Q: Looking at your biography I gathered that books play an important part in the development of CLT. What do you think could be the role of the French translation?

J.D.: The first book in 1972 introduced this new model to an American audience and of course being in United States we all thought we have invented it, and we took all this credits to create this wonderful new thing. In fact, we had taken most of our best ideas from other countries, because the CLT model drew elements from the 'Garden Cities' of England, from the 'Gramdan' villages in India, from the cooperative housing 'Moshavim' in Israel, the 'Egido' of Mexico... so in the best traditions of stealing the best ideas and claiming them as our own, in 1972 the CLT book introduced this new CLT concept to an American audience and planted the seeds for a new model.
The 1982 book, 'The CLT handbook', was more an operators' manual [explaining] how to create a Community Land Trust. It no longer just a concept it is a practical way of doing land, housing and community development.
By 2010, there was a new anthology called the 'Community Land Trust Reader'. I ended that book to draw on the best of the essays from 1972 and 1982. But, by 2010, our movement in United States had grown to a point where a different kind of book was needed.
In the first 1972 there was one CLT in United States and that was what the book was based on. [It was an introduction] to these new forms of tenure [aimed at] creating new towns in rural areas on baked land. By 1982, there were about a hundred CLTs and that book reported on those experiments, [bringing CLT's] application in a new direction. The authors of the 1982 book took that model and said: ‘may be there is an urban application, may be we can do more with this model for affordable housing, may be we need to do more to build the community base - the C in CLT - and may be we do not have to wait till we have 6.000 hectares to start a CLT. We can do it incrementally, in the existing urban fabric of the built environment’.
By 2010, there were over 200 CLT in United States and at that point we did not need a basic description, we did not need a how-to manual, we need a reminder of where we come from and an encouragement for new directions where we might go.
My wife is an artist and she does wonderful cards and woodcuts and [...] a numbers of years ago she did a wonderful card [with the following text on it]: 'there are only 2 lasting bequests we can leave to our children: one is roots and the other is wings'. The 2010 was an attempt to remind people of the roots of this model, roots in social justice struggle for racial equality, the civil rights movement in the american south and the places we have drawn our ideas, kind of giving some dude a belated credit to the places we have stolen our best ideas; but it was also to say to this growing movement
that there are new directions: we can take this model now and we can try commercial applications
than urban agriculture and, by the way, it is not only happening in United States, they are doing this
model in England, in Australia …
The book that was published a couple of weeks ago and that we are rolling up tonight draws on all 3
of those previous books. However, I think that it also introduces the idea to a french speaking
audience and it encourages people to do a CLT. It also says “you know, do not be afraid of this. It's
a little strange, but this is a vehicle that we have test ripen on the road and if you adopt it the wheels
would not fall off”. We also added some essays that were not in any of the previous books […].
My hope for this book is to do a bit of what all the three previous books did, but also pushing it a
little further.

Q: If I am not mistaken you had in United States a small subprime crisis a couple of years
ago. What was your grip on it? How could you stop it or slow it down or find other solutions?
Or was it an opportunity?

J.D.: It was an opportunity to talk about the model in a different way and to get some land.
Up until about 2008 - the start of the great recession and the mortgage melt down in my country, all
of the rational for adopting a CLT had to do with housing and land appreciation; sky rocketing land
dives; sky rocketing housing crises and a slow increase in income, so that affordability gap was
growing wider and wider in a hot market and we start creating creative financing to help boost low
income people into homeownership which is one of the reasons we got in to this crises.
The CLT model had demonstrated its effectiveness in controlling and protecting the affordability in
the hot market. At the top of the market we can preserve the top of investment in the housing, we
could protect the affordability of the housing so the next generation can access to the same
homeownership opportunity that the public helped to create for this generation.
In 2008, suddenly, we are in a cold market ... what happens to a CLT homeowner when there is a
different problem? What we discovered was that the CLT helped performing the market when it was
at its worst. When foreclosure rates on mortgages among private homeowners were up around 30%
- 40% of all the mortgages of Unites States; in the CLT sector, it was 1/10 of what it was in the
market. We documented and studied this and we were able to demonstrate that there is a ceiling,
protective affordability, when the market is hot, but when the market is cold there is a floor; and we
protected our homeowners, we insulated them against the worst abuses of a bust where else before
we talked mostly in terms of insulating, protecting our homeowners against the boom.
It was a wonderful rhetorical, political opportunity to go to our funders and bankers, that suddenly
became our best friends. Unfortunately at precisely the moment we could demonstrate our abilities
in the hot and cold market, public authorities were tightening their belts and bank tightening their credit criteria and it was very difficult to access public money and we were not able to take much advantage from that opportunity to buy land cheaper, buy houses out of a closure.

**Q:** You describe, in fact, CLT as a tool to introduce more equilibrium in a very volatile market...

**J.D.:** Yes exactly and the people we serve are the lower middle class, the poor, the working poor who are precisely the populations that are the most vulnerable both at the top of the market and the bottom of the market. That is how you have to design your housing policies and mechanisms to protect those populations when the economy inputs are most aggressive.

**Q:** Now the CLT is slowing crossing the Atlantic [...] Is it a positive development or are you afraid that your children will develop in a way that you do not like?

**J.D.:** I could not be more pleased that the seeds have somehow blown across the Atlantic and the Pacific and taking roots in other countries. Primarily because this is a very flexible model, it is malleable. Every time we have gone in a new directions and we have adopted some new practices and procedures is because some CLT was very brave and very innovative. I think what is happening and going to happen in Europe in Australia and in England is that the model will take on a few new elements, it is going to perform and to be applied in a slightly different way but that is noting more than an opportunity for us to steel ideas and come back across.

**Q:** The model will have to adapt to national local circumstances, legislation and so on...

**J.D.:** It has always been that way. I visited the CLT here in Brussels earlier today and we gathered around the table and they told me about the projects and plans for the future asking me what I thought about this, what was wrong and if I could give them some advices. By the end of the meeting, I realized that I had taken more away from that meeting than I gave because the way they are doing involvement and community participation and bringing community in the design of the project, getting them involved before they ever build anything, is the way we used to do it. We used to be much more participatory. The C in CLT, the Community in CLT used to be our touch stone. [...] So, I am going back to United States and say: “you know in Brussels they do it right and we used to do it better and we got to go back to it!” So, do I worry about my children? No, because they have a lot to teach to me!