



Images of Nations in the News: The Image of Greece in the United States
by **Prof. Thimios Zaharopoulos**

The media have an important role to play in affecting the image a people have of another nation, simply because most people do not have a personal experience or immediate contact with that other nation. Generally the US media do not provide much coverage of non-elite nations such as Greece. The little coverage they do provide is often related to extraordinary events, or as it has been traditionally labeled “coups and earthquakes.”

Over the past 20 years or so the news coverage of Greece in the US press has not changed much in terms of the structure of the coverage. Obviously the topics have changed, going from the coverage of Melina Mercouri and the Parthenon Marbles to the 2004 Olympics, and more recently, the riots.

Unlike many other nations similar to Greece, most Americans have a pre-conceived positive image of Greece, due to its important history and influence of Western civilization. In addition, the many Greeks living in the United States tend to provide the American public a view of Greece that is unrelated to the media and current events, which itself makes a positive contribution to the people’s attitude towards Greece.

Nevertheless, despite the attempt of Greece to elevate its image, with the desire to be seen as an import and mature player in international relations, this has never been successfully achieved in the US media nor in the perceptions of the average US citizen.

CV

Thimios Zaharopoulos serves as the dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences, at Park University, Parkville, Missouri, USA. He holds a Ph.D. in Journalism from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. He has published *Mass Media in Greece* (1993), and *Sport and Media* (2008, in Greek). In addition he has authored three books chapters; eight articles in reference books; 19 refereed scholarly articles; 15 refereed presentations; and 24 invited presentations at national conferences. His main research interests lie in the area of media influence of public perceptions across national boundaries. He has previously taught at Washburn University, Pittsburg State University, the American College of Greece, Southern Illinois University, and has served as a Fulbright Scholar at Panteion University in Athens, Greece.