

Exploring social tags in a digitized humanities online collection

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Research Goal & Questions

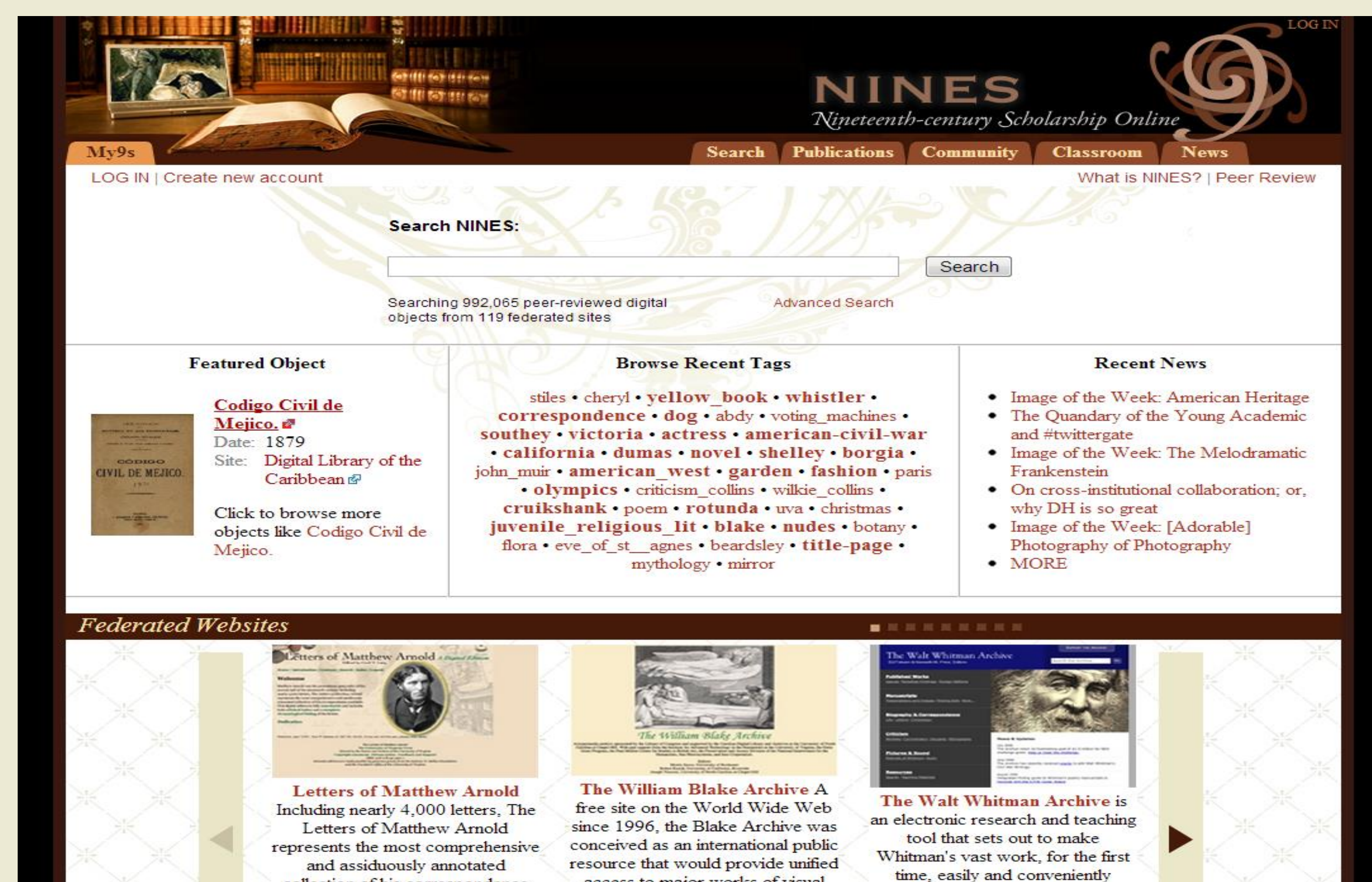
The purpose of this study is to find the value of tags in a digital collection for research and educational activities by investigating the way users describe digital resources in tags.

Specific research questions are:

- What kinds of terms do users assign to primary historical and classical resources as tags?
- Do tags in digital scholarly collections go beyond content description?
- How do social tags differ from textual annotation of the object?
- In what ways can tags be used to supplement for retrieval purpose and resource representation?

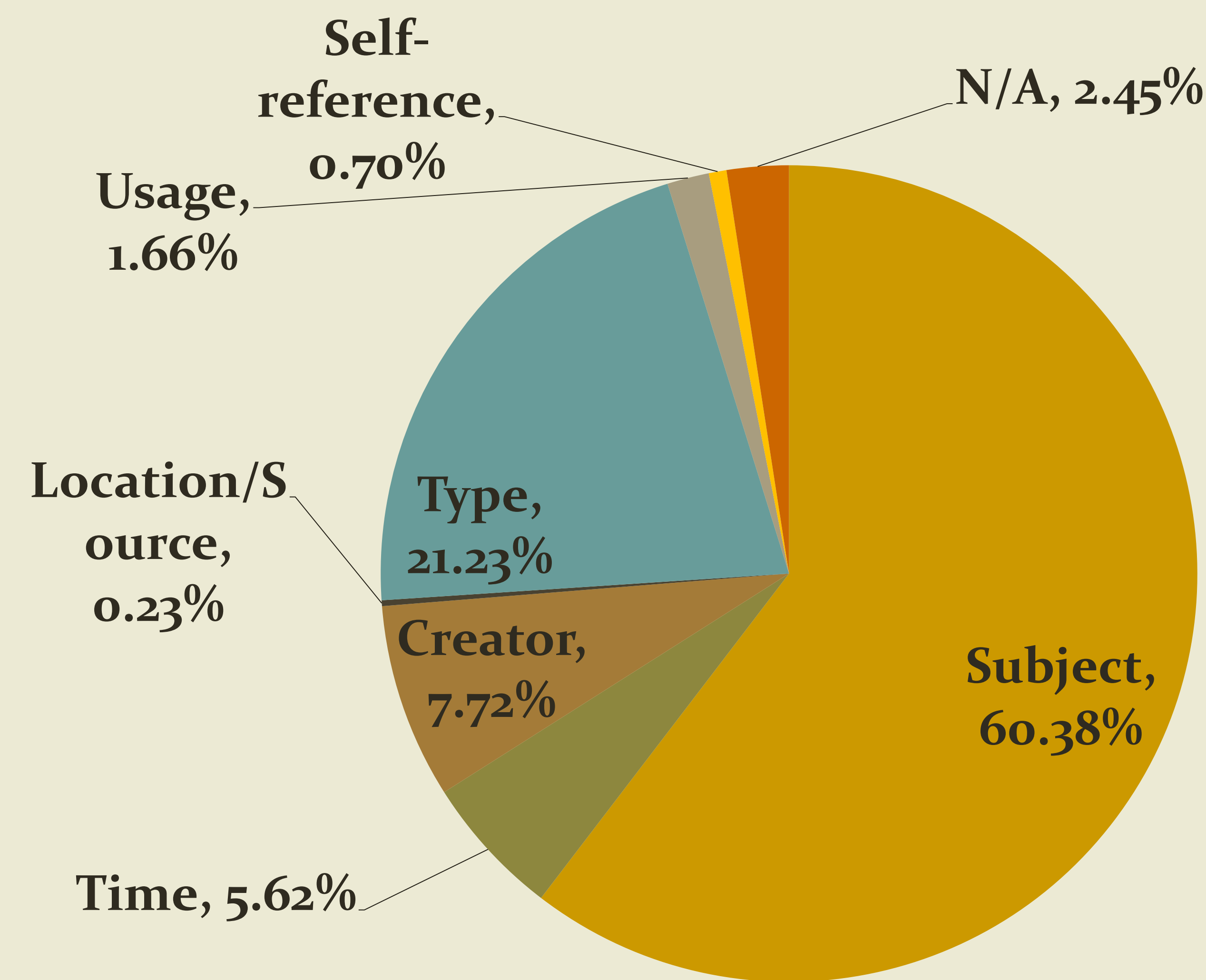
Method & Analysis

- Users' tags on NINES (1,542 tags for 8,297 items)
- Categorizing tags to identify what attributes tags describe the content of the resource and resource itself.
- Mapping tags to annotation.



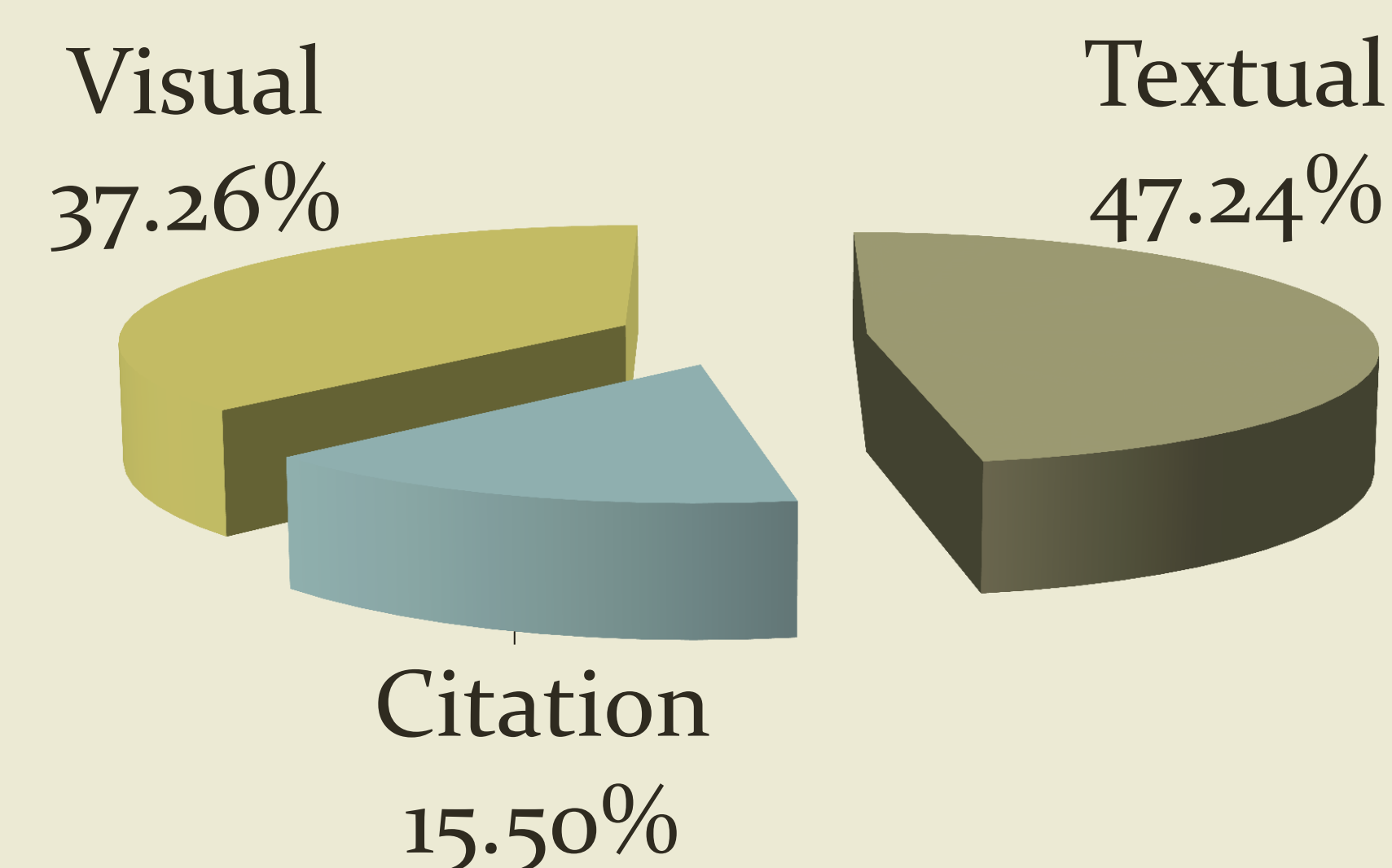
Results

Tag Category Distribution

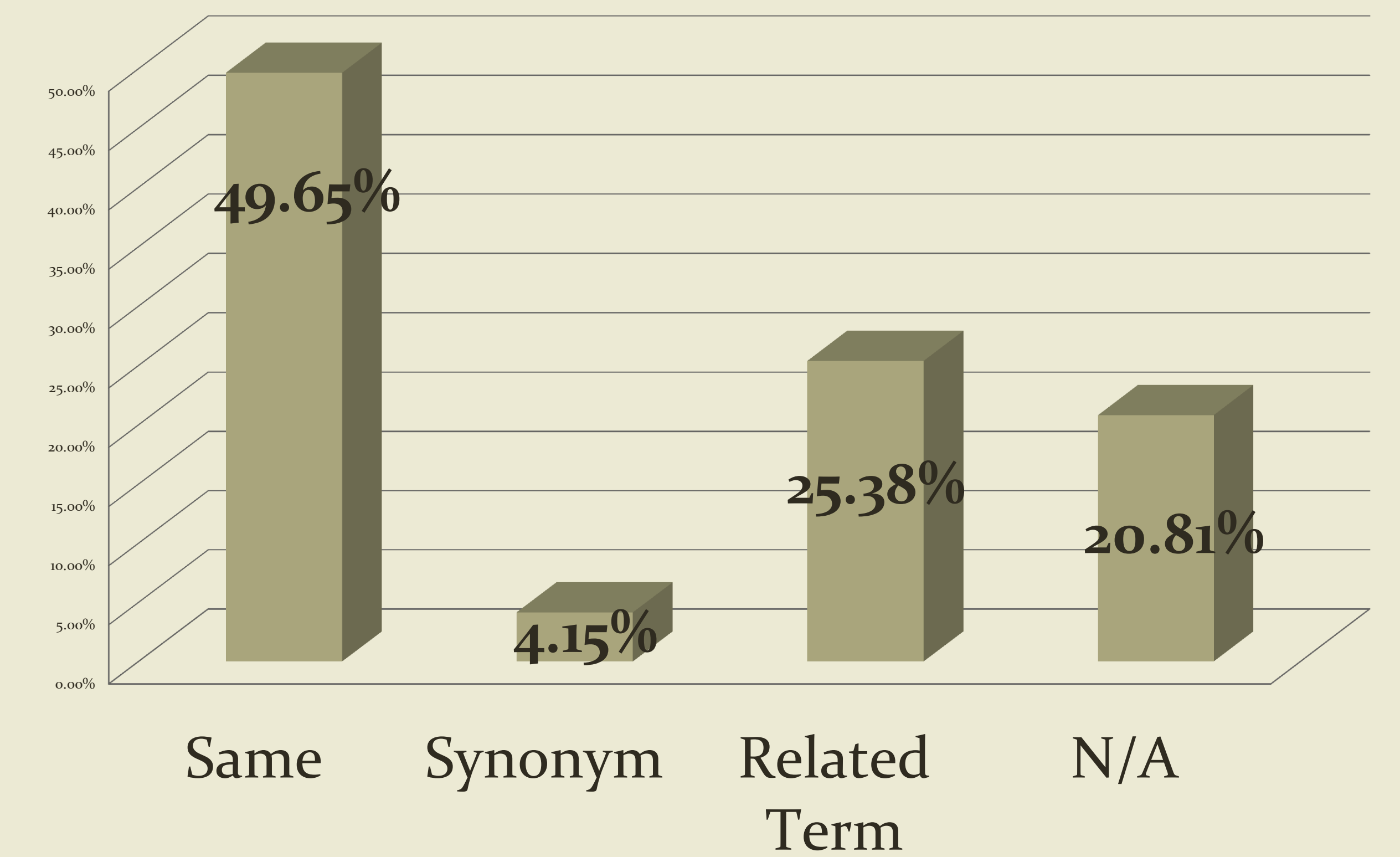


- Tags tend to describe subjects and topics of resources (60.38%). It is also interesting to note that *Type*-related tags are used very frequently (21.23%).
- The most frequent attributes in subject category tags are *Person* (20.06%), *Concept/theme* (16.67%), and *Geographical Place* (8.03%).

Formats of Items Tagged



Tag Comparison to Annotation



- A half of tags (50.47%) were mapped to the title field of annotation.
- About 20% of tags were not mapped or available to any fields of annotation of an item.

Discussion

- Most of the tags were considered as topic-related.
- Many user tags of NINES were related to the nature or physical characteristics of resources.
- The frequent use of type- and topic-related tags may represent users' ways of describing resources in research and critical analysis of archival and cultural materials in NINES.
- Text and non-text resources were used for research and education in digital humanities.
- In doing research and educational activities in digital humanities domains, both subject content aspects of resources and the nature of the work itself were important for users.
- Users tended to tag resources from a term available in annotation. Such terms appeared mostly in a title of the item. About 20% of tags were distinctive from annotation.