**The Circular Economy as a Means to Create the Ecological Society**

(Ekolojik Toplum Yaratmanın Bir Aracı Olarak Döngüsel Ekonomi)

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The industrial revolution represents a drastic paradigm shift in the relationship between the human being and nature. Before the revolution, there had been a traditional agrarian society in which the human being had a symbiotic relationship with nature, and human actions were mostly appropriate to the ecosystem. On the other hand, the industrial revolution created an industrial society in which mass production and consumption became the main determinants of the human actions (consumerism). However, these kinds of actions gradually caused a serious environmental crisis as they depend on the exploitation of nature, and scientists declared that the industrial society was no longer a sustainable system for the human kind after the 1970s. As a response to this crisis, the ecological society emerged as an alternative paradigm to the industrial society. The ecological society mainly aims the harmonious coexistence of human kind with nature; thus, human actions within this new paradigm should be totally appropriate to nature. Despite the necessity of a paradigm shift from the industrial society to the ecological society, there is not any clear blueprint on the question how to achieve this shift. Particularly, the industrial society constitutes a broad cognitive structure which significantly shapes every aspect of the social life from economic actions to aesthetics, and the ideas generated from this cognitive structure is less likely to achieve the targeted paradigm shift. After carrying out a conceptual analysis, this research argues that the Circular Economy (CE) is a promising idea which could gradually evolve the industrial society into an ecological one. First of all, the CE wants to decrease the resource leakage in the economic activities from production to consumption, and the prevented resource leakage/waste means further prosperity. Therefore, it provides more economic wealth while protecting the environment, and this encourages especially countries and the business world to implement the circular actions. In addition to this incentive, the CE is an idea which could be gradually implemented in an evolutionary way; thus, it does not need any revolutionary change, and this means less uncertainty and cost for the actors. Its gradual adaptive nature also makes the CE as an applicable idea in the eyes of the actors. Last but not least, small changes could gradually lead to a paradigm shift if these changes are synchronized around a new idea. In this regard, the abovementioned incentives encourage all stakeholders (e.g. small firms, multinational companies, industrial parks, cities, producer/consumer organizations, and countries) to perform circular actions, and if the synchronization of these actions is achieved, the CE might become a means to create the ecological society.

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