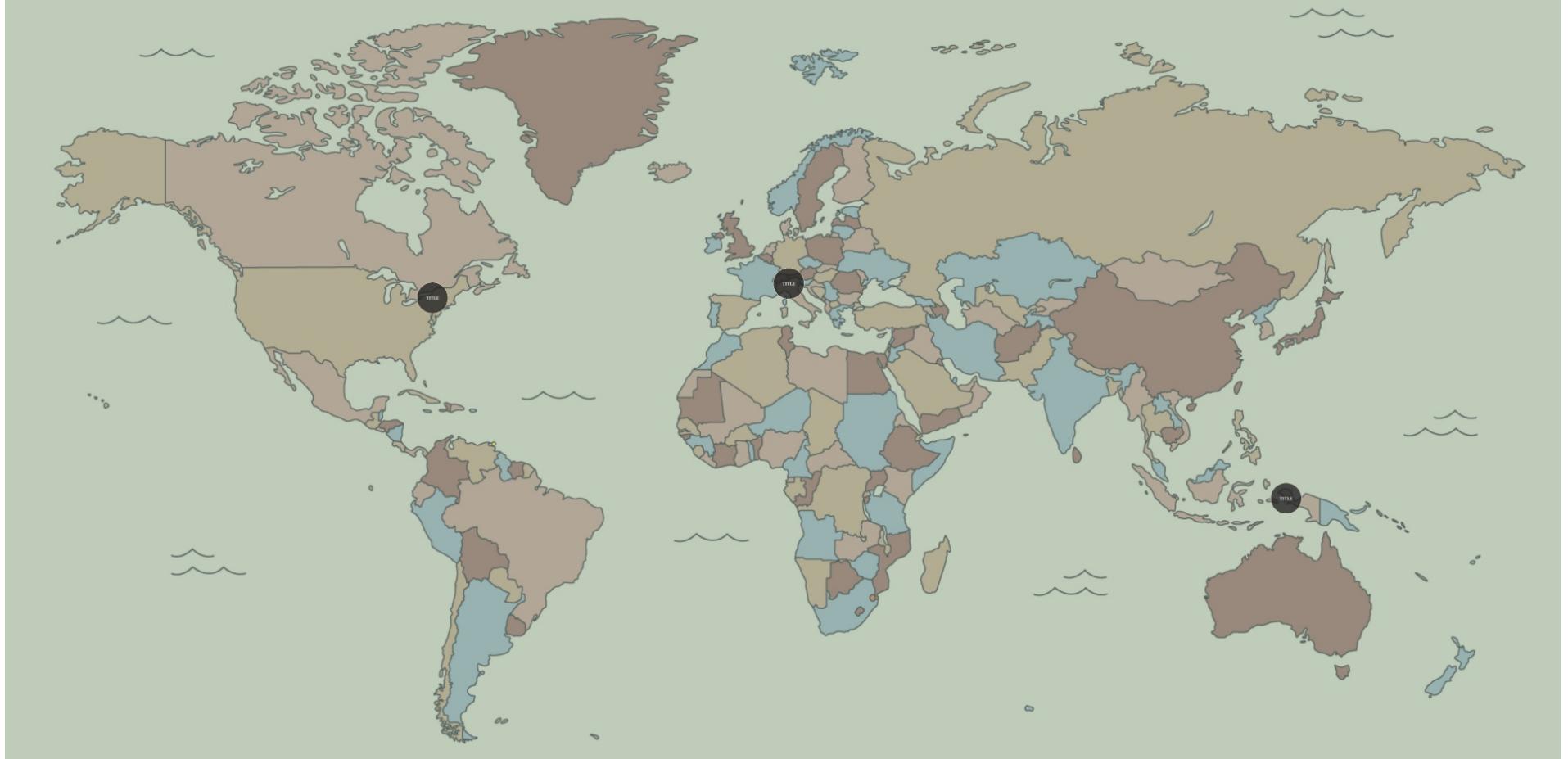


Letters from my Grandfather



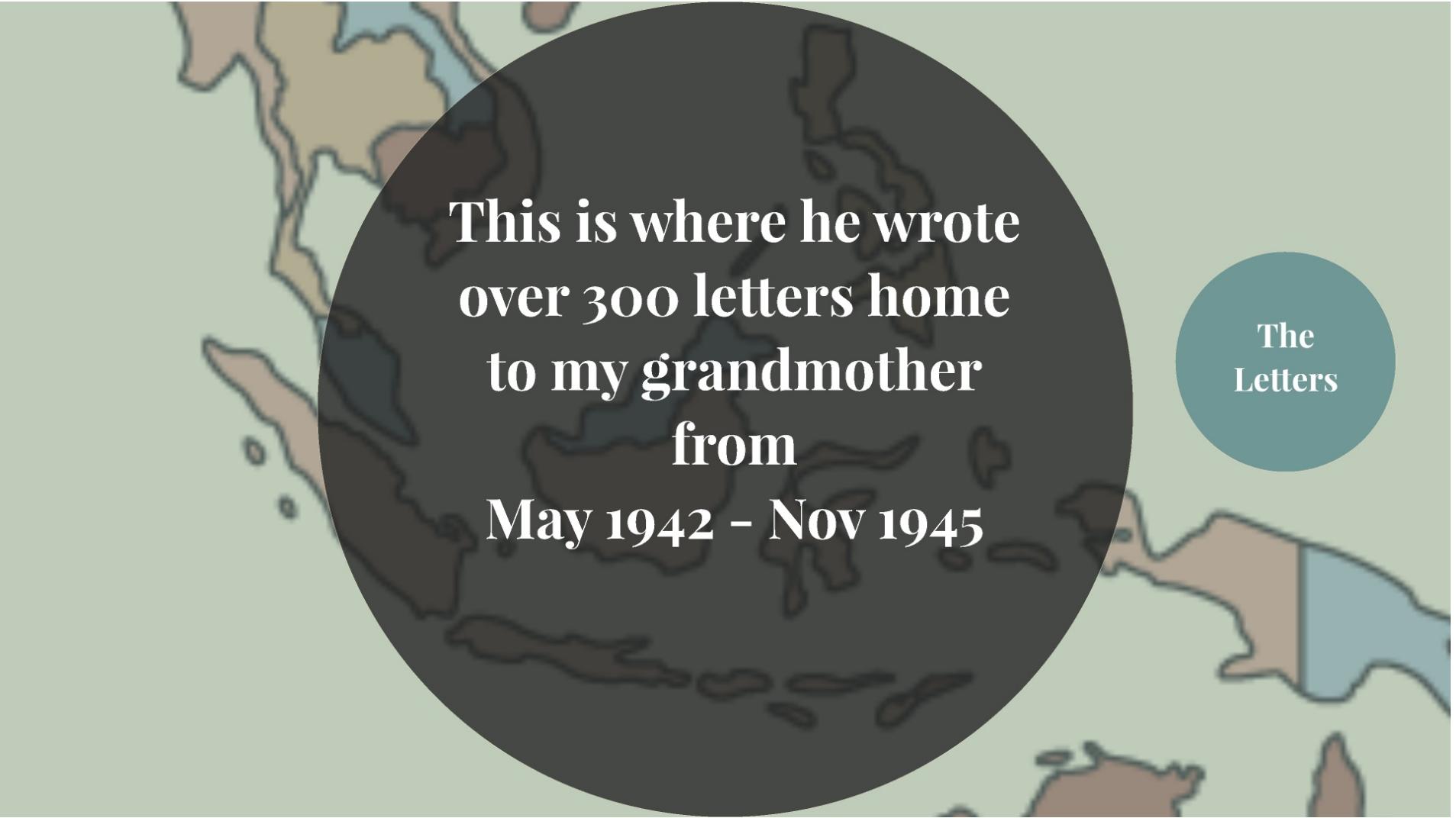


Silvio Tontar

Born in Italy 1907

Moved to the U.S.
in 1935





This is where he wrote
over 300 letters home
to my grandmother
from
May 1942 - Nov 1945



The
Letters

Data and Process

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Writing and receiving letters was a huge motivator for troops

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Used vader sentiment analyzer to understand how he felt over time

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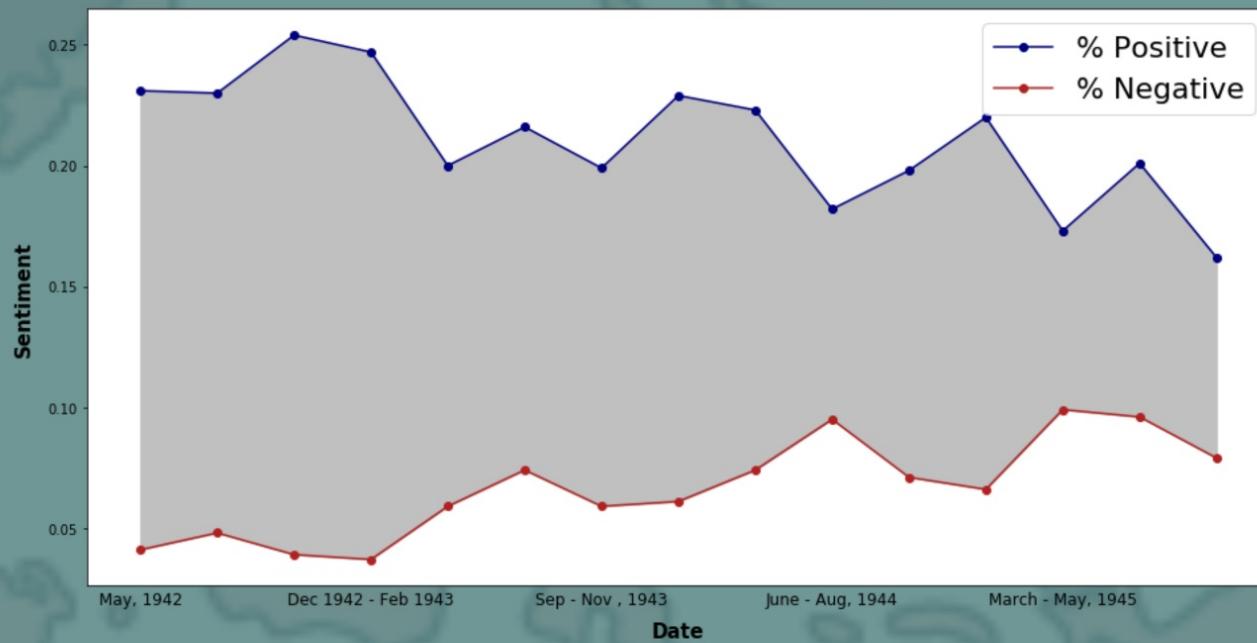
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Topic Modeling to find abstract themes in his writing

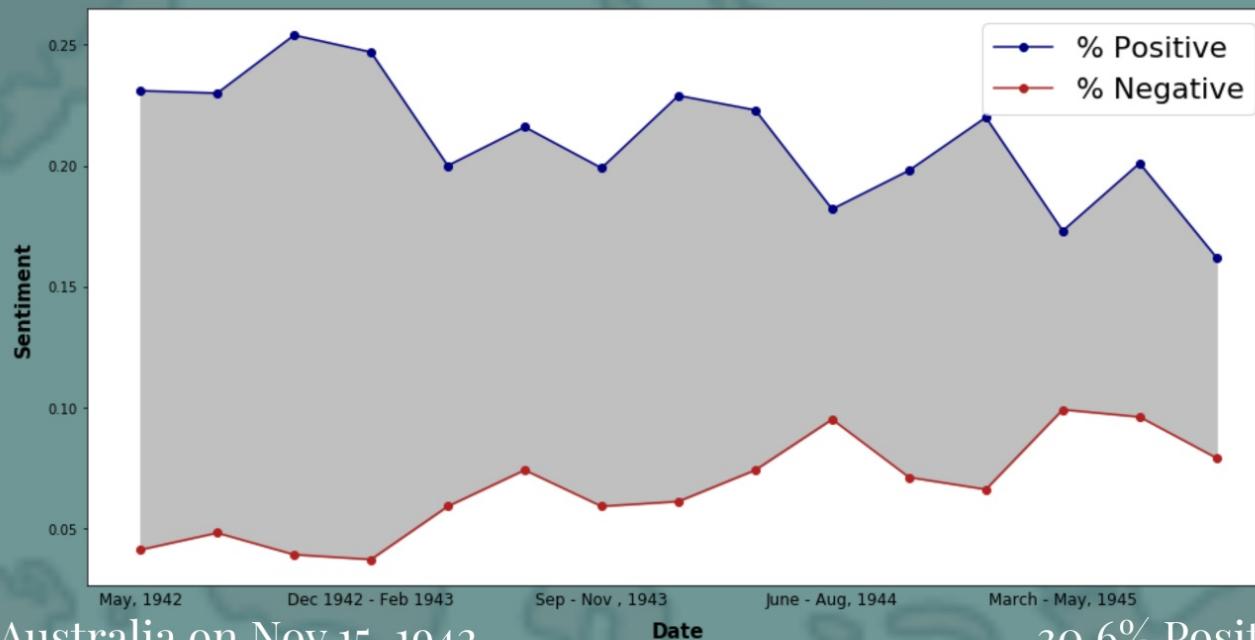
Letters were generally positive

Letter Sentiment - Quarterly



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Letter Sentiment - Quarterly



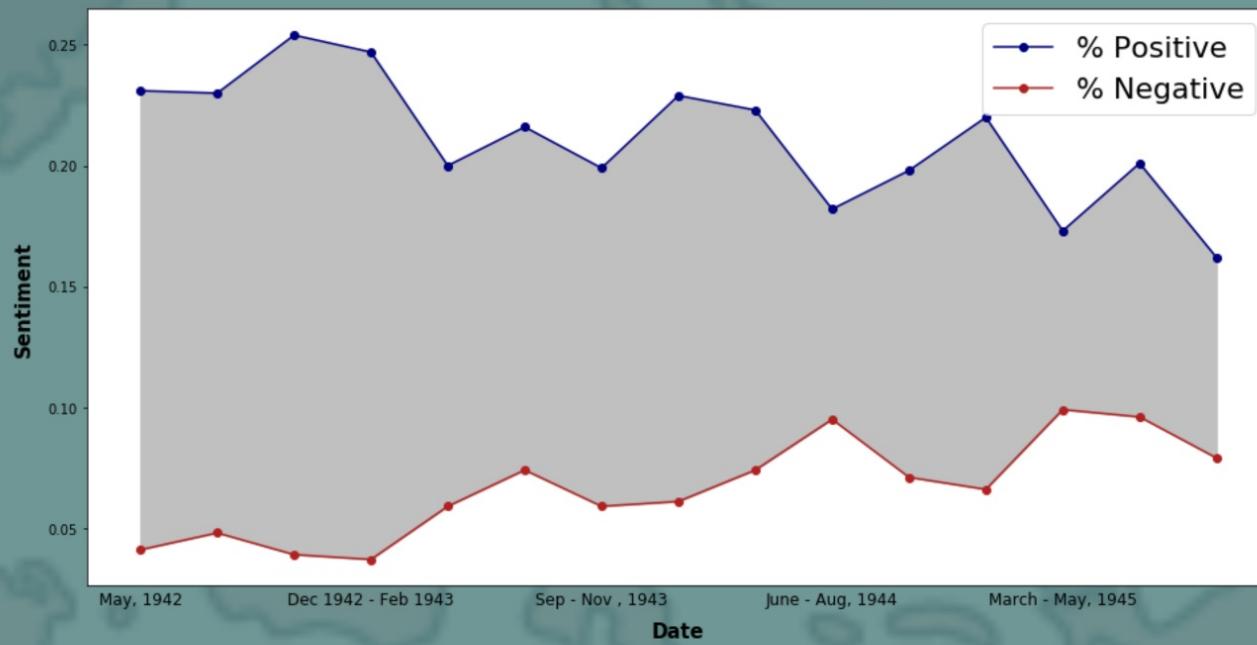
Written in Australia on Nov 15, 1942

30.6% Positive

...I hope this letter finds you in the same healthy condition as I am as it leaves me. I hope your cold is over and the first and last of this winter. On November 11th, I received my birthday fruitcake that you sent me a long, long time ago. it was excellent. I have to congratulate you. It was not only good but well preserved. I made a meal out of it and shared it with my friends...

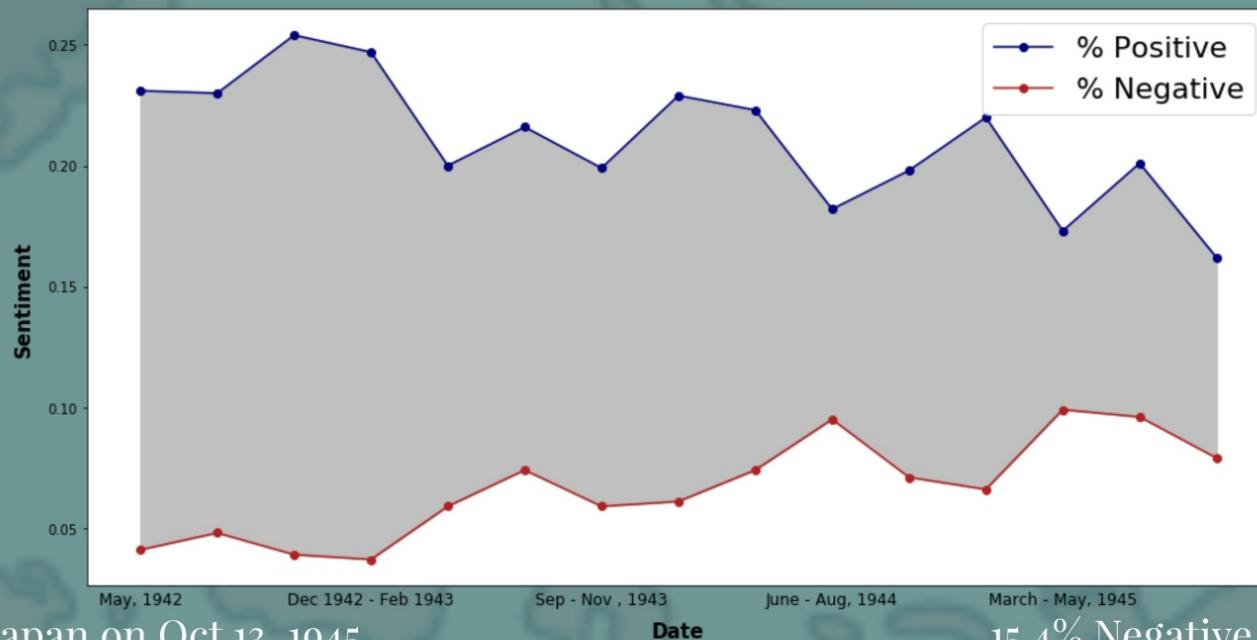
Letters were generally positive

Letter Sentiment - Quarterly



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Letter Sentiment - Quarterly



Written in Japan on Oct 13, 1945

15.4% Negative

I don't like Japan. there is too much suffering, too much misery, too much struggling to live. Yesterday, I saw what once was the city of kure. I only saw a vast mass of rubbish, of buried ruins with a wall or chimney standing here and there. what a scene of desolation!



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Topic 1: Duty

war, hospital, expect, medical, overseas

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Topic 2: Comfort/Normalization

christmas, picture, morning, went, dinner

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union telegram, western union,
western union telegram, western, union

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Topic 4: Conflict/Internal Struggle

jap, island, native, philippine, rain

NMF found six interesting topics

Topic 1: Duty

war, hospital, expect, medical, overseas

Topic 3: Money

union telegram, western union,
western union telegram, western, union

Topic 5: Travel by Sea

ship, sea, land, typhoon, calm

Topic 2: Comfort/Normalization

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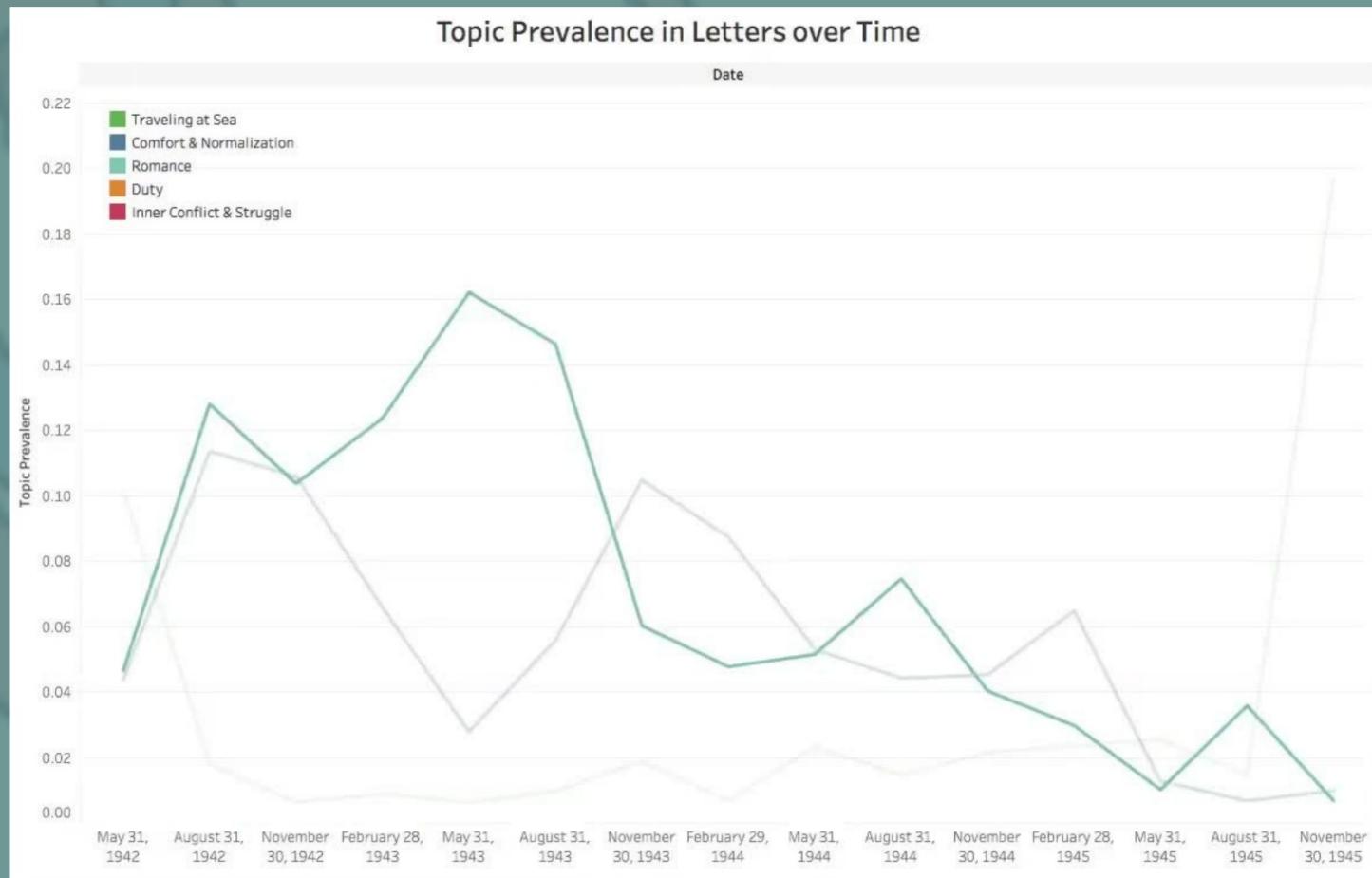
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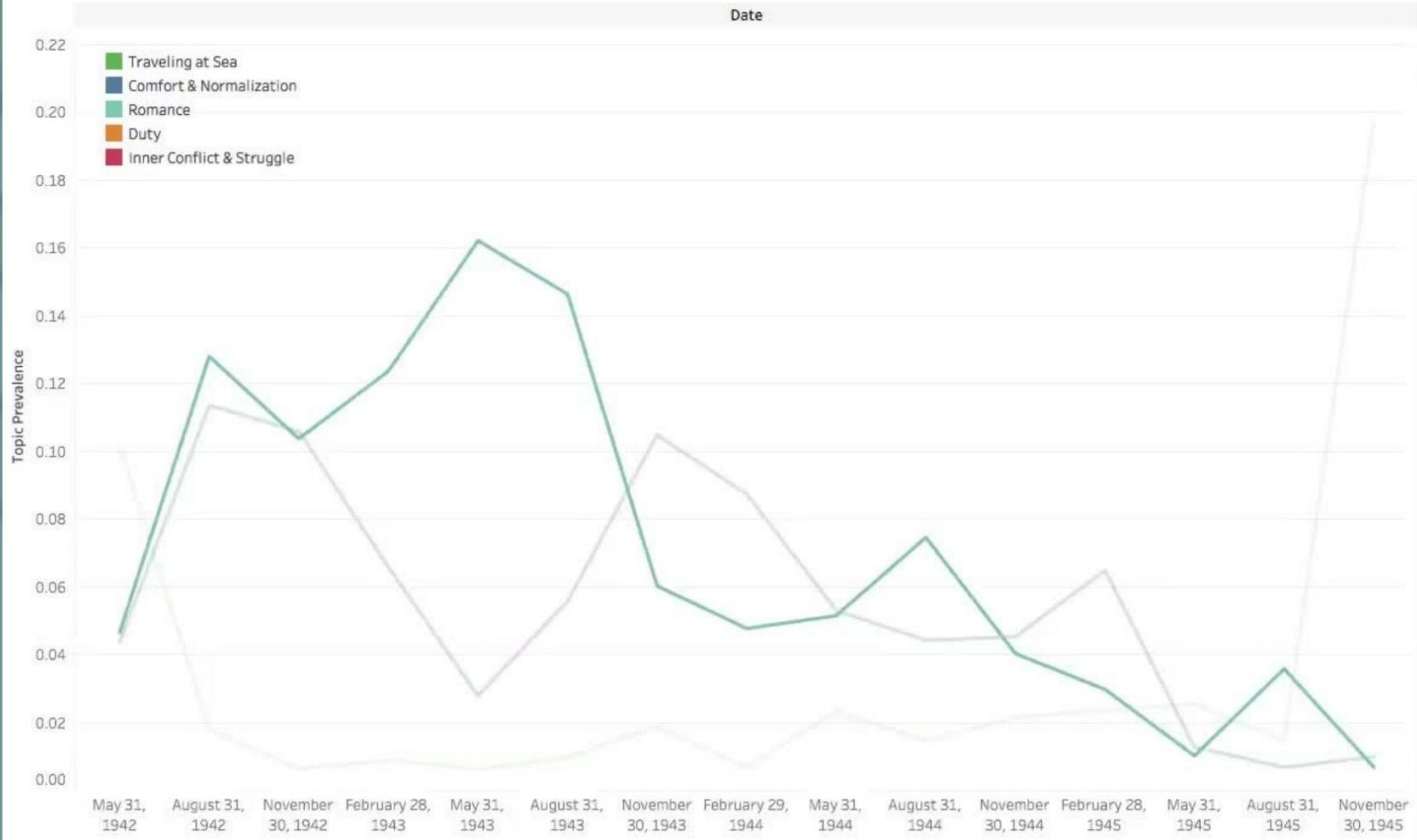
jap, island, native, philippine, rain

Topic 6: Romance

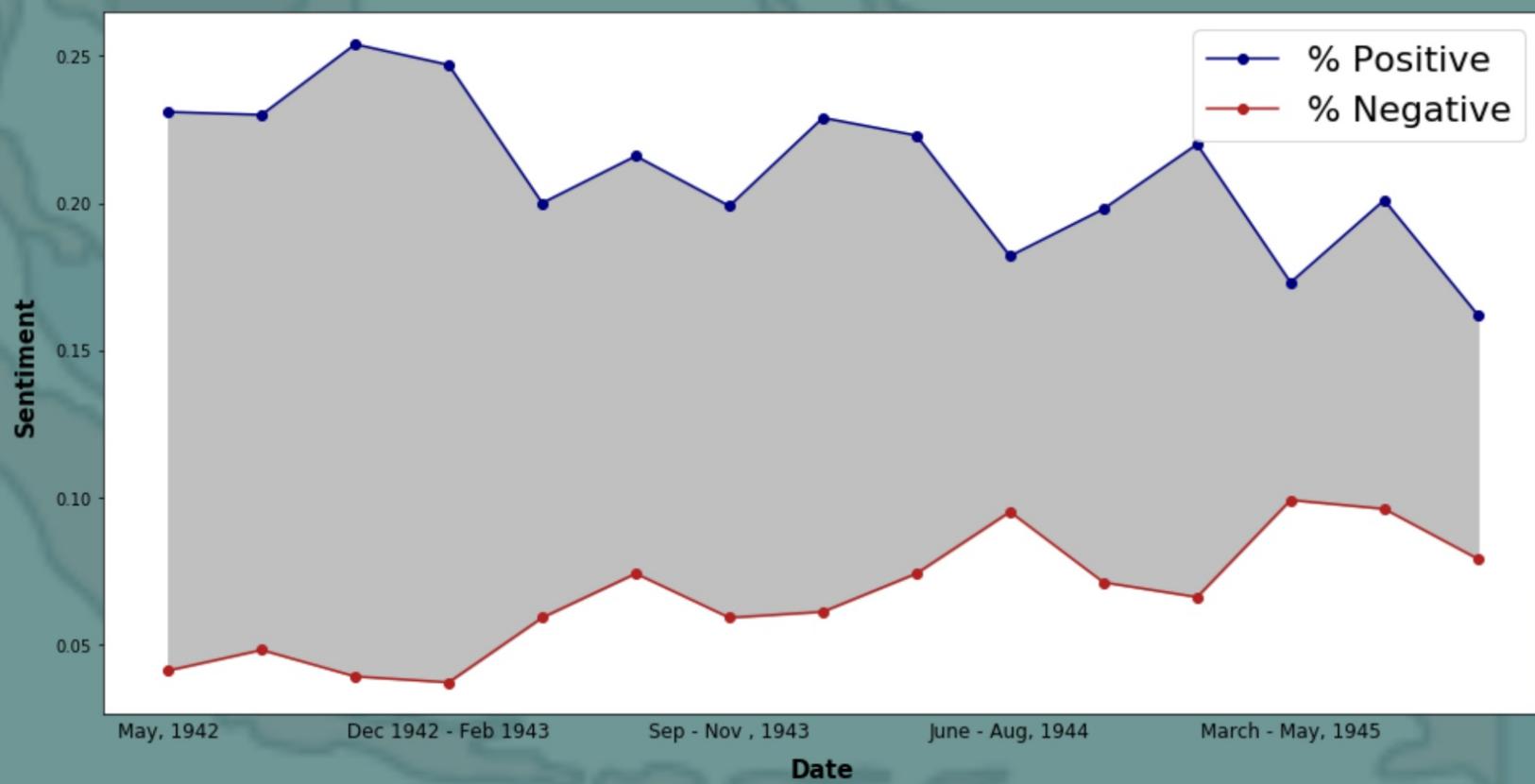
birthday, wife, beloved, send, happy



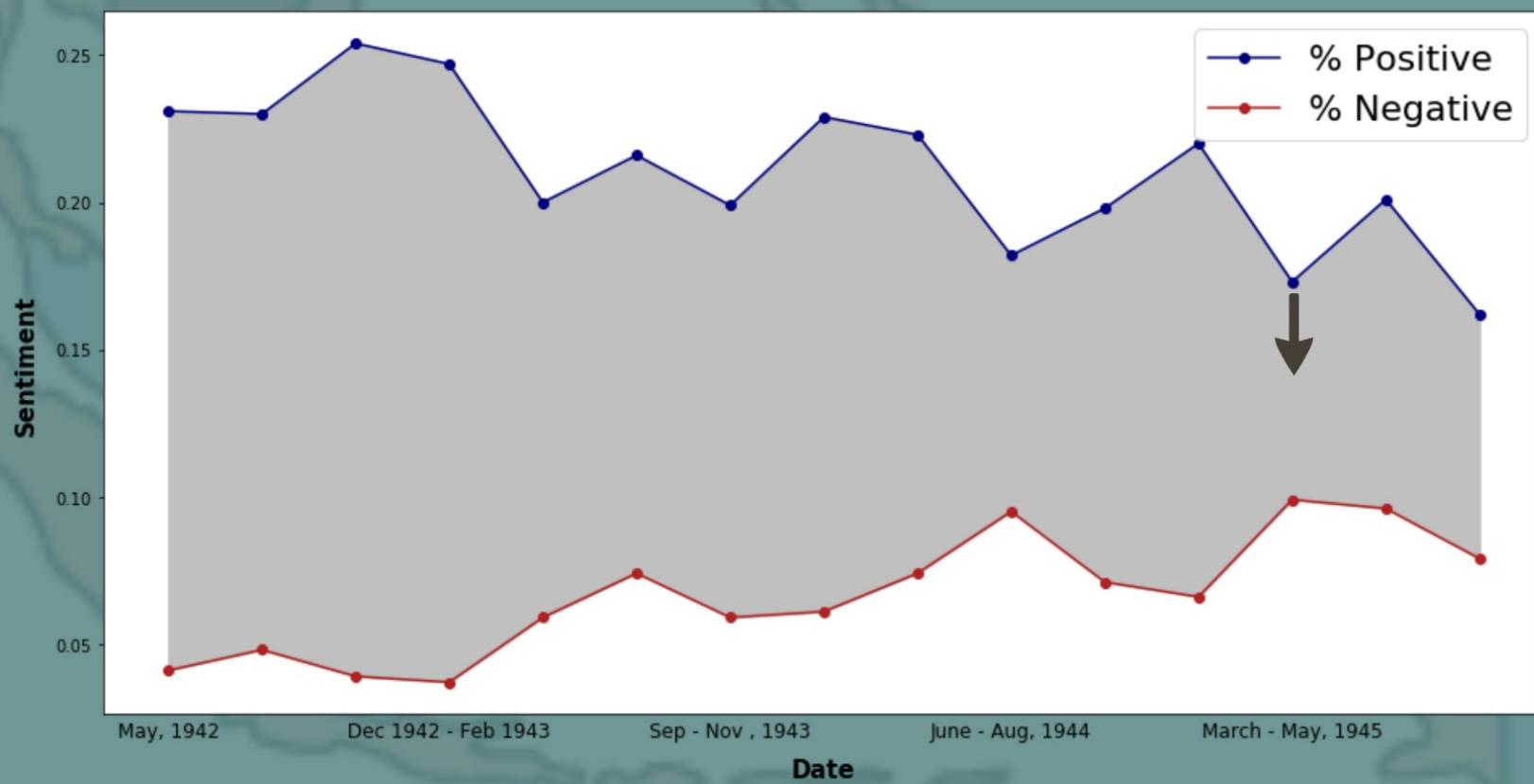
Topic Prevalence in Letters over Time



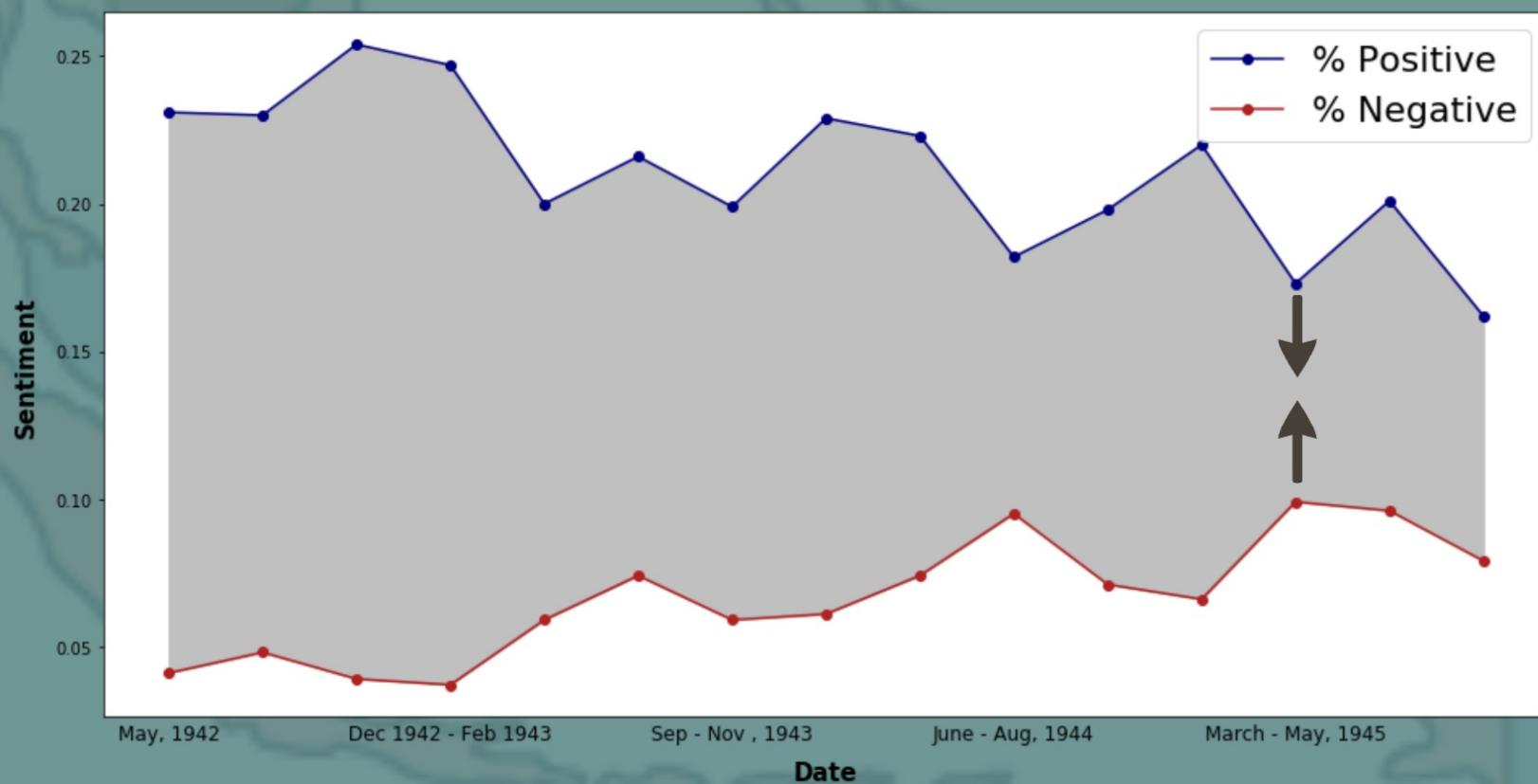
Letter Sentiment - Quarterly



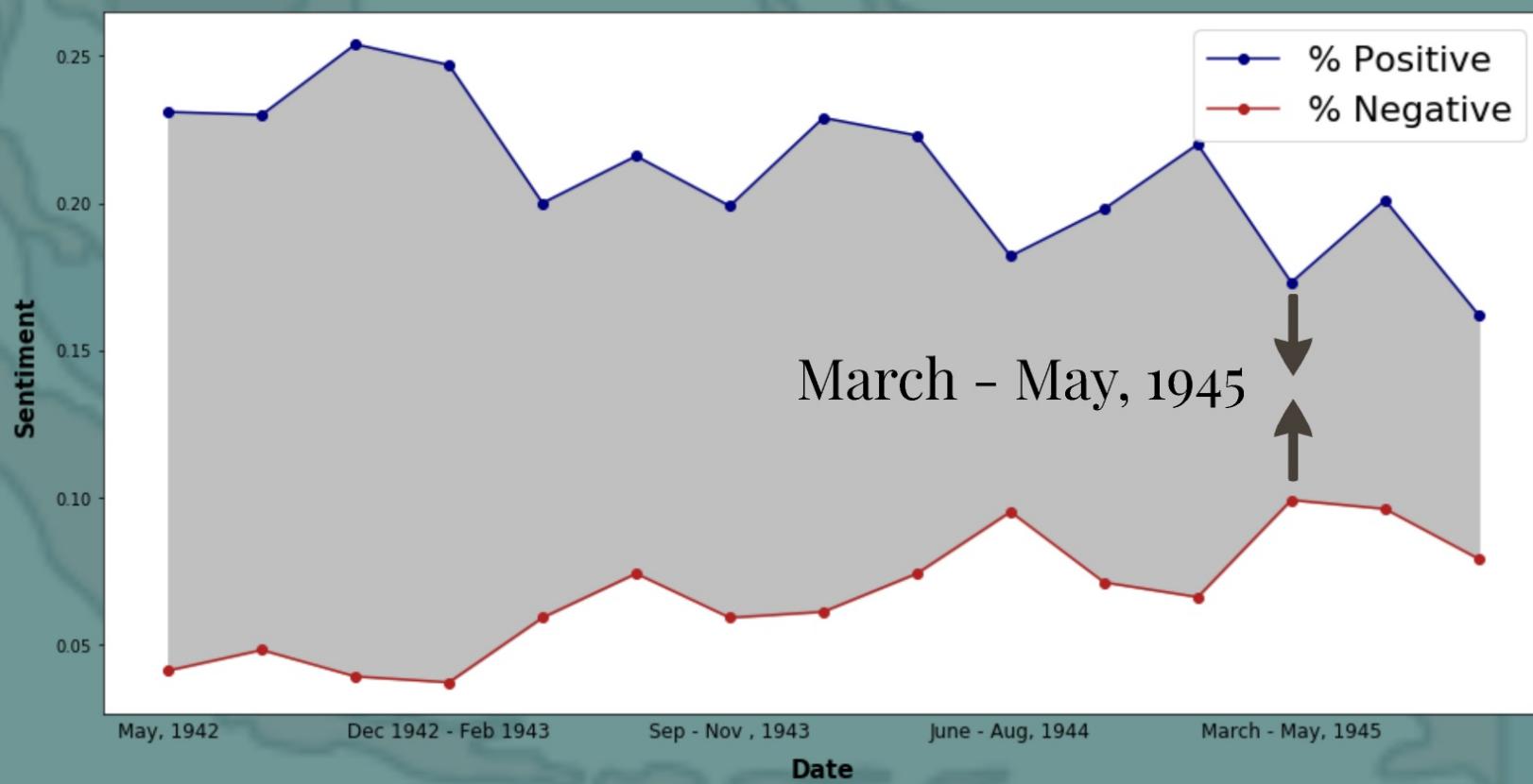
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Struggle/Inner Conflict

from April 9, 1945 written in Philippines

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...some places I had to crawl up and down steep mountains. I had to wade belt deep in rivers and creeks. I got wet and slept more than one night in the rain...

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...some places I had to crawl up and down steep mountains. I had to wade belt deep in rivers and creeks. I got wet and slept more than one night in the rain...

...I have met many Filipinos and heard their gruesome experiences under Jap rule, the people are ragged...



From "Most Romanic Letter" written April 18, 1943

...It's a great feeling to know that when I save a man from certain death I'll make somebody in the states that I never saw and never will see very happy. It's a feeling that no money can buy. It partially compensates for the hardship and discomfort a doctor goes through. I am glad and willing to do my part. I hope they will consider it and give me a break so that I can go home soon and be with the best lady in the whole world, my beloved wife...



Thank you

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