

12/23. A police officer said to me: "Why waste words on this sort of person? Let's beat him to death and dig a hole to bury him in and be done with it. How lucky we've got a place to put him away here."
 @tengbiao, describing his detention after visiting Fan Yafeng's mother in Beijing

2/15. "If you don't let us get on with our work in peace," they said, "we won't let you get on with anything. No, don't argue; this is the Communist Party's China."
 @litiantian on her questioning by the Domestic Security Department officials

2/15 Anonymous Twitter post calling for a Jasmine Revolution in China

2/19. "In the future, anyone who is invited to 'drink tea' should not hope to drink jasmine tea."
 @tengbiao

2/22. "Please keep an eye out for our friends, Teng Biao, Ran Yunfei, Jiang Tianyong, Tang Jitian etc. – in this defeated cynical society, they are our era's rare generous and righteous people."
 @zhiyongxu

3/11. "Under house arrest by the police for more than 20 days, without due process, without telling me what laws I've violated – how can the police illegally block one's door with such brazenness?"
 @lhplawer (Li Heping)

4/21. "I am well, please rest assured my friends. I am not prepared to accept any media interviews on the matter, please forgive me."
 @jtyong1 (Jiang Tianyong)

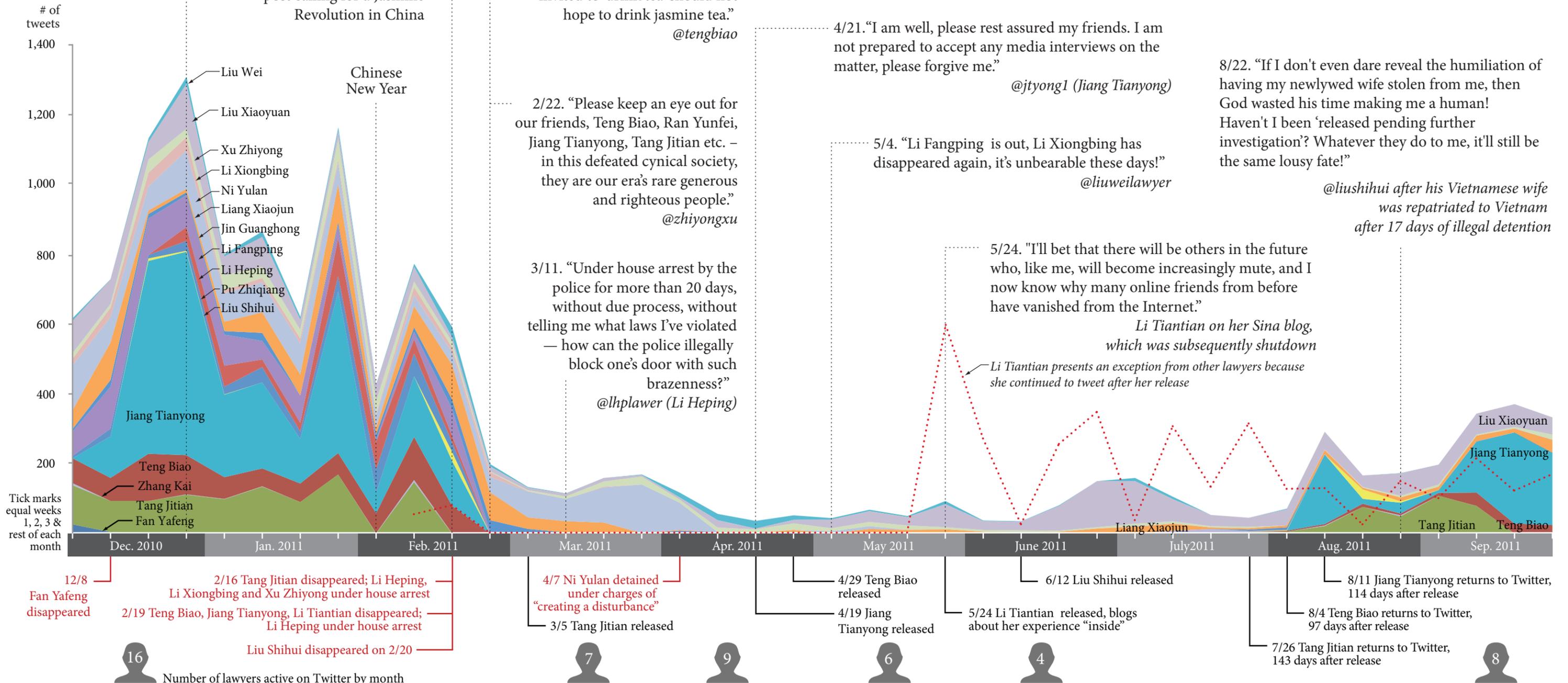
5/4. "Li Fangping is out, Li Xiongbing has disappeared again, it's unbearable these days!"
 @liuweilawyer

5/24. "I'll bet that there will be others in the future who, like me, will become increasingly mute, and I now know why many online friends from before have vanished from the Internet."
 Li Tiantian on her Sina blog, which was subsequently shutdown
 Li Tiantian presents an exception from other lawyers because she continued to tweet after her release

8/22. "If I don't even dare reveal the humiliation of having my newlywed wife stolen from me, then God wasted his time making me a human! Haven't I been 'released pending further investigation'? Whatever they do to me, it'll still be the same lousy fate!"
 @liushihui after his Vietnamese wife was repatriated to Vietnam after 17 days of illegal detention

LAWYERS TWEETING THE 2011 CRACKDOWN

Although Twitter is currently blocked in China by the Great Firewall, users can access it through censorship circumvention software. Twitter can therefore be a platform on which netizens communicate with and meet like-minded individuals. China's rights lawyers have used Twitter to disseminate information about their cases as well as beleaguered colleagues and personal encounters with Chinese authorities, describing their experiences in detention and house arrest. The graphic below traces the tweets of 16 of the most vocal lawyers from December 2010 to September 2011. The silence of these lawyers on Twitter following the 2011 Crackdown demonstrates one aspect of its chilling effect on that community.



Tick marks equal weeks 1, 2, 3 & rest of each month

12/8 Fan Yafeng disappeared
 2/16 Tang Jitian disappeared; Li Heping, Li Xiongbing and Xu Zhiyong under house arrest
 2/19 Teng Biao, Jiang Tianyong, Li Tiantian disappeared; Li Heping under house arrest
 Liu Shihui disappeared on 2/20

4/7 Ni Yulan detained under charges of "creating a disturbance"
 3/5 Tang Jitian released

4/29 Teng Biao released
 4/19 Jiang Tianyong released

5/24 Li Tiantian released, blogs about her experience "inside"
 6/12 Liu Shihui released

7/26 Tang Jitian returns to Twitter, 143 days after release
 8/4 Teng Biao returns to Twitter, 97 days after release
 8/11 Jiang Tianyong returns to Twitter, 114 days after release

16 Number of lawyers active on Twitter by month

7

9

6

4

8