STARBUCKS SUCCUMBS TO IGNORANT ANTI-TURKISH PROPAGANDA - II

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The news about Armenian reaction to the Starbucks poster - about women in traditional clothing under the Turkish Crescent and Star has spread both in Turkey and abroad. Since writing my comment on this issue,[i] I have come across some additional information.

According to a piece of news by Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty,[ii] Tim Carl Rose -the person responsible for the photo in the poster- has stated that the photo was taken in 2011 during the 19 May Commemoration of Atatürk, Youth and Sports Day. In a related news in the Guardian,[iii] Rose personally wrote comments[iv] and explained that the photo was taken in Istanbul on 2011 at a folklore dance competition, and that the women depicted in the photo were indeed Turkish. He also stated that the poster was adorned around cafés for three years prior to this incident.

Yet Rose has still apologized and has taken off the photo from his website, and explained he did so once it came to [his] attention that [the photo] was rightfully offensive to the Armenian community.[v]

According the Rose himself, this photo has nothing to with the Armenian people, save for the fact that Armenians too have similar traditional costumes depicted in the photo.

In this respect, it is completely illogical for both Rose and Starbucks to apologize to people of Armenian descent due to this poster. There is nothing inherently offensive about this poster, and as such, there are no grounds for an apology. It can be construed that Rose came under pressure to take such an action.

As stated in my previous commentary, if Starbucks is to apologize, it should be to the Turkish people (especially to people of Turkish descent living in the US) for succumbing to such biased and ignorant propaganda.

[i] Mehmet Oğuzhan Tulun, STARBUCKS SUCCUMBS TO IGNORANT ANTI-TURKISH

PROPAGANDA, *AVIM*,

http://www.avim.org.tr/analiz/en/STARBUCKS-SUCCUMBS-TO-IGNORANT-ANTI-TURKISH-PROPAGANDA/3896

[ii] Carl Schreck, Starbucks Enrages U.S. Armenian Community With PR Misfire, *RFE/RL*, http://www.rferl.org/content/armenia-starbucks-genocide-pr-misfire/26858687.html

[iii] Starbucks apologises for 'offensive' ad ahead of Armenia genocide anniversary, *The Guardian*, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/feb/20/starbucks-offensive-ad-armenia-genocide

[iv] Tim Carl Rose, *The Guardian,* https://profile.theguardian.com/user/id/14523116

[v] Starbucks Enrages U.S. Armenian Community With PR Misfire.

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Mehmet Oğuzhan Tulun is an AVİM Analyst. His research focuses on Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Asia, Turkish-Armenian and Turkey-Armenia relations, international crimes and history, and the interplay between religion and politics.

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