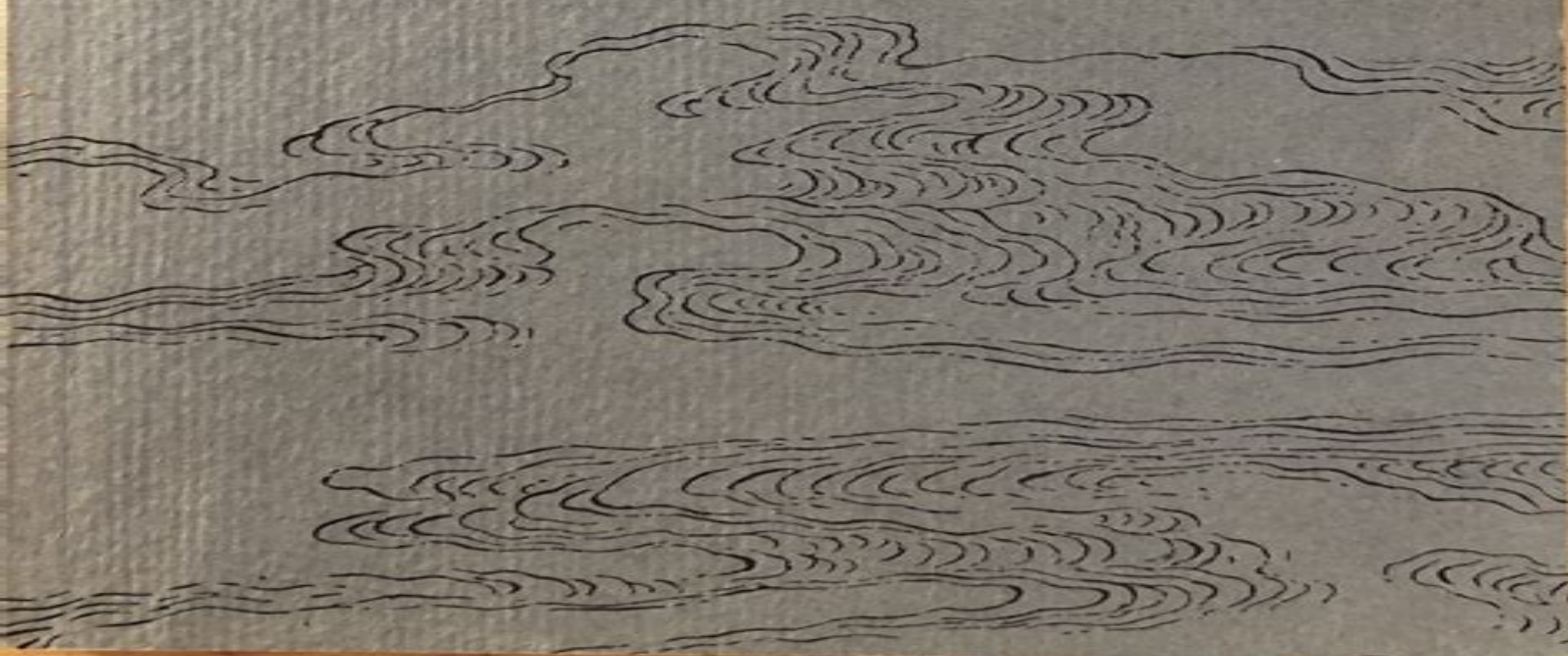


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Empty Cloud:
The Autobiography of the Chinese
Zen Master
Hsu Yun

translated by Upasaka Lu K'uan Yu
(Charles Luk)



Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun

William M. Johnston



Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun:

Empty Cloud - The Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master XuYun , INTRODUCTION Long before the time of his death in 1959 at the venerable age of 120 on Mount Yun ju Jiangxi Province Master Xu yun s name was known and revered in every Chinese Buddhist temple and household having become something of a living legend in his own time His life and example has aroused the same mixture of awe and inspiration in the minds of Chinese Buddhists as does as does a Milarepa for the Tibetan Buddhist tradition remarkable in view of the fact that Xu yun lived well into our own era tangibly displaying those spiritual powers that we must otherwise divine by looking back through the mists of time to the great Chan adepts of the Tang Song and Ming Dynasties They were great men whose example still inspires many today but in many cases we have scant details as to their lives as individuals outside their recorded dialogues or talks of instruction The compelling thing about Xu yun s story which follows is that it paints a vivid portrait of one of China s greatest Buddhist figures complete with all the chiaroscuro of human and spiritual experience It is not a modern biography in the Western sense it is true but it does lay bare the innermost thoughts and feelings of Master Xu yun making him seem that much more real to us No doubt the main thing for a Buddhist is the instructional talks and Xu yun s are rich in insights but it is only natural that we should wonder about the individual human factors asking what life was like for these fascinating figures After all holy men are like mountains while their peaks of attainment may thrust into unbounded space they must rest on the broad earth like the rest of us That part of their experience how they relate to temporal conditions is an intrinsic part of their development even if the ultimate goal be to pass beyond the pale of this world In Xu yun s account we are given a fascinating glimpse into the inner life of a great Chinese Buddhist Master By the time of his passing Xu yun was justifiably recognized as the most eminent Han Chinese Buddhist in the Middle Kingdom When he gave his talks of instruction at meditation meetings and transmitted the Precepts in his final decades literally hundreds of disciples converged upon the various temples where he met and received his followers and on some occasions this number swelled to thousands Such a wave of renewed enthusiasm had not been witnessed in the Chinese monasteries since the Ming Dynasty when Master Han shan 1546 1623 appeared This eminent Master had also found the Dharma in decline and set about reconstructing the temples and reviving the teachers as would Master Xu yun some three hundred years or so later Only years before these great gatherings around Master Xu yun many of the temples which he was subsequently to use had been little more than ruined shells decrepit shadows of their former grandeur and vitality but the Master revived these along with the teachings that were their very raison d tre Not surprisingly Xu yun soon acquired the nickname Han shan come again or Han shan returned for their careers were in many respects similar Both had shared the ordination name of De qing and both had restored the Monastery of Hui neng at Cao xi among others in their times However unlike his eminent predecessors in the Tang Song and Ming Dynasties who had frequently enjoyed official patronage and support from Emperor and State Xu yun s long life of 120 years spanned a most troublesome

time both for China and Chinese Buddhism It was a period continually punctuated by both civil and international conflict with almost perpetual doubt and confusion as to China's future and security one in which general want and straitened circumstances were the order of the day Xu yun was born in 1840 around the time of the Opium Wars and by 1843 the Treaty of Nanjing had been signed with the ceding of Hong Kong to Great Britain the thin end of a wedge of foreign intervention in China's affairs that was to have fateful and long lasting repercussions Xu yun lived to see the last five reigns of the Manchu Dynasty and its eventual collapse in 1911 the formation of the new Republican era taking place in the following year With the passing of the old order much was to change in China China's new leaders were not that concerned about the fate of Buddhism and indeed many of them were inclined to regard it as a medieval superstition standing in the way of all social and economic progress The waves of modernism sweeping China at this time were not at all sympathetic towards Buddhism nor any other traditional teachings Needless to say many of the monasteries found themselves falling on hard times and many others had already been in ruins before the fall of the dynasty Government support for the Buddhist temples was scanty when not altogether absent Of course China's new leaders had other things on their minds for besides the frequent famines droughts and epidemics which ravaged China during these years there was also the growing threat of Japanese invasion The Communist Chinese were rising in the countryside soon to find sufficient strength to take on the Nationalist armies By the late 1930s Japanese troops occupied large areas of northern China It goes without saying that this unfortunate social and political climate hardly offered the best of circumstances in which to embark upon large scale renewal of the Chinese Buddhist tradition

Empty Cloud Xuyun,1974 **Empty Cloud** Xuyun,2015 **Empty Cloud** Xuyun,1974 **Buddhist Masters of Modern China** Benjamin Brose,2025-05-27 Through the life stories and translated writings of eight masters modern Chinese Buddhism comes to life for English readers for the first time Amidst the Chinese political revolutions and cultural upheavals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a group of dedicated and determined monks nuns and laypeople labored to reinvigorate the core practices and teachings of Buddhist China These men and women credited with instigating a Buddhist revival overcame a series of obstacles to shore up the foundations of vibrant Buddhist traditions and ensure their transmission to future generations Their legacies now underlay all the Buddhist teachings practiced throughout China Taiwan Hong Kong and the Chinese diaspora today This ambitious collection introduces the lives and teachings of eight of these exceptional teachers Brief but engaging biographies are set against accessible translations of key Buddhist teachings We are introduced to Chan masters Pure Land patriarchs creative visionaries disciplined renunciants accomplished poets and sophisticated scholars These carefully crafted essays take the reader through the struggles and triumphs of Buddhists living through the transformative twentieth century in China In a long overdue portrait of modern Chinese Buddhism we encounter truly remarkable individuals whose hard won insights remain sources of inspiration and understanding for anyone interested in the history and practice of Buddhism

[Making Saints in Modern China](#) David

Ownby, 2017 Sainthood has been and remains a contested category in China given the commitment of China's modern leadership to secularization modernization and revolution and the discomfort of China's elite with matters concerning religion. However, sainted religious leaders have succeeded in rebuilding old institutions and creating new ones despite the Chinese government's censure. This book offers a new perspective on the history of religion in modern and contemporary China by focusing on the profiles of these religious leaders from the early 20th century through the present. Edited by noted authorities in the field of Chinese religion, *Making Saints in Modern China* offers biographies of prominent Daoists and Buddhists as well as of the charismatic leaders of redemptive societies and state managers of religious associations in the People's Republic. The focus of the volume is largely on figures in China proper, although some attention is accorded to those in Taiwan, Hong Kong, and other areas of the Chinese diaspora. Each chapter offers a biography of a religious leader and a detailed discussion of the way in which he or she became a saint. The biographies illustrate how these leaders deployed and sometimes retooled traditional themes in hagiography and charismatic communication to attract followers and compete in the religious marketplace. Negotiation with often hostile authorities was also an important aspect of religious leadership, and many of the saints' stories reveal unexpected reserves of creativity and determination. The volume's contributors from the United States, Canada, France, Italy, China, and Taiwan provide cutting-edge scholarship. Taken together, these essays make the case that vital religious leadership and practice has existed and continues to exist in China despite the state's commitment to wholesale secularization.

Inner Worlds: Individuals and Interiority in Chinese Religious Life Benjamin Brose, James A. Benn, 2025-07-18 How do the inner convictions of individuals clash and sometimes cohere with the ideologies of their times? This volume investigates the interior lives of Chinese religious practitioners from the tenth century to the present to explore their dreams, visions, and personal struggles. The reader will encounter an eminent Buddhist master's Confucian dreams, a Qing court lama's visions of China, and a modern Chan master's memories of his own awakening. The contributors draw on a vast array of sources: poetry, dream records, confessions, instructional talks, and previously unpublished archival documents to offer a new perspective on the interplay between personal belief and political ideology between the otherworldly and the mundane. Contributors are James A. Benn, Ester Bianchi, Raoul Birnbaum, Benjamin Brose, Daniela Campo, Wen-shing Chou, Vincent Goossaert, Ji Zhe, Paul R. Katz, Beverley McGuire, Gray Tuttle, and Wang Jia. *Reimagining Chan Buddhism* Jimmy Yu, 2021-11-14 This book is the first socio-intellectual history of the Dharma Drum Lineage of Chan/Zen, a new lineage of Buddhism founded by the late Chinese Buddhist cleric Sheng Yen (1931–2009), arguably one of the most influential Chan masters in contemporary times. The book challenges the received academic and popular image of Chan Buddhism as a meditation school that bypasses scriptural learning. Using Sheng Yen's doctrinal classification, the Chan panjiao chart, as an example, the book shows Sheng Yen's Chan as a synthesis of both Indian and Chinese premodern forms of Buddhism and as the summum bonum of Han transmission of Chinese Buddhism. The book demonstrates how Sheng Yen

s presentation of Chan was intimately related to the volatile social and political realities of his life the Communist takeover of China and the subsequent industrial boom that impacted Taiwanese society In short this book presents a historically and culturally embodied approach to the formation of Buddhist doctrine and practice Drawing on the works of postcolonial theories that integrate the role of the researcher into the research the book also offers a more integrated approach between emic and etic insider and outsider perspectives to research Advancing the field of Buddhist studies the book will be of interest to scholars of Buddhism in the modern period twentieth century religious history of China and Taiwan Chan Zen studies World Religions Asian civilizations and Modern Biographies Buddhism in the Modern World Steven Heine, Charles S. Prebish, 2003-09-11 The history of Buddhism has been characterized by an ongoing tension between attempts to preserve traditional ideals and modes of practice and the need to adapt to changing cultural conditions Many developments in Buddhist history such as the infusion of esoteric rituals the rise of devotionism and lay movements and the assimilation of warrior practices reflect the impact of widespread social changes on traditional religious structures At the same time Buddhism has been able to maintain its doctrinal purity to a remarkable degree This volume explores how traditional Buddhist communities have responded to the challenges of modernity such as science and technology colonialism and globalization Editors Steven Heine and Charles S Prebish have commissioned ten essays by leading scholars each examining a particular traditional Buddhist school in its cultural context The essays consider how the encounter with modernity has impacted the disciplinary textual ritual devotional practical and socio political traditions of Buddhist thought throughout Asia Taken together these essays reveal the diversity and vitality of contemporary Buddhism and offer a wide ranging look at the way Buddhism interacts with the modern world **Buddhism in the Modern World : Adaptations of an Ancient Tradition** Steven Heine Professor of Religious Studies and Director of the Asian Studies Florida International University, Charles S. Prebish Professor of Religious Studies Pennsylvania State University, 2003-08-14 The history of Buddhism has been characterized by an ongoing tension between attempts to preserve traditional ideals and modes of practice and the need to adapt to changing cultural conditions Many developments in Buddhist history such as the infusion of esoteric rituals the rise of devotionism and lay movements and the assimilation of warrior practices reflect the impact of widespread social changes on traditional religious structures At the same time Buddhism has been able to maintain its doctrinal purity to a remarkable degree This volume explores how traditional Buddhist communities have responded to the challenges of modernity such as science and technology colonialism and globalization Editors Steven Heine and Charles S Prebish have commissioned ten essays by leading scholars each examining a particular traditional Buddhist school in its cultural context The essays consider how the encounter with modernity has impacted the disciplinary textual ritual devotional practical and socio political traditions of Buddhist thought throughout Asia Taken together these essays reveal the diversity and vitality of contemporary Buddhism and offer a wide ranging look at the way Buddhism interacts with the

modern world *Buddhism A to Z* Ronald B. Epstein, PhD, 2012-10-15 This book is a brief but comprehensive and encyclopedic study handbook of Buddhist cosmology hagiology and terminology Most entries are explanatory essays based on the teachings of Tripitaka Master Hsuan Hua explaining hundreds of Buddhist terms personages lists and concepts The book also indexes Chinese Pali and Sanskrit terms providing clear and accessible explanations The book also provides a brief study guide for both novice and advanced seekers of enlightenment Most entries also end with notation that refers the reader to related entries Reviews Provides the right mix of scholarly attention and accessible language David Batstone University of San Francisco Department of Theology Religious Studies Have you confused karma with dharma Amida with Gautama The Five Desires with the Eightfold Path Then Ronald Epstein s *Buddhism A to Z* can provide a little enlightenment Geared for English speaking Westerners who want to know more about Buddhism this alphabetical dictionary covers everything from the role of an abbot to the contributions of Zen Publishers Weekly A comprehensive handbook not only useful for the interested beginner but also a treasury of teachings for the experienced practitioner Ajahn Amaro Co abbot Abhayagiri Monastery Redwood Valley CA **Encyclopedia of Monasticism** William M. Johnston, 2013-12-04 The two volume Encyclopedia of Monasticism describes the monastic traditions of both Christianity and Buddhism with more than 600 entries on important monastic figures of all periods and places surveys of countries and localities and topical essays covering a wide range of issues e g art behavior economics liturgy politics theology and scholarship Coverage encompasses not only geography and history worldwide but also the contemporary dilemmas of monastic life Recent upheavals in certain countries are highlighted Korea Russia Sri Lanka etc Topical essays subtitled Christian Perspectives and Buddhist Perspectives explore in imaginative fashion comparisons and contrasts between Christian and Buddhist monasticism Encyclopedia of Monasticism also includes more than 500 color and black and white illustrations covering all aspects of monastic life art and architecture

Zen Buddhist Rhetoric in China, Korea, and Japan Christoph Anderl, 2011-11-25 Through a diachronic and comparative approach this book offers a comprehensive study of Zen Buddhist linguistic and rhetoric devices in China Korea and Japan It draws a vivid picture of the complexity of Zen Buddhist literary production in interaction with doctrinal and ritual issues as well as in response to the sociopolitical contexts Chan Insights and Oversights Bernard Faure, 1996-12 Suzuki Faure demonstrates how both West and East have come to overlook significant components of a complex and elusive tradition **The Zen of Tantra** Monica Esposito, 2013-03-11 After the Zen boom of the 1960s and 1970s Tibetan Buddhism increasingly captured the West s imagination Today entire stadiums fill when the Dalai Lama speaks training centers mushroom and books proliferate Even the most esoteric form of Tibetan Buddhism rDzogs chen or Great Perfection has found numerous followers in the West But the West stands not alone in communist China too this form of Buddhism experienced a kind of camouflaged boom from the 1980s Monica Esposito 1962-2011 one of Europe s foremost scholars of Chinese religions observed this process up close After her discovery in 1988 of a Buddhist nunnery on Mt Tianmu in China s

Zhejiang province she lived and practiced under the monastery's founder a Chinese Zen Chan and Tibetan rDzogs chen Great Perfection master called Fahai Lama 1920-1991 Dr Esposito's book offers a fascinating glimpse into the daily life and practices of a Chinese Buddhist monastery and into the teachings of a man who not only survived the Cultural revolution as an acupuncturist Qigong master and recluse in a Daoist cave but managed to found and build a Chan monastery to promote Tibetan Tantra in a still thoroughly communist environment

The Records of Mazu and the Making of Classical Chan Literature Mario Poceski, 2015 The Records of Mazu and the Making of Classical Chan Literature explores the historical growth and transformation of Chan Zen Buddhist literature in medieval China focusing especially on the earliest records of Mazu Daoyi 709-788 It presents important primary materials about classical Chan Buddhism some of them translated for the first time into English

Historical Dictionary of Chan Buddhism Youru Wang, 2017-06-27 The popular name for Chan Buddhism in the West is Zen Buddhism as it was Japanese scholars who first introduced Chan Buddhism to the West with this translation Indeed chan is a shortened form of the Chinese word channa rendered from the Sanskrit word dhyana which denotes practices of the concentration of the mind through meditation or contemplation Although rooted in the Indian tradition of yoga which aims at the unification of the individual with the divine meditative concentration became integrated into the Buddhist path to enlightenment as one of the three learnings sanxue of Buddhism Early Buddhist or the so called Hinayana Buddhist scriptures include the teachings on four stages of meditation four divine abodes four formless meditations the tranquility samatha and insight vipassana meditations and so on Early Buddhist communities commonly practiced these meditations along with the moral disciplines and the study of the scriptures and doctrines Mahayana Buddhism in India and East Asia continued the practice of meditation as one of the six perfections or virtues of the bodhisattva path In this general context some eminent monks might have composed scriptures treatises for the training of meditation or have become more famed with meditation However the school of Chan is more than just a group of meditation practitioners As one of the Chinese Buddhist schools it involves its own ideology its own community and its own genealogical history serving to establish its own identity The Historical Dictionary of Chan Buddhism contains a chronology an introduction and an extensive bibliography The dictionary section has over 400 cross-referenced entries on important personalities schools texts vocabularies doctrines rituals temples events and other practices This book is an excellent resource for students researchers and anyone wanting to know more about Chan Buddhism

The Rhetoric of Immediacy Bernard Faure, 2021-06-08 Through a highly sensitive exploration of key concepts and metaphors Bernard Faure guides Western readers in appreciating some of the more elusive aspects of the Chinese tradition of Chan Buddhism and its outgrowth Japanese Zen He focuses on Chan's insistence on immediacy its denial of all traditional mediations including scripture ritual good works and yet shows how these mediations have always been present in Chan Given this apparent duplicity in its discourse Faure reveals how Chan structures its practice and doctrine on such mental paradigms as immediacy sudden gradual and center

margins Pilgrims and Sacred Sites in China Susan Naquin, Chün-Fang Yü, 2023-11-15 Until now China has been scarcely represented in the burgeoning comparative literature on pilgrimage This volume remedies that omission discussing the interaction between pilgrims and sacred sites from the tenth century to the present From the perspectives of literature art history religion politics and anthropology the essays focus on China's most famous pilgrimage mountains as well as lesser known sites Until now China has been scarcely represented in the burgeoning comparative literature on pilgrimage This volume remedies that omission discussing the interaction between pilgrims and sacred sites from the tenth century to the present From the perspective *How Zen Became Zen* Morten Schlütter, 2010-04-30 How Zen Became Zen takes a novel approach to understanding one of the most crucial developments in Zen Buddhism the dispute over the nature of enlightenment that erupted within the Chinese Chan Zen school in the twelfth century The famous Linji Rinzai Chan master Dahui Zonggao 1089-1163 railed against heretical silent illumination Chan and strongly advocated kanhua koan meditation as an antidote In this fascinating study Morten Schlütter shows that Dahui's target was the Caodong Soto Chan tradition that had been revived and reinvented in the early twelfth century and that silent meditation was an approach to practice and enlightenment that originated within this new Chan tradition Schlütter has written a refreshingly accessible account of the intricacies of the dispute which is still reverberating through modern Zen in both Asia and the West Dahui and his opponents arguments for their respective positions come across in this book in as earnest and relevant a manner as they must have seemed almost nine hundred years ago Although much of the book is devoted to illuminating the doctrinal and soteriological issues behind the enlightenment dispute Schlütter makes the case that the dispute must be understood in the context of government policies toward Buddhism economic factors and social changes He analyzes the remarkable ascent of Chan during the first centuries of the Song dynasty when it became the dominant form of elite monastic Buddhism and demonstrates that secular educated elites came to control the critical transmission from master to disciple procreation as Schlütter terms it in the Chan School

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Table of Contents Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun

1. Understanding the eBook Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - Personalized Recommendations

- Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun User Reviews and Ratings
- Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun and Bestseller Lists
- 5. Accessing Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun Free and Paid eBooks
 - Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun Public Domain eBooks
 - Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun eBook Subscription Services
 - Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun Compatibility with Devices
 - Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - Interactive Elements Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
- 8. Staying Engaged with Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - Setting Reading Goals Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Empty Cloud An Autobiography Of The Chinese Zen Master Xu Yun

- Distinguishing Credible Sources
- 13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development
 - Exploring Educational eBooks
- 14. Embracing eBook Trends
 - Integration of Multimedia Elements
 - Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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