

NONE OF YOUR DAMN BUSINESS





NONE OF YOUR DAMN BUSINESS

BARBARA LEOFFBURGE

Handwritten shorthand notes in the bottom-left section of the book cover.

Handwritten shorthand notes in the bottom-right section of the book cover.

Handwritten shorthand notes on the inside cover, including a header that reads "The letter's intimations".

appeared in the New York
city resurfaced amidst a
friends, who garnered
the letter's intimations

s written in shorthand,
manuscript, whose
made little green apples,
men and stenographers

the sheer mischief of it,



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| <p style="font-size: small;"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. </p> | <p style="font-size: small;"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. </p> | <h3 style="text-align: center;">Women's Secret Language</h3> <p style="font-size: x-small;"> To the Editor: "Yang Hsanyi, the Last User of a Secret Women's Code" (obituary, Oct. 7) was most informative about the culture and ingenuity of women's communications. You report, "Yang Hsanyi, the last woman to communicate secretly with others in a rare script used exclusively by women, died Sept. 20 in her home in Hunan Province, China." Private communication between women is not unknown here and elsewhere in the world. But our communication is overt, sent through a look exchanged, a comment or a shared laugh to which men are generally oblivious. BERE LAVIN Columbus, Ohio, Oct. 7, 2004 </p> | <p style="font-size: small;"> 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13. 14. 15. 16. 17. 18. 19. 20. 21. 22. 23. 24. 25. 26. 27. 28. 29. 30. 31. 32. 33. 34. 35. 36. 37. 38. 39. 40. 41. 42. 43. 44. 45. 46. 47. 48. 49. 50. 51. 52. 53. 54. 55. 56. 57. 58. 59. 60. 61. 62. 63. 64. 65. 66. 67. 68. 69. 70. 71. 72. 73. 74. 75. 76. 77. 78. 79. 80. 81. 82. 83. 84. 85. 86. 87. 88. 89. 90. 91. 92. 93. 94. 95. 96. 97. 98. 99. 100. </p> |
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| | |
|---|---|
| <p style="font-size: small;"> A letter to the editor headlined, "Women's Secret Language," appeared in the <i>New York Times</i> on October 9, 2004. The clipping, measuring 2" x 3", recently resurfaced amidst a pile of unsorted papers. Thanks to the efforts of computer savvy friends, who garnered the ancient sags of Nushu, my long cherished hope to work with the letter's intimations began to take shape. </p> | |
| <p style="font-size: x-small;"> The ensuing book, a brief narrative of Yang Hsanyi and Nushu, is written in shorthand, my own secret language. Embellished, it resembles the Islamic manuscript, whose celebrated practitioners are exclusively men. Yet as sure as G-D made little green apples, Islamic women are writing exquisite calligraphy, as are Asian women and stenographers of every culture and country. </p> | <p style="font-size: x-small;"> I dedicate this book to all of you, who by dint of necessity, or for the sheer mischief of it, write your own secret language. </p> |

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Handwritten text in a rectangular box at the bottom of the right page, organized into two horizontal sections.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
الحمد لله رب العالمين
والصلاة والسلام على
سيدنا محمد وآله الطيبين
الطاهرين

الحمد لله رب العالمين
والصلاة والسلام على
سيدنا محمد وآله الطيبين
الطاهرين
الذين هم خير البرية
والصالحين

والصلاة والسلام على
سيدنا محمد وآله الطيبين
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سيدنا محمد وآله الطيبين
الطاهرين
الذين هم خير البرية
والصالحين

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10. 6. 2004

Yang Huangyi, Last User of a Secret Code Dies
by Douglas Martin

Yang Huangyi, the last woman to communicate secretly with others in a code script used exclusively by women, died Sept 20 in her home in Hainan Province. She was believed to be in her late 90's.

The New China News Agency reported her death, saying estimates of her age ranged from 95 to 98.

The script, Nushu, represents the language spoken in Jiangyong Prefecture in the rolling hills of southern Hunan Province.

Women who were denied education for many centuries in China, used it to share feminine feelings, including arranged marriages, husbands and, of course, mothers-in-law.

"By writing, so much suffering disappears," Ms Yang said in an interview with Northwest Asian Weekly in 1996.

The News Agency called Ms Yang the "last practitioner" of Nushu.

However, this East...
Barbara Leff Bunge...
said in an interview...
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that she had no...
other anthropologists...
China had found...
who continued to...

None of your book
produced at the
Workshop which
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This is Book no

Special thanks to:
Tina, Lucrino Ann,
Chris Petrone, Rita
and Caitlin who
this book would
without their
Miss Hazel M
High School, in
the year of 19

However, Chris Endo, a language professor at
Bunrikyo University in Tokyo and a
leading scholar of the writing system,
said in an e-mail message that
at least two other women knew and
still used some Nushu. She said
Ms Yang was important because
she was the last woman to use
Nushu to communicate with other
women under an oath of secrecy,
the ancient way.
One of the women she said was con-
versant with the script is He Janyin,
who learned it from her grandmother.
The other He Jiaohua, who like He Janyin,
is in her sixties began to teach her-
self to write Nushu in 1997.
Loring Miller, a professor of linguistic
anthropology at St. Loyola University in
Chicago, said in an e-mail message
that she had heard reports that
other anthropologists working in
China had found other women
who continued to use Nushu.

But its disappearance may be
inevitable. In 2002 Time Magazine
included Nushu in the 50 percent
of the world's 6,000 languages that
might be extinct by 2050. An
academic record is being preserved
by scholars, some of them men. Also,
the Chinese government supports
the collection and study of Nushu
script, partly to encourage tourism
in the small part of Hunan Province
where it was historically used. Nushu,
which means "female writing," contains
at least 1,800 characters, each rep-
resenting a spoken syllable, not an
idea, as is the case for much of
Chinese calligraphy, which has at
least 50,000 characters. A script
specific to one sex is rare among
the world's languages, and
popular writers have called Nushu
"the witch's script" and "the
first language of women's
liberation."

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and