

Shareish and post-growth: A combination of non-monetary solidarity practices, online radical cartography, and open-source development

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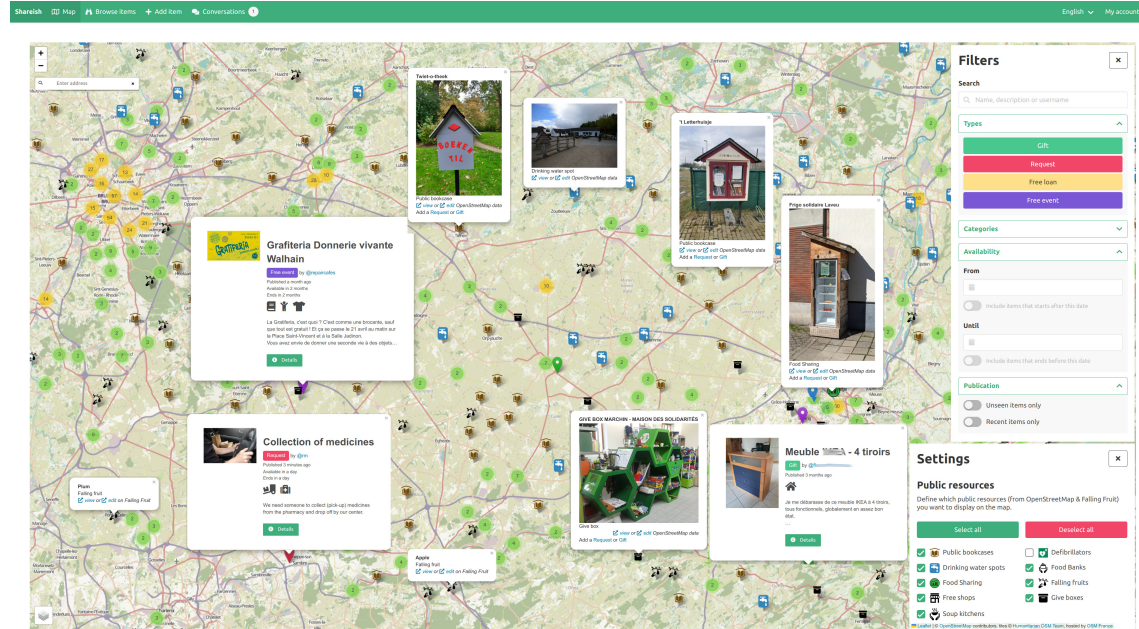


Fig. 1. Illustration of the type of content that can be found on a Shareish server map, highlighting non-monetary solidarity practices and free public resources. Users can navigate (zoom in/out, pan, locate), filter and select items, and enable/disable public resources. Here some content is selected on the map including a piece of furniture to give away, a free market (“Grafiteria”), a request for the pick-up and delivery of medicines, two public bookcases, a solidarity fridge, a give box, a drinking water source, two falling fruit spots (plum and apple).

We are developing Shareish (“Share and Cherish”), an online, map-based, open-source platform to facilitate diverse non-monetary solidarity practices supporting the values of mutual aid, sharing, and care. It is distributed under an open-source permissive license and a research demonstration server is available (<https://shareish.org/>).

CCS Concepts: • **Information systems** → **Web applications**; **Social networking sites**; • **Human-centered computing** → **Open source software**.

Additional Key Words and Phrases: mutual aid, generalized exchange, community economy, gift economy, human needs, autonomy, community map, radical cartography, open-source, interactive map, online web application, free software, solidarity HCI, post-growth

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1 INTRODUCTION

Many authors from diverse disciplines argue that the societal organization of production, redistribution, consumption, and decision, should be further transformed to address social and environmental unsustainability and injustice. Numerous potential transformative and emancipatory concepts have been proposed concerning environmental issues and solidarity among which post-capitalism, post-growth, commoning, mutual aid, subsistence, pluriverse, community or care-based economies, real utopias, and prefigurative politics ([9, 14, 15, 20, 26, 29, 31, 36, 42, 45, 52]). These currents of thought, among various proposals, suggest the importance of finding ways of creating alternative networks of value where relationships between individuals and groups are not characterized by profit but solidarity and interdependence. It includes non-market-based approaches to supply through local production and free exchange of goods and services (ie. without any monetary compensations). Diverse solidarity practices have actually spanned the ages [6, 27, 35, 41, 50] and research studies actually reveal a series of complementary solidarity concepts, exchange structures, and practices [5, 8, 21, 38–40, 47, 49, 53, 55] named as gift economy, mutual aid, non-monetary sharing, network-generalized exchange, self-help, indirect reciprocity, third party or reciprocal altruism, or random acts of kindness. Nowadays, these longstanding conceptions of solidarity are continued or reinvented and materialized in different forms and places, including face-to-face interpersonal free exchanges [28]; stooping or curb alerts (the action of taking something off the stoop, or curb, that was left there for others to take, potentially with no in-person contact); gleaning (the humanitarian act [1] of letting people collect leftover crops from fields after they have been mechanically harvested [34]); food growing in public spaces for public consumption [12]; give boxes and free shops (freely accessible places where everyone, without any access criteria, can come to deposit and acquire items), “donnerie” or “grafiteria” (free markets taking place on a specific date), grassroots food sharing networks to reduce food insecurity and food waste through the transformation of surplus food from a commodity to a gift [3]; community and solidarity fridges (somehow similar to “give boxes”, but for food [7, 54]); repair cafés (free events where people can bring in broken or damaged items to be repaired by volunteers [37]), ...

Design decisions made by technological platforms (including social networks and digital maps) can have immense impacts on how we experience our neighborhood and our world. They shape our understanding of it and of our place within it [16]. While mainstream technological platforms mainly highlight for-profit entities and ease commercial transactions, novel sociotechnical tools could be created to alternatively support logics of reciprocity [43] and to experiment the move from a market logic to the co-creation of human economies [51].

2 OUR WORK: THE SHAREISH (SHARE AND CHERISH) PLATFORM

We are developing Shareish (<https://shareish.org/>; <https://github.com/shareish/>; <https://mapstodon.space/@shareish>), an open-source, interactive, online, system that combines three key concepts:

- It aims at facilitating **diverse, locally situated, solidarity practices** including non-monetary network-generalized exchange (face-to-face exchanges with free offers and needs for goods and services), gifting through physical intermediaries (no in-person exchanges e.g. stooping), gleaning, the announcements of free events (incl. free markets, repair cafés), and at increasing the visibility of free public resources (community fridges, give boxes, free shops, public bookcases, drinking water sources, fruits and plants in public urban spaces) ... Its

105 design requirements were established based on an extensive literature review (in Solidarity HCI and CSCW),
106 online ethnographic observations of exchange groups, and an ongoing qualitative research with actors of local
107 solidarity practices.

- 108 • This platform is centered around an **interactive, user-editable, digital map** while it also offers advanced search
109 functions (filtering, ordering), and communication modules between users (private conversations and public
110 comments). It can be easily deployed by communities to foster these diverse non-monetary solidarity practices
111 in their neighborhood. On Shareish, users can discover or add (see Figure 2) free content and resources. They
112 can indicate on the map they want to either give (Donation), loan (Loan), or ask for (Request) items or services,
113 as well as announce Events. In addition, they can add or edit public resources and associate donations/requests
114 to them (so as to use them as physical intermediaries). Users are notified when new content is added in their
115 neighborhood through configurable notifications mechanisms. Several human geographers have pointed out
116 the potentials of maps (seen as platforms for locally situated knowledge) e.g with concepts of maputopias [19],
117 caretopographies [22], and transformative or radical cartography [29]. These works suggest ordinary citizens can
118 collaboratively generate maps to produce an alternative, dynamic, useful, community-owned representation of
119 a territory in order to open avenues of social transformations previously held inaccessible or invisible [10], or
120 to chart new desires and hopes for a better future into the landscape [13]. The map of the visible represents the
121 realm of possibilities and prepares us for action [56]. Maps are considered as tools that can be made and used
122 with the aim of transforming territories and landscapes according to social projects, they contribute to shaping
123 territories and not only represent them passively [4], they have the potentials to construct new propositions
124 about how the world is represented and organized [16]. After all, technological tools and digital maps are
125 massively used by citizens e.g. to localize and use bikes or electric scooters in large cities, so there is no technical
126 reason that this cannot be the case to easily access free resources while promoting solidarity and reuse.
127 • It is distributed under a **permissive open-source license**. In contrast to closed-source, proprietary, software
128 licensing carried out by most digital platform companies, free open source license permits third-parties to
129 modify, use, and redistribute the software for any purpose, based on the notion of “common humanity” (through
130 the mutual dissemination of knowledge and the acknowledgment of the abilities of each individual to act and
131 to do) [11]. We believe such a distribution model potentially allows its reuse by various communities (including
132 less-resourced grassroots groups) and the seamless launch of bottom up, self-organized, initiatives rooted in
133 daily lives. Open-source technologies for sharing are good candidates to favor processes of proliferation [30] and
134 help to resist to the influence of the growth discourse of corporations, towards local caring arrangements where
135 citizens are empowered, as exemplified by the collective experiences of technological sovereignty, grassroots
136 digital urbanism, or civic tech grassroots [25, 32, 33, 48]. Overall, they are expected to increase human autonomy
137 by enabling the creation of tools for conviviality [23] and autonomous spaces adapted to local conditions that
138 are not subjected to a centralized control, hence reclaiming a greater human dignity [24, 46].
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149 3 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

150 While the massive use of digital technologies is not neutral in terms of ecological impact and complex conditions or
151 community issues are not necessarily best addressed with software technology [2, 44], we would like to discuss with
152 workshop participants the potentials of Shareish as a digital technology to nurture post-growth values. We believe if
153 they succeed in fostering social ties between neighbors and if they contribute to multiplying the number of physical
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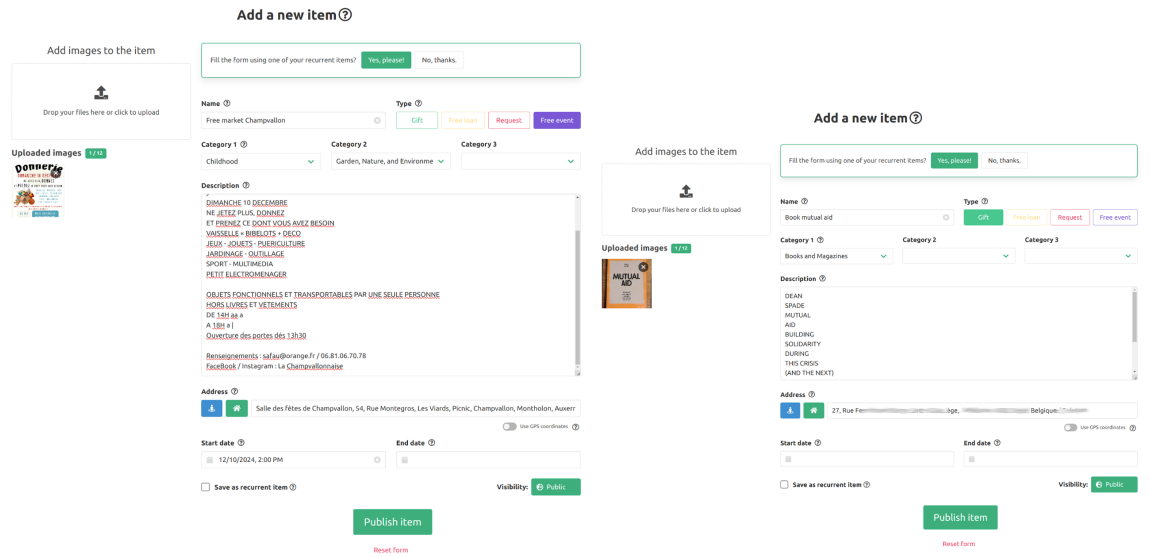
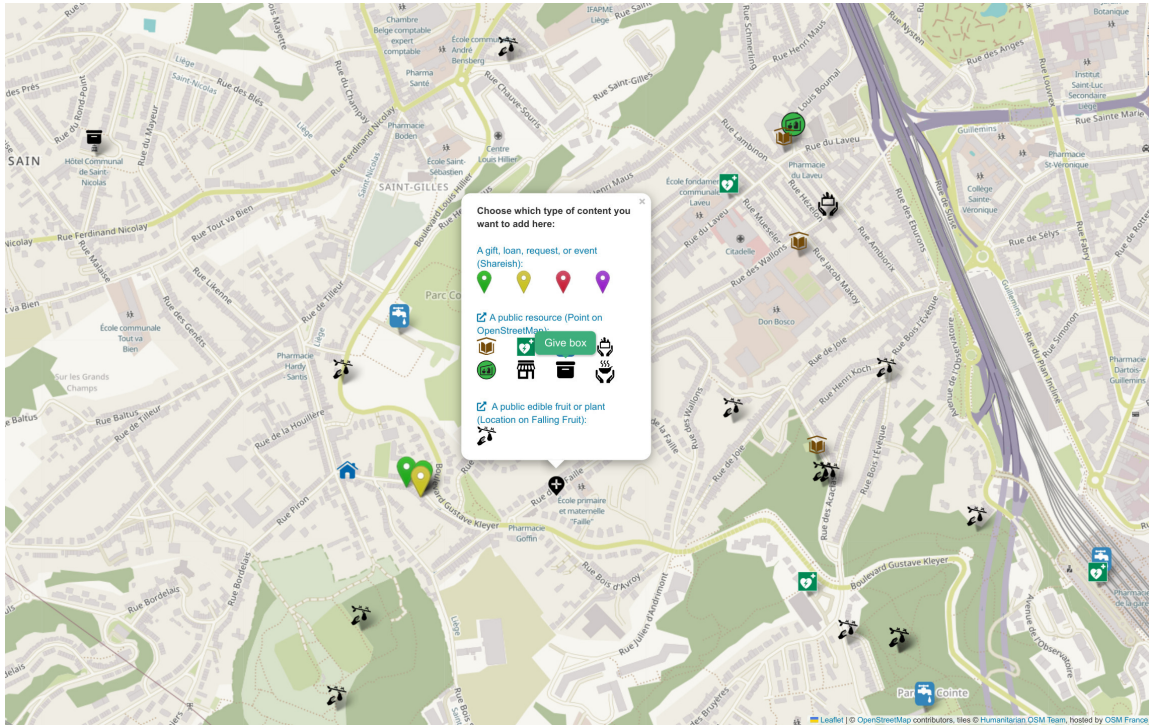


Fig. 2. Top: Adding content at a precise location on the map illustrated with a public resource (give box). Bottom: Online user interfaces to add user content with pre-filled fields using AI-based auto-tagging applied on user uploaded item image.

places of exchanges and making them more visible, sharing platforms like Shareish may ultimately lead to a reduced reliance on energy-intensive technologies while fostering care and solidarity in autonomous communities.

4 ONLINE RESOURCES

A demonstration research server is available online at <https://shareish.org/> where readers can sign up. The source code of the whole application is distributed under an open-source permissive license on a public repository for collaborative development (<https://github.com/shareish/>). A complete installation procedure (for production or development mode) is also provided there.

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