

Was there a plan for Jewish extermination in Shanghai  
under Japanese military rule?

— Around Mitsugi Shibata and Josef Meisinger —

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In the exhibition gallery of Sydney Jewish Museum, the images of two Japanese 'Righteous' hang next to each other: one is Chiune Sugihara (1900-86) now famous the world over, and the other is Mitsugi Shibata (1910-77) who, in contrast, has remained entirely obscure even to the Japanese public. Much of the literature produced to date on Jewish residents in wartime Shanghai, however, has celebrated Shibata for saving over 20,000 Shanghai Jews from an egregious extermination plan, ostensibly elaborated by S. S. Colonel Josef Meisinger.

Far from refuting the humanitarian aspects of Shibata's actions, this article attempts to reconstruct the events in which he was involved in a different way to that of existing works, notably *The Fugu Plan* (1979) by Marvin Tokayer and Mary Shwartz.

Using testimony left by Shibata's widow as well as some diplomatic archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, the present account will provide a unique insight, from within Japan, into the reality of the ambiguous 'Shibata Affair', which took place during the summer of 1942 in Shanghai.