

**National Treasure Hall****Statue of Sakara****National Treasure**

Sakara is a mythological being derived from Nagaraja, the Indian king of the *nāgas* (snakes or dragons) and one of Kofukuji's set of Eight Kinds of Mythological Beings. Sakara is portrayed as a youthful warrior in armor with a snake coiled around the top of the head and chest. The snake deity legend came to Japan via China, where snakes were conceived as dragons, including the Dragon King, an important water god. In Japanese mythology, dragons are often portrayed as water deities associated with rainfall and bountiful harvests. Dated to 734, this work was made by the hollow-core dry-lacquer sculpting technique.