Popular Literature Discourses in Athenian Suburbia: The Northern Suburbs

Les banlieues nord d’Athènes dans les discours littéraires populaires

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Popular Literature Discourses in Athenian Suburbia: The Northern Suburbs

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Locating the VP area anthropogeographically

Since the mid-1970s, upper and upper-intermediate professional classes relocated from the central community to close and distant suburban locations in the north-eastern and southern part of Greater Athens, as well as to adjacent areas outside of its administrative limits, leading to the so-called “process of suburbanisation” (Maloutas and Karadimitriou, 2001: 711).

The VP area includes municipalities, like Kifisia, Ekali, and Palaio Psychiko, which have been stereotypically treated as the leafy and posh suburbs of Greater Athens. By contrast, the western suburban zone of Athens (Dytika Proastia, henceforth DP), which includes municipalities such as Peristeri, Petroupoli and Egaleo, is considered to be a working class area, mainly due to the proliferation of factories in the 20th century (Triantafyllopoulou, 2006), and, as a result, it was primarily workers who preferred to inhabit these areas. Self-promotion and self-construction in these areas have created a low-quality suburban environment, close to the city centre, where “a progressively stagnant population have remained due to the relative increase of the working class and the entrapment of their initial population in inadequate owner-occupied housing” (Maloutas and Karadimitriou, 2001: 711). A difference like the aforementioned one between people who live in these two suburban zones, is reflected in Tables 1 and 2.
Table 1. Annual gross income per capita in euros according to the area (last decade on the 20th century)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>&lt;15,000</th>
<th>15,001-20,000</th>
<th>21,001-30,000</th>
<th>Over 30,000</th>
<th>Total number of people in the sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DP (mainly Peristeri &amp; Petroupoli)</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
<td>1432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP and Kolonaki</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>52.7%</td>
<td>1287</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Maloutas et al. 2006: 128 (selection of quantitative results)

Table 2. Educational background of the VP and DP people according to the area in which they were born and have grown up (last decade of the 20th century)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>University</th>
<th>High-school (Lykeio)</th>
<th>Junior high-school (Gymnasio) or lower</th>
<th>Total number of people in the sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DP (mainly Peristeri &amp; Petroupoli)</td>
<td>20.1%</td>
<td>45.5%</td>
<td>34.4%</td>
<td>1432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP and Kolonaki</td>
<td>62.3%</td>
<td>26.1%</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>1287</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Maloutas et al. 2006: 129 (selection of quantitative results)

As suggested by both Table 1 and 2, VP residents’ income and education are significantly higher than those of DP: compare the striking differences in percentages in the category of people, who make more than 30,000 euros per year in Table 1 and in the category of people, who have university education. These differences in both the annual income and the educational background in the two areas could be seen as instantiation of what has been called “vertical social differentiation” in urban social geography (Maloutas and Karadimitriou, 2001). This differentiation is partly the equivalent of the choice of the middle classes, a pattern that is usually found in the Anglo-American city (and, for that matter, in Athens as well), to reside in suburban locations, leaving the working class, the newcomers and the minorities near the centre. This vertical social differentiation in Athens during the 20th century was triggered by the massive relocation of upper and upper-intermediate professional categories to suburban communities (for a debate on the status of vertical social differentiation in Athens, see Leontidou, 1990 and Maloutas and Karadimitriou, 2001).

Nevertheless, in the sociological (e.g. Emmanuel, 2004) as well as the urban social geographical literature (e.g. Sayas 2004; Maloutas, 2007) on social classes in Athens, all these aforementioned areas and their demographic profiles are only presented as statistical correlates. In other words, there are no qualitative descriptions or analyses of these areas, which draw on discourses stemming from people themselves, rather than
from their objectively measured socioeconomic status. Such accounts should be treated as essential, given that lots of people’s life-styles do not exactly fit their socioeconomic status: in the VP area, for example, there are people, who notwithstanding their wealth, prefer to live in decent apartments rather than luxurious villas and spend their money on cultural activities, such as travelling or subscriptions to concert halls or museums, rather than buying clothes or expensive cars.

5 Trying to bridge this gap in the relevant literature, albeit from a more (socio)linguistic and discourse analytical perspective, I argue that popular literature can be seen as a resourceful source of both people’s reflections on the meanings of these areas as well as actual practices, whereby people incarnate identities and personae pertaining to these areas. These popular culture discourses should be seen as an indispensable part of the areas and the meanings attached to them from an epistemological perspective, because, through its wide accessibility and embracement on behalf of people, popular literature is a key factor in the construction (and reflection) of culture. In what follows, I present the theoretical framework of discourse against the backdrop of which the data analysis will take place.

Theoretical framework

6 Motivated by an established and widely circulating, but under-researched traditional rivalry between VP and DP, which is rooted in the stereotypes (Pickering, 2001) associated with these two areas (VP is associated with wealthy, educated and cultivated people, whereas DP bears on working class, uneducated and uncultivated people), my aim is to provide a description and interpretation of the popular literature “discourses” pertaining to the VP culture. With a focus on speech stylistic (Coupland, 2007) and life stylistic (Bourdieu, 1984) choices, an attempt will be made to flesh out the social meaning of “VP discourse”, as the latter is represented in Greek popular literature, and, to be more accurate, in literary novels, whose respective plots are built on the cultural rivalry between the VP and DP suburban cultures.

7 The reason why the term “discourse” has been chosen to encompass what is represented by the label “VP” is because it is seen here as “a group of statements which provide a language for talking about – a way of representing the knowledge about – a particular topic at a particular historical moment... Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language. But... since all social practices entail meaning, and meanings shape and influence what we do – our conduct – all practices have a discursive aspect” (Hall, 1992: 291).

8 The basic asset of this definition is that the term “discourse” erases the traditional distinction between “what one says” (language) and “what one does” (practice), as both of these parameters are equally taken into account, labelled under the common notion of discourse. From this perspective, discourse couples very closely with style, which, in the framework of this paper, is treated as a holistic property of practice or its product, pertinent to both language and actions. Figure 1 provides a sketch of the discourse structure.
Following Coupland (2007: 103-5), speech stylistic resources available to speakers, can be (socio)linguistic, namely specific features (lexico-grammatical and phonological systems) or whole dialects and speech varieties imbued with potential for social meaning, and communicative competence, namely linguistic awareness of social rules and norms for speaking. Speakers engage with social norms and practices based on their knowledge of what variables in their language index, a type of knowledge they have accumulated during their socialisation process (see Schieffelin and Ochs, 1986) and their general exposure to social experience. This linguistic awareness can manifest itself not only through speakers’ ability to perceive the differences in what these variables index (e.g. the -ing indexes prestige and/or formality, while the -in’ indexes lack of – or perhaps covert – prestige [Trudgill, 1974: 93-95] and informality), but also through the propensity to comment on these differences metalinguistically. In addition, as has been proven through social psychological experiments on language attitudes, speakers display varying degrees of control over these sociolinguistic features, with regards to both using and analysing them (e.g. Preston, 1996; Niedzilski and Preston, 2003: 22ff; Campbell-Kibler, 2005: 101-27. For a review of sociolinguistic uses of perceptual studies, see Thomas, 2002).

This awareness can be seen as a type of reflexivity (Johnstone, 2006), which allows the speakers to design their own stylistic operations and attend creatively to the form of their linguistic products (Coupland, 2007: 101). The notion of “reflexivity” or “awareness” is Coupland’s argument against Bourdieu’s (1991) notion of *habitus*, which constrains people’s communicative dispositions by embedding speakers’ style deeply into their social experience. For Bourdieu (1991: 86), “*linguistic competence is a dimension of bodily hexis in which one’s whole relation to the social world, and one’s whole socially informed relation to the social world, are expressed... through the mediation of ‘articulatory style’, the bodily hexis characteristic of a social class (which) determines the system of phonological features which...*”
characterise a class pronunciation”. To de Certeau's (1984: 56) claim that habitus is a determining force that shapes people’s actions without their being aware of it – a “docta ignorantia”, Coupland argues against habitus as a pre-conditioning of practice that precludes choice. He suggests that awareness of the functional and indexical implications of people’s utterances is a core quality of all communicative interaction, and, as such, it can also lead people to question, resist or even challenge social norms. This can be realised through the ‘performativity of speaking’ or ‘performance’.

Performance, namely the “enacting of agency, its coming into being”¹⁴ (Duranti, 2004: 454), can allow people to engage themselves in what Butler (1997) has called the “performativity of speaking”, whereby they can challenge or even subvert the dominant ideologies and established social values. In this sense, people’s styles can break with the social contexts in which they occur (Coupland, 2007: 101), therefore performance should be seen as a reaction to pre-existing ideologies.

Along the same lines of awareness and agency, the other stylistic practice of interest is the notion of “life-style”. Echoing Bourdieu (1984: 172), life-style can be seen as a sign system that is socially qualified (as “distinguished”, “vulgar”, etc.) The generative formula of life-style is taste, namely the propensity and capacity to appropriate (materially or symbolically) a given class of classified, classifying objects or practices. As such, taste is identified with a unitary set of distinctive preferences, which express the same expressive intention in the specific logic of each of the symbolic sub-spaces, furniture, clothing, language or body hexis. Each dimension of life-style “symbolises with” the others, in Leibniz’s phrase, and symbolises them (Bourdieu 1984: 173).

Talking about VP stylistic practices is trying to attribute values, the VP values, to specific dimensions or topics drawn from everyday life and experience that are styled. These topics are aspects of life, where people notice differences between VP and DP people in terms of how they act, what they believe, how they spend their money and, last but not least, how they talk. Whatever is said or observed about these values, it is the values themselves that construct what I call the VP discourse. In other words, the VP discourse not only defines and (re)produces people’s knowledge of this label, but it also influences the ways ideas are put into practice and are used to regulate the conduct of people living in the VP area (Hall, 1997: 44). In fact, it could be claimed that discourse essentially sets the rules on how a topic or a practice or a style should be talked about, while, at the same time, and, by definition, it “rules out” other ways of constructing topics, practices and styles. These rules or ways of constructing a discourse are not limited to one source or one text-type or one statement; rather, they circulate across a wide range of popular literature texts, in which its construction takes place and to whose examination I now turn.

Description of the data

The data stem from popular literature, which treats as its subtext, namely as its main theme or intent (Danesi, 2008: 71), the VP life-style, which, thus, becomes a point of reference, either as the projected-as-a-model, to which everybody alludes, or as a life-style worthy to be caustically criticised due to its artificiality. The corpus from popular literature contains excerpts from two popular literary texts³ by Pavlina Nasioutzik, called Mamades Voreion Praction (“Mommies from the Northern Suburbs”) and Mykonos Blues, both of which were best-sellers during the summer period of 2006 and 2007 respectively,
one book by Nikos Themelis called Mia Zoi Dyo Zoes (“One Life Two Lives”), which was a best-seller in the autumn period 2007, and one essay on new-rich people’s life-style by Dionysis Haritopoulos (2008) from a collection of essays he has written on Modern Greek culture. This best-seller collection is called Hmon ton Idion (“Of Our Own”) and the essay’s title is Kparsoi me lefta (“Dummies with Money”); the latter is essentially a caustic comment on new-rich people and the ways their arrogance coupled with their humble socioeconomic origin renders them ridiculous and pathetic. All of these texts centre on the life-style of people, both women and men, who live a wealthy life in the northern suburbs of Athens, and provide many dimensions of the VP suburban culture. Below there is a brief background description of each of these popular literature texts, which serves as a useful contextualisation of the data analyses found in the final section.

Mamades Voreion Proastion

This literary text (2006) is built around the friendship of five women, aged between 30 and 40 years of age, living in the northern suburban Athens. Of interest for the purposes of this paper are the author’s descriptions of these women’s respective lives and autobiographies. To be more specific, the author devotes story lines for various types of women, like married or divorced or single mothers, beautiful or ugly, loyal or infidel, educated or uneducated. Nevertheless, the main emphasis on these women’s description remains their social class origin, which is seen as a sine qua non for these women’s positioning within the imagined community (Anderson, 2006) of VP people. The VP type ramification suggested by Nasioutzik contains women of noble origin, humble origin (mainly the ones, who originate from the DP or from the country), the second and third generation rich, who are characterised as “new-rich” women. The allocation of these labels is made not only on the basis of these women’s actual origin, but it is also in accordance with their current or ex husbands’ social status.

Mykonos Blues

Drawing on Mamades Voreion Proastion, in her second popular literary text Mykonos Blues (2007), Nasioutzik revisits some of these women’s personal lives, but, this time, the background is the island of Mykonos and not the VP area per se, even though Nasioutzik (2007: 1) explicitly states at the very beginning of this novel that “Mykonos and northern suburbs are communicating vessels”. The first half of this book, which is of interest here, is dedicated to the description of the life-style of these women: wealthy families, luxurious houses with big swimming pools, children going to the most prestigious private schools, parents attending celebrity parties, travelling to the most expensive European or American ski resorts or to exotic islands for summer holidays, etc.

Mia Zoi Dyo Zoes

In this popular novel, which belongs to the type of literature devoted to the analysis of ethos of individuals or groups of people, Themelis is focusing on the life of a Professor at the University of Athens, Odysseas, who lives in the northern suburbs of Athens. He narrates how his peaceful but latently miserable family life (he has a wife and no children) was transformed by the entrance of two other women, a colleague of his and the
daughter of a very good friend of his. The dimension of the book that is of interest here is the extensive number of descriptions Themelis gives on Odysseas’ (the name of the protagonist) education, culture and hobbies, all of which position him as a cultivated, cosmopolitan and bon viveur person.

Corpus from literary texts/Essays

The corpus from the literary texts was gathered on the basis of the topics of social relationships, behaviour and material needs. Schematically, the description of the corpus of literary texts is as follows (Table 3):

Table 3. Description of the data stemming from the literary texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literary text/Essay</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Behaviour</td>
<td>Social relationships</td>
<td>Material needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamades Voreion Proastion</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mykonos Blues</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mia Zoi Dyo Zoes</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmon ton Idion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of pages</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Having provided some essential background information on the corpus, on which I draw data, as well as a description of the literature texts per se, I now come to analyse the VP discourses with a focus of speech stylistic and life stylistic practices.

Data analysis

Even though the analysis has been based on the original Greek texts, all the texts below are provided in English translations, in order to be accessible to the reader. These translations are mine and they are based on a translation model, which I have elsewhere labelled “Functional Variation Model” (Theodoropoulou, 2006, 2007). Its gist is that translation should take into consideration both the pragmatic and the sociolinguistic meaning of utterances, in order for the translation into target language to have the same impact to the target language audience as the source language text has to the source language audience, and hence to be as close to the original as possible.

VP speech stylistic features

Codeswitching

The first excerpt stems from the literary novel Mykonos Blues by Nasioutzik. It is quite revealing for the VP sociolinguistic resources as represented in popular literature, since
it illustrates a significant stylistic practice, which is considered to be stereotypical of VP people, namely codeswitching. Codeswitching is seen here “an umbrella term encompassing a continuum of code alternations, more or less rapid, occurring in the same turn or in different turns, and involving phenomena such as transfer and code mixing” (Alexiou, 2001: 312; Auer 1995). In this particular bit, Aliki, a new-rich VP woman, gives orders to her maid, Ruslana. Throughout the whole novel, Aliki’s speech style is represented as codeswitching between Greek and English. It is, therefore, interesting to investigate the interpretative process relating linguistic forms to the indexed salient aspects of context, if we are interested in understanding how codeswitching is realised and what social meaning is attached to it (Gal 1979; Gumperz 1982; Heller, 1988: 14).

Excerpt 1. Mykonos Blues, pp. 139-140
Aliki was happy to find maids to tyrannise, and she was driving Ruslana crazy.
-“Bring (GR) coffee (ENG)”
-“Bring (GR) milk, skimmed milk, you jack ass, I told you, I’m on diet (ENG), diet (GR)!”

We are talking here about the type of woman who demanded from the waiter to find out the brand of the French coffee, and if they had another brand. And all this was done in a noble authoritarian style; the style of a countess, who was raised by a great number of servants. It was this style that she was using in great joy and harshness toward Ruslana.
-“What is this, Ruslana?” she was yelling at her pointing toward her bed. “I told you (GR spell.), I told you (ENG) to change the sheets every day and not to use cotton ones (she was shaking them in disgust), linen (GR) linen (ENG), I have very sensitive skin, I suffer (GR), I suffer (ENG). But of course, what can you possibly make out of skin problems, you jack ass!”...
-“You know how well bred (ENG) – well bred (GR) – my children are. You know how much attention I pay to manners, to good manners (GR)”.

In this particular excerpt, where she addresses her Romanian maid, Aliki’s codeswitching draws on Greek and English as part of the construction of her αυτοκρατορικό ύφος (noble style). This style is constructed through codeswitching in combination with her imperative tone and abrupt ordering toward her maid, Ruslana. More specifically, codeswitching from Greek to English serves as an index of Aliki’s cosmopolitanism, associated with her ability to travel as a result of her good financial standing. At the same time, her imperative tone is signified by the imperative form μπρίνκε cafè (“bring coffee”) without the addition of the mitigating “please”, and the disparaging address forms γαϊδάρα (“jack ass”, literally “female donkey”) and μουλάρα (“stubborn”, literally “mule”).

The first level of analysis will focus on the spelling variation found in the excerpt and the social meanings attached to it. Striking are the two words μπρίνκε (“bring”, the English verb transliterated into Greek spelling) and ντάιετ (“diet”, the English 7 word transliterated into Greek spelling). These words spelled in non-standard way can be seen as an instantiation of “unlicensed variation” (Sebba, 2007: 30), given that the convention, at least in literature, to spell English words in Roman characters “is broken in such a way that allows the original meaning to be conveyed, along with additional social meaning, which derives from defying the conventions”. This meaning is identified here with Aliki’s representation as exhibiting cursory attitude toward her maid, which is indexed by the use of Greek phonetics of the two words depicted in the Greek spelling ([bprin] and [daiet]). If we envision the scene with the two protagonists, we should be able to hear this
“unprepared”, and, therefore, almost embarrassing style Aliki is using to address the maid. The Greek spelling of the English words μπρινγκ and ντάιετ point toward the social meaning of glocalisation, in the sense that the English, i.e. global, words are retained, but they are represented in Greek, i.e. local, spellings. By spelling only some key words in English, the social meaning of these English stylistic choices is identified with an effort for Aliki’s idiolect to be constructed as consisting of glamour, educated-ness and cosmopolitanism, all indexed by the English spellings.

Overall, the codeswitching on behalf of Aliki could be seen as having multiple social meanings: the fact that the address forms γαϊδάρα and μουλάρα are in Greek and not in English should be seen as Aliki’s orientation at two levels: at the level of the linguistic variety in use, that is Greek language, the orientation is toward the construction of Greek as more “authentic”, in the sense “vernacular”, namely natural, original, real. Therefore, it is the appropriate code to use for expressing her anger and aggressiveness against her maid, because the latter does not seem to satisfy Aliki’s material needs (bringing coffee, changing the bed sheets every day, and using linen instead of cotton sheets). By the same token, at the level of interactional function, the use of Greek disparaging address forms orients Aliki toward considering Ruslana a person, who does not deserve to be treated in respect and politeness. If we combine these two claims, it becomes obvious that the discourse underpinning codeswitching can be seen as the result of fractal recursivity (Irvine, 2001: 33), namely “the projection of an opposition, salient at one level of relationship, onto some other level”. In this instance, the linguistic opposition between English (whose use is seen as prestigious by Aliki, since she is using it to refer to VP culturally valued things and practices, such as coffee, brand, linen sheets, well-bred children and manners) and Greek, which is used to address the maid in a devaluating manner, is projected onto the level of the social relationship between Aliki as a “noble” VP lady, who holds her Rumanian maid in contempt. This latter level is constructed through the use of Aliki’s “noble style”. Therefore, this “noble style”, namely codeswitching, which is used in the discursive frame of ordering, achieves its meaning through the differentiation of varieties, which, by expansion, index differences in people’s status.

Communicative competence

With respect to communicative competence, namely the linguistic awareness of social rules and norms for speaking (Coupland, 2007: 103), the relevant excerpts are the following:

Excerpt 2: Μία Ζωή Δύο Ζώες, p. 68
... Correct articulation played a major role in speech perception, in unhampereperception...  
Excerpt 3: Μύκονος Βλες, p. 70
... When I hear the nasalised stilted voices, which can articulate a correct phrase in Greek in great difficulty...  
Excerpt 4: Μύκονος Βλες, pp. 70-71
Voices, oh yes, voices indicate lots of things, even when they aren’t Cavafy’s ideal voices. Therefore, whoever female peasant or fellah reels a wealthy husband, first thing they do after taking courses on manners is to get an elocution teacher. Nonetheless, don't even bother! Despite the elocution course, your voice always betrays you. Although she has been taking elocution courses for years and years, the wife of the big capital businessman wasn’t able to get rid of her ns and ls⁸. Similarly, another woman who was

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9

8

10
pretending to be an aristocrat and she used to get drunk, whenever she was
drunk, she used to take all her experiences from Kakosales out of her
(meaning: she used to reveal her humble social origin).
-“It’s unbelievable how loud Egaleo city yells!” whispered Aliki in malice.

In these first three excerpts, it is the discursive event of articulation that is commented
upon. Articulation, as a basic feature of communicative competence, is seen by both
authors, namely Themelis (Excerpt 2) and Nasioutzik (Excerpts 3 and 4) as a domain,
where different values are attributed for VP and DP speakers respectively, and it is one of
the spaces, where a significant difference between the speakers from these two zones can
be observed. More specifically, the VP speech is characterised by a “correct” articulation
(the use of words σωστή άρθρωση and ορθοφωνία), which is also enhanced by the feature of
nasality (ένρινες). As a result, the prototypical way of articulation for VP people is
represented through these three excerpts as επιτηδευμένες (stilted).

Notwithstanding its high artistic value, the VP style is also represented as lacking the
ability to construct a proper Greek phrase (Excerpt 3: με περισσή δυσκολία στρώνουν μια ελληνική φράση). This is a cue for the codeswitching habit on behalf of VP people,
instantiations of which I have already analysed in Excerpt 1. In excerpt 3, Nasioutzik
makes a metalinguistic comment on VP people’s inability to speak proper Greek, and,
from this perspective, it could be seen as a hint of VP codeswitching’s social meaning of
snobishness. A further hint pointing toward codeswitching is the use of the phrase
Αιγάλεω-city in Excerpt 4, which can be seen as an ironic reference to Egaleo, a DP area,
which, from the VP perspective, is considered to be decadent. The animator (Goffman,
1981:128), namely the person who “speaks the words”, in this excerpt is trying to apply
the common practice of codeswitching to refer to a place, whose name is associated (for
VP people) with low – if any – prestige, which, accordingly, does not justify the use of
codeswitching (VP people are represented to codeswitch, when they refer to prestigious
things and situations, as I have already shown in excerpt 1). Therefore, this phrase could
be considered as an effort of the VP people to mock the DP area by focusing on one of
these suburbs, Egaleo.

In stark contrast with VP speech style, DP style is indirectly viewed as inarticulate, in a
sense of lacking articulatory elegance, not only because, according to Nasioutzik, people
in DP tend to yell (Excerpt 4 κραυγάζουν) instead of talking, but also because they cannot
abandon their palatalised alveolar consonants [n], which becomes [ɲ], and [l], which
becomes [ʎ]. These phonetic features are seen as indexing βλάχοι (peasants), who, in the
context of Nasioutzik’s books, are the ones who either come from the DP or from the
country. Even when these βλάχοι manage to move into the northern suburbs, as a
prerequisite to be accepted by the society there, it is essential for them to take
articulation classes. Through this indirect opposition at the level of comments on
communicative competence pertaining to VP and DP speech styles, the value attributed
to the VP style is higher, insofar as it is projected as the luxurious, the model style against
the DP style, which gets associated with lower values.

Performance

As has been shown, at the level of literature it is difficult, if not impossible, to draw a
distinct line between Coupland’s sociolinguistic features (see Figure 1 above) and
performance. Hence, which data can be used to illustrate each of these dimensions

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becomes a tricky question; in this section, the relevant excerpt with respect to performance in popular literature is one from Themelis’ text *Mia Zoi Dyo Zoes*. The reason why it has been chosen to illustrate performance relevant to the VP discourse is because it provides a dialogue between two fictional characters, hence we can see how the thrust of the notion, namely the “enacting of agency, its coming into being” (see above) plays out in (and through) the literary text. One could argue that excerpt 1 also contains a dialogue, hence it can be used in this section as well. Nonetheless, the “dialogue” of Excerpt 1 is basically a monologue of Alki, since we do not have Ruslana’s answers or reactions to her performed or even metalinguistically commented upon, hence Excerpt 1 cannot enlighten the reader with respect to how Aliki’s agency comes into being. It is in this sense of lack of dialogical reactions that Excerpt 1 cannot be used to illustrate performance at the level of literature.

Excerpt 5: *Mia Zoi Dyo Zoes*, p. 163

Mihalis bent over the table, grabbed the small monkey and asked Odysseas: “How much does this small monkey cost, Odysseas my friend?” Odysseas couldn’t help himself. He looked in his bag, found another monkey and pinned it into Mihalis’ lapel by saying: “autoprosopographies are offered for free to those who are interested”. He carried on distributing the last gifts, while Tasos was whispering in his ears: “you did the right thing to talk to him like that; he is a total looser, and Alkis was also applauding by winking at him. 

30 The excerpt contains a dialogue between Mihalis, who is an old colleague of Odysseas and likes teasing him, whenever they get together, and Odysseas, who, in turn, does not think much of Mihalis. The dialogue takes place in Odysseas’ house, where he holds a dinner with his colleagues, and the snapshot of the dialogue we have at hand is at the end of the dinner, where Odysseas distributes some gifts (monkey pins, to be more precise) to all of his guests. It is at this point where Mihalis gets his pin, when he tries to make fun of Odysseas by asking him how much this pin costs. Given that Odysseas, as every respectable VP person, considers such a question a taboo one, because, in the VP world, all people are supposed to have money, he cannot take it (δεν συγκρατήθηκε).

31 Behind this “it” lies the implicature of Mihalis’ question that Odysseas does not have much money, or that the pins he has bought for his friends are not of a good quality, and hence, they are cheap. At this point, we can bring into play Goffman’s (1974) notion of “face”, which, in one of the most influential theories of politeness, the one by Brown and Levinson (1987: 61), is defined as “the public self-image that every member wants to claim for himself (sic)”. Instead of providing Mihalis with a direct answer or even starting to abuse him verbally, as a host of the dinner and as a well-bred person, Odysseas prefers to offer him another pin. This offer in combination with the comment Odysseas makes, while he is giving it to Mihalis, that this pin should be seen as Mihalis’ “autoprosopography” (a self-portrait), is what creates Odysseas’ social meaning of his VP style; instead of just providing a direct answer to his interlocutor, which would be the expected way of reaction, Odysseas is represented as more creative in this respect and as challenging the established value of positive face by choosing to display negative face, namely his desire to be unimpeded by Mihalis’ utterance. In other words, through his answer Odysseas manages to come into a power position, where he is entitled to make statements about people and situations (Hutchby, 1996). By taking advantage of this position, he maintains that Mihalis is like a monkey, namely a stupid person, who likes imitating the others,
without thinking too much. Nevertheless, this statement is made through the indirect way of irony, whereby Odysseas positions Mihalis as a person interested in finding out how much his autoprosopography, namely the monkey pin, costs. In this sense, irony is seen as a strategy indexing superiority of the person, who is using it.

In sum, it has been argued that codeswitching, cultivation but, nonetheless incapability of producing “correct” Greek voices and, last but not least, performed irony form some of the stylistic features, which are represented as part of the VP discourse in popular literary texts. The social meanings of cultivation, cosmopolitanism, exhibition of snobbishness and alleged superiority attached to these speech stylistic features have a bearing on VP life-stylistic features, as the latter relate to two distinctive types of VP people, new-rich and new-poor or elegant poverty. These life-style practices and their social meanings form the analytical focus of the next section.

**VP life-stylistic features**

Albeit from a different perspective, the common thread that runs through the VP discourse is that it pertains to mainly two categories of people: the new-rich and the new-poor or elegant poverty. Table 4 provides the overall number of references to each of these labels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4. Instances of the labels “new-poor” and “new-rich” in literary texts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>New-poor/elegant poverty</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamades Voreion Proastion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mykonos Blues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmon ton Idion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This section provides a sketch of what the social meaning(s) of these labels is in these texts are, by fleshing out the differences between these two labels on the basis of the life-style choices associated with them.

**New-rich people**


[1] New-rich women's past had been sunk in a veil of mystery; they were never talking about their parents, their neighbourhood or their school; in other words, they were muting the most distinct signs of origin.

In this first bit, the most important observation to make is that there is a strong opposition between new-rich and new-poor women, which is based in the way they portray their past. To be more specific, new-rich women systematically avoid referring to some key dimensions of their origin, including their neighbourhood, their school or their parents' jobs and origin [1]. These key dimensions are explicated extensively below.

Excerpt 7: *Mamades Voreion Proastion*, pp. 93-94 (The interesting foci of analysis are provided in italics).
In this game of social up-scaling, our mothers participated too by accusing one another. So, Mrs R. might be pretending to be noble by ringing the bell in order to call her maid, but everybody knew that she was the bastard child of a French maid and a tradesman. It goes without saying that in their social careers her daughters were always forgetting to mention that; they were just saying that their mum was French, as if she were a countess or a duchess. A lot of those new-rich women were working as secretaries in the offices of their husbands, when they got to know them – that was the dream of every secretary, but it was also the most secure mark of a distinctive social line. It was totally out of the question for a wealthy woman to go to work as a secretary. Most of them were remaining deeply silent and we were holding them in condemnation for their past. Only very rarely would one or two talk about their past courageously; it was them whom we absolutely accepted. And there were some others who were trying to reconstruct their past. As you realise, it was the latter ones that we disdained the most. It was from them that one could hear the most hilarious stories. There was one who claimed that she was a student at the College, but she didn’t get to learn to speak English out of a psychological negation. Another one, Polish, who was working as a maid for her husband’s mother, when the latter died and he married her, was claiming to be commercial attaché of the Polish embassy. She had her maids all dressed up in old-fashioned uniforms and the latter were wearing these throughout the day and not just on the occasion of formal dinners. She was changing maids every month, she was yelling at them the whole time, and somehow she was trying to remind herself that she was not a maid anymore. Their way of denying their past was so funny and was giving out such a lack of courage. It was as if all of them were born on the day they got married, and they didn’t even mention their nee, which was usually so much peasant-like, that what they did was the next best thing. We would sympathise with them.

This excerpt juxtaposes individual cases of new-rich women, who, in order to hide their humble social origin, come up with the most fanciful stories about their past. The common pattern of all these stories is that the story-teller tries to construct a relationship with foreign cultures and behaviours, which belong to the noble society per se. Nonetheless, the way this relationship is constructed by Nasioutzik is that of twisting the standard behaviour, in order to adulterate it toward the direction of new-rich women, who, due to their lack of knowledge of these cultural peculiarities, cannot come up with a believable scenario about their past, and, as a result, they make fools of themselves. In this way, the discourse pertaining to new-rich women is characterised by total lack of references to two key issues: first, their past activities (e.g. the fact that they were working as their future husbands’ secretaries), since women, who are established members of the VP world would not even condescend to work as a secretary due to this position’s lack of prestige). Second, their name, which is usually βλάχικο (“peasant-like”).

Through the use of the first person plural in, the author affiliates herself with this established circle of VP women, who due to their long exposure to the peculiarities of this culture know how to behave, and, hence, they are entitled to make judgments not only at the level of who counts as old and established, and thus acceptable VP person (and not as a new-rich, i.e. recently arrived one), but also eventually at the level of which behaviours count as (morally) right or wrong. In this sense, what she does resonates with Skeggs’
(2008: 28) observation, that “the powerful only want their authority recognised not themselves. It is the exchange systems and relationships that establish value that are significant for understanding the production for identity as inequality”.

Instances of this opinion-giving can be seen in [7], where the author’s circle were setting new-rich women at naught, while in [8] they were handing it to the very few ones, who were talking about their past without any regrets. The circle’s entitlement to discern right from wrong behaviours is most evident in [16, 17], where they justify new-rich women’s avoidance of referring to their peasant-like names. In an ironic way, Nasioutzik hints at established VP world’s loathing toward anything peasantry-related, and, as a result, she can understand and justify all these name-changes that usually take place after somebody has joined the VP society.

As soon as they have up-scaled, new-rich VP people treat as an indispensable aspect of their new suburban identity social recognition. This zest for social recognition becomes evident in the following excerpt by Haritopoulos:

Excerpt 8. Hmon ton Idion, pp. 24-25
[a] The inner world of new-rich people is longing for new fields. Eventually, they must leave anonymity. [b] If possible, everybody must learn their (new-rich people’s) success and social up-scaling. People should both recognise them and appreciate them. [c] After they conquered the “having” aspect of material goods, they now desperately need to develop the “showing off” aspect of them. [d] What is meant by “showing off” is throwing parties for the powerful people, bragging about their fortunes, spending immense sums of money on superficial activities, and giving interviews, which lack witty remarks let alone humanity. [e] In order to make themselves heard, new-rich people are after popular people, who will keep them in publicity, they even sponsor mass spectacles with a superficial twist of art and they make deafening philanthropies.

The gist of it is that new-rich people, having secured the ownership of a big fortune, set their sights on exhibiting their wealth [c, d], in order to achieve social recognition by powerful people [e]. This showing off of wealth can be realised through various ways, such as hanging out and being photographed by gossip magazines and tabloids in expensive venues with celebrities or sponsoring mass artistic activities or even making generous donations and acting as a philanthropist [e].

Elegant poverty

Contrary to new-rich people, who mute their past (Excerpt 7) and triumphantly celebrate their current good financial standing (Excerpt 8), new-poor or elegant poverty people, namely the “old money”, who loath new-rich people, seem to behave the other way round, in the sense that they speak gloriously of their past and they tend to emphasise it, while at present they adopt a low profile life-style. The following excerpts illustrate this:

Excerpt 9. Mamades Voreion Proastion, pp. 91-92
[18] New-poor women were constantly talking about their childhood, their British or German nannies, Athens College and Moraitis School [two prestigious private schools located in the VP area], their childhood trips to Europe, their chauffeurs, their summers at the Rose, their grandma’s house in Ekali; in a nutshell, they were indulging themselves into a nonstop name
New-poor women brag about their cosmopolitan and glorious past through the practice of name dropping, which is translated into talking in an almost nostalgic way about their holiday destinations, the names of their nannies or chauffeurs, the names of their schools or referring to some very culturally specific facts (e.g., spending their summers at the Rose).

Against this backdrop, in the following two excerpts we learn about the actual cultural models, namely our “first thoughts” or taken-for-granted assumptions about what is “typical” or “normal” (Gee, 1999: 59), in the VP culture:

Excerpt 10. Mamades Voreion Proastion, pp. 54-55

[19] She was living in a beautiful house in Ekali, against the backdrop of elegant poverty, as Gaskell puts it. [20] Of course, the meaning of elegant poverty in Psyhiko, Philothei and Ekali differed from the one of elegant poverty in Kypseli or Pangrati. [21] Elegant poverty translates into having a huge swimming pool, both an internal and an external one, but your fridge remains, nonetheless, empty. [22] Your children go to the most expensive private schools in Athens, but you can hardly fill your car up with gas, and in situation crisis you empty your kids’ piggy-banks. [23] You sell and you live, this the motto of elegant poverty...

This piece could be seen as encompassing the gist of the discourse associated with the elegant poverty; it makes a statement about the different experiences of material conditions and practical activity: elegant poverty [21] people are those who live in impressive properties and own Olympic size swimming pools (πισίνες ολυμπιακών διαστάσεων), those who can afford sending off their children to the most expensive private schools [22] but, on the other hand, do not have the money to cover their basic needs, such as paying for gas or buying food. In other words, elegant poverty’s practical activity is incongruent with their apparent material conditions, since their actual practical behaviour (spending small sums of money for these mundane tasks), expected from people who can afford running and conserving expensive premises is far from being the case. Characterised by such controversial representation, they have been labelled “elegant poverty” or “new-poor”, namely a new type of poor people, who are dealing with conditions of poverty, like the lack of cash, against the background of a wealthy mansion. It is exactly this background that differentiates them from the standard poor people, who not only have no money but they also live under restricted (and restrictive) circumstances (small houses or flats, no luxury, no capacity to send their children to expensive private schools). An evaluative term, “elegant”, forms part of the label for the simple reason that the luxurious background in which these people live renders them elegant, since it secures them prestige. It is more than apparent that the whole label and the discourse associated with it is pretty ironic; this irony is built upon the combination of two ideas that cannot go hand-in-hand: the ability to spend a fortune on financially demanding tasks, such as managing a mansion and catering for one’s children’s education, and the inability to financially cover everyday needs.

The cultural model that is relevant here is what I would call “the reproduction of culture-economic capital”, echoing but seeking to expand Gee’s (1999: 73) example of the “reproduction of cultural capital”. The suggested model’s economic dimension is translated into the following premise: a family who have lots of money as to be able to run an
expensive house and provide their children with costly – but unnecessary for their survival – privileges, such as sending them to expensive private schools, affording horse-riding classes for them, or even hiring personal chauffeurs for them, who take the children to school, should be able to cover their basic expenses as well. In addition, a family who spend their money in luxurious activities, such as the aforementioned, are considered to belong to the elite, who are characterised by mental superiority, total lack of humbleness, hence they could be seen as an example of *bon vivants*, whose actions and choices are guided by their faith in and their basing their behaviour on savoir-vivre⁴⁴. According to Zambounis (2002: 161), good parents should respect their children’s privacy and lives in general, something which is recanted in case parents steal their children’s money from their piggy banks. This cultural model, based on the expected socioeconomic behaviour by wealthy people, is twisted in the case of new-poor social class through parents’ deviant behaviour, and this type of behaviour is what renders them new-poor.⁴⁶

Despite their incongruence in their material conditions and practical life-style activities, VP people, and especially women, prioritise their children’s education and their own cultural (Bourdieu, 1984: 53-54) – as opposed to financial – capital, by holding firm to their ideas, explicated in the excerpt below:

[24] All of us were facing shocking dilemmas: in which hair salon you can get the best hair cut, in Freestyle or at Jonny’s, which store we are going to pay a visit to, in order to buy boots, Charakter or Kalogirou’s, and in which school we are going to register our children, in Athens College or in Moraitis School [Two of the most prestigious Greek private schools, both located in Palaio Psychiko, one of the VP areas. 25] Those of us who were really part of the old VP people, namely those of us who had graduated from these schools, had already solved the problem. [26] Our children would study in the alma mater. [27] There was something indefinitely touching knowing that your child would be sitting in the same classrooms you were sitting in as a pupil, they would be playing in the same garden, and if you were lucky enough, they would be torturing the same teachers you were torturing. [28] And of course it goes without saying that all this two-generation-graduates-from-the-same-school story entailed something undefinably noble, which in countries like Greece, where there has never been organised nobility, was exquisitely special. [29] There were two of three (the really old ones, who were also well established members of the VP society, those who were going out in casual outfit and jeans, were avoiding shops with brand names, and they were living in huge mansions with not taken care of gardens) who had the ultimate honour: their mothers were alumnae of Women’s College or Berzan High School (the latter was the old Moraitis School). [30] They were the only ones, who didn’t give a damn about the recent status symbols: expensive car brands, trendy clothes, decorated houses by the most popular decorators, registration in Ekali Club. [31] The really “oldies” were driving semi-ruined clunkers (compared to the latest Mercedes models), they were dressed up casually, they were decorating their houses on their own, and they were considering going to Ekali Club¹² as an insult. [32] At a children’s party we were invited in Ekali Club, all these women were indefinitely condescending and they were ironically grinning. [33] They kept saying that all these things were too much, and the parties organised and hosted by them were minimal and they were taking place at their houses only: meatballs, chips, sandwiches, and children’s cakes were all decorated by these women themselves.
This extensive excerpt offers a description of the cultural model associated with the new-poor women of VP. At the core of it lies these women’s tendency to carry on the glorious past of the family by sending their children to the same (private) school they themselves have graduated from. In [28], Nasioutzik’s evaluation of this tendency is that it brings a family some aristocratic flavour which is missing, since Greece has never had an organised aristocratic class. In this way, families whose offsprings go and graduate from the same schools as their parents are invested with an “aristocratic” calibre, in the sense that they do not bear any similarities with the rest of VP people (and, mainly, the new-rich, who do not have this kind of tradition in their family circles). Another important parameter in new-poor women’s cultural model is their loathing for any indicators of new-rich-ness, starting from their outfits (they very much prefer to dress casual and without any trade-marks), to their cars (old and sometimes faulty, but stylish), and ending in their children’s party organisation, in which they go for minimalism, indexed by the party venue (their houses as opposed to Ekali club) and hand-made food (as opposed to catering) [32, 33].

All these practices seek to consolidate new-poor women into a closed network (κλειστός κύκλος), whose common feature is their long and already established intimacy. As such, they do not recognise nor do they wish to incorporate people they do not know into their circle. These latter personae non gratae are the new-rich.

Concluding discussion

In the previous sections, excerpts from popular literary texts were analysed on the basis of both speech stylistic and life stylistic features associated with the VP discourse, and an attempt was made to flesh out the actual practices as well as their social meanings. In this section, I will try to synthesise these findings and discuss their meanings vis-à-vis the urban-rural continuum.

The speech stylistic practices of codeswitching, carefully exercised and cultivated voices as well as the exhibition of irony and, through it, the construction of alleged superiority and snobbishness could, in unison, be treated as relevant to the urban side of the urban-rural continuum, inasmuch as it is mostly people who live in urban environments that feel the need to deploy these features: foreign languages and the adoption of a cosmopolitan life-style are essential for those who are looking for a job that pays off well and involves lots of travelling around the world. Such jobs, at least in Greece, are to be found mostly in big urban cities, such as in Athens, Thessaloniki or in Patra. Moreover, the cultivation of voice could be seen as a qualification, which can be achieved through taking courses in Rhetoric. These courses are usually taught in schools or offered by tutors in urban sets, where there is the need (and the luxury) for them, in order for people to maximise their chances of getting a good job by exhibiting rhetorical (and, by extension, communicative) skills. Such jobs are to be found again in the aforementioned big cities. Finally, the construction of snobbishness through irony is a purely urban feature, insofar as it is in the urban settings that big social differences are to be found, hence people feel the need to differentiate themselves from each other; those who have the power, indexed by their good financial or – in the case of the elegant poverty – cultural status, usually choose to look down at people, who are not as privileged as they are. On the contrary, in the more rural settings, where these differences are hard – if not
impossible – to be traced, people do not feel the need to exhibit these ironic or snobbish tensions.

However, features pertinent to the rural settings start entering the scene of the VP discourse, when new-rich people and their practices become relevant. These are usually people who originate from the country therefore regardless of whether they up-scale to achieve the VP suburbanite status they still carry with them the package of their rural origin, which speech stylistically translates into yelling and using the palatalised alveolar consonants, which are highly stigmatised in Greek. Life-stylistically rural origin translates into an inability to adjust to the VP culture’s manners indexing bon-vivants, as the latter have been already analysed in the final section.

Given that, according to the texts analysed, both of new-rich and elegant poverty people share the VP suburbanite identity, albeit with different values, they and the social meanings associated with their practices could be argued to form together the VP discourse. As a result, since the values have been claimed to be correlated with both the urban and the rural sides of the continuum, it can be argued that the VP discourse, as represented in Greek popular literature texts, encompasses features from both these two settings, hence, from a sociolinguistic point of view, it can indeed be treated as a marriage of urban and country side.

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NOTES

1. The paper stems from research pertinent to my PhD project titled Indexicalities of Modern Greek Speech Style: A Comparative Sociolinguistic Study on Athenian Suburban Class Identities at King’s College London. This research has been funded by the Greek State Scholarships Foundation (IKY), the Alexander S. Onassis Public Benefit Foundation and the Foundation for Education and European Culture (ΙΠΕΠ), to all of which I express my gratitude. In addition, the discussion has benefited from constructive feedback by the audience of the conference Revisiting the “Urban” and the “Rural”: Spatial Representations and Practices in Luxembourg.

2. These are the latest percentages I was able to find pertinent to the populations in these two areas. My guess is that due to extensive mobility that has been going on in Athens at least for the past 30 years, these percentages may be different nowadays, in the sense that the differences may not be that sharp.

3. Kolonaki is considered to be one of the most posh areas in downtown Athens, known for its expensive shops and cafes; the latter are to be found around its famous square.

4. Although performance holds a key position in Coupland’s model, no definition of it is provided in the 2007 book. The reason why Duranti’s definition is given here is because it
encompasses sociolinguistic and linguistic anthropological origins, thus it is in accordance with Coupland’s statement that in order to move into non-autonomous sociolinguistics in stylistic research, we need to incorporate tools and notions from other relevant social sciences.

5. They belong to the genre of “chick lit”, namely the genre which corresponds to the “chick flick” movie genre, and deals with the plight of modern womanhood by presenting women as fearless and liberated (Danesi, 2008: 159).

6. Switchings between Greek and English spellings are noted in capitals in parentheses. GR means Greek spelling and ENG means English spelling.

7. The word “diet” is basically a loan word in English from the Ancient Greek δίαιτα (“way of life”), and it has been re-initiated in Modern Greek with the meaning “watching someone’s nutrition” as an anti loan from the English word “diet”.

8. Indicated, in this particular excerpt, by the fact that all the rest of the English words are spelled in Roman characters, hence, as such, they can be treated as “written borrowings” from English (Sebba, 2007: 27-8).

9. This is how variationist sociolinguistics has been dealing with vernacular speech, according to Coupland (2007: 180-183).

10. The palatalised n and l sounds are considered highly stigmatised, because they index either a lower social class origin or an origin from the province.

11. For the Greek, such a book of good manners is the 2002 best seller Savoir Vivre by Hristos Zambounis.

12. A private club located in Ekali, one of the VP areas. The club is known as one of the most prestigious social clubs in the VP world, which gets selected by some of the wealthiest business families in Greece to host their social events. In addition, and as a result of its reputation, its membership fees are very high.

ABSTRACTS

Suburbia, home to a life-style many people aspire to, could be seen as a marriage between urban and countryside life, and, as such, it should be seen as a vital arena for interdisciplinary research on the urban-rural paradigm. This paper explores the ways whereby discourses on what is stereotypically seen as posh northern Athens suburban culture (Voreia Proastia) are represented in popular literature. The main argument is that Voreia Proastia suburban culture could be seen as positioned on an urban/countryside continuum. This is grounded on the simple reason that, both at the speech level and in terms of lifestyle, it encompasses features of urban and rural worlds, the former associated with the “new-poor” or “elegant poverty” people, the latter with the “new-rich”.

Les zones périurbaines donnent lieu à un train de vie auquel aspirent de nombreuses personnes, étant donné qu’elles semblent marier la vie urbaine et la vie rurale. De ce fait, ces zones constituent un domaine essentiel pour la recherche interdisciplinaire sur le paradigme urbain-rural. Cet article cherche à examiner les manières selon lesquelles les discours associés aux banlieues nord d’Athènes (Voreia Proastia), considérées de manière stéréotypée comme chics, sont repris par la littérature populaire. À travers l’analyse de cette appropriation, nous tentons de comprendre leur signification sociale. L’argument principal avancé ici est que la culture suburbaine de Voreia Proastia se positionne sur un continuum entre l’urbain et le rural pour la
simple raison qu'au niveau des pratiques langagières et des styles de vie, elle englobe à la fois des caractéristiques du monde urbain, associé aux « nouveaux pauvres » ou à la « pauvreté élégante », et du monde rural, associé aux « nouveaux riches ».

INDEX

Mots-clés: discours, style, changements de code, performance, banlieues culturelles, Grèce
Keywords: discourse, style, codeswitching, performance, cultural suburbia, Greece

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