This chapter proposes to establish a discussion on the following hypothesis. The images on the Attic pottery show a drastic reduction of the rural scenes by the end of the sixth and beginning of the fifth centuries. This decrease was the direct result of a flagrant shift made by the Athenians towards urban space (asty) to the detriment of rural space (khora) after the victory in the Greek-Persian war.

This should not be understood, however, as a policy of abandonment undertaken by the Athenians in relation to landed properties, agriculture and pastoral rights in the fifth century B.C. On the contrary, not only did landed properties remain in force, but also several rural activities continued throughout the Attic period (for a detailed historiographic and documentary discussion of the Athenian shift, see Chevitarese, 2001a: 181–195)

The last three decades of the 20th century witnessed the development of uncountable archaeological studies related to ancient Greek rural space. We can even speak of a “true discovery” of the Greek khora when comparing the great volume of publications in the last thirty years with the historiographic production previous to 1970. One can see, however, that the results obtained by these studies remain unrecognized by the larger public and by a significant number of researchers of Ancient Greek history. Five points can be highlighted that help us understand the reason for this lack of connection between recent work on Ancient
Greek rural space and the majority of individuals interested in the history and archaeology of the Ancient World:

First, there is a generally accepted perception disseminated by many researchers (historians, archaeologists, classicists), who seem unaware of its implications, that polis is a synonym for city-state or city. This conception is based on three principles:

1. The majority of the poliad population lived in urban spaces;
2. The calendar that ruled life in the poliad community was established by urban activities;
3. A greater part of poleis production came from the urban sector.

These three points constitute situations that actually appear anomalous to the dynamics of the polis. As I have observed elsewhere (Chevitarese, 2001a: 23, footnote 2), the majority of citizens lived in rural areas, the calendar that regulated the community's life was related to agriculture, and that in fact agricultural production was predominant in the Greek polis. Even so, the recurrent use of polis as a synonym for city ends up suggesting (to any unaware reader) that ancient Greek culture was predominantly urban, with a strong emphasis in urban life and habits. This analysis perspective contributes to the overlooking of rural space in many history books.

Second, and strongly related to the first point though it demands separate attention, Snodgrass (1987: 67–68) has observed that ancient Greek texts emphasize urban life themselves, with exception of military campaigns and battles, such as assemblies, tribunals, sanctuaries, and marketplaces. This inclination in the written sources to reinforce city data instead of rural, has also helped consolidate the argument that archaeological fieldwork in Greece must be, basically, if not entirely, directed towards urban sites.

Another piece of information that helps us explain the absence of the khora from recent studies is related to a long literary tradition (with strong implications for Western political thought), starting with ancient Greek literature, which has sought to disqualify the peasant. This element is very meaningful since the readings made by the kaloi kagathoi, who were responsible for literary production, sought to confine the agroikos into a certain pattern: a rude person (Teophrastus, Characters 4.7, 4.11–12, 4.16), ignorant (Aristophanes, Clouds 627–631), devoid of any kind of social refinement (Aristophanes, Wasps 1120–1537), against politics (Aristophanes, Acharnians and Peace), who tries to maintain distance from the habits and novelties of theasty, who is seen as rejecting rurality (Teophrastus, Characters 4.8; Aristophanes, Acharnians 33–39; Clouds 43–52). These texts reinforce the assumption that the peasant was worried exclusively about his day-to-day life or, in the best of cases, with his survival.

We can also verify the prejudice of elites toward manual crafts (this too is greatly disseminated in Western political thought); not only towards the work realized by the agroikos but also towards craftsmen (banausos). This points to a very interesting question in ancient