

# Basic Detail Report

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## Dragon Cover

### Date

20th Century

### Primary Maker

Li

### Medium

Cotton and silk

### Description

The Li dragon cover is a distinct textile unique to the Li minority group. Unlike other Li textiles, the dragon covers are hangings or tapestries with symbols reserved for the emperor, such as the four or five-clawed dragon. Scholars have suggested the dragon covers to be subtle resistance to governmental control over indigenous beliefs, as the dragon was worshipped as a rain god in the Li religion. Generally the covers are about five feet wide and seven feet long, and contain imagery of dragons, smaller animals, flowers, decorative motifs and symbols of the Han to appease government control whilst maintaining traditional elements of their embroidery. Textiles are spiritually significant to the Li and these covers were usually hung during ceremonies, used as funeral coverings or used as a sacrificial object. Li dragon covers typically have blue dye, as well as gold, brown, black and white colors. Sometimes the covers are known as the "Great Quilt," or found in historical records as the "Yazhou Quilt." Although these textiles may have initially been created as resistance to the government control, the dragon is a shared symbol and is significant to the Li culture as much as Han iconography and the covers remain significant to preserving and showcasing Li culture.

### Dimensions

69 1/8 × 51 in. (175.6 × 129.5 cm) 2019.23.31a: 68 3/4 × 17 in. (174.6 × 43.2 cm) 2019.23.31b: 69 1/8 × 16 3/4 in. (175.6 × 42.5 cm) 2019.23.31c: 67 3/8 × 16 7/8 in. (171.1 × 42.9 cm)