Topic: A Journey in Spain—La Sombra del Viento
   (The Shadow of The Wind)
Name: Cindy Chen 陳鈺雯
School: Tainan Municipal Tu Cheng Senior High School
   Class: Sr.2 Xiao 高二孝
Instructor: Amanda Su 蘇瑞梧
Date: 2009.10.30
I. Introduction

Have you ever thought that books you read have spirits of their own? Have you ever had a feeling that those books you read and the real life of your own have something in common as if what they were saying is your life? *The Shadow of the Wind* is such a book having all the characteristics above.

*The Shadow of the Wind* can also be considered as a biography of someone who loves books. This story begins with a ten-year-old boy whose name is Daniel Sempere. He finds a book whose name is *The Shadow of the Wind* written by Julián Carax by accident in the cemetery of forgotten books and after reading it, he is attracted by the substance deeply. In order to continue reading other works written by the author, Julián Carax, he begins to look for the author’s other works that has already been burned by someone. From then on, there is a gate which opens the black past of Barcelona opening for Daniel and others in this book. And now, we will start our journey with the author, Carlos Ruiz Zafón, to reveal the mysterious veil of Barcelona.

In the following parts, I will first make a brief summary of the story. Then choose three most important chapters in the story – “The Cemetery of Forgotten Books” is the first part of the story describing how Daniel gets *The Shadow of the Wind* written by Julián Carax. “City of Shadows 1954” mainly describes Julián Carax’s past, the adventure of Daniel and Fermín and Daniel’s world of emotion. As for the last chapter, “Nuria Monfort: Remembrance of the Lost 1933-1955” can be considered as Nuria Monfort’s memoir that makes Daniel realize all the things from the beginning to the end. In addition, this chapter reveals Nuria Monfort’s love for Julián Carax and Miquel Moliner’s love for Nuria Monfort and friendship for Julián Carax as well. It is the story that is reduplicated by human nature, love and hatred such as the shadow floating in the wind.

II. The Summary of the Story

According to the second paragraph in the introduction, the beginning of the story is from a ten-year-old boy, Daniel Sempere, who finds a book whose name is *The Shadow of the Wind* by accident. After reading it, he is enchanted by it with depth. He starts to find out the other works of Julián Carax but someone has done it and made an event – burning them at the same time.
From then on, Daniel starts a journey of looking for the root of literary; however, the appearance of Laín Coubert, the devil in *The Shadow of the Wind* makes this journey more dangerous. He begins to investigate Julián Carax’s past and discovers more and more of the black past of this city, Barcelona. What begins as a case of literary curiosity turns into a race to find out the truth behind life and death of the author, Julián Carax, and to save those he left behind.

Next, I will analyze this story in terms of the most important three chapters. With “The Cemetery of Forgotten Books”, the journey between the book and me starts. With “City of Shadows 1954”, I begin to realize Julián Carax’s past with these complex materials: friendship, love between his parents and he, love and hatred. At the same time, I can also understand the process the rise and decline of the Aldaya family. With “Nuria Monfort: Remembrance of the Lost 1933-1955”, I can realize Julián Carax’s life when he goes into exile and his love for Penélope Aldaya. In addition, we can find out that something is waiting for us at the end of the story. Now, are you ready to explore the 20th century of Barcelona? Let’s go!

III. Analysis of the Three Important Chapters

In this part, I will analyze the three chapters: “The Cemetery of Forgotten Books”, “City of Shadows 1954” and “Nuria Monfort: Remembrance of the Lost 1933-1955”. Why do I choose the three chapters to analyze? That’s because the three chapters are the keys in the story. What we want to know about Julián Carax’s past and Daniel Sempere’s life in the real word can be found in the three chapters. By analyzing the three chapters, we can completely understand a story behind Julián Carax and the 20th century of Barcelona. At the end of the story and the end of the journey as well, all of us will be given back our lives.

3-1. The Cemetery of Forgotten Books

3-1-1. About This Place

The cemetery of forgotten books is known by those who love books very much. No one knows for sure when it was built, and who built it. On the surface, it can be sure that it is a very ancient palace with a large door of carved wood, blackened by time and humidity. “Before us loomed what to my eyes seemed the carcass of a palace of echoed and shadow.”(1) It located on a mysterious corner in Barcelona and only people who love books or a few secondhand book sellers know its existence. As for
the interior, it looks like a very complex labyrinth filled with many shelves and dust. “After a while it occurred to me that between the covers of each of those books lay a business universe waiting to be discovered, while beyond those walls, in the outside world, people allowed life to pass by in afternoons of football and radio soaps, content to do little more than gaze at their navels.”(2) This is the first time for Daniel to feel that the difference between the cemetery of forgotten books and the outside world he knows. On one cold morning in 1945, Daniel is taken to this place and according to an old tradition, he has to choose a book. His father had ever said to him, “The first time someone visits this place, he must choose a book, whichever he wants, and adopt it, making sure that it will never disappear, that it will always stay alive. It’s a very important promise. For life.”(3) According to what his father said, he finally chose *The Shadow of the Wind* written by Julián Carax. “Perhaps the bewitching atmosphere of the place had got the better of me, but I felt sure that *The Shadow of the Wind* had been waiting for me for years, probably since before I was born.”(4) Every book has their own spirit. Which books will meet us and accompany with us forever need opportunity because we do not know what will be our choices. At the moment, he gets this book by accident, the journey starts.

3-1-2. The Purpose of the Cemetery of Forgotten Books

Then what is the purpose of this cemetery? Daniel’s father said, “When a library disappears, or a bookshop closes down, when a book consigned to oblivion, those of us who know this place, its guardians, make sure that it gets here.”(5) In addition, as long as it is called “The Cemetery of Forgotten Books”, of course, its another purpose is to collect those books and titles which were forgotten and no longer remembered by the world. “In this place, books no longer remembered by anyone, books that are lost in time, live forever, waiting for the day when they will reach a new reader’s hands.”(6)

3-1-3. The Meanings for the Existence of the Cemetery of Forgotten Books

For people who know this place, it is not only a sanctuary but also a place full of mystery. Most important of all, it has another much important meaning: The great cellist Yo-Yo Ma had ever said, “Every cello has soul of their own.”(7) Every book has soul of their own as well. “The soul of the person who wrote it and of those who read it and lived and dreamed with it.”(8) Like humans, our souls will grow up with our age, the souls of books will grow up, too. “Every time a book changes hands, every time someone runs his eyes down its pages, its spirit grows and strengthens.”(9)
3-2. The Middle Development

So, Daniel gets *The Shadow of the Wind* written by Julián Carax and he was deeply attracted by the substance of it. He decides to find out the other works of Julián Carax in every method. At the same time, the devil in this book called Laín Coubert appears on the street in Barcelona, doing the same event as Daniel, but he has another purpose: find them out and burn them. You may ask why the devil, Laín Coubert wants to find out Julián Carax’s other works and burn them. In later part of the analysis, “Nuria Monfort: Remembrance of the Lost 1933-1955”, the question will be solved.

In the process, Daniel meets a person who will be an important part in the survey and his life. The two people resemble a lot and he is a mentor to Daniel. Can you guess who is he? He is the spiritual person in the story – Fermín Romero de Torres. With Fermín’s help, they will find out more and more information about Julián Carax and the black past of Barcelona stage by stage.

3-3. City of Shadows 1954

3-3-1. About This Chapter

It can be considered as the most significant chapter for the structures of the chapter are quite complex. In “City of Shadows 1954”, Daniel and Fermín begin to confer everything about Julián Carax, but they must avoid Inspector Javir Fumero’s persecution at the same time. This chapter contains love which is not blessed between Julián Carax and Penélope Aldaya, who is his sister in half blood, but they don’t know until the end.

In addition to love between Julián Carax and Penélope Aldaya, It also refers to the richness to degeneration of the Aldaya family and Javier Fumero’s hatred toward Julián because Julián had taken his beloved, Penélope away from his life. Thus, his love for Penélope turns into full hatred to Julián Carax from then on. In order to kill Julián Carax, he becomes an evil person who uses any methods and even injures other people just in order to achieve his purpose. We can also see friendship between Julián and his best friend, Miquel Moliner, but this part will be talked in “Nuria Monfort: Remembrance of the Lost 1933-1955”.

3-3-2. From Julián Carax’s Past to the Real Lives of Daniel and Fermín

In the process of looking for Julián Carax’s past, Daniel and Fermín’s lives are having a connection with Julián Carax, especially Daniel. They are like two careful detectives to collect everything about Julián Carax and figure out all the answer to a riddle. In this chapter, we will talk about Daniel and Fermín’s love. Daniel falls in love with Beatriz Aguilar, who is his friend, Tomás Aguilar’s elder sister. As for Fermín, he falls in love with Bernarda, who works as a maid in the Barcelós. Barceló, the full name is Gustavo Barceló. He is a secondhand book seller in Barcelona. He once wanted to buy The Shadow of the Wind from Daniel, but failed to do that because Daniel is not willing to sell it no matter how high the prices he had offered. And also Daniel in that moment wanted to keep the promise he had with his father in the cemetery of forgotten books. The cemetery of forgotten books is a secret between his father and he. In this chapter, he will provide some help for them to investigate.

3-3-3. The Meanings of the Chapter

Fermín has ever said, “Destiny is usually just around the corner. Like a thief, a hooker, or a lottery vendor: its three most common personifications. But what destiny does not do is home visits. You have to go for it yourself.”(10) All the characters in the story have their own destiny. We do not know everyone’s destiny because we can not predict someone’s future. The beginning for everyone is the same, but how to make it develop is up to you. Daniel, Fermín, Julián Carax and all the others are wandering in time. As the story develops, this journey becomes more and more exciting but dangerous. Daniel’s life has been connected with Julián Carax’s past since he got The Shadow of the Wind in the cemetery of forgotten books. There are still some things we do not understand in it; therefore, we will continue analyzing the last important chapter – “Nuria Monfort: Remembrance of the Lost 1933-1955” and attempt to find out some clues.

3-4. Nuria Monfort: Remembrance of the Lost 1933-1955

3-4-1. About This Chapter

This is the first time for Nuria Monfort to meet Julián Carax. At first, Nuria works in a publishing house. Her understanding for Julián Carax is from Miquel Moliner, who is Julián Carax’s best friend when they were students and provide him money to
make his books published in Barcelona. In order to negotiate the new contracts with Julián Carax, she is sent to Paris. Then all the development between Nuria Monfort, Miquel Moliner and Julián Carax starts.

This chapter can be also regarded as a memoir of Nuria Monfort and even the important key to understand Julián Carax when he goes into exile in Paris, a deep friendship between Julián and Miquel Moliner and Javier Fumero’s hatred to him. Of course, Julián Carax’s deep love for Penélope and Nuria Monfort’s love for Julián Carax and Miquel Moliner’s love for Nuria Monfort all will be developed. After reading this memoir of Nuria Monfort, Daniel will understand more about Julián Carax.

3-4-2. Friendship Between Miquel Moliner and Julián Carax

In this chapter, Miquel Moliner is an important part of Julián Carax’s past. When Julián Carax and Penélope Aldaya prepared for going to Paris, it was he who helps them to escape from Barcelona and provide him with more than ten years. But at last, only Julián Carax successfully escaped from Barecelona to Paris. Penélope Aldaya was found and imprisoned in the garret by her family and even at last, she died miserably with Julián’s baby in her stomach, but Julián didn’t know from the beginning to the end. Their friendship is deep enough that Miquel Moliner is willing to change Julián Carax’s life with his. Miquel Moliner can be regarded as the best friend of Julián Carax.

3-4-3. Love of Nuria Monfort for Julián Carax

Nuria Monfort falls in love with Julián Carax from the first day they met at the Gared’ Austerlitz in Paris. She was attracted by Julián Carax’s charming appearance. From then on, she loves him loyally even though the person Julián Carax loves is Penélope. At the same time, Miquel Moliner also falls in love with Nuria Monfort even though he knows Nuria does not love him. He is very considerate to Nuria and expects she will turn back and love him one day even if the day never comes. The above reveal that Nuria Monfort’s love for Julián Carax, Miquel Moliner’s love for Nuria Monfort and the most important of all is Julián Carax’s love for Penélope Aldaya. All of their love for each other are quite loyal and never have variety, but their emotions for each other are not ended with happiness.

3-4-4. Nuria Monfort’s Expectation for Daniel
Knowing Penélope’s death, Julián Carax has been negative for a while and even starts to destroy his works to let himself become the devil, Laín Coubert in his books. But until Daniel’s appearance and his steadiness for not willing to sell *The Shadow of the Wind*, Julián Carax’s attitude to his life has been changed. “A story is a letter the author writes to himself, to tell himself that he would be unable to discover otherwise.”(11) Julián Carax starts to learn to see and memorize the world throughout Daniel’s eyes and lets him find those he had ever left behind and lost. Nuria Monfort’s expectation for Daniel is hope that Daniel can save Julián Carax from the past memories and not forget everything about it. “Of all the things that Julián wrote, the one I have always felt closest to my heart is that as long as we are remembered, we remain alive.”(12)

IV. Symbolism

4-1. Montblanc Meisterstück

Montblanc Meisterstück has ever been Daniel’s dream because Victor Hugo had ever used it. He once dreamed to be a novelist and write with it, but its price is not a ordinary person can afford. On Daniel’s birthday, his dad sent this expensive pen to Daniel as his birthday present. Nuria Monfort had also sent Julián Carax the Montblanc Meisterstück. “Is it possible that someone who has the pen can write great compositions? The answer is of course negative, but only because this pen from their beloved is full of love and hope. It reveals an unobvious love from Nuria Monfort’s love for Julián Carax and Daniel’s father’s love for him.”(13) We can see the hidden love of Daniel’s father for him and Nuria Monfort for Julián Carax from Montblanc Meisterstück. This is love which cannot be figured out.

4-2. The Angel of Mist

The Angel of Mist means the Aldayas’ house on Avenida del Tibidabo, 32. It symbolizes not only the beginning and the ending of the Aldayas’ but also love between Julián Carax and Penélope Aldaya. There are many legends spreading in Barcelona. At the end of the story, it is reconstructed as a storehouse belonging to a company to promote the sales of cotton socks, skimmed milk, and sports cars for jet-setting businessmen. The change of The Mist of Angel symbolizes a new beginning for the story. It has been past when it was the Aldaya’s house. The Mist of Angel symbolizes not only Julián Carax’s black past but also the beginning of a
new day when everything comes to the end.

V. Conclusion

5-1. Review

Hidden in the heart of the old city of Barcelona is the ‘Cemetery of Forgotten Books’, a labyrinthine library of obscurity and forgotten titles. To this library, a man brings his ten-year-old son, Daniel, on one cold morning in 1945. There, Daniel is allowed to choose one book and from the dusty shelves pulls *The Shadow of the Wind* by Julián Carax. But as he grows up, several people seem inordinately interested in his friend. What begins as a case of literary curiosity turns into a race to find out the truth behind life and death of Julián Carax and to save those he left behind.

The journey is over. The ending of the story is describing the development of every character. Daniel and Beatriz get married at last and they inherit the bookshop and continue to run it. As for Fermín Romero de Torres, he becomes the manager of the cemetery of forgotten books after Isaac, the former manager of the cemetery of forgotten books, died and Julián Carax has been given back his life. Like Fermín said, “Life is waiting for us.”(14)

5-2. Reflection

“Books are mirrors: you only see in them what you already have inside you.”(15) This is the central concept of *The Shadow of the Wind*. From a ten-year-old boy got the books also named *The Shadow of the Wind* written by Julián Carax, the entrance to the black past of Barcelona is starting. At last, there is one thing waiting for all the characters in the story and us, the readers: a new life.

From Daniel got *The Shadow of the Wind*, I can feel as if I were a character in the story to find out the truth with Daniel and Fermín. It is only such a simple book, but it can lead to many things in the black city, Barcelona. With the development of the story, as a reader, I feel that we take an adventure with the characters whether in the cemetery of forgotten books or walking on the streets in Barcelona to experience the excitement and danger in the story.

Li-Heng Li, the artistic inspector in Taipei Arts Festival said, “In every chapter, every surprise and the developments out of people’s imaginations, we can feel the
enjoyment and expectation like a матрёшка (a Russian doll).”(16) This is a story which is constructed by historical fiction, occasional farce, existential mystery and passionate love. All the situations of every character in the story may be the same as people in the real world. But something waiting in front of us is a new life.

5-3. Conclusion

Traveling with Carlos Ruiz Zafón, we experience the adventure with the characters in the story. In The Shadow of the Wind, it tells the pass of time, the beginning and the ending of a family and difficulties of love at the same time. Every book has soul of its own. When we read the book, our souls are in the story as if we were parts of the story. Read it and do your best to cry and laugh and travel with the characters in the story until you find the most important thing in your life.

VI . References

(7) 喀報 Cast Net - 《風之影》 交織愛恨情仇,(2008).
http://castnet.nctu.edu.tw/view.htm?ar_pk=858 (瀏覽日期：2009.3.29)
(13)喀報 Cast Net - 《風之影》 交織愛恨情仇,(2008).
http://castnet.nctu.edu.tw/view.htm?ar_pk=858 (瀏覽日期：2009.3.29)
(16)卡洛斯・魯伊斯・薩豐著、范湲譯(2007)。《風之影》(精裝版)。台北市：圓神。