



MARKETS 360

## Weekly Economic Report

2026年4月23日号 (No.1127)

河野 龍太郎  
チーフエコノミスト

### スマホと SNS が子どもと若者の心を蝕む理由 人類の進化への無視し得ないインパクト

中東危機も相当に深刻な問題ですが、こちらも相当に深刻な問題です。スマホや SNS が与える子どもや若者への深刻な影響のことで、日本でも総務省が SNS の年齢制限を検討し始めましたが、人間の社会化の過程にも甚大な影響を及ぼすこととなります。『グローバルインフレーションの深層』や『世界経済の死角』で論じていた点とも関係しますが、どうやら人類の進化の過程にも大きな影響を与え始めているようです。以下は、2026年4月11日号の週刊東洋経済への寄稿を修正・加筆したものです。

#### 『不安の世代 スマホ・SNS が子どもと若者の心を蝕む理由』 ジョナサン・ハイト著 西川由紀子訳 草思社

著名な政治心理学者による本書は、若者の精神状態の急激な悪化という事実からスタートする。米国では 2010 年前後を境に、10 代のうつ、自傷行為、自殺未遂が急増し、その傾向は特に女子が目立つという。一体、何が起こったのか。

本書の回答は、「子ども時代」の環境激変にある。「遊び中心の子ども時代」から「スマホ中心の子ども時代」への大転換である。かつて子どもは、放課後の自由な遊びや年齢をまたぐ集団の中で、社会性を身につけていた。小さな危険や衝突を経験し、対人関係を学んでいたのだ。

しかし、2010 年代前半にスマホと SNS が普及し、環境が一変する。子どもたちの社会関係は、現実の遊び空間からオンライン空間へすっかり置き換えられてしまった。

さらに、米国では 1990 年代後半から、親の監督なしの遊びは育児放棄と見なされるようになっており、子どもが仲間同士で自律的に遊ぶ機会が縮小していた。保護者のいない外出は危険だからといって、部屋の中で、心身を蝕むオンライン空間への移行を意図せずして助長していたのだ。

SNS は他者からの承認と他者との比較を常態化させる。「いいね」は評価を数値化し、集団内での排除や無視を可視化し、思春期の心理を左右する。とりわけ外見や他者評価に敏感な少女期に自尊感情の低下や不安を生じさせることから、精神健康指標の悪化は女子に顕著だった。

重要なのは、こうした変化が漸進的なものではなく、2010 年前後に先進国で同時かつ急激に始まった点だ。フロントカメラ搭載のスマホによる常時ネット接続とインスタグラムなど SNS の普及が、子どもを「つねに評価される空間」に追いやってしまった。

本書の射程は教育問題に留まらない。問題は、子どもの社会化の過程そのものの変容にある。遊びの中で、集団内の他者との関係を築く過程は、多くの哺乳類に共通するものだ。しかし現在、人間のその過程は、アルゴリズムが媒介するネット上のプラットフォームへ移行している。

この点で本書は、情報ネットワークが社会を形作ると論じた歴史学者ユヴァル・ノア・ハラリの『NEXUS（ネクサス） 情報の人類史』とも通じる。ハラリは AI が情報ネットワークの構造を変え、人間の認知や社会のあり方を変えると指摘していた。本書はその変化が、既に子どもの社会化の領域で始まっていることを示すのではないか。

本書の提案は明快だ。子どものスマホ利用の制限、SNS の年齢規制、学校での使用禁止、自由な遊びの回復。スマホは単なる通信機器ではなく、成長期における人間の社会化の形を変えた。この進化論的な変化にどう向き合うか、人類全体に突き付けられた課題だ。

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