村上龍さんを偲ぶ

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OUR KEY VIEWS

- 10歳の小学生から、構造改革って何なの？　と質問されたら、どう答えればいいのでしょうか？
- 構造改革（こうぞうかいかく）というのは、昔に決めたケーキの分け方を変えるようなものです。

村上龍さんが亡くなった。

2000 年前後、村上さんが主宰するメールマガジン「JMM」で、私は他の二人の金融アナリストと共に、村上さんやゲストの専門家を交えて、2 カ月に一度ほど議論していた。一回の対談は、夕食も含めると 4～5 時間に及び、その内容はメールマガジンで配信され、書籍にもなっている。

当時、村上さんが、「日本社会が変わって、このまま職場から OL がいなくなると、日本語から OL という言葉もなくなっていくだろうから、最も変化の激しい金融の人間と話したい」という趣旨のことを話されていたのが、印象的だった。

以下は、2001 年に村上さんから「10 歳の小学生に、構造改革とは何かと尋ねられたら、どう答えるか」と問われ、私が書いた文章である。2003 年の『啓蒙的なアナウンスメント』にも収録されている。25 年が経った今も、この問いには考えさせられる。村上さんとの対話を懐かしく思い出しながら、当時のまま紹介したい。なお、文章に登場する「キク」と「ハシ」の名前は、村上さんの小説「コインロッカー・ベイビーズ」からお借りした。

謹んでご冥福をお祈りします。

2001 年 3 月 26 日 JMM 掲載

質問　10 歳の小学生から、構造改革って何なの？　と質問されたら、どう答えればいいのでしょうか？

構造改革（こうぞうかいかく）というのは、昔に決めたケーキの分け方を変えるようなものです。

あるところに、キクとハシというふたりの男が住んでいました。キクは 30 歳、ハシは 10 歳と、親子のように年が離れていました。ふたりは、大きな石を山の町から海の町に運ぶ仕事をしていました。

大きな石はひとりでは運べません。ふたりで力を合わせて運んでいました。一回大きな石を運ぶと、ふたりはケーキを 5 つもらいました。キクが 3 つ、ハシが 2 つとりました。キクは大人で力も強く、石運びでも 5 分の 3 くらいはキクが貢献していました。ハシはまだ子供で、力はあまり強くなく、石運びも 5 分の 2 くらいしか役に立っていませんでした。だから、キクに 3 つ、ハシに 2 つというケーキの分け方は、ふたりにとってとっても自然でした。

20 年が経ちました。ふたりは今でも石を運んでいますが、最近は喧嘩ばかりしています。20 年前に決めたケーキの分け方をめぐって、喧嘩しているのです。キクの言い分は、「昔決めた分け方を今になってなんで変える必要があるの。一回の石運びで俺が 3 つ、お前が 2 つは昔から決まっていることじゃない」。

でもハシは納得がいきません。キクは 50 歳になり、ハシは 30 歳です。確かに、昔は石を運ぶとき、5 分の 3 くらいはキクが貢献していましたが、キクは今ではすっかり年をとってしまって、5 分の 2 も役に立っていません。ハシは、自分が 5 分の 3 以上石を運んでいるのに、なぜケーキが 2 つなのか納得がいかないのです。

実は、ハシの疑問は今に始まったものではありません。疑問を持ち始めたのは、10 年くらい前からです。当時ハシは 20 歳でキクは 40 歳。ふたりの石を運ぶときの貢献度合いはほとんど同じでした。だからケーキは、本当は 2 個半ずつにすべきだと考えていました。

でも、そのころは、ふたりともとても体力があったので、石を運ぶ回数も多く、ケーキの分け方を変えなくても、ハシは十分な数のケーキをもらうことができました。だから、ハシはちょっと変だなとは思いつつも、ケーキの分け方を変えようとキクには言い出しませんでした。

でも、今はキクはすっかり年をとってしまい、すぐに疲れてしまうので、ふたりが石を運ぶ回数も減っています。ケーキをもらう数をハシが増やすためには、キクの取り分を減らすしかありません。

でも、キクは昔決めたことを変えることは絶対に嫌だと言います。ふたりともケーキの分け方をめぐって喧嘩ばかりして、石を運ぶ回数もすっかり減っています。このため、ケーキの数も減ってしまいました。ハシは「分け方を変えてくれなきゃ、もうキクとは一緒にやっていけない」と言い出しました。

キクは年をとっていて、今から新しいパートナーを探すのは大変です。キクはどうするのでしょうか。ハシの言う通りケーキの分け方を変えるのでしょうか。来年になったらちゃんと相談し直すとごまかして、ケーキの分け方をこのままにしておくのか。ハシが怒って出ていって、ケーキが全然手に入らない状態になるのか。

昔に決めた自分に都合のよいケーキの分け方は、「既得権益（きとくけんえき）」って大人の言葉では言います。昔決めたケーキの分け方を変えることを「構造改革（こうぞうかいかく）」って言います。何となくうやむやにして、ケーキの分け方をそのままにしておくのは「先送り（さきおくり）」と言います。ケーキがまったく手に入らなくなることを「破綻（はたん）」と呼んでいます。

キクはどうすると思う？キクはハシの要求を飲んで、ケーキの分け方を変えると思うでしょ。でも、キクがどんな結論を出すのか、お父さんにはわかりません。だって、この国では、昔決めたっていう理由だけで、ケーキの分け方を変えようとしない人が多いのです。キクの味方をする人が多いしね。もうすぐ選挙もあるでしょ。

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