This means that non-white troops are most likely to accept dangerous tasks and deployment locations. This meso-level policy thus does little to "even out" the unequal distribution of physical security resulting from macro-level inequalities or to mitigate the micro-level beliefs that peacekeepers from non-white countries are particularly suitable for high-risk work.

Whiteness as a Credential

In racialized organizations, whiteness is associated with professionalism and valued knowledge and skills. In peacekeeping, a variety of specialized skills from military, police, and civilian personnel are required: on the military and police side, these include planning, intelligence, training, and operations; on the civilian side, they include analysis, reporting, liaison, and communication. While all of these activities are necessary for an operation to succeed, they exist in a hierarchy. Some of them, particularly those focusing on strategic planning, thematic knowledge, and the ability to transmit liberal values to the host society, are viewed as more "sophisticated" and prestigious than those centering on implementation, operations, and tasks requiring country-specific knowledge. For accessing these more prestigious tasks, whiteness serves as a credential, partly because white personnel are automatically assumed to have the necessary skills (see also Benton 2016). In this subsection, we thus argue that white members of the UN peacekeeping workforce: (i) are assumed to be professional and suitable for leadership roles; (ii) benefit from the valorization and assumed universality of their knowledge and skills; and (iii) profit from a (self-)perception of being dedicated to cosmopolitan and liberal values. As above, we find that the credentialing of whiteness also reflects macro- and micro-level inequalities.

First, on the military side, there is a strong perceived association between whiteness and professionalism, military strategizing, and discipline. European and North American peacekeepers often land high-status jobs at mission headquarters in charge of strategic planning (Coleman and Li 2022), while Black and Asian peacekeepers subsequently execute those plans. In MINUSMA, for example, a mission where almost 90 percent of troops came from Africa and Asia, the post of Command Group Advisor was staffed successively by several US army officers, while the rest of the key headquarters posts were occupied by Europeans: a French Chief of Staff, a German Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, and a Swedish Military Assistant to the Force Commander. This led to a "growing sense of disgruntlement" on the part of non-white peacekeepers: An African contingent protested "because it no longer wanted to take orders from white [mission headquarters]" (Boutellis and Beary 2020,

20). In other missions, African and Asian troops also resented North American and European peacekeepers' dominance over mission management, or a "you lead, we bleed" division of labor (UNA-UK 2018).

While white troops are stereotyped as professional, non-white peacekeepers are often associated with poor reliability and misconduct. A US congressional report lauded African countries' willingness to serve for the UN but noted their "capacity shortfalls and/or poor adherence to human rights standards" (Congressional Research Service 2019, 10).[13] In Mali, discipline indeed lapsed among Chadian peacekeepers who had served in the most dangerous areas for two or three years without a break, strengthening the perception that non-white peacekeepers were, in the words of a European military officer, "undisciplined, badly skilled and unpredictable" (Cold-Ravnkilde, Albrecht, and Haugegaard 2017a, 70). However, these perceptions often fail to account for non-white peacekeepers' working conditions and risk exposure. Furthermore, peacekeepers from white-majority countries have not always conducted themselves irreproachably either: Portuguese peacekeepers have been accused of gold, diamond, and drugs smuggling; French peacekeepers have been at the center of a child sex abuse scandal; and Canadian peacekeepers have been involved in the torture and extrajudicial execution of civilians (see Razack 2004 on the latter). Associating *only* non-white peacekeepers with unprofessional behavior and ill-discipline not only reflects micro-level stereotypes but indeed reinforces them.

On the civilian side, the micro-level stereotypes linking whiteness to leadership and authority are also strong: As an official in the UN mission in Sierra Leone acknowledged, "you've got to command a level of respect and authority…I carry that because I'm a white guy, which is very sad, but it's true" (Hogan 2008, 7–8). Due to this, as well as the macro-level inequalities in political support that peacekeepers receive, white-majority countries are overrepresented among civilian leaders of UN peacekeeping operations. Between 1995 and 2023, 44 percent of leaders and deputy leaders of UN peacekeeping operations were from the Western Europe and Others Group (which includes white-majority countries in North America and Oceania), though it represents only 12.5 percent of the world's population.[14] Moreover, key positions that are less visible than the top leadership are especially prone to being dominated by members of the white racial group. Since 1989, sixteen civilian chiefs of staff (a senior post in charge of coordination and planning) were from Europe, North America, and Australia, while only three were from Africa, one from Latin America, and one from Asia (Jenne 2023). Admittedly, there is more diversity among Force Commanders, but there is also a strong link between mission-specific troop contributions and these posts, so countries need to risk the lives of their soldiers to lay a convincing claim to mission command (Oksamytna, Bove, and Lundgren 2021). Yet, as mentioned, Force Commanders are frequently flanked by senior military officers from Europe and North America, might have been appointed tokenistically, and, as Harig and Jenne (2022) suggest, have better chances of getting the job if they share the policy priorities of white-majority countries.

Importantly, senior peacekeeping appointments are often thought to reflect institutional power and thus to be unrelated to race. However, the case of China, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, demonstrates that institutional power and racial privilege only partially overlap (see also Mukherjee 2022 on imperial Japan). No Chinese national has headed a peacekeeping operation, and Chinese officials have approached UN experts to discuss the skills and training needed for such positions (Gowan 2020), suggesting a (self-)perception that China is still in the "catching-up" category when it comes to expertise for senior positions in peacekeeping.

Second, and relatedly, white peacekeepers' knowledge and skills are valorized and considered universal, while those of non-white personnel are devalued and sometimes even rejected. For example, in Mali, European troops expressed frustration with African peacekeepers, whom they claimed were illiterate and could not write reports (Rietjens and Ruffa 2019). At the same time, human intelligence collected by African troops, who knew French and local languages but were not well-versed in formalized intelligence-gathering, was discarded by European technology-heavy reconnaissance teams (Boutellis and Beary 2020). This mirrors the long-standing association of technological modernity with the assumed "superiority" of peoples and races (Bell 2020). In peacekeeping, "the use of technologically advanced military equipment can inflect performances with a professionalism that coheres around the 'nonhuman' military hardware itself" (Higate and Henry 2009, 116–7). Such perceptions both reflect and reproduce the hierarchy of skills and knowledge, while also reflecting macro-level inequalities in access to advanced technologies.

Among civilian staff, the valorization of white peacekeepers' knowledge is reflected in the fact that the criteria for employment as an international staff in peacekeeping operations do not include "prior political or contextual knowledge" of the host country (Campbell 2018, 258), which is the case for international peace and security "experts" in general (Achilleos-Sarll 2023). For "local" knowledge, peacekeeping operations rely on non-white staff, yet such knowledge is not perceived as equally valuable as the expertise of white peacekeepers.[15] Non-white peacekeepers are thus perceived to have a specific but limited "use-value" (Holmes 2019), and it restricts their mobility within the UN as they remain pigeonholed as experts in particular places and times. This echoes Harper-Shipman's (2021, 2026) observation regarding "a racialized matrix of privilege that locates Blackness as local and whiteness as global." Indeed, one UN staff member remarked that "[a]s an African, I am given the impression that my career path is limited to dangerous duty stations" (Lynch 2020, para. 30). Similarly, some officials ascribe the success of their non-white colleagues to spatially limited "cultural" abilities rather than transferable skills. For example, an African leader of a peacekeeping operation was described as "an elder, so he commanded respect from his African counterparts."[16] This reflects and reinforces the perception that African peacekeepers can be leaders only in Africa, while white peacekeepers can be leaders anywhere in the world.

These hierarchies of skills and knowledge, in turn, reinforce the micro-level stereotypes linking whiteness and professionalism described above. For example, in the UN mission in Haiti, an official from a white-majority country described a colleague as "very competent, knowledgeable as well; he was coming from a country in Europe," in contrast to an African colleague with whom cooperation was allegedly difficult "principally because of culture."[17] Simi-

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[13] See Freeman (2023) on racial biases in US' assessments of the capacity of other states.

[14] See NYU Center on International Cooperation's UN Senior Appointments Dashboard: https://cic.nyu.edu/data/un-senior-appointments-dashboard.

[15] On local knowledge in peacebuilding, see von Billerbeck et al. (2022).

[16] Interview, April 2021.

[17] Interview, July 2020.

larly, a US military officer in the UN mission in South Sudan highlighted the expertise of (mostly few and far between) European colleagues: Norwegians' "quiet professionalism meant you could count on them to do their duties and their presence was certainly welcomed," Germans' "professionalism increased their effectiveness within the mission," and "the British way of operating stood out very strongly," so the officer "appreciated this presence"; at the same time, he half-jokingly mentioned that the mission had an "Indian mafia" and expressed apprehensions about sharing information with Indian colleagues (Munson 2015, 43).

Third, white officials are presumed to be more cosmopolitan and better able to embody and transmit the liberal values associated with UN peacekeeping, in line with the view in white-majority countries of "the West as the bearer of enlightened institutional models" (Yao 2022, 907; see also von Billerbeck 2016). Indeed, military peacekeepers from white-majority countries are seen as naturally better suited for multinational cooperation than African ones, who are seen as consumed by rivalries: As one interviewee remarked, unlike "the UK and US and other armies from the European Union…[that] have been working together in NATO for decades…at the UN, the Chadian army, the Chadian government is not going to accept…a Congolese general to run its contingent in the Central African Republic."[18] Such perceptions also exist regarding civilian peacekeepers, as another interviewee commented:

> In the same office you can have someone who thinks "We the people" [the opening line of the UN Charter] is my engine, and the other one who's motto will be "I'm the first Chadian to rise to that level and I will try to teach all the white faces, or the Asians, and the non-Africans that I will exert my power, at my position, to impose my narrative of what's going on here."[19]

Here again, African staff are stereotyped as disruptive and insufficiently dedicated to cosmopolitan ideals and organizational values.[20] White personnel are also considered to be better able to network with influential actors who hold power at the macro-level. For example, one interviewee acknowledged that "if you have a 'westerner' as a SRSG…[they] probably socialize much more with the US ambassador or the French ambassador than a guy from Niger [would]."[21] This makes Western leaders of peacekeeping operations appear successful, cementing the belief in those leaders' superior credentials and merit.

Moreover, because white peacekeepers are assumed to be well-versed in liberal norms, they are also sought out for prestigious tasks, such as "knowledge transfer" to local officials. In a conversation about obstacles to a police training program in one mission, an interviewee noted:

> It's not like it's going to be [police trainers from] Holland and Sweden every time who show up. Sorry, I know it's racist. If there's one thing this profession shows you, it is that sometimes the stereotypes are right. It has nothing to do with your skin color or anything; it has everything to do with education and fiscal space.[22]

Notably, here racial stereotypes are explained away by referring to differences in the perceived "advancement" and wealth of states, enabling staff to convince their interlocutors (and possibly also themselves) that such assessments are not racist but "merely" in line with stereotypes about the prevailing economic and educational conditions in different regions—conditions shaped by the legacies of race-based exploitation and the current dominance of white-majority countries in the international system.

Overall, the perception that white peacekeepers are "professional, well-trained, and well-equipped, and…come with financial and political support" (Boutellis and Beary 2020, "Executive Summary") is reflective of both macro-level inequalities, whereby white majority countries are better able to provide material and political support to peacekeepers, and micro-level assumptions that peacekeepers from white-majority countries have desirable skills and values. As a consequence, at the meso or organizational level, whiteness serves as a credential because it is taken as an indicator of aptitude in strategizing and leading, discipline, cosmopolitanism, and the ability to promote liberal values, all of which enjoy high status in the hierarchy of skills within the UN, and therefore shape access to prestigious roles.

Decoupling along Racial Lines

In racialized organizations, members of certain racial groups may be allowed to deviate from organizational rules. Decoupling of formal rules from informal practices along racial lines is particularly stark in IOs because of a tacit acceptance that white-majority member states—and, by extension, personnel from those countries—are entitled to special treatment. Thus, decoupling along racial lines is shaped by macro-level inequalities in the international system (the IO leadership's perception that the support of white-majority states is so valuable that it necessitates not aggravating staff from such countries) and individual micro-level prejudices (the belief that white staff should have more comfortable working conditions than staff from other racial groups). We argue that decoupling along racial lines is evident in how white members of the UN peacekeeping workforce: (i) demand (and obtain) special arrangements in terms of command and control, transport, and logistics; and (ii) benefit from lenience regarding nonadherence to UN-wide procedures.

First, the formal military planning structures at UN headquarters are at the service of all troop-contributing countries. Informally, however, European and North American peacekeepers often demand special mechanisms in those rare cases when they contribute peacekeepers to contemporary missions. For instance, the deployment of French and Italian troops to Lebanon was conditioned on the creation of a temporary unit at UN headquarters, the Strategic Military Cell, staffed mostly by European military experts. France and Italy demanded this arrangement because the mission entailed "high risks for the troops" (Hatto 2009, 189), revealing an unwillingness to place the lives of their soldiers in the hands of UN military planners who also direct the work of non-white peacekeepers. The UN Secretariat, keen to lure hesitant European contributors back to peacekeeping, reluctantly accepted the Strategic Military Cell, even though other troop contributors viewed it "as an unjustified concession to the European states…[that] created a two-tier system, one for the global North and another for the South" (Murphy 2012, 395). Indeed, non-white contributors wondered "why European troops deserved professional expertise while their troops had to deal with the over-

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[18]Interviews, March 2021.

[19]Interview, February 2020.

[20]See Huju (2023) on cosmopolitanism as an ideology legitimizing Western dominance and Goetze and Bliesemann de Guevara (2014) on the preponderance of elite forms of cosmopolitanism among peacebuilders.

[21]Interview, January 2020.

[22]Interview, June 2020.

stretched UN officials" (Dijkstra 2016, 206). Moreover, accommodating peacekeepers from white-majority countries came at a steep administrative cost that all other countries collectively bore: "for the UN Secretariat, Western contributions have added in terms of bureaucracy to its workload" (Karlsrud and Novosseloff 2020, 25).

Once deployed, European peacekeepers have also requested and been granted special arrangements because they "held their military doctrines in higher regard than the United Nations doctrine and refused to adapt" (UN 2021, 15) or because they saw formal UN procedures and services as inadequate. Such beliefs have manifested themselves in individual behavior—Belgian peacekeepers in UNAMIR "often refused to salute or pay proper respect to officers of other contingents, especially of colour" (Dallaire 2003, 183)—but have also had more far-reaching repercussions. In Mali, for example, the condition for the temporary deployment of a Swedish company to a volatile area was the airlift of its soldiers and vehicles, while African troops made the dangerous journey by road, exposing them to risks from ambushes and improvised explosive devices (Boutellis and Beary 2020). European contributors, prized for their political and material resources, could make demands for transport arrangements that differed from those available to non-white colleagues, which reflects macro-level influences on racial inequality in peacekeeping.

Similarly, Swedish peacekeepers in MINUSMA complained about small UN-provided food rations, saying that they were "perhaps enough for the UN soldiers from Burkina Faso and Bangladesh, who are often smaller-built, but not for us" (The Local 2015, para. 3). Sweden eventually provided a separate kitchen for its contingent, which was not technically against UN policy, but it served to solidify the perceptions that UN structures and procedures were inadequate for peacekeepers from white-majority countries. Here again, the micro-level influences of racial stereotypes and macro-level pressures of global inequalities allowed white-majority peacekeepers to enjoy favorable working conditions. While policy analysts have called upon the UN to educate European governments and militaries about "issues surrounding European TCCs' higher consumption of fuel, food, and water" (Boutellis and Beary 2020, 27), these efforts, similar to the UN's encouragement of "sensitivity" toward the disparities between locally hired and international civilian staff, only obscure but do not remedy the inequalities in the working conditions of peacekeepers from white-majority and non-white-majority countries.

Second, when peacekeepers from white-majority countries deviate from official rules and procedures, they tend to face very little pushback from the UN Secretariat. Some European countries have refused to cooperate with UN-led inquiries into incidents involving alleged misconduct by their troops and have instead sent suspects home, preventing investigations (Boutellis and Beary 2020, 18). The fact that many UN inquiries therefore involve non-white peacekeepers has perpetuated the perception that white peacekeepers are professional and well-performing, while non-white troops are ill-disciplined.

Relatedly, according to Boutellis and Beary (2020), some European and Canadian peacekeepers in Mali declined to paint their vehicles and aircraft white like the rest of the mission (which signals neutrality but makes them more visible to armed groups), instead keeping them in camouflage colors. By deviating from the procedures that applied to non-white peacekeepers, European and Canadian contributors increased their own protection while also further endangering colleagues: The lack of a visual distinction between MI-NUSMA and the parallel French anti-insurgent deployment led some armed groups in Mali to see both forces as the enemy. In this case then, decoupling also contributed to the hoarding of security, thus exacerbating the unequal distribution of resources described above.

Some Western European peacekeepers also bypassed traditional military hierarchies to improve their access to mission leadership, demonstrating an active disregard for procedures that in theory apply to all. In one example, a detachment commander from a white-majority country noted that mission leadership not only did not reprimand his inattention to procedure, but actually welcomed it. Notably, however, his ability to ignore rules required specific cultural and, crucially, material resources:

> We were very well equipped, very well-trained, and prepared. We had money…I had my own helicopters so I could fly wherever I wanted…so I flew them to [the capital city and]…said, "I need half an hour with the Force Commander because we need to talk and have coffee." [He] loved that…If you are coming from…the Asia-Pacific region, the culture is not that you are knocking on the door of your boss…You stay at a far distance from your boss…Our culture is that you talk to your boss.[23]

This further contributed to both the stereotype of white peacekeepers' competence described above and a perception that peacekeepers from white-majority countries have greater leeway in interpreting organizational rules than their counterparts from non-white-majority countries. In addition, it demonstrates how macro-level inequalities influence meso-level procedures, since personnel from white-majority countries are presumed to be able to work together more easily and effectively.

Only one interviewee seemed willing to acknowledge the special treatment of white personnel and their disregard for common norms as problematic:

> People are of mixed minds here about the return of the Europeans to peacekeeping, like there's a lot of sense [of] "OK, it brings us these much-needed capabilities, it brings us an amount of discipline." But that almost sense of "Oh, we Europeans just want to work together and keep everyone Black and Brown outside of the ring…So there's a refusal to be bound by [common norms]…Oh, just because it's Europe and NATO, it's going to bring this great asset. Second, there's been a perception that it creates some real morale problems: that Europeans bring all this and they're treated differently than the way we treat the Bangladeshis or the Sri Lankans.[24]

The UN's willingness to accommodate the demands of peacekeepers from white-majority countries by granting special arrangements and overlooking deviations from organization-wide procedures constitutes decoupling of formal rules and informal practices along racial lines. It also shows clearly how macro- and micro-level inequalities influence organizational practices.

Conclusion

In this article, we develop the concept of racialized IOs by adapting and extending theories of racialized domestic organizations. We do so by demonstrating the effects of macro-level inequalities in the international system and micro-level

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[23]Interview, May 2021.
[24]Interview, February 2020.

prejudices held by individual staff on the four characteristics of racialized organizations at the meso-level. We illustrate the analytical value of the concept of racialized IOs through a case study of the UN peacekeeping workforce. First, we show how racialized IOs enhance or inhibit the agency of racial groups. In UN peacekeeping, there exists a rigid distinction between international staff and those hired locally in countries hosting contemporary peacekeeping operations, which in the past quarter of a century have been in Sub-Saharan Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Caribbean. This results in the concentration of non-white members of the UN peacekeeping workforce in less prestigious and lower-paid posts, their exclusion from organizational processes, and tokenistic appointments. Second, racialized IOs distribute material and non-material resources unequally along racial lines. In UN peacekeeping, where physical security is a key resource, international civilian staff as well as military and police personnel from white-majority countries perform safer tasks in more secure locations compared to locally hired civilian staff and African and Asian military and police peacekeepers. The UN does little to ensure greater equality among them. This, in turn, reinforces stereotypes linking non-white peacekeepers to dangerous work. Third, whiteness operates as a credential in racialized IOs. In peacekeeping, whiteness has an implicit association with professionalism, leadership, cosmopolitanism, and liberal norms. By contrast, non-white peacekeepers' knowledge is devalued as parochial and is at times even rejected. Finally, in racialized IOs, white personnel demand and receive special treatment, which constitutes decoupling of formal rules and informal practices along racial lines. In UN peacekeeping, this includes granting requests for special command, transportation, and logistical arrangements for troops from white-majority countries or tacitly allowing them to disregard UN procedures.

The concept of racialized IOs that we develop opens up several avenues for future research on race and IOs. We propose five in particular. First, racial inequalities are likely to operate differently depending on the organization type. For example, IOs without large field presences might have few locally hired staff in overseas offices, but whiteness as a credential can be especially prominent at their headquarters (e.g., Momani 2005). Future research could also examine how the features of racialized organizations work in regional and subregional IOs. Likewise, in international NGOs, powerful states may be less able to demand privileges for their citizens than in IOs, but other features of racialized organizations, such as increased risk exposure or the devaluation of expertise of locally hired staff, may be more pronounced (e.g., Bian 2022; James 2022; Scott 2022). Second, the macro- and micro-level influences on organizational processes deserve further attention. At the macro-level of the international system, studying the impact of global power shifts can illuminate how racial hierarchies are enacted and contested in different international arenas, including IO workforces. At the micro-level, IO officials come from societies with different racial stereotypes that may overlap or clash with each other and with those that exist in societies where they work, so the persistence or transformation of such stereotypes merits closer attention. Third, other sources of inequality and stratification in IO workforces, such as class or gender (e.g., Goetze and Bliesemann de Guevara 2014; Nair 2020; Standfield 2022), may exacerbate or mitigate the effects of racial hierarchies, which also deserves further inquiry. Fourth, research should examine how IO effectiveness and legitimacy are affected by racial hierarchies in IO workforces. The goals of efficiency and

equality in IOs can conflict, at least in the short run. If personnel from white-majority countries were not granted special arrangements, they might disengage from an IO completely, thus decreasing its diversity. If the pay of locally hired staff were brought in line with that of international staff, or the distinction between the two categories were abolished, budget-holders might decide that IO activities are too expensive. Future research should investigate these trade-offs. Finally, research has started exploring how racialized IOs engage with populations they serve (e.g., Tudor 2023), and it is important to examine whether and how different features of racialized IOs affect not only internal processes within them but also the consequences of their work (e.g., Clark and Dolan 2022).

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Appendix

Table A1. Multidimensional UN peacekeeping missions, 1989–2022, reverse chronological order[25]

Name	Region	Dates
United Nations Mission for Justice Support in Haiti (MINUJUSTH)	Caribbean	2017–2019
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2014–ongoing
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2013–ongoing
United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2011–ongoing
United Nations Organization Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2011–ongoing
United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2010–ongoing
United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2007–2010
African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2007–2020
United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT)	Southeast Asia	2006–2012
United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2005–2011
United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2004–2006
United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)	Caribbean	2004–2017
United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2004–2017
United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2003–2018
United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire (MINUCI)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2003–2004
United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET)	Southeast Asia	2002–2005
United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE)	Sub-Saharan Africa	2003–2004
United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1999–2010
United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET)	Southeast Asia	1999–2002
United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1999–2005
United Nations Interim Administration Mission (UNMIK)	Southeastern Europe	1999–ongoing
United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1998–2000
UN Civilian Police Support Group (UNCPSG)	Southestern Europe	1998
United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti (MIPONUH)	Caribbean	1997–2000
United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti (UNTMIH)	Caribbean	1997
United Nations Support Mission in Haiti (UNSMIH)	Caribbean	1996–1997
United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES)	Southeastern Europe	1996–1998
United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH)	Southeastern Europe	1995–2002
United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP)	Southeastern Europe	1995–1999
United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO)	Southeastern Europe	1995–1996
United Nations Angola Verification Mission III (UNAVEM III)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1995–1997
United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1993–1996
United Nations Mission in Haiti (UNMIH)	Caribbean	1993–1996
United Nations Operation in Somalia II (UNOSOM II)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1993–1995
United Nations Operation in Mozambique (ONUMOZ)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1992–1994
United Nations Operation in Somalia I (UNOSOM I)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1992–1993
United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC)	Southeast Asia	1992–1993
United Nations Protection Force February (UNPROFOR)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1992–1995
United Nations Observer Mission in El Salvador (ONUSAL)	Central America	1991–1995
United Nations Angola Verification Mission II (UNAVEM II)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1991–1995
United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1991–ongoing
United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG)	Sub-Saharan Africa	1989–1991

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Table A2. List of archival documents

All documents from the UN Oral History Project that contain interviews with former officials in UN multidimensional peacekeeping operations (1989–20,022) have been consulted:

1. Interview with Adriaan Verheul (human rights officer, UNTAC), by Jean Krasno, July 2, 1998, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/V512;

2. Interview with Ahmad Fawzi (media advisor to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNTAET), by Jean Krasno, September 23, 2005, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/F281;

3. Interview with Anthony Banbury (human rights officer, UNTAC), by James Sutterlin, July 20, 1998, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/B22;

4. Interview with Dennis McNamara (director of the human rights component, UNTAC), by James Sutterlin, February 16, 1998, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/M112;

5. Interview with Frederic Eckhard (spokesperson, UNTAG), by James Sutterlin, February 16, 1999, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/E36;

6. Interview with Hawa Binta Dieye (head of office, UNTAG), by James Sutterlin, June 23, 1998, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/D567;

7. Interview with Michael Williams (deputy director of the human rights component, UNTAC), by James Sutterlin, July 7, 1998, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/W722;

8. Interview with Legwaila Joseph Legwaila (Deputy Secretary-General, UNTAG), by Jean Krasno, February 10, 1999, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/L521;

9. Interview with Joseph Stephanides (head of office, UNTAG), by James Sutterlin, April 20, 1998, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/S5;

10. Interview with Raymonde Martineau (electoral affairs officer, UNTAG), by James Sutterlin, July 7, 1998, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/M385;

11. Interview with Thant Myint-U (human rights officer, UNTAC), by James Sutterlin, July 1, 1998, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/T367;

12. Interview with Sergio Vieira de Mello (director of the repatriation component, UNTAC), by James Sutterlin, May 5, 1998, ST/DPI ORAL HISTORY (02)/M527.

Table A3. Conduct and analysis of interviews

Respondents were recruited through both purposive and snowball sampling, but are diverse in terms of roles, career histories, and seniority. Interviewees included thirty-two senior leaders of peacekeeping operations, five senior leaders in the UN Secretariat or the UN system, international personnel in peacekeeping operations, and three officials who have worked as locally hired staff. Respondents mentioned race both explicitly and others only indirectly, and some referred to it in relation to the UN itself (28 interviews out of 242) while others referred to it in interactions with or perceptions of actors in the host country. To capture both explicit and implicit references to race, we have used the following *keywords*: race, racism, racial, Black, white, Africa(n),[26] Asia(n), Europe(an), West(ern), Global South, Global North, first/second/third world, cosmopolitan(ism), imperial, and (neo)colonial.

Mentions of race within the UN (28):[27]

● February 17, 2017 (afternoon)
● November 13, 2017
● February 1, 2020
● December 10, 2020
● March 11, 2021
● January 13, 2021
● June 13, 2020
● April 14, 2021
● January 14, 2020
● May 14, 2021
● January 15, 2020 (morning)
● January 15, 2020 (afternoon)

Table A3. Continued

- February 19, 2021
- July 2, 2020
- April 20, 2020
- June 22, 2021
- March 22, 2021
- December 23, 2020
- February 23, 2021
- March 23, 2021
- March 24, 2021
- November 24, 2020
- January 27, 2020 pm
- January 28, 2021
- March 3, 2021
- March 31, 2021
- June 4, 2021

Mentions of race in interactions with, or perceptions of, actors in the host country (77):

- February 1, 2017
- February 17, 2017 (morning)
- February 17, 2017 (afternoon)
- December 1, 2020
- February 1, 2020
- April 10, 2020
- December 10, 2020
- March 10, 2021
- December 11, 2020
- January 13, 2021
- June 13, 2020
- May 13, 2021
- April 14, 2020
- January 14, 2020 (morning)
- January 14, 2020 (afternoon)
- May 14, 2020
- May 14, 2021
- January 15, 2020 (morning)
- January 15, 2020 (afternoon)
- May 15, 2020
- December 16, 2020
- January 16, 2020
- March 16, 2021
- April 17, 2020
- February 17, 2021
- January 17, 2020
- February 19, 2021 (morning)
- February 19, 2021 (afternoon)
- February 19, 2021 (evening)

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[25]Excluded are traditional observer missions, such as United Nations Supervision Mission in Syria (UNSMIS), United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala (MINUGUA), United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), United Nations Observer Mission in Angola (MONUA), United Nations Mission of Observers in Prevlaka (UNMOP), United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), United Nations Aouzou Strip Observer Group (UNASOG) , United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG), United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNO-MUR), United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC), United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNKOM), and United Nations Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA).

Table A3. Continued

- July 2, 2019
- March 2, 2021
- April 20, 2020
- March 20, 2020
- January 21, 2021
- June 22, 2021
- December 23, 2020
- February 23, 2021
- March 23, 2021
- June 24, 2020
- March 24, 2021
- November 24, 2020
- February 25, 2020
- July 25, 2019
- February 26, 2021
- 26 May 2020
- January 27, 2020 (evening)
- January 28, 2020 (morning)
- January 28, 2020 (midday)
- January 28, 2020 (afternoon)
- January 28, 2020 (evening)
- May 28, 2021
- March 3, 2021
- March 30, 2021
- April 30, 2020 (morning)
- April 30, 2020 (afternoon)
- January 30, 2020
- January 31, 2020
- January 31, 2020 (afternoon)
- January 31, 2020 (evening)
- March 31, 2021 (afternoon)
- March 31, 2021 (evening)
- February 4, 2020
- June 4, 2020
- June 4, 2021 (afternoon)
- June 4, 2021 (evening)
- January 5, 2021
- March 5, 2021
- August 6, 2020
- February 6, 2020
- April 7, 2021
- February 7, 2020 (morning)
- February 7, 2020 (afternoon)
- May 7, 2020
- August 8, 2020
- April 8, 2020
- February 9, 2021
- March 9, 2021

[26]Excluding African Union as a political actor, generic references to the African continent as the location of peacekeeping activity, or references to South Africa implying leaders or actions of that specific country.

[27]If the same interview mentions race both within the UN and with regard to the host country, it is counted once in each category.