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NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN

Faculty of Design

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"On The Beat" – An Analysis of Uniforms And In Particular

The Uniforms of An Garda Síochána

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Complimentary

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INTRODUCTION

The subject I have chosen for my thesis is uniforms. Uniforms are a required attire for a vast number of people in Ireland and this makes them an integral form of clothing, here as in most countries. Through my research I discovered that uniforms tended to be ignored by fashion magazines, journalists, editors, designers and retailers. Because uniforms are comparatively uncharted ground in the world of clothing and especially fashion, I found this topic interesting and challenging. Most other particular forms of clothing e.g.: eveningwear, occasionwear, clubwear, sportswear, resortwear are all well addressed by the fashion media. However I felt uniforms which are also influenced by changing fashion would be interesting to research as they are often ignored and neglected by the same fashion media.

I became interested in the idea of uniforms, initially as it was a part of so many peoples lives, on a day-to-day basis. From an early age, most of us have been exposed to the concept through school uniform-wearing, whether the school uniform was desirable or not is irrelevant. The fact that uniforms are worn is reason enough for them to be analysed.

Fig 1

School Uniform



I approached this subject with no precise knowledge of how to go about it. I found it necessary first to examine the theories behind uniforms. This was done through book research. By doing this I was able to identify the well known writers, psychologists and designers, and their different theories, opinions and explanations of uniforms.

My main secondary sources were books on the History of Uniform, on the psychology of clothes and on Dress and Gender.

I found that among many of the well recognised writers, there were many contradictory statements.

After gathering and compiling the initial research, it was then desirable to take a practical example of a uniform for the purpose of doing a more detailed and personal body of research and analysis.

There was a difficulty in carrying out the research of the uniforms as there was a surprising lack of records maintained on various well recognised uniforms of Dublin. Initially I had hoped to use the uniforms of Bewleys restaurants, but decided there was insufficient records, time and space to make a worthwhile study of them.

However, in the end, I chose the uniform of the Garda Síochána to research. It was possible to use the Garda uniform to put into practice the general theories and to examine the Garda Síochána uniform on a more detailed level. My main primary sources were the Garda Síochána Archives in Dublin Castle and the Kevin Street branch of the Gardaí.

I chose to research the design and manufacture of the uniform as well as how they are worn and the extent to which the uniform corresponds to their daily duties and activities.

I feel that the thesis was a success in that I did achieve what I set out to do, which was an analysis into the wearing of uniforms, with particular reference to an area of Irish uniform wearing.

I feel that the research I have done is only the beginning of a larger field of research that could be possible for the future. I feel, for example, that there is a whole area regarding gender that was far too broad to be covered in this thesis alone.

CHAPTER 1

The Nature of a Uniform

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 1 — The Nature of a Uniform

SECTION I – *DESCRIBING A UNIFORM*

What is a Uniform?

A Uniform's Purpose

How Do Uniforms Work?

Types of Uniforms

SECTION II – *AIMS OF A UNIFORM*

The Practical Aim

The Psychological Aim

The Advertising Aim

SECTION III – *RESULTS ACHIEVED*

The effects of wearing a uniform on the wearer

The effects of wearing a uniform on the onlooker.

SECTION IV – *A UNIFORM IN CONTEXT*

Is there a difference between mens uniforms and womens uniforms?

Uniforms within the context of 1990's Dublin.

CHAPTER 1 — THE NATURE OF A UNIFORM

SECTION 1 DESCRIBING A UNIFORM

WHAT IS A UNIFORM?

A uniform is a form of clothing that is issued to be worn as conscription. It affiliates the wearer to a certain group. By wearing the uniform there is a certain loss of the individual. The individual, body, mind and spirit becomes more or less subsumed by the body, mind and spirit of the group. The group, through the uniform, has authority over the individual's appearance, and it is argued over their ideas and outlook. It is almost like the group uses the individual's body as a blank canvas to paint their values.

The uniform acts as an emblem/sign/signal for the collective ideas and functions of the group. The group dictates standards of behaviour on the uniform wearer. Also by wearing the uniform the individual is given some authority to carry out deeds otherwise forbidden to them. Flügel felt that uniforms were "a reaction formation against self display in any form" (*Flügel, 1971, Pg. 97*).

Regardless of this he felt uniforms were an important part of the social organisation of a nation.

"For many professions they are a great convenience either because it is desirable to be able to recognise the members of the profession at a glance or because the nature of the activities involved imposes certain special conditions upon costume." (*Flügel, 1971, Pg. 221*).

Flügel went on to say that the uniforms could also be able to influence the behaviour of workers including benefits such as "social discipline, group loyalty, and group respon-sibility." (*Flügel, 1971, Pg. 135*).

Nathan Joseph, who is a professor of sociology at Herbert H. Lehman College, did research in communication, and political socialization, he also wrote the book, "Uniforms and Nonuniforms". He felt that the uniform was a method of enforcing power over people.

"The very existence of a uniform gives an organisation options, denied to non-uniformed groups, which can become powerful tools of control." (*Joseph, 1986, Pg. 69*).

By wearing a uniform, people are given responsibility and authority above that of the ordinary civilian, to the wearer of the uniform, so the uniform wearer is clearly at an advantage over the non-uniform wearer. Nathan Joseph sees the use of uniforms as an autocratic method of managing people. With a uniformed group, ideas of a over-ruling body, or group of leaders are acted out by the uniform wearers, who become like mere puppets of their power. Joseph said that uniforms could be used:

"To define boundaries, achieve organisational goals, and resolve priorities in dealing with significant others in his status set." (*Joseph, 1986, Pg. 71*).

The various models of uniform, highlight the representation of hierarchy and status within a group. The wearing of a uniform is a symbol of the acceptance of ones status within a group. Ruth P. Rubinstein (1995) described uniforms as "required attire" she said that by issuing uniforms the group will assume responsibility for the persons conduct." (*Pg. 67*). The group has the power to choose who they want to wear a uniform, and who they will not allow to wear the uniform. This give the uniform wearer a level of respect in the social hierarchy that other people might aspire to, thus adding respectability to the notion of wearing a uniform.

"His dark blue uniform moved through the countryside like a cloud. The truncheon had grooves round the top and a loop of brown leather through which you put your hand so it couldn't be snatched away. The truncheon was heavy and shone like chestnut." (*Connaughton, Shane, "A Border Station", London, Sphere Books Ltd., 1990, Pg. 2*).

"The generally increasing respectability of work and decreasing snobbishness, that are as a whole characteristic of our age, may well lead to an increase of occupational uniforms." (*Flügel, 1971, Pg. 221*). Despite uniforms being a feature of subservience, they remain desirable, as they represent employment in an age of growing unemployment.

A UNIFORM'S PURPOSE

The uniform acts a way for the group to suppress individuality. The suppression of expression in the individual, makes it possible to have a unifying corporate expression. The uniform allows the group to exert authority over the individual in areas such as dress, behaviour and opinions. The uniform brings a single overall image to a collective group of people. According to Rubinstein: "A continuity of fabric" and "a unity from head to toe." (*Rubinstein, 1995, Pg. 67*). As has been said, one of the key purposes of a uniform is function. The wearing of the uniform could help workers to carry out tasks they would not otherwise do.

"One worker I spoke to in a fast food restaurant detested her uniform, precisely because she felt it demeaned her, took away from her individuality." "I don't feel a human being in this thing," she said, "and that's exactly what they want, because if I wore my normal clothes, I don't think I'd do what they make me do." She said she would be "mortified" if any of her friends saw her and certainly her tunic and trousers are pretty revolting." (*White, Victoria "Uniform and Function." Image Magazine, February 1991, Pg. 46*).

The uniform works from a visual point of view by forbidding the wearing of any garment other than the uniform. By the eradication of other garments a group of uniform wearers can be easily identified or connected with the overruling body. There is a continuity of appearance creating one overall image, an obvious example of which is an army. This is a symbol of power.

Control is exerted over the individual when their appearance alone expresses what duties they are expected to perform. In uniform it is more difficult for the individual to escape their obligations. According to Nathan Joseph, they lack "protection of the status anonymity of the modern urban stranger." (*Joseph, 1986, Pg. 73*). In other words the uniform establishes whether a worker is on or off duty. A uniform wearer cannot "slack off" as easily as non-uniform wearing worker.

"Philadelphia police were forbidden to appear in public wearing only a portion of their uniform. This rule is designed to discourage a man from taking off his shirt or jacket and slipping into some place for drinks." (*Joseph, 1986 Pg. 73*).

This rule is also incorporated into the rules concerning uniform wearing of the Garda Síochána. The Gardaí must be in full uniform, to be able to perform standard duties.

The uniform works as a means of communicating the group's values. This can be seen as a method of advertising. For example the Bewley Cafes group incorporate a uniform which is a replica of a house maid at the beginning of this century. Black dress and white apron, collar, cuffs and bonnet head-covering. This uniform, worn by the waitresses creates images of tradition, subservience, efficiency and hygiene, femininity and home like comforts. Within the food industry there are uniforms consisting of aprons, hair nets, rubber gloves and hats. These garments are not merely functional items, but are key insignias of the values of the food industry.

HOW DO UNIFORMS WORK?

A. The uniform is a means of social control

The organisation can identify the employees from non-employees at a glance. This makes it difficult for the uniform wearer to take time out or shirk off his duties. The uniform makes the wearer feel physically part of the organisation.

"The uniform influences the wearers themselves... In one famous experiment college students described the demands of the uniformed statuses to which they were arbitrarily assigned, half the group assumed the mock status of prison guard and wore the appropriate uniforms, the others became "convicts" and were given demeaning, effeminate smocks. Both types of clothing greatly reinforced the respective behaviours and internalised assertiveness or dependancy." (Joseph, 1986, Pg. 74).

B. The right to wear a uniform is a clear visual symbol of the conferring of authority

The uniform itself is the visual/physical sign of the licence to perform tasks that the ordinary non-uniform wearer would not have the authority to do. For example the police badge gives the police officer the authority to arrest a person and use a baton on somebody. Another example is the nursing profession. The nurse's uniform authorises the nurse to administer drugs to a patient.

C. The uniform categorises the hierarchy/status within an organisation

Rank within an organisation can be demonstrated by varying the uniform. It is predominantly the people within the organisation who know and understand the system. This can be seen in the military, with the foot soldier in combat gear being clearly visible with ribbons being displayed. Also the type of buttons worn by military can distinguish the rank.

D. The uniform is a form of protective clothing and can aid the performance of a specific task

The design of uniforms also follows the intended function, the first protective form of uniform being an apron. The apron is incorporated into nurses' uniforms, waitresses, chefs etc. A large number of the uniforms that are worn today come from a necessity for garments that perform at a higher level than civilian plain

clothes, for example, reflective fabrics in air traffic controllers, boots for horseback, police and hats in the catering industry.

E. The uniform is an emblem used to represent the group

The uniform imbues a diverse group with communal and expressive visual attributes. The uniform creates a corporate identity, it creates a visual image that portrays the good and bad aspects of the company. The public's perception of the success of a company can be directly related to its employees.

"The general assumption is that, as in the theatre, many roles cannot be, believably, performed without the aid of a customer. It enhances credible performances. Similarly the quality of fabric and fit makes rank visible in the corporate hierarchy."

(Rubinstein, 1995, Pg. 67).

TYPES OF UNIFORM

To be able to understand the various types of uniform, we must look at all forms of dress which remain fixed, while fashion trends change, come and go. Flügel looked at clothing as being broken into two distinct forms.

- a) Geographical Costume and
- b) Uniforms.

Costumes are unlike uniforms in that they can distinguish what area the wearer comes from. An example of National Costume would be the outfits worn by different cultures e.g. sahris worn by women of India. An example of Local Costume is the Breton Dress, clothes worn specifically by people from Brittany, a region of France. An example of Family Costume is the tartan patterns of Scotland, whereby theoretically each aristocrat clan had their own specific plaid patterned cloth.

Flügel also broke uniforms into three categories:

- 1) Military
- 2) Occupational
- 3) Associational.

1. Military Uniform

Military uniform is worn by the various branches of state law-enforcing and defence bodies, such as the army, navy, airforce and police of a state.

2. Occupational Uniform

Occupational uniforms relate to the trades that necessitate various garments from a protective point of view.

"Mining and smelting workers wore protective leather aprons as early as the fifteenth century. In fact, the apron is probably the original model of all work clothing. In preindustrial times, many manual workers wore it to protect the few items of clothing they could afford to own. More recently, the apron evolved into overalls, coveralls and protective garments of many types." *(Horn, Marilyn, J., "The Second Skin", Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981, Pg. 199).*

3. Associational Uniform

An associational uniform has little practice function, but exists mainly as a means of being able to identify allegiance of employee to a specific organisation. Examples are: AIB bankers, Ku Klux Klan, Scouts.

Fig. 2 AIB uniform for women



Ruth P. Rubinstein (1995) also felt it necessary to categorise uniforms into three main types. These were:

- 1) The Spiritual Realm
- 2) The Economic Realm and Guild Attire
- 3) The Governmental Realm.

1. The Spiritual Realm

The earliest form of uniform wearing was in the Church. Priests have been wearing a uniform from as early as the fifth century. It was a Chausuble (overtunic). The monks began to acquire a uniform in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

2. The Economic Realm and Guild Attire

In the Middle Ages guilds for each craft were set up to protect the workers economically, and also to set standards for quality. Each group developed an insignia as a form of dress that they could be identified with.

"The Shoemaker's Guild, organised in 1272, had the motto "Leather and Skill." Its insignia was a golden chevron and three goats heads. It was different from the insignia of the cobblers, whose task it was to repair shoes, rather than make them."

(Rubinstein, Ruth, P., Dress Codes, Boulder, Westview Press, 1995, Pg. 77).

3. The Governmental Realm

Rubinstein divided the Governmental Realm into Judicial and Military attire. A judges uniform originated from what nobility used to wear as court dress. This represented the transferral of the monarchs power.

The military uniform originated out of a need for recognised loyalty to a specific Lord of battles. By use of colour and coats of arms.

SECTION II

AIMS OF A UNIFORM

The Practical Aim

A uniform endeavours to improve job performance by making tasks to be carried out easier by use of well designed uniforms. An example of improved performance due to uniforms is a surgeon's tunic which has short sleeves as opposed to the gown which had long sleeves.

The uniform also endeavours to protect the wearers from hazards involved with jobs, i.e. the fireman's overalls with fire-proof fabric, the hard plastic hats of builders, radioactive-proof capes worn by radiologists and bullet proof vests worn by police officers.

The Psychological Aim

The uniform aims to give wearers a professional approach to the way they work. Hopefully making a higher workload easier to achieve.

"Persons are apt to draw a sharp distinction between clothes worn for work and the less severe more ornamental garments worn for rest or recreation, and (those of them at least who are capable of relaxation) tend to "feel different" to adopt a less stiff and rigid view of life when themselves dressed in clothes of the latter type." *(Flügel, 1971, Pg. 97).*

The wearing of the uniform eliminates individualism of the masses making for a more unified thought scheme, making for less disagreement within organisations hence more efficiency.

"Ideally, a uniform will make employees feel good about their jobs, and happy staff means loyal, more productive staff. Any worker made to feel foolish by their uniform will watch the clock, waiting for the moment they can tear off their sartorial branding." *(Yusuf, Nilgin, Fashion Plates, The Sunday Times, October 1996, Pg. 64).*

The Advertising Aim

The uniform is a means of displaying the corporate image of a company to the public. It also creates a greater awareness of the company. The types of people in uniforms can influence people's judgement of a company's success.

Tom Gilbey is a designer of uniforms for Restaurants such as London's "Daphne's" and the Thai Restaurant, "Vong" he felt.

"Restaurant proprietors will spend thousands on a place, then leave nothing for uniforms. Staff are more important than ceiling finishes. Who looks at the ceiling?"
(Yusuf Nilgin, *Fashion Plates*, *The Sunday Times*, October 1996, Pg. 64).

Each of these aims are equally important, it is impossible to say that one aim is more important than the others.

Fig 3 Waitress, Daphne's, London

Fig 4 Waitress, Vong, London



SECTION III

RESULTS ACHIEVED

The Effects of Wearing a Uniform on the Wearer

The wearer assumes a more efficient attire for working in. There is more focus on the work to be done rather than the appearance of the employee. The worker attains an air of confidence involved with improved appearance.

"Having a positive group reaction to their new articles of dress gave them greater security in wearing the new clothes later on the job." (*Horn, Marilyn J., The Second Skin, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981, Pg. 195*).

The Effects of Wearing a Uniform on the Onlooker

The onlooker gets an idea of the sort of organisation the wearer works for by the image portrayed through the uniform e.g. hygienic, efficient, wealthy, powerful. The onlooker puts more trust in a uniform wearer for carrying out required tasks successfully. The onlooker will be able to immediately recognise the workers.

In a survey of hiring agents perceptions of appearance, carried out in 1974, the findings were: "Appearance could be a determining factor in employee selection if skills of several candidates were equal. Adherence to appearance norms during everyday work was important both to retain a position and for advancement within the company. Employers looked for people who were "neat and conservative" in appearance." (*Horn, Marilyn J., The Second Skin, Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981, Pg. 196*).

The uniform addresses the public by helping them to recognise an employee. The uniform is also a way of controlling the standards of work carried out by uniform wearers.

SECTION IV

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN UNIFORM

Is there a difference between mens' uniforms and womens' uniforms?

When considering uniforms, gender appears to be an issue worth addressing. The idea behind wearing a uniform, for men, differs greatly to that of wearing a uniform for women. The introduction of women to the workforce remains a relatively new concept. Traditionally the career field is a mainly masculine environment. Therefore the basic foundation of uniforms is masculine and continues to have male associations. When women started to enter the workforce the women's uniform became a slightly modified version of the men's uniform. Thus making women in uniform appear genderless. Unfounded opinions about a woman's place in the business world being unsuitable lead to women feeling that they must appear masculine, or pseudo-male to be given a fair chance.

The identity dialectic that is triggered animates the ambivalence derived ultimately, of course, from the historic division of sexual roles in the culture of the West. Without belabouring the point, this, as any child soon comes to know, essentially equates maleness with occupation, breadwinning, authority, and the exercise of instrumental capacities, and femaleness with sexual allure, domesticity, child rearing, subordinate status, and expressive display. And it is because these heavily gender-driven attributes are so effectively, though subtly, inscribed in the vestamental codes of the west that special problems are posed, equally for the social order as for women who seek acceptance, equality, and authority in formerly all-male or nearly all-male preserves. (Davis, Fred, *Fashion, Culture and Identity*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1992, Pg. 46).

UNIFORMS AND 1990'S DUBLIN

In Dublin today, uniforms are as common as any other city in the world. With the finance houses of Ireland there has been a growing use of corporate wear uniforms. Organisations such as Abbey Life, IPBS, TSB and AIB have only a uniform for women. Men have a choice of whatever suit they wish. This seems to be an equality.

"Surely the distinction has to be worrying, if it is accepted that wearing a uniform keeps you in line, and is not usually associated with top management positions? There may be a deeper reason still: "Perhaps its because women are too different from each other and wearing a uniform makes them equal." says Dr. Peter Corrigan. "Making women wear a uniform pins down what men tend to see as their unpredictability. Men see themselves as the rational ones."
(George, Laura, Uniform and Function, Image Magazine, Dublin. February 1991).

The only people that can abstain from wearing the uniform are the people who hold the power. This gives men an unfair advantage of possibility of promotion within these institutions.

CHAPTER 2

An Gharda Síochána

OUTLINE OF CHAPTER 2 – THE GARDA SÍOCHANA

Section 1 Introduction

- The Role of a Police Force
- The History of the Garda Síochána
- The Importance of Rank within the Garda Síochána

Section 1 Analysis into the fundamentals of the uniform of An Gharda Síochána

- Uniform Department
- Tunic
- Trousers
- Shirt
- Tie
- Cap
- Shoes
- Patrol Jacket
- Reflective Jacket
- Handcuffs and belt pouch
- Baton
- Motorbike Jodphurs
- Wax Jacket
- Helmet
- Boots
- Great Coat
- Buttons
- Sam Browne Belt

Section 3 Areas of Importance for the Garda Siochana Uniform

- The Changes in uniform over the years
- The Introduction of Women to the Garda Síochána
- Design Problems

CHAPTER 2 — An Garda Síochána: Embodiments of Power

SECTION I *INTRODUCTION*

Each country throughout the world has a police force. They are a necessary group of professionals who are responsible for the peaceful running of nations. The word "POLICE" originates from the Greek word "Politeia". The translation of this word describes quite substantially the role of a police force in any state.

"The art of governing the city state for its comprehensive good, including the power to regulate in the public interest, security, order, supplies, morality and welfare".

(Whitaker, 1982, Pg. 35).

In other words the police officer is a multi-purpose public servant. The job title requires the officer to fulfil a variety of roles, such as arbitrator, social worker, lawyer, doctor. The earliest form of policing evident is that of the Roman Empire. Julius Caesar created a hierarchial structure of bodyguards each given responsibility over certain districts. In 1252 the Danes and Anglo-Saxons had created in the British Isles a system of watchmen to watch over the walled towns whereby strangers in the hours of darkness would be arrested. *(Ripley, 1983, Pg. 1).* The modern day structure of police dates back to 1829, when Robert Peel founded the Metropolitan London Police. By being law enforcers the police naturally take on a political function. Essentially the main role of a police force is to prevent crime.

The police force of Ireland today is called AN GARDA SIOCHÁNA translate it means Guardians Of The Peace. The Irish police force is relatively new, dating back to 1922. Prior to this Ireland was governed by Britain. The policing of Ireland was done by the Royal Irish Constabulary, (R.I.C.) whom wer a epartment of the overruling British Constabulary.

When Ireland became an independent state in 1922 the first independent Irish police force were formed, The Civic Guard. The Civic Guard became known as An Garda Síochána in 1954.

"The appearance of police in a new uniform was taken for granted by the population of Dublin, weary of processions and uniforms, flags and banners, after all the excitement of the revolutionary years." (*"The new uniform – Justified by History"*, Gregory Allen, *Garda Síochána Archives*).

The Garda uniform was introduced when the Garda Síochána were formed in 1922. The old dark navy uniform of the RIC was discarded. The Garda Síochána uniform has since been altered in 1954 and in 1987, but essentially the overall appearance remains the same.

Women were first introduced to the Gardaí in 1959, and are known as Banghardaí. Their introduction was in keeping with the changing role of women since the second world war. Women have been in the British Police force from as early as 1941.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RANK WITHIN THE GARDA SIOCHÁNA

Hierarchy within the police force is crucial for the smooth running of the organisation. Throughout the years, rank has been an obvious characteristic of the Gardaí uniforms.

"Rank is another form of status that requires clothing for differentiation, as in protective agencies, occupational groups and the military Not only is there a need for clothing to indicate the superiority of these leaders, but without clothing in the form of uniforms, there would be no way to demonstrate the authority of the army, the navy and the police force."

(Horn, Marilyn, J., *"The Second Skin"* Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1981).

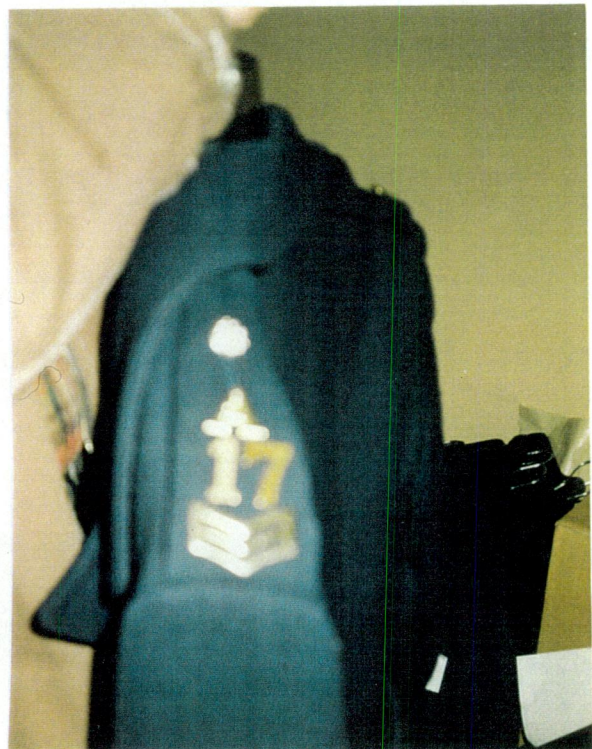
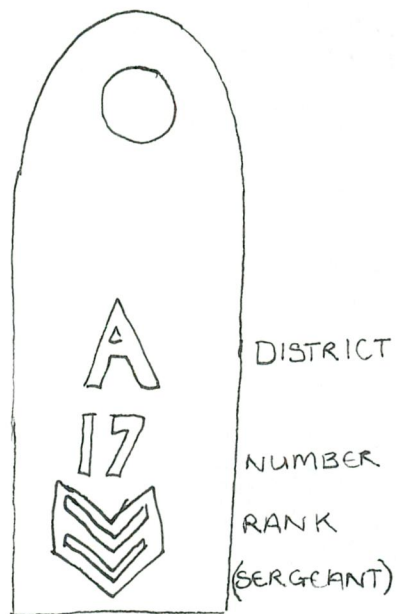
Within the Garda Síochána there are thirteen levels of garda officer, they are

Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner, Commandant, Barrack Master, Surgeon, 1st Class Chief Superintendent, 2nd Class Chief Superintendent, 1st Class Superintendent, 2nd Class Superintendent, 3rd Class Superintendent, Sergeant and Garda.

These ranks are displayed in the uniform, each rank can be clearly identified by distinguishing characteristics on the basic garda uniform. Each guard has a badge of rank which makes each individual guard identifiable by a number.

The badge of rank is in the form of an epaulette which is both on the shirt and the tunic. It is made of navy cavalry twill similar to that of the fabric of the tunic. There is a brass button, a letter of district, a personal number and a rank symbol on each badge of rank.

Fig. 5 Badge of Rank



The badges of rank have distinguishing features, these are:

Commissioner:

Three gold bars on each shoulder strap on red lines, and one gold circle on red centre, attached to bar nearest collar.

Deputy Commissioner:

Three gold bars on each shoulder strap, mounted on red lines and one gold circle, on plain centre, attached to bar nearest collar.

Assistant Commissioner:

Two gold bars on each shoulder strap, mounted on red lines, and one gold circle on plain centre, attached to bar nearest collar.

Commandant:

Two gold bars on each shoulder strap, and one circle on plain centre.

Barrack Master:

Two gold bars and circle mounted on blue lines on each shoulder strap.

Surgeon:

Two gold bars and circle on each shoulder strap.

1st Class Chief Superintendent:

Two gold bars and one gold circle on each shoulder strap.

2nd Chief Superintendent:

One gold bar and one gold circle on each shoulder strap.

1st Class Superintendent

Three gold bars on each shoulder strap.

2nd Class Superintendent

Two gold bars on each shoulder strap.

3rd Class Superintendent

One gold bar on each shoulder strap.

Sergeant:

Chevron of three silver bars.

Garda

No symbol on each shoulder except personal number and district letter.

The Garda Síochána maintain various other forms of rank on the uniforms. The shirts worn by Superintendents upwards are white in contrast with the lower ranks wearing pale blue shirts. The tunics worn by those of higher rank are made by individual tailors so that the fit is perfect for the officer. At lower ranks gardaí have to be satisfied with made to order tunics. In earlier days the full dress uniform worn

by higher ranks was considerably more detailed and ornate than a basic great coat which was worn by the lower ranks for official occasions. However in recent years there have been efforts made by the Garda Síochána to lessen the visual effects of rank and so making the Garda Síochána a more cohesive unit. Prior to 1989 the tunic worn by superior officers was a different colour to that of the common guard. The guard wore navy and the officer a lighter grey/blue. The Garda Síochána have done away with having two colours, making all the tunics a grey/blue.

Buttons and buckles are another area where rank has been displayed in the past. Previously the lower ranks of Garda Síochána would wear white metal buttons and buckles and the higher ranks would wear gilt. At present all ranks now wear gilt buckles and buttons. This suggests a move towards a structure within the force, where status is less focused upon.

Of the change of colour for the tunics, the Irish Times said:

"The change is significant for two reasons – it represents an increased cohesion between the ranks, and secondly, the lighter colour reduces its authoritarian impact of the uniform."

(Magee Kathleen, "Respecting the uniform's significance – and its symbolism." Irish Times, 27 April, 1987).

This colour change is successful in giving a better overall connected image. But the change to a paler colour is a negative move as it means that the garda on the beat is losing his / her appearance of authority.

SECTION II *AN ANALYSIS INTO THE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE UNIFORM OF THE GARDA SIOCHÁNA*

The uniform in use today by the Garda Síochána has not been designed by a single designer but instead, it is designed by a committee of various types of people of various professions. The committee includes fashion designers, garment production managers and superintendents. Recommendations for alterations of the uniform are made to the committee and they then form decisions. The Garda Síochána uniform

was first introduced in 1922 then it was revised 1984, 1987 and 1991. Practical considerations were taken into account for these alterations, such as the functionality, protective qualities, comfort, warmth, accessibilities of fabric and accessories. Also the overall appearance would influence decisions made.

Military associations with the uniform

Military uniforms have influenced many types of other professions where there is a required attire. The police uniform is one of the more obvious examples.

"The military legacy is a feature of most uniforms. For example, police uniforms were explicitly modelled on army uniforms with the aim of conveying authority and distinguishing uniforms featured great-coats, trousers, rows of buttons, shield and cap, elements of which still persist." (*Craik, Jennifer, The Face of Fashion London, Routledge, 1994, Pg. 219*).

This extension of the government's power is not very different from an also a government power that is strongly identified by its uniform. The Garda Síochána uniform embodied military features.

"The higher ranks wore a distinctive blue uniform cut from a superfine cloth, modelled on the pattern for National Army Officers and tailored by T.G. Philips of Dame Street; box pockets in the frock, and a decorative "scotch" cuff, discarded in the 1950's."

(*Allen, Gregory, "The New Uniform," justified by history, Garda Archives, Pg. 2*).

The methods used to convey rank and authority as explained earlier by the Garda Síochána are similar to those of a military uniform, i.e. colour badges, buttons, stripes etc. Another feature of military attire that is evident in the uniforms of the Garda Síochána is the padding of shoulders.

"Another very frequent form of dimensional decoration aims at producing a broad-shouldered effect by the use of padding. Men wish to appear broad shouldered, as this is associated with muscular strength, hence most mens coats are padded at the shoulders and many military uniforms have epaulettes which very definitely increase the apparent width across the chest." (*Flügel, J.C. "the Psychology of Clothes," London, Hogarth Press, 1971, Pg. 48*).

The overall impression one gets from the uniform of the Garda Síochána has the ability to affect the function and performance of the Gardaí in uniform. The uniform's images of officiality and rank help maintain the authority held by the Garda Síochána over the civilian population.

The Tunic

The tunic is the basic tailored jacket worn by all ranks within the Garda Síochána. Over the years various aspects of the tunic have been altered. The first Garda Síochána tunic was high collared with buttons up to the neck. By 1952 this was replaced by a v-neck tunic, with reverse collar and lapels, and a complimenting shirt and tie. In 1987 the two colours of tunic (navy and blue) which distinguished rank, were discarded and one colour, blue, remained for all ranks.

Fig. 6 Garda Tunic

Fig. 7 Garda Tunic Close-up



A police organising committee headed by Staine, the first commissioner had decided on a grey cloth of suitable quality which they dyed blue. This fabric was hard wearing but the colour faded when it was exposed to the elements. Many people today remember the first Garda Síochána uniform as being grey blue in colour.

There was a noticeable change in hue of the tunics some time later. The notice the Garda Síochána were given by the RIC of their departure was so short that "the second commissioner, Eoin O'Duffy and the Barrack Master, Chief Supt. James Brennan, inspected samples of the only suitable cloth readily available, warm and hardwearing for outdoor conditions, unavoidably, it seems navy blue in colour."

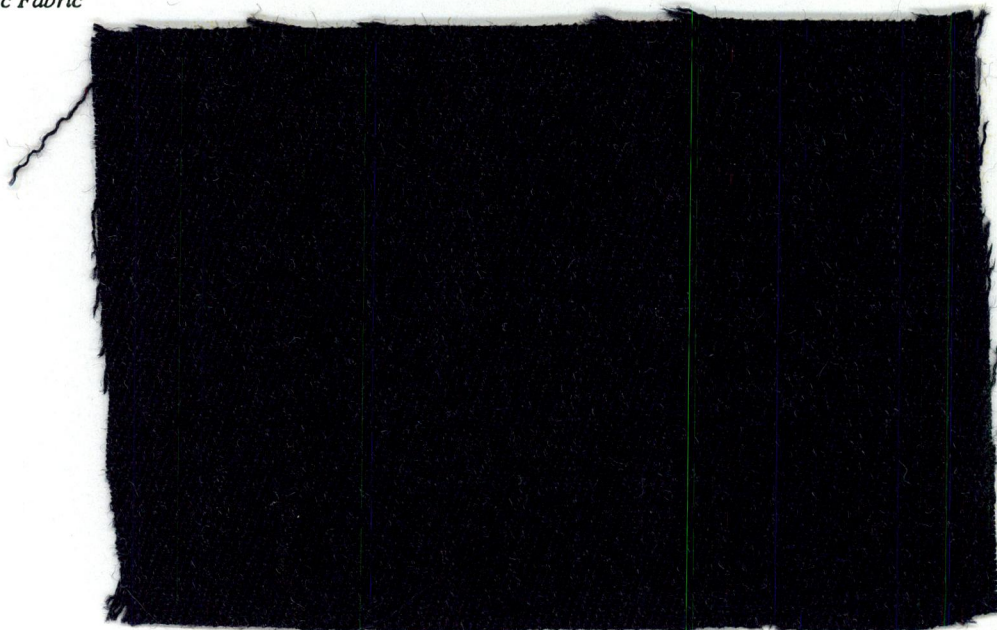
(Allen, The New Uniform, Garda Archives, Pg. 2).

The fabric that was chosen by the second commissioner Eoin O'Duffy was supplied by woollen mills in Athlone, and some four thousand uniforms were made by the Limerick Clothing Company between October 1922 and March 1933.

The present day tunic is tailored by Filton Ltd. The fabric is made from cavalry twill which is made by the Botany Weaving factory of the Coombe. It has two breast pockets and two waist pockets. Each pocket has military style flaps, with brass buttons.

There is a built in belt, with a brass buckle. The collar is reverse style. On each lapel there is a silver Garda emblem. The tunic is made with the specific body measurements of each individual guard. Such tailoring methods add to the cost of production for each tunic made.

Fig. 8 Swatch of Tunic Fabric



"In terms of colour the change to navy from rifle green worn by the Royal Irish Constabulary may have been made for the practical purpose of distinguishing the newly established force, colours associated with authority are usually the darker hues of blue and green." (Magee, Kathleen, "Respecting the uniforms significance – and its symbolism." *The Irish Times*, 27 April, 1987. Pg. 4).

"The uniform was finished with John Francis Maxwell's new insignia ornamented with motifs from celtic art. The silvered insignia, could not, have been a more striking contrast to the crowned harp in black metal and block horn buttons of the RIC."

(Allen, Gregory, "The New Uniform" *Garda Archives*, Pg. 2).

Fig. 9 An Garda Síochána Emblem



There are three brass buttons on the sleeves. The tunic is undeniably military in style.

In terms of function the tunic has little inherent protection. The only protection that the tunic could lend would be the Garda Síochána emblem, which entitles the Gardaí to exert more force than an ordinary civilian.

Comfort would not be a large criteria of the tunic, but the appearance of it and its ability to intimidate a criminal may be of comfort to the Garda on the street. Bernadette Leech, a member of the Gardaí remarked "I feel that the uniform is like a protection mechanism, even in Dublin today there's still that little bit of respect for the uniform."

(Kathleen Magee, The Irish Times, 27.04.87).

Trousers

Each Garda have two pairs of trousers. One pair of heavy wool, for winter, and a pair for summer made from lighter wool. They both have centre pleats in the front leg. The trousers are a matching navy blue odour to the tunic. They are a reasonably loose fit on the legs to ensure ease of movement, in the case of running. The trousers are conventional in style. The side pocket has extra length lining to allow for a baton. The baton can be completely concealed, or made partially visible, by leaving the tassle of the baton swinging outside the pocket, so as to appear more threatening.

Shirt

The official Garda shirt has been part of the uniform since 1954. It has a button collar, with which a tie is worn. There are two breast pockets in military style. On each shoulder there is a navy epaulette with badge of rank. The shirt is pale blue in

colour. The shirt is generally worn with tunics, or jackets outdoors and on its own or with the Garda jumper on its own.

Fig. 10 Gardaí in Shirts



Jumper

The Garda jumper is made from pure wool, ribbed knit, with a v-neck and is navy. There are navy fabric epaulettes and one breast pocket. The pocket has GARDA embroidered in gold/mustard coloured thread. The jumper is a direct relation of the jumpers worn by the Irish Army. It is a military design classic. It is worn and hard-wearing.

Cap

The cap is made from the same fabric as the tunic. A feature of this cap is the Garda Síochána emblem on the front. The cap is worn by all ranks of gardaí. The ranks of inspector and superintendent wear an additional black braid on their caps, The chief superintendent wears a gold band on his cap. So hats do distinguish levels of hierarchy within the Garda Síochána. The hat worn by banghardaí is more

100
100

100

100

100

streamlined and compact. It transpired in this investigation from an individual garda source that the common understanding that a garda is without power to make an arrest if he is not wearing his cap, is only a myth.

Shoes

The shoes worn by the Gardaí are standard. They are leather soled Doc Martin shoes with toe-cap seam. These are practical for their hard-wearing qualities, the comfort factor and the low cost.

Patrol Jacket

The outer patrol jacket is made of goretex and has a detachable lining. It has two main pockets. It is seen as practical for Irish weather conditions as it is wind and waterproof. This jacket is produced by Wenass Ireland. It is debateable as to whether this jacket is capable of defining an image of authority within a community.

Fig. 11 Patrol Jacket (Front)

Fig. 12 Patrol Jacket (Back)

Fig. 13 Patrol Jacket (Lining)



The Reflective Jacket

The reflective jacket is a lightweight jacket to be worn over other garments. It is made of luminous yellow and reflective fabric. It is made by Penta. This patrol jacket is worn by motorbike guards, traffic control and guards working after dark. It works as a means of visual impact as well as a safety measure.

Fig. 14 Reflective Jacket (Front)

Fig. 15 Reflective Jacket (Back)



Gardaí on Motorbikes

Gardaí on motorbikes require other garments of uniform for practical reasons. They wear black heavy duty wax jackets over which there is the reflective patrol jacket. On the legs they wear black leather jodphur shaped trousers. On their feet they wear up to the knee black leather boots. Their helmets are blue with Gardai written in white.

Fig. 16 Wax Jacket (Front)

Fig. 17 Wax Jacket (Back)



ACCESSORIES OF THE GARDAI UNIFORM

Brass Buttons

The buttons on the tunic are round and brass with the Garda Síochána emblem embossed on them. This is in keeping with military traditions. It adds an air of officialness to the overall appearance of the uniform. It also aids recognition of a garda officer.

Tie

The tie worn under the tunic gives an air of respectability to the uniform. Making it a socially acceptable form of attire in the corporate environment and other formal areas.

Baton

By being part of the uniform the baton is central to the force and authority the Gardaí have to use it where necessary. Prior to 1959 the baton was worn on a baton carrier on the Sam Brown belt which was worn on the outside of the tunic. Since then, the baton is concealed in the trouser pocket, making it quickly accessible to the Garda. It also gives a less aggressive overall appearance to the gardaí. The baton is made of solid oak.

Hand Cuffs and Belt Pouch

The hand cuffs are also a tool which are part of the garda uniform. They are made of steel and are opened with a small key. They enable the gardaí to arrest people, by partially immobilising the captive. They are worn as uniform in a leather pouch that is strapped onto the trouser belt.

Fig. 18 Truncheon, Cap, Hand Cuffs and Pouch.



Sam Brown Belt

The Sam Brown belt used to be a feature of all the gardaí uniforms until 1959. Now it is worn only at official ceremonies by Inspectors, Superintendents and Chief Superintendents.

Great Coat

The great coat is an item of uniform for all ranks of gardaí, but seldom worn.

It is made from a heavier wool than the tunic. It is navy with brass buttons. It is three quarter length. The great coat is reserved for formal and ceremonial occasions only.

Fig 19 Great Coat (Front)

Fig 20 Great Coat (Back)



SECTION III

AREAS OF IMPORTANCE FOR THE GARDA SIOCHANA UNIFORM

Changes of Uniform Design over the years

The design of the uniform of the Garda Síochána has remained essentially the same since the inception of the force in 1922. There have been a few minor alterations to the design of the uniform. Most of these changes relate to rank within the force, and are representative of changes of the working ethos within the force. Between 1922 and 1954 the tunic was a high collared jacket.

"His black cycling cape and pull-ups were shiny with wet when he came. The narrow chinstrap held the cap firmly on his head, the medallion between the peak and the crown with its S twined through the Celtic G shining more vividly tonight against the darkened cloth. There were dark patches of wet on the trousers, and on the tunic with its array of silver buttons, the three stripes of his rank on the sleeve."

(McGahern, John, "The Barracks", London, Faber and Faber Ltd., 1991, Pg. 11).

In 1954 the tunic was revised. It became an open v-neck revere collar with lapels. With this new design went a pale blue shirt and a navy tie. The change was relevant from the point of view that the tie gave the overall appearance of the uniform a more corporate look. It could be argued that this change of uniform however, was impracticable as there was less protection from the elements for a Garda "on the beat" who was wearing the v-neck tunic as opposed to the high-neck tunic of previous times.

"There began the scrupulous brushing of his tunic and great coat and cap, the buttons drawn together in a row on the brass stick and coated with silvo, the letting it dry and then the shining, even the medallions on the collar and cap, the whistle chain that went across the tunic to the breast pocket, were polished till they shone like brightness. And last of all the black baton sheath was shone; the baton – a short vicious stick of polished hickory filled with lead, the grooved surface tapering to where a leather thong hung from the handle for securing it about the wrist in action – was placed in the sheath and hung from the belt of the tunic." *(McGahern, 1991, Pg. 46).*

Fig. 21 The Garda Síochána Uniform prior to 1954



Along with the collar change of the tunic, there was a change in the colour of the buttons and buckles. Prior to 1954 the higher ranked officers wore gilt and the lower ranked officers wore white metal buttons and buckles. After 1954 all ranks wore gilt. According to Kathleen Magee of the Irish Times, this "might indicate a more egalitarian ethos within the force."

Between 1922 and 1933 all the Gardaí wore a Sam Brown belt. This was a preference of the commissioner at the time. The Sam Brown was seen as inappropriate by some.

"The belt designed to support the weight of a sword or heavy service revolver and ammunition pouch is an odd adornment for a member of an unarmed police force."

(Allen, Gregory, The New Uniform, Garda Síochána Archives).

When the first commissioner retired in 1933 the Sam Brown belt remained being worn by the ranks of inspector upwards, only.

The baton used to be worn on the outside of the uniform on the Sam Brown belt. Now it is concealed in the trouser pockets. This change lends itself to a less authoritarian image.

In 1959 women were introduced to the Garda Síochána. The uniform introduced for Banghairdaí was the same as the men's except they wore skirts in place of the trousers and the shape of their cap is more streamlined than that of their male counterparts.

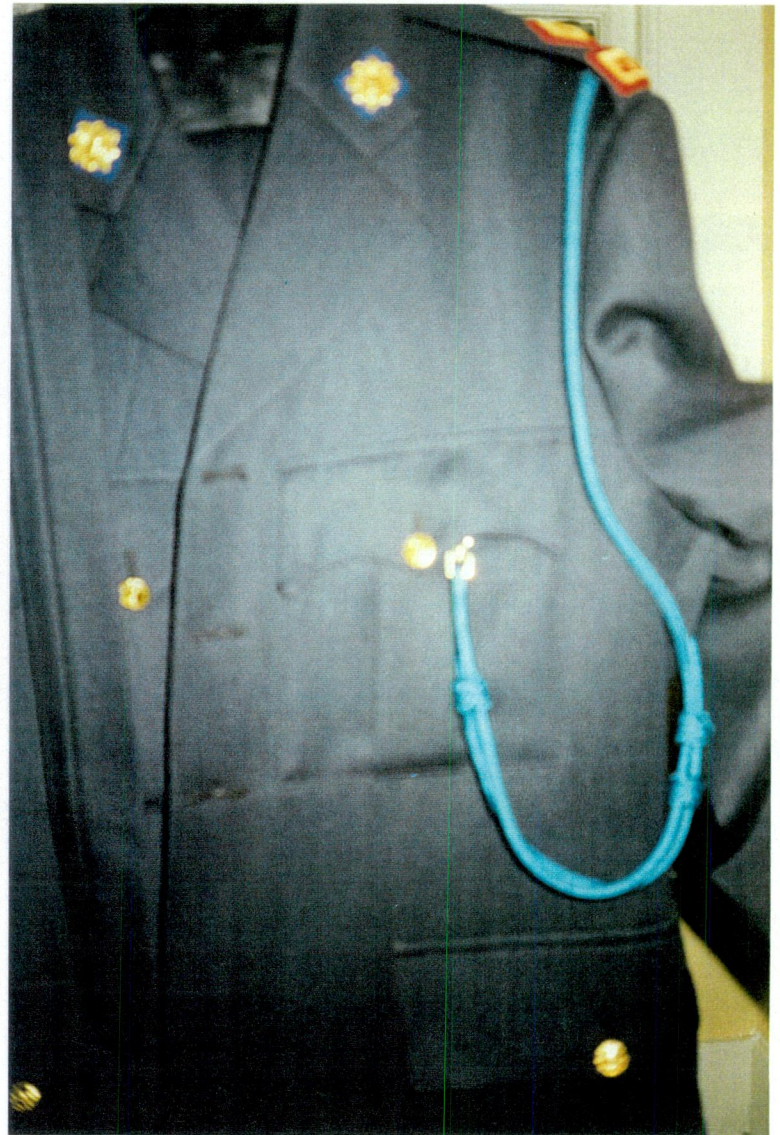
The uniform then remained the same until 1987, prior to this there were two colours worn by members of the Gardaí; a grey/blue which was worn by the ranks of inspector upwards, and a navy worn by the lower ranks. Since 1987 all Garda Síochána members now wear one shade of grey/blue. The Garda Síochána explained the change as:

"An attempt to bring the uniform of the lower ranks into line with that of superior officers, whose uniform was always in a lighter tone, the change is significant for two reasons – it represents an increased cohesion between the ranks and secondly, the lighter colour reduces the authoritarian impact of the uniform."

(Magee, Kathleen, "Respecting the Uniforms Significance – And its Symbolism", *The Irish Times*, 27 April 1987).

Fig. 22 Inspectors Uniform

Fig. 23 Inspectors Uniform (Detail)



In 1991 the Garda Síochána saw the introduction of the gore-tex Patrol Jacket. This jacket was a breakthrough, in terms of comfort and practicality for the Gardaí "on the beat". The gore-tex fabric is waterproof and windproof, making it possible to work in almost any weather conditions.

1992 saw the introduction of trousers for Banghairdaí, a long overdue change. Women can now, at last be seen as equals of men in the Garda Síochána. The

practical need for this change was undeniable.

"By being in uniform, he was better dressed than a lower-middle-class Catholic would normally be, and this made his social image somewhat ambiguous. Whether we wanted this to happen or not, some authority from the RUC ahered to us in our social lives."

(Donoghue, Denis, "Warrenpoint," London, Jonathan Cape, 1991, Pg. 14).

Fig. 24 Garda on Duty in Patrol Jacket



Fig. 25 Overalls (Front)

Fig. 26 Overalls (Back)



THE INTRODUCTION OF WOMEN TO THE GARDA SÍOCHANA

The Banghairdaí have been part of the Garda Síochána since 1959. This introduction of women came about as a result of World War II. There was a demand for more workers. Also women's roles had changed and an increasing amount of women joined Ireland's workforce.

The Bangharda uniform has remained mostly the same as the original in 1959. It is similar to the men's except for a few minor differences. The tunic is tailored for the curvier woman's silhouette. The trousers are shaped for bigger hips and a neater waist. The shirt tapers in at waist and there are darts for the bust. The pocket on the jumper is a few inches below as opposed to being right on the bust. The cap is smaller and more streamlined in shape. The shoes are more narrow and shaped for a woman's foot. The Outer Jacket, Buttons, Tie, Baton and Handcuffs all remain the same.

Sheila Gorman an N.C.A.D. graduate commented "The women's uniform is very like the man's. Its like its almost trying to disguise the female form underneath it; the breast pockets almost seem like an attempt to disguise the chest." (*Gorman Sheila, Thesis, NCAD Library*).

This defeminisation of the uniform possibly can aid the Bangharda in her role as police officer as she is less likely to suffer from sexual discrimination. Comparatively speaking, the banghardaí uniforms have been much more suitable than women's police uniforms of other countries. For example one British female police officer once said of her uniform:

"The uniform was unspeakable . . . designed surely by men who had spite against us . . . when at last, I stood before mirror clad from head to feet in police provided clothing, I shuddered, and for the first time regretted my choice of career."

(*Wyles 1952 : 44*).

The British female police officers still have to contend with the wearing of skirts. The British police woman's uniform was first designed in 1941, then in 1946, 1966 and 1974 the uniform was redesigned.

The Bangharda's uniform on the other hand allows the female officer to carry out her job with equal ability as a male officer. The trappings of female attire, i.e. dresses and skirts, would undermine the Banghardaí and make them seem weak and fragile. On the other hand, the wearing of trousers minimises the risk of sexist attitudes about women working in a predominantly male profession.

Fig. 27 Bangardaí



PROBLEMS CONCERNING THE UNIFORM OF THE GARDA SÍOCHÁNA

In general the uniform of the Garda Síochána can be looked on as a success. It is not without its problem areas in the opinion of people working outside the force. It is possible that the uniform department of the Garda Síochána could look into the areas in question at a future date.

Irish Designers, John Rocha and Louise Kennedy both agreed that there was too much gender ambiguity in the uniform. They felt that it was preferable for the Banghairdaí to appear as women, and not as sexless parts of the force.

"Its also time to look at changing the jacket for women. If they gave it a few rounded corners, this would give the women's uniform a much more feminine look."

(Magee, Kathleen, Respecting the Uniform's Significance – and its Symbolism, The Irish Times, 27.4.87).

John Rocha was asked if he could, would there be anything about the uniform, that he would change. He decided that the great coat, used at official times, had unclear reasoning behind why it was necessary at all.

"I don't think much of it. It looks a bit restrictive and it couldn't be practical in wet weather. Something waterproof would be much better."

(Magee, Kathleen, Respecting The Uniform's Significance – And its Symbolism. The Irish Times 27.04.87).

Prior to the introduction of trousers for the bangardai, Louise Kennedy felt that the skirts were more of a hindrance than a help for the roles of a bangharda. "They should have been in trousers a long time ago." She also felt aesthetically speaking the skirts were unpleasant.

"The skirt looks pretty hideous and those flesh coloured tights are awful! The women would look much better wearing airforce navy tights with flat shoes."

(Magee, Kathleen, Respecting The Uniforms Significance – And its Symbolism. The Irish Times 27.04.87).

It is difficult when talking about the uniforms of the Garda Síochána, not to mention Glen Thompson, an Irish uniform enthusiast. He felt that the Garda hats were awkward and cumbersome.

"Something more compact would make it easier to wear, getting in and out of cars."

(Magee, Kathleen. The Irish Times 27.04.87).

Another complaint with the uniform of the Garda Síochána is its similarity in design to those of private security firms. Although it is obvious that the security firms have been influenced by the design of Garda Síochána uniforms and not the other way around frequently it is difficult for civilians to be able to distinguish between the two. At the moment there is legislation that forbids anybody from directly impersonating the uniform of the Gardaí. This legislation should be enforced more satisfactorily.

CONCLUSION

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In this thesis there was an analysis into the various ideas and concepts on the wearing of uniforms.

There were various interpretations from dress theorists, some of whom had contradictory points of view. It was established that there were different forms of uniforms, and that most contemporary uniforms derived from these forms. It was debated who the uniform wearing was aimed at, the wearer or the onlooker? Gender inequalities were discovered that related to social aspects of the work environment.

There was also a study done of the Irish Police Force, An Garda Síochána, and their various forms of uniform. This study was carried out for the practical purpose of being able to use the general research points made previously on uniforms, and put them into practice with the specific example.

Some of the discoveries were that hierarchy and rank are still necessary features for uniforms of an Garda Síochána, although they are less important today than when the uniform was created in 1922.

The idea of gender was not an issue of great importance prior to 1959 as there were no women members of an Garda Síochána. The uniform was an embodiment, solely, of masculinity. In 1959, Banghardaí were introduced to the force, making gender a critical focus. The Bangharda is now almost identical to their male counterparts. So Banghardaí are in effect pseudo male in gender.

The uniform has a decreasing intimidation factor. Reasons for this are: a) The Sam Browne belt was discarded and the truncheon is now concealed in a trouser pocket. b) The introduction of the Patrol Jacket, although more practical, is less military,

and more civilian in appearance. Thus there is a less assertive appearance. c) In 1987 the colour of the uniform was changed from a dark navy to a paler blue/grey. The fact that darker colours assert a more authoritative appearance, and the change of colour was from dark to lighter means less authority for an Garda Síochána.

Each of the garments worn by an Garda Síochána as uniform, were examined separately and evaluated under ideas of: Cut and Colour, Function, Protection, Comfort, Warmth and Expense. The modifications made over the years were analysed. How the Garda Síochána dealt with the introduction of Bangharda uniforms was also looked into. It was possible to gather some opinions on how the Garda Síochána uniforms could be improved upon today.

The research was successful as the method used to compile it was primarily to establish general facts, theories, information on all uniforms. It was then possible to use this general research as an introduction point for advancing into a more specific method of researching that was necessary for the study of An Garda Síochána. This specific form of study would not have been possible without doing the initial general research.

The topic of this thesis could be studied further. Areas concerning gender issues involved with a uniform; a comparative look at the history of mens and womens clothes; how clothing design can be related to the lifestyles of men and women; the change for women, as there are more women entering the workforce; the equality of women; women adapting a more masculine role; what femininity actually means, whether the idea of femininity includes being a successful worker, mens opinions of women in the workplace; historic references in women's wear – are all aspects of this study that could valuably be expanded on.

One of the reasons for carrying out this research was to establish whether uniforms were beneficial or detrimental. Uniforms give a company a form of corporate

identity, but on the other hand this denies a freedom of expression to the individual. Companies are able to dictate dress codes and tasteful clothing, but the one look is not suitable for all people with varied body shapes who must wear it. A uniform is a visual sign of allegiance to a specific organisation and a good way to advertise but it also is responsible for the loss of the comfort of anonymity. Within Companies the wearing of uniforms cuts out unnecessary competition between employees in areas of looks, but the uniform has the effect also of the individual spending less time and attention to the way they present themselves as employees of a firm and allowing for unkemptness. In the end I have decided that in general the uniforms are beneficial for employers, more so than they are for employees.

However, in the case of the Garda Síochána, the uniform seems to be equally beneficial to both parties. Perhaps that is because the Gardaí are directly serving the public in a protective role. Their duties are for the public through a government agency. The public is therefore indirectly the employers of the Gardaí and it is important that they should be recognised and answerable to the community that pays for their services.

Because of the risks involved in their particular job it is important for them to feel protected, and if a uniform helps them to feel individually braver and communally stronger, then it is helping, I would argue, them – as the employee and the public – as the employer.

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