Transfiguration of One's "Home"

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The "Furusaso" (home or native places) which residents of cities recall in mind, what implication does it have?

After YANAGITA Kunio, the famous folklorist, the native places or home the inhabitants of cities recall in mind or imagine from time to time after their departure therefrom are nothing but an illusion. They are kept deep in mind and felt in keen contrast with the strange lands they now live in. Thus their home or native places change incessantly in their mind, he says.

What is the identity of the "home" sung in our popular songs? In most cases, they are no other than some souvenirs in their childhood and the nature which fostered it. There are living their parents and other familiar persons. Though what is really meant by the word "Furu-sato" or home is dependent on each persons, there always are the existence of Mother Nature and that of familiar persons. Moreover this "Nature" is closely linked with the existence of their villages which have gradually been beautified in their imagination. In other words, the native places are an antagonism of cities. In this antagonism, one side is an imaginary world and the other, the reality; peaceful life one the one hand, and the struggles in this world, on the other.

In 1950s however, with their longer life in urban areas, there came a plenty of popular songs which allowed them to find the "raison d'être" in their urban life. In these cases, their "home" were displaced into the most city-like places. This implies that the conversion of value began in these days from village-like things into urban things. But our cities cannot still be our own "home".

The "home" as appeared in the public relations bulletins published by Chofu City, Tokyo has two different faces. One of them has been rooted in it that their actual home is there as base and center of their very life, namely rooted into the reality. The other face is settlement-like one such as tradition, nature and so forth, which can provoke yearning for good, old days. In conclusion, the "home" as seen in the urban life remain illusory under the conditions of which we can yet hardly recognize our home in our daily urban life in cities.