

Honolulu Academy of Arts



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February 26, 1988

George Balazs  
992=A Awaawaanoa Place  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96825

Dear Mr. Balazs:

Reiko Brandon, our Curator of Textiles, found lots of wonderful material relating to your tiger insignia.

The photocopies of the texts and your photographs of the textile are enclosed.

I am glad that we could return your help. Unfortunately, however, no one here can pin point the time of production. Probably it is an early 20th century production. In any case, we are all enamored of the fungus/valentine's hearts ears of the little crittur.

Warmest regards,

Sincerely,

  
Sanja Saks Deutsch  
Registrar

# INSIGNIA OF NOBLES, 1759-1912

## FOR EMPEROR AND TWELVE RANKS

### EMPEROR:

Large pearl on Hat-spike, or Hat-knob.  
 Dragon Robe: usually bright, or clear, yellow; some all blue known; at least one red one. Four front-facing five-clawed dragons on upper part and five profile ones on lower part. The "Twelve Symbols". Five-coloured clouds. The Eight Buddhist Symbols on border.  
 Coat: purple-black, with four medallions, each with a front-facing five-clawed gold dragon. Sun and Moon on shoulder medallions. *Shou* character on breast and back medallions.

### HEIR APPARENT:

Ruby on Hat-spike, ruby\* or coral on Hat-knob.  
 Dragon Robe: Same as his father's but "apricot yellow" and without the "Twelve Symbols."  
 Coat (*p'u-fu*): Like his father's but without the symbols or *shou*.

### PRINCES:

All wore Ruby on Hat-spike, ruby\* or coral on Hat-knob, and Dragon Medallions on their coats.

#### 1ST DEGREE

Dragon Robe; same as Heir Apparent's but "gold yellow," and without the five-coloured clouds. *P'u-fu*: Four Medallions; two with front-facing five-clawed dragons, front and back. Two with profile ones, on shoulders.

\*This ruby was often just clear red glass.

#### 2ND DEGREE

Dragon Robe; same as above. *P'u-fu*: Four Medallions; all with profile five-clawed dragons.

#### 3RD DEGREE

Dragon Robe: same, but "Indigo Blue." *P'u-fu*: Two Medallions; with front-facing four-clawed dragons (*mang*), front and back.

#### 4TH DEGREE

Dragon Robe: same as above. *P'u-fu*: Two Medallions; with profile four-clawed dragons (*mang*), front and back.†

### IMPERIAL DUKES, MARQUISES, EARLS, AND SONS-IN-LAW of 1ST DEGREE PRINCES:

All wore Ruby on Hat-spike, and ruby\* or coral on Hat-knob. Squares, not Medallions, front and back on their coats, with the front-facing four-clawed dragon.

A Square with a five-clawed dragon is that of a Duke with an extra claw added by favour of the Emperor.

### NOBLES OF 9TH, 10TH, 11TH, AND 12TH DEGREES:

Wore mandarin squares like those for the four highest military officials, with the unicorn (*ch'i-lin*), lion, leopard, and tiger, respectively.

†Cammann: "The Development of the Mandarin Square," *HYAS*, Vol. 8, p. 92.

## INSIGNIA OF OFFICIALS\*

Classes of officials	Round Hat Knob Worn with the Dragon Robe and a small jewel on the brim at front of hat	Insignia of the "Mandarin Squares"	
		Civil officers, birds	Military officers, animals
1st Degree	Ruby or transparent red stone (in theory); in practice usually coral, plain. And a brilliant pearl.	Manchurian Crane	Unicorn ( <i>Ch'i-lin</i> )
2nd Degree	Red coral, or opaque red stone, engraved. And a small red stone.	Golden Pheasant	Lion
3rd Degree	Sapphire or transparent blue stone. And a small red stone.	Malay Peacock ?	Leopard
4th Degree	Lapis lazuli or opaque blue stone. And a small blue stone.	Wild Goose	Tiger
5th Degree	Crystal or transparent white stone. And a small blue stone.	Silver Pheasant	Black Bear
6th Degree	White opaque stone. And a small blue stone.	Lesser Egret ?	Tiger Cat (Panther)?
7th Degree	Crystal or transparent white stone but smaller than Degree 5. For simple ceremonies a plain gold knob.	Mandarin Duck	Tiger Cat (Panther)? ×
8th Degree	Gold, chased with flowers in relief.	Quail	Seal, lit: "Sea Horse" ×
9th Degree	Silver, engraved. But for ceremonies of the ordinary kind he would wear a gold hat-knob, either plain or engraved.	Paradise Flycatcher	Rhinoceros ×

\*From Le P. Guy Boulais: *Manuel du Code Chinois*, Tr. of Kuang Hsu Ed. 1890, pp. 380-391 (Variétés Sinologiques, No. 55, Shanghai, 1924); Thos. Taylor Meadow: *Desultory Notes on Gov. and People of China*, 1847; and Cammann, *H Y A S*, Vol. 8, pp. 104-106.

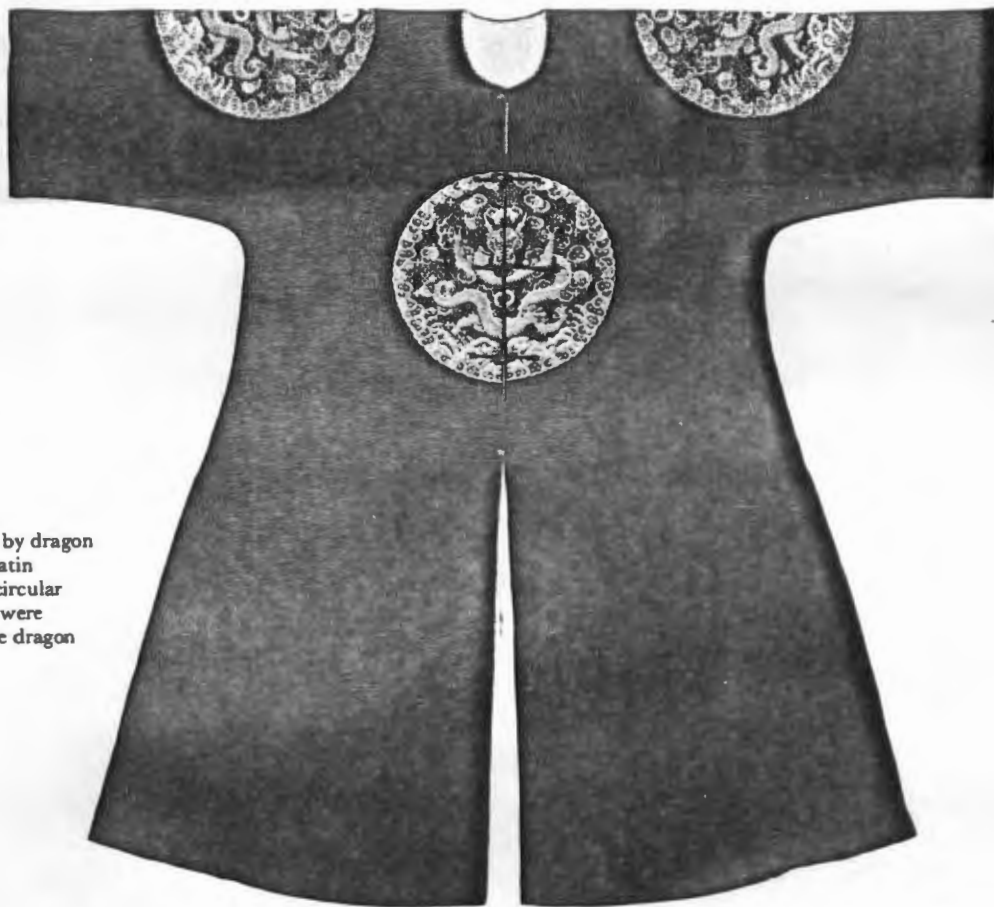


After 1759 all courtiers were required to wear a surcoat over other court attire; on it were displayed insignia badges to indicate rank. This posthumous portrait of a seventh-rank civil official depicts a fur-trimmed hat and fur-lined *p'u-fu* with mandarin duck insignia, typical Manchu winter attire. 1875-1900.  
115.5 × 63.4 cm  
921.1.152

## P'u-fu

After 1759 all members of the imperial court from the emperor down to the lowest appointed official were required to wear the *p'u-fu*. This was a plain, dark-coloured, unbelted surcoat designed to be worn over a semi-formal coat. These simple coats were made of two lengths of cloth fashioned with short sleeves, open down the centre front and vented at the sides and back, and were part of the nomadic heritage brought from the north by the Manchu. The coats were worn over other garments but were never finished with the flaring cuffs of the riding coat. For men the coat was invariably three-quarter length, leaving the long cuffed sleeves and decorated hem of the *ch'i-fu* exposed. Women, however, frequently wore full-length surcoats.

Elevation of this particular garment to the rank of court attire achieved several ends. The measure acted as a social leveller, requiring all, regardless of means, to appear at court in similar garb. The very simple construction of the coat made it ideal for displaying the pictorial insignia of rank that had been adopted by the Manchu in 1652. The system of insignia badges followed Chinese precedent, but whereas the Ming had applied the badges to the front and back of their court coats, the short-sleeved nomadic surcoat stressed Manchu national identity. On a less obvious level the garment linked the Manchu to former barbarian dynasties. The Mongol Yuan (1260-1368) wore decorated surcoats as part of their costume; the Jurchen Chin, who ruled northern China from 1115 to 1234 and from whom the Manchu claimed descent, also utilized such a surcoat.



Noble ranks were indicated by dragon badges. This embroidered satin emperor's surcoat has four circular insignia. Less exalted ranks were indicated by fewer or square dragon insignia. 1850-1875.  
914.7.8

Insignia for military ranks.  
First rank—*ch'i-lin* (unicorn), embroi-  
dered. 1750-1775.  
950.100.32





Third rank—leopard, embroidered.  
1875-1900.  
950.100.12



Fourth rank—tiger, embroidered.  
1825-1850.  
950.100.184



Fifth rank—bear, brocaded. 1875-1900.  
950.100.7

Sixth and seventh ranks—tiger cat  
(panther), embroidered. 1875-1900.  
950.100.314

Miscellaneous insignia.  
Musician—oriole, brocaded. 1750-1800.  
950.100.194

