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A Dialogue at the Threshold:

Analysing Marginal Existence in *The Alienist*, *Bury Me My Love,* and *Kuroshitsuji*[1]

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Thispaper analyses the construction of the 'marginal', the 'immigrant', and the 'migrant' in transmedia narratives of the Neo-Victorian novel *The Alienist* by Lucien Carr and (the popular television series based on it), the videogame *Bury Me My Love* developed by the Pixel Hunt, and the English anime adaptation of the Japanese manga *Kuroshitsuji*by Yana Toboso. Within academia, political narratives are generally concerned with ethnicity, race, religion, and sexuality, while largely overlooking the intricate issues of the representation of the migrant in popular narratives, alternate sexuality of the migrant, and the problematic consumerism of the refugee problem in twenty-first century convergence culture. However, an academic dialogue can be effectively started by examiningparatexts such as the popular transmedia narratives, emerging from both developed and developing nations alike that today represent the complexities of existing on the threshold of indeterminacy. For instance, critiquing the heterosexual-white-male-dominated sphere of videogames that often brutalise and mutilate non-white, transsexual and female experiences, Adrienne Shaw in *Gaming at the Edge: Sexuality and Gender at the Margins of Gamer Culture*argues that video games provide a platform for the players to experience race, gender and ethnicity concurrently. Establishing a dialogic framework for representation of divergence and difference in a participatory culture of user-generated content and individualised media consumption, Shaw provides new insights on how the marginalised player in his/her constant negotiation of selfhood in the digital space also influences the mainstream gamer culture.Similarly, in *Neo-Victorianism and the Memory of the Empire,*

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[1]The stylesheet followed for formatting the abstract is Modern Language Association (MLA), Seventh Edition.

Elizabeth Ho examines the decolonized dimensions of Neo-Victorian transmedia narratives, to argue how appropriation of Victorian images in contemporary literature and culture has emerged as a critical response to the crises of colonization and Imperial collapse.

While the transmedia narrative quiver on the threshold of indeterminate genre designation and between literature and reality, they become the perfect metaphor for the twenty first century refugees who have to constantly negotiate between multiple layers of insecurities, gossamer selfhoods, fragile national affiliations, inevitable rootlessness, and transgressive sexuality. Thus, the paper examines different iterations of contemporary transmedia such as a Neo-Victorian novel and its serialised Netflix adaptation, a Japanese manga and its English anime adaptation, and an American videogame to explore how this fluid genre both represent and perhaps even monetises on the presence of the refugee, the displaced, the migrant and the immigrant. I intend to critically enquire whether transmedia narratives can be instrumental in the imperative dialogue between politics and academia. Contextualising my arguments in light of game and Neo-Victorian theories as expostulated by the works of Shaw and Ho, my paper argues that thesetexts expose an emergence of a new narrative medium surrounding discourses such as that of the experience of being a migrant refugee, trauma of forced displacement and alternate sexuality of the marginalised communities, and further critiquesthe amorphous and uncanonical transmedia narratives on migration and trauma in order to challenge the myth that popular media is universally acceptable, as well as to problematize the debatable ethics involving the monetization of these narratives without considering the migrant's subjective agency.

Keywords: marginal existence, transmedia narratives, The Alienist, Bury Me My Love, Kuroshitsuji, forced displacement, migrant, alternate sexuality