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"There we were, now here we are": *nostos* and *algos* of Oasis' (1990s) imaginary in contemporary society and mediascape[1]

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Abstract

Within the theoretical frameworks of the sociology of imaginary (Durand, 1994; Grassi, 2006; 2012; Marzo & Mori, 2019) and nostalgia, concerning cultural theories (Jankélévitch, 1974; Boym, 2001; Morreale, 2009; Affuso, 2012) and the link with media and media narratives (Niemeyer, 2014), this paper aims to focus on the affirmation of the imaginary in which the Manchester band Oasis helped to shape in the 1990s (through lyrics, music videos, and outfits), alongside other bands. The paper will also examine how, through mechanisms involving nostalgia, this imaginary echoes in contemporary society and the current mediascape for fans. The narrative and metaphoric construction surrounding Oasis has taken shape as a symbolic space in which memory, generational identity and forms of nostalgia intertwine, giving rise to new forms of belonging and cultural and media consumption. Starting from a content analysis of audiovisual products and interviews with Italian fans of the band, we can say that: a) the concept of Nostalgia for Oasis assumes the form of *algos*, or nostalgia for a different time (Boym, 2001), a past that cannot be returned to (Prete, 1992), and is also linked to personal life events; b) nostalgia, closely related to passion (Bolin, 2015), takes the form of *nostos* and becomes generational nostalgia, which can be traced back to the media representations in which the band is present, which become repositories of collective memory; c) nostalgia turns into retromania (Reynolds, 2011; Pomarico, 2023) when the imaginary of those years is recreated, even partially, through objects and simulacra (Baudrillard, 1981).

Keywords

Imaginary | Nostalgia | Social Media | Nostalgia Effect | Retromania

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1. Introduction. Nostalgia and imageries between past and present: the case of Oasis

In the contemporary scenario, the social and cultural imaginary is increasingly structured around (symbolic) practices of a nostalgic nature. Television series, fashion systems, and musical phenomena illustrate how the past is continually reinvested, reinterpreted, and made current through media and cultural artefacts. In this scenario, nostalgia plays an active role, functioning not only as pain for lost time (*algos*) or desire for return (*nostos*), to borrow Svetlana Boym's distinction (2001), but also as a device for identity construction and a producer of new imaginaries (Durand, 1994; Grassi, 2006). Digital media, particularly social media, play a crucial role in continuously reactivating collective memories (Niemeyer, 2014; Kalinina, 2016) and in spreading forms of cultural retromania (Reynolds, 2011; Pomarico, 2023). According to Davis (2024), nostalgia evolves into a multifaceted phenomenon, transcending its individualistic nature to become an indicator of the prevailing social and emotional transformations of our era. The present paper aligns with this framework by analysing the case of the British band Oasis from Manchester, which became a symbol of the 1990s (and part of the early 2000s). Oasis played a significant role in shaping the collective imaginary of youth culture during that period. The band incorporate elements of working-class rebellion and conceptions of authenticity, thereby establishing a distinctive aesthetic that encompasses music, visual art, and fashion. The primary objective of this paper is to understand how the narrative and symbolic construction around the Oasis is configured as a metaphorical space in which memory, generational identity, and forms of nostalgia intertwine, giving rise to new forms of belonging and cultural consumption. To that end, this paper will consider two main theoretical frameworks: The sociology of the imaginary, as discussed by Durand (1994), Grassi (2006, 2012), and Marzo and Mori (2019), and the cultural theories of nostalgia, as explored by Jankélévitch (1974), Boym (2001), Morreale (2009), and Affuso (2012), are two pertinent areas of study in this field.

The initial approach enables the interpretation of the symbolic universe of Oasis as a coherent system of meanings that has contributed to the construction of collective realities and shared identities. The second component facilitates the examination of the affective, cultural, and media mechanisms through which the past is reactivated, narrated, and consumed in the present. The employment of these two theoretical approaches enables the examination of the role of nostalgia in shaping contemporary cultural consumption and the processes of re-signifying the past in modern society. The case of Oasis emerges as a prime subject for this examination.

We will endeavour to provide a critical reflection on how cultural memory is activated, renewed, and given new meaning through mediatised practices of nostalgia. In this reflection, we will also examine how past collective imaginaries are evoked, reappropriated, and given new significance.

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2. The sociology of the imaginary and nostalgia: some theoretical reflections to interpret the persistence of Oasis

The concept of the imaginary is pivotal to understanding the symbolic processes that govern social life. According to Durand (1994), the imaginary constitutes a set of symbolic, mythological and narrative productions that mediate the relationship between human beings and the world. These are not mere creations of the imagination but real systems of meaning that guide collective experience. Taking up a definition by Wunenburger (2003 [2008: 19]), we can add a further element to this definition: the imaginary, represented by productions "concretised in works, based on visual [...] and linguistic elements (metaphors, symbols, stories)", that can give rise to "coherent and dynamic sets, which, starting from a symbolic function, create a sense of interlocking meanings, both literal and figurative" (ibidem). According to Marzo and Mori (2019: 23), the imaginary can become a "field of meaning that acts as a matrix for the social construction of reality", far from being merely a product of imagination and unreality. Indeed, the human imaginative component plays a crucial role, as it enables the construction of images according to principles valid in each historical and socio-cultural context (Tirino & Tramontana, 2018). Thus, the imagination becomes a way for human beings to shape reality through figures, metaphors, and myths (Grassi, 2006). With their narrative and symbolic constructions, as well as multiple forms, the media shape and disseminate imaginaries. This theoretical perspective, articulated in this way, enables us to understand how the narratives associated with Oasis have contributed to shaping a shared cultural imaginary, which, although not exhausted in the past, continues to be reactivated in various forms in the present. Taking up the theoretical approaches outlined above and as will be seen in the next part of the paper, we can say that the imaginary of Oasis is shaped—from a symbolic and cultural point of view—by the songs they wrote, their music videos, confident stylistic and aesthetic choices, and the public statements of the band members. These elements have contributed to creating a symbolic, cultural and value-based universe capable of surviving and renewing itself, even beyond the actual lifespan of the band. For this reason, the band's return, announced for 2025, has aroused great interest. Nostalgia may be another key to interpreting Oasis's persistence in the contemporary world and understanding the return of their imaginary in the minds of fans and the cultural industry. As Jankélévitch (1974) observes, nostalgia is a complex feeling that articulates an impossible desire: the desire to return to a past that, by definition, cannot be recovered.

Boym (2001), however, distinguishes between 'restorative nostalgia', which idealises and attempts to reconstruct the lost past, and 'reflective nostalgia', which critically engages with the past. In the case study analysis, it could be argued that both modes are triggered: on the one hand, fans and brands seek to 'recreate' the Oasis experience (through clothing and outfits); on the other hand, it is possible to initiate a reflection on the loss of time and the transformation of one's experiences and therefore of one's life. Niemeyer's contribution (2014) aims to understand nostalgia as a feeling and "an act of speech that can potentially turn into a pragmatic creative

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process" (Niemeyer 2014: 10), manifesting itself in communicative processes. Nostalgia thus becomes a cultural practice realised through the media and mediatisation, transforming private memories into shared collective memories.

The media play a crucial role in defining and disseminating nostalgia (Kalinina, 2016). Digital media play an even more critical role in the contemporary world precisely because of their logic and affordances: social media such as Instagram and TikTok, based on a language that manages to bring together images, videos and music, including through editing, can encourage the circulation and reactivation of pictures from the past, making nostalgia a socially visible, participatory and multiplied phenomenon (Kalinina, 2016). Starting from this, we can reflect on the concept of 'retromania' (Reynolds, 2011; Pomarico, 2023), which describes the contemporary tendency to continually revive and recycle forms, styles and languages of the past. In this context, the imaginary of Oasis becomes the object of aesthetic and symbolic reuse, producing 'simulacra', to use Baudrillard's term (1981), which, while drawing on original elements, are transformed into new, decontextualised cultural constructions.

We can also recall the category of 'hauntologia' (Fisher 2014), which can be considered a failure of the mourning process and a refusal to let go (the ghost). As Fisher points out, regarding the Manchester band Joy Division, we can say that the band, which has managed to crystallise the "depressed spirit" (ibidem) of our contemporary world, expresses a melancholy without any real object or apparent cause: it is a feeling that reflects the sensation of facing a closed future. The past can therefore reappear as a ghost that won't let us go, and for this reason, we reconsider putting forms from the past back into circulation in some way.

3. Methods

Starting from these introductory premises and the definition of the theoretical framework, we decided to define some research questions that guided the realisation of this work: i) What elements define the Oasis imaginary?; ii) What meanings underlie the nostalgia for Oasis among fans?; iii) What media and cultural forms does nostalgia for the Oasis imaginary take today? To answer these questions, we decided to proceed with a qualitative *mixed-methods approach*: we analysed the band's music videos using *thematic analysis* (Braun & Clarke, 2006); we used a qualitative *content analysis* (Schreier 2012) to analyse the documentary released in 2025; we conducted *semi-structured interviews* (Corrao, 2005) with some Italian fans of the band; we conducted a qualitative *content analysis* of some artefacts present on the social media platforms Instagram and TikTok, using the hashtag *#oasisreunion* as a search key. In the first case, we analysed the music videos to reconstruct the imaginary created by Oasis, of which Oasis was the spokesperson during the 1990s, with repercussions and effects in the contemporary world. The thirty-six official music videos released between 1994 and 2009, the year the band broke up, were analysed. Starting from the music videos, we: i) identified recurring themes at a visual, narrative and aesthetic level; ii) analysed the strategies used in constructing the band's identity; iii) identified the presentations of

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nostalgia through stylistic and narrative elements. The thematic coding focuses on the visual and narrative aspects that contribute to building a coherent and recognisable imaginary, articulated around authenticity, rebellion, memory, and cultural continuity. By systematising the most recurring themes, it was possible to highlight how Oasis' music videos accompanied the band's musical success and constructed a symbolic space of recognition, reaffirming identity and the production of generational nostalgia. In the second case, we decide to proceed with the analysis of the documentary *The Oasis Revolution* (2025) since, unlike previous documents, even those of particular importance (such as *Oasis: Supersonic* or *Oasis Knebworth 1996*, also distributed in cinemas), it does not merely retrace the band's beginnings or musical career or even individual concerts but traces a narrative path that starts from the beginning, passes through the phase of success and then encounters decline and subsequent resurrection, also recalling the theme of reunion. A content analysis of the documentary was therefore conducted, aiming to highlight the main content and understand how, from a media representation perspective, the Oasis imaginary is perceived and (re)constructed, as well as the criteria according to which the theme of nostalgia is explored. In the third case, to explore more specifically the meanings associated with nostalgia for Oasis, 14 semi-structured interviews were conducted with Italian fans of the band, selected through snowball sampling (Albano & Paccagnella, 2006), starting from a few key contacts (nine men, five women; from 36 years to 45 years old). We built the interview outline around five main areas: knowledge of Oasis; experiences and memories; nostalgia; objects and simulacra; and media and cultural consumption. The interviews were transcribed and analysed thematically, identifying recurring patterns related to nostalgia's affective, memorial, identity and media dimensions. In the fourth case, we collected an illustrative corpus of 40 pieces of content from social media (20 images in the form of Instagram posts and 20 videos on TikTok) collected using the same hashtag. The analysis focused on the type of content through which commemorative practices emerged (with the presence of visual tributes and old album covers), emotional practices (with examples of amazement at the reunion) and aesthetic practices (with the presentation of objects and outfits linked to the imaginary shaped by Oasis).

4. Is there an Oasis imaginary? The story of the problematic and rebellious working-class kids of Manchester

Based on the theoretical reflections mentioned at the beginning, reconstructing the Oasis imaginary allows us to contextualise the main themes of the media narratives surrounding the Manchester band and some specific plots and forms—individual and collective—that nostalgia can take on for fans. The media products we have chosen to analyse allow us to carefully reconstruct this imaginary, which, more generally, the media themselves have helped to spread and potentially expand and recreate, especially when considering the creative possibilities offered by social media (Boccia Artieri, 2012; Vittadini, 2018). To map the imaginary of Oasis, we can proceed by

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identifying some specific themes: the (urban) identity of the working class; music, style aesthetics of the 1990s; the rise of the myth and the mass culture; identity and rebellious attitude; retro aesthetics and cultural references.

Regarding the first point, the identity of the working class, the documentary film places Oasis within a strongly connoted visual landscape from the very first scenes.

We can see old Manchester, particularly the Burnage neighbourhood, with its streets, alleys, shops, and council houses. This environment becomes the symbolic backdrop for a narrative of identity centred on working-class belonging. The personal stories of Noel and Liam Gallagher also evoke this reflection. There are references to their difficult childhoods, problems with the law and the socio-economic conditions of their environment. These elements create an image of rise, revenge, rebellion and authenticity. The media often highlights the reflection on working-class identity, primarily when referring to the rivalry with another contemporary English band, Blur (Scott, 2016; Danton, 2023). This element also appears in the documentary.

Oasis is portrayed as the face of the working class in northern England, in contrast to Blur, which is seen as an expression of the London middle class. In the documentary, the Oasis-Blur rivalry becomes a conflict of class and regional identity, transformed by the media into a veritable 'battle of Britpop'. The notion of territorial belonging, as well as cultural belonging—manifesting in the fans' adherence to their values, in contrast to the adherents of Blur, who had different values—translates into a representation that positions them as symbols of "working-class ambition".

This notion is corroborated by the documentary, which demonstrates their capacity to achieve a prominent position on the global music scene. The music videos also exemplify a rich symbolic universe that contributes to constructing an imaginary world deeply rooted in the stylistic features of the British working class. At the beginning of the documentary, some Oasis music videos also feature an urban setting and a social fabric that can be traced back to the working class. We can see anonymous streets, red brick buildings, suburbs and railway stations.

Regarding the music, style and aesthetic of the 1990s, returning to the theme of the conflict with Blur, we can refer to the music scene of the time. The documentary highlights how the immediate success of Oasis's album *Definitely Maybe* (1994) and the rise of the band are intertwined with the aesthetics and culture of the 1990s. The Manchester music scene—first populated by bands such as Joy Division, The Smiths, and later The Stone Roses—became the fertile cultural ground where the seed of Britpop blossomed, with Oasis becoming its emblem. Britpop presented itself as a 'cultural and musical revolution' in which music, fashion and national identity—as can be heard in the documentary—were intertwined. This revolution placed Oasis within a broader social and symbolic change. In the music videos for the songs *Supersonic* (1994) and *Live Forever* (1994), the band moves in minimalist, almost anti-glamour settings, emphasising their roots and distance from the glamour aesthetic of other contemporary bands. This visual choice helped to construct an image of authenticity, in contrast to the more sophisticated narratives associated with British pop culture in the 1990s.

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From their early gigs in small clubs to large indoor and outdoor concerts, such as Knebworth in 1996, Oasis' musical history is mythologised in the documentary and becomes a story of social redemption, as well as a tale of collective conquest.

In this sense, the documentary could shape the image of Oasis as a 'popular hero', the product of a tough but genuine Manchester, capable of rising above its roots without losing its authenticity. The representation of the tumultuous relationship between Liam and Noel Gallagher, their excesses and their media controversies is part of the logic of 'celebrity culture' (Turner, 2014), according to which the public construction of the image of stars is undoubtedly based on their performances in their field of interest, but also on narratives concerning their private lives, thereby feeding the often contradictory fascination with famous people.

The band is sometimes self-referential in its music videos, which feature the band members playing together in various contexts without presenting coherent narratives. We can see this practice in the music videos for *Wonderwall* (1995), *Some Might Say* (1995) and *Roll with It* (1995). In these videos, music assumes a central role as a collective and immediate experience, devoid of superfluous elements. While there may be some interest in the band's personal lives, the primary focus remains on their musical craft, with live performances occupying a central role. As evidenced by the music videos, Oasis is a band that demonstrates fidelity to live performance, a quality that distinguishes them from many artists associated with the pop music scene of that era.

Concerning the themes of rebellious identity and melancholy, the visual media of the band Oasis has been observed to exhibit nonconformity and a defiant attitude.

This phenomenon is further substantiated by recent social media content that aligns with these themes. The music video for *Cigarettes & Alcohol* (1994) exemplifies the link between youth culture and fun, often associated with excess. This link is characterised by a hedonistic imaginary that is reminiscent of the British rock music of the 1960s and 1970s. The title of the video, "Cigarettes & Alcohol," is evocative of this association. However, this rebellious disposition is concomitant with a pervasive sense of melancholy, a quality that is intimately intertwined with the lyrical content and musical composition. A considerable number of music videos, particularly those associated with albums after *Definitely Maybe*, have been observed to introduce a more reflective and melancholic dimension. This characteristic has been identified as a recurring theme in Oasis's body of work. The video for *The Masterplan* (1995) can be cited as an example. An atmosphere that appears to be suspended in time, accompanied by a sense of nostalgia, is evident in the video, which is partly attributable to the palette of colours utilised. The music video for *Don't Look Back in Anger* features various props, including old cars and Polaroids. This phenomenon evokes the notion of time standing still, thereby creating an overlap between past and present. This aesthetic engenders a form of visual nostalgia, thereby establishing Oasis as a symbol of a musical and personal happy time. The veracity of this notion will be validated through the results of the interviews.

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Over the years, Oasis' music videos have introduced numerous cultural references that explicitly recall the past: *All Around the World* (1997) references the psychedelic imaginary of the 1960s in the style of The Beatles; *The Importance of Being Idle* (2005) recalls British cinema of the 1950s and 1960s, particularly 'kitchen sink drama'; *Lyla* (2005) revisits glam rock atmospheres and retro-futuristic visions. These references construct a layered imaginary in which the British musical past is continually evoked, reinterpreted and celebrated.

5. The underlying meanings of nostalgia for Oasis: *algos*, *nostos*, and media effects

Defining nostalgia is a complex task (Batcho, 1995), as it is a multifaceted phenomenon with inherent contradictions (Pickering & Keightley, 2006) that are particularly evident in both grassroots and mainstream production. It allows historical knowledge to be constructed (Affuso, 2012), but at the same time presents an ambivalent attitude towards memory (ibidem): on the one hand, it can act as a defense mechanism for identity and, on the other, it can become a critical tool with generative potential for the future (ibidem), but in truth it can also be understood as a dynamic tool that allows us to relate to the present (Pickering & Keightley, 2006). The stratification of nostalgia for Oasis emerges from interviews with fans of the British band, which aligns with the theoretical proposal presented above, as well as from specific themes present in the documentary film, music videos, and social media content. In this case, nostalgia is articulated on different levels and takes various forms. Some concepts Boym (2001) expressed can help us interpret the forms of nostalgia linked to Oasis.

Nostalgia as algos (or nostalgia for a different time). Fans perceive nostalgia as pain for a lost time. The interviewees describe a return to adolescence or youth, linking Oasis songs to unrepeatable personal events (first loves, school friendships). This type of 'reflective nostalgia' feeds on desire itself and appreciates fragments of memories (Boym, 2001) as they move through time. The interviews with fans reveal nostalgia for a past perceived as unrepeatable, and in this case, the feeling can be traced back to subjective experience. Fans describe the time associated with Oasis as 'more authentic', 'simpler' and 'more real' than the present. However, this is not a desire to return but rather the construction of an idealised past that acts as a bridge to the present, in which it still plays a significant role (Prete, 1992). Fans are aware of the temporal distance but can use the past as a space for identity negotiation. In this sense, nostalgia serves as a device for maintaining continuity of identity, linking the past and present selves. Oasis songs become devices that allow fans to instantly evoke emotions and memories associated with significant moments in their personal lives (Sedikides & Wildschut, 2019).

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> *Don't Look Back in Anger* represents the memory of a happy summer in 1996. *D'you Know What I Mean* is a September memory of the beginning of my third year of secondary school, when I bought the album *Be Here Now*, released a few weeks earlier.
>
> [M., 38 years old]

> For me, Oasis represents carefree love, good times and bad times, from the ages of 11 to 16.
>
> [W., 42 years old]

> I am aware that it will never be as magical as the 1990s.
>
> [M., 40 years old]

> A song I'm particularly fond of is *Live Forever*, which takes me back to a beautiful summer in Nettuno at my crush's house.
>
> [W., 38]

Nostalgia is deeply intertwined with the personal memories and emotions evoked by listening to music at specific moments in life. This personal connection intensifies the desire to relive those feelings. As Ercoli (2016) points out, memory is crucial because it can arouse specific emotions associated with certain periods of life. The imaginary of Oasis also plays an important role, as it helps to generate a feeling of pain for something that belonged to that era. One example is clothing.

> Parkas and denim shirts have already identified a generation. What struck me about Oasis was the persistent presence of sunglasses and bucket hats, accessories that reminded me of them in any context. I have always liked the British style, and they have always been its ambassadors.
>
> [M., 45 years old]

As Secondulfo (2019: 15) points out, the archetypal imaginary has a "clear tendency to regenerate the past [...] with a clear tendency to regenerate it by smoothing out changes". It could be a defence against novelty and uncertainty about the future, possibly in the face of a past perceived as more stable and secure. This element may be linked to the need for continuity and familiarity with the past, which can lead to a sense of nostalgia. According to Secondulfo, this imaginary plays a key role in defining "social rituals [...] linked to the deconstruction-reconstruction of collective memory" (ibidem). Social rituals linked to collective memory often reinterpret the past by consolidating shared narratives, resulting in an idealisation of the past and regret for what has been lost. Oasis fans take up the imaginary shaped by Oasis, who connect with the image the band has built up over the years: their outrageous, cheeky, even politically incorrect attitude has played a significant role. In line with what emerged from the documentary, fans perceived them as symbols of authenticity, while also

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highlighting their extravagant lifestyle. Liam Gallagher's appearance and, above all, his outfits were a source of inspiration for some fans.

On the one hand, this testifies to the role of the social and cultural imagination, disseminated by the media and, above all, by celebrities. In any case, however, this is unlikely to return.

Nostalgia as nostos. The individual dimension is not the only one that emerges. Interviewers' thoughts and media content recall a collective or generational nostalgia, manifesting in the shared recognition of the same symbols, sounds, and emotions, and linked to the close relationship with media products (Bolin, 2015) during youth. In this case, nostalgia becomes a collective emotional return. Songs and music videos are archives of generational memory, evoking a sense of belonging to a shared era (the 1990s and early 2000s). The passion for Oasis was often shared with relatives (who were close in age), friends and peers, creating a collective memory (Halbwachs, 1992) associated with the band and the media and formats that existed at the time (cassette tapes, CDs, and MTV). In this sense, the reunion is seen by some fans as an 'epochal' event that allows those who lived through those years to relive a collective experience, in line with the concept of nostos and generational nostalgia. This concept can also be linked to passion, as Bolin (2015) understood. Even among those who listen to Oasis less today, a strong emotional identification remains, a kind of loyalty that can emerge on extraordinary occasions, such as the reunion. Nostalgia emerges as a subjective feeling, situated within a broader generational context; it can also be a collective experience (Sedikides & Wildschut, 2019). Nevertheless, this manifestation of nostalgia, along with the notion of the reunion, is associated with nostalgia as *algos*. This is evidenced by fans' assertions that, rather than attending a sophisticated marketing strategy, they would have preferred the memory to remain unaltered.

> I preferred them to remain confined to that time, so different from today, of which they were the ultimate expression.
> [M., 39 years old]

The development of a shared passion for Oasis often emerged from the collective practices of listening and cultural consumption, such as sharing cassette tapes with others, which contributed to the formation of a shared generational memory. The imaginary shaped by Oasis has thus become a symbolic archive in which the generation that grew up in the 1990s can recognise itself and reaffirm its identity, especially in a present perceived as fragmented and unstable. Therefore, the return (*nostos*) is not merely a simple evocation; instead, it becomes a complex process of emotional and cultural reactivation. By listening to music, sharing it on social media and joining communities dedicated to Oasis, fans continually renew their sense of belonging to an imaginary community, which in the contemporary mediascape can take various forms (being part of groups and following pages or communities on social media). Therefore, nostalgia still exists, albeit in different forms, and remains a latent element in the cultural identities of fans. The appreciation for Oasis' music is not

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confined to nostalgic memories: several interviewers emphasise the intrinsic quality of the songs, and they still find pleasure from listening to them today. Nostalgia is thus enriched by a lasting aesthetic appreciation, consolidating the value of the band's musical legacy as a "memory of those wonderful years".

The reflection of nostalgia in media practices and retromania. As previously stated, nostalgia is not a feeling that dwells on the past; rather, it contributes to interpreting the present and looking to the future. As demonstrated in this research, nostalgia is not confined to individual experiences. Consequently, it can enter shared collective meanings and recognisable media practices, primarily through social media. The concept of nostalgia can be translated into aesthetic practice, whereby aesthetic practice refers to a collective identification that passes through the symbolic reappropriation of objects (e.g., sunglasses, posters) and active participation in rituals of collective memory (possibly mediated), such as concerts, simultaneous viewing of documentaries, and events followed live on platforms. According to the respondents interviewed, a considerable number of individuals continue to engage with Facebook pages dedicated to Oasis, sharing content and using WhatsApp to exchange songs or links.

> I share privately with a few friends [...]. However, I often receive recordings of songs from the radio from friends who are aware of my passion.
> [M., 39 years old]

In this regard, social media can serve as an instrument for emotional reactivation, evoking a sense of nostalgia. Moreover, although not all individuals have persisted in acquiring Oasis-related merchandise (including CDs, vinyl records, and T-shirts) from the 1990s, those who have done so use these objects to establish connections with the past. The retention of these objects, which may be regarded as simulacra (Baudrillard, 1981), and the subsequent acquisition or recreation of new ones, falls within the ambit of retromania (Reynolds, 2011; Pomarico, 2023). The case of a particular enthusiast exemplifies this phenomenon:

> I recently bought an olive-green Barbour jacket that reminds me so much of their style in the 90s: I still love Britpop fashion.
> [M., 42 years old]

These examples and concepts serve as evidence of the transformation of nostalgia into cultural, media, and even symbolic practices.

Niemeyer (2014) and Kalinina (2016) highlighted that a nostalgic feeling can increase within a mediascape with the proliferation of social media. In this context, nostalgia does not simply evoke the past, but reconstructs it, aestheticises it and makes it continuously accessible in the participatory practices typical of online environments. Based on content analysis conducted on social media, we can distinguish four main types of content: a) iconic images (album covers, photos taken in places associated with the band, and tributes); b) revival of the band's imaginary

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(especially related to clothing); c) old content from the band (e.g. video clips and songs); d) fan-created artefacts (ironic or nostalgic).

In the first case, we can discuss the iconisation of the past, which helps to strengthen the collective memory associated with Oasis. In the second case, we are witnessing a revival, primarily aesthetic, on TikTok, where we enter the logic of the fashion system, demonstrating how nostalgia becomes a part of consumer practices and identity processes. In the third case, the publication of historical material, which has helped to strengthen the imaginary associated with Oasis over time, allows us to celebrate the past, re-semantising it through the affordances of social media. In the last case, the process of aesthetic and emotional elaboration occurs on social media (Farci, 2019; Tirino & Castellano, 2020) through practices of symbolic reworking.

The four classes identified allow us to reflect on nostalgia for Oasis and the possibility that it will not remain anchored to the past through simple re-proposal. Still, they will instead become a tool through which new processes of meaning can be created.

6. Conclusions

The analysis conducted on various cultural artefacts—fan interviews, one documentary, videoclips, and social media content—highlights how nostalgia for Oasis is a complex and dynamic phenomenon, just as the definition of nostalgia suggests, capable of simultaneously mobilising individual, generational, and media dimensions. From a subjective point of view, there is an apparent algic nostalgia (*algos*), associated with memories that had a significant impact during adolescence and youth, in which Oasis songs serve as devices of emotional remembrance. In this regard, there may be a loss of an idealised 'elsewhere' (Affuso, 2012), a sort of utopia (Pickering & Keightley, 2016), idealised because the interviewees would still like to relive that period, probably removing unpleasant episodes. At the same time, fans trigger a generational nostalgia (*nostos*) by sharing musical, aesthetic and narrative practices that reaffirm a collective belonging to the 'authentic' time of the 1990s. However, nostalgia is not limited to a romantic return to the past. It also takes the form of critical nostalgia, in which the perception of a loss of spontaneity, authenticity and simplicity translates into an implicit reflection on the present, perceived as fragmented, accelerated and mediatised. In this case, nostalgia also serves as a mechanism that preserves collective identity (Affuso, 2012).

Through content such as commemorative posts and nostalgic videos, social media ultimately contribute to a nostalgia that becomes mediatised through performative acts, in which the past is continuously reactivated, aestheticised, re-semantised and consumed. In this sense, nostalgia can also be a regretful reflection of a specific social and cultural context (Affuso, 2012); therefore, reliving Oasis through these practices can lead to the rise of a shared narrative about a musical past — that of Britpop — which has now disappeared. The media—especially Oasis songs in this context—contribute to defining nostalgic feelings associated with specific eras (Ercoli, 2016).

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However, there may be an "anti-historical" reconstruction (ibidem), in the sense that the focus is more on personal experience than on an objective reconstruction of the past (ibidem).

In conclusion, nostalgia for Oasis mirrors the contemporary *Zeitgeist*: not as pure regret, but as an expression of a widespread need for meaning, continuity and recognition in a context characterised by cultural and emotional instability.

Nostalgia for Oasis becomes a device of re-enchantment, capable of activating not only the dimension of memory and remembrance but also the imagination and, above all, desire. Through the layered imaginary they have shaped, Oasis today represents not only an archive of music, experiences, artefacts and simulacra but a symbolic universe in which past, present and future (because of the reunion) merge in such a way as to have an impact on consumption (cultural and media) and forms of collective belonging. In this scenario, nostalgia is an authentic cultural device (Niemeyer, 2014).

The analysis confirms that nostalgia is not simply a private feeling, but an active and shared cultural practice capable of constructing imaginaries and forms of belonging. The practices of Oasis fans reworking and performativity of memories testify how nostalgia today constitutes a social instrument, suspended between the desire for identity continuity and creative capacity. In its continuous fluctuation between *algos* and *nostos*, nostalgia thus reveals all its contemporary symbolic power, fueling processes of reappropriation, cultural resistance and collective reinvention of the past.

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