

**TANKA AND
HAIKAI: JAPANESE
RHYTHMS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649718191

Tanka and Haikai: Japanese Rhythms by Sadakichi Hartmann

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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SADAKICHI HARTMANN

TANKA AND HAIKAI

Japanese Rhythms

AUTHOR'S EDITION

SAN FRANCISCO, 1916



TANKA I.

WINTER? Spring? Who knows?
White buds from the plumtrees wing
And mingle with the snows.
No blue skies these flowers bring,
Yet their fragrance augurs Spring.

The Tanka (short poem) is the most popular and characteristic of the various forms of Japanese poetry. It consists of five lines of 5, 7, 5, 7, and 7 syllables—31 syllables in all. The addition of the rhyme is original with the author.

TANKA II.

OH, were the white waves,
Far on the glimmering sea
That the moonshine laves,
Dream flowers drifting to me,—
I would cull them, love, for thee.

TANKA III.

MOON, somnolent, white,
Mirrored in a waveless sea,
What fickle mood of night
Urged thee from heaven to flee
And live in the dawnlit sea?