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In 1948, Vietnam's great 20th Century mystic Phạm Công Tắc (1890–1959) began a series of sermons making Caodaism's claims to universal salvation the clearest. In only two decades, this religion had stamped its fast-growing presence on the nation. With potent creative and poetic skill Phạm Công Tắc invited his co-religionists to take a shamanic journey with him to examine the heavens and literally see how they would be saved. The 35 sermons translated here are provided with a commentary and extensive introduction by Hartney. *How Heaven Works* is a fascinating insight into the deep connection between shamanic atmosphere, literature, and Modern syncretic concepts of salvation.

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**How Heaven Works**  
 Christopher Hartney

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# How Heaven Works

*The Collective Shamanic Journeys  
 of Phạm Công Tắc and the  
 Syncretic Afterworld of Caodaism*

**Christopher Hartney**

*Translations by*

**Đào Công Tâm, Từ Chơn,**

**& Christopher Hartney**



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