

peasant and landlord (Firestone, 1975a; 1975b). Basically, Firestone constructs a schema to illustrate the progressive devolution of the landlord's control over his land in favour of the cropper, resulting from the intrusion of market forces into the peasant's subsistence economy. The form that this devolution took was partnership and "quasi-partnership" compacts in land, based on share-tenancy arrangements between peasant smallholders (and occasionally landless tillers) and landlords in the Jenin and Nablus districts.

The progression from full landlord's control over crop production to the ascendancy of the sharecroppers to the status of smallholders corresponded to the physical movement of rural potentates from their villages of residence to regional urban centres. Although this process did not quite constitute a linear progression over time -- with many absentee landlords retaining direct control over the land through resident relatives -- it did evolve historically in such a way that the big landlords gradually were divested from their estates in favour of local peasant "partners." This progression can be broken down into stages of cropping arrangements illustrated below: