The zenith of this "compatibility" is observed in the bond of association between peasants and landlord in the institution known as the mugharasa contract -- a form of co-cultivation predominant in orchards and groves -- in which the cropper acquires accession to ownership of part of the orchard after contributing his labour for a specified number of years. 'Ashour defined mugharasa as a "long-term contract by which the landlord leases-out a designated portion of land to a tenant stipulating the planting of trees in it, with the provision of all expenses. At the termination of the contract period, the tenant peasant acquires title deed to a proportion of trees (only) or to both land and trees." ('Ashour, 1949a:42). The period of accession differs depending on the variety of arbor: three to five years for mulberry trees (tut), 4-6 years for vineyards, 7-8 years for olives (but 30 years in Lebanon, indicating regional variations), 10 years for orange groves, etc. ('Ashour, ibid.:43).

Unlike Firestone, however, 'Ashour does not compare mugharasa favorably with other forms of sharecropping. The crucial variable he considers in this context is the density of the rural population. The latter is seen to be associated, rather mechanically, inversely with the size of the peasant's share of the yield ('Ashour, ibid.:47). But even when rural density is low, the peasant is still enslaved by his dependency on long-term loans from the landlord; in the case of mugharasa, by the unfavourable conditions of the contract (ibid.:48).

In contrast, Firestone sees mugharasa as a form of partnership or quasi-partnership in which the active partner (the peasant-worker) takes advantage of an expanding market by providing him and his family's labour to acquire land, while the passive partner (the landlord) makes available his capital stock as a form of investment.