

Selma Mayer, née Giesenow, was born on 05.03.1879 in Schwerin. She was the youngest daughter of Malvine Giesenow, née Ascher, and Meir Giesenow, who had married in 1872. After the death of her husband, Malvine Giesenow moved to Berlin, where she lived until her death on November 12, 1910.

Selma Mayer, née Giesenow, married Hugo Mayer in Berlin on 11/17/1903 (see biography of Hugo Mayer). They lived in an apartment at Barbarossastr. 32 in Berlin Wilmersdorf. Their daughter Helene Mayer was born in Berlin on 10/9/1904.

Her husband Hugo Mayer was a merchant and owned a metal goods factory and stamping shop since 1906, initially at Oranienstraße 34, and since the 1920s at Köpenickerstraße 114 in Berlin-Luisenstadt (today Kreuzberg). The "Metallwarenfabrik und Stanzerei Hugo Mayer" produced pressed, drawn, stamped articles using "electroplating, soldering eyelet tinning, and increasingly components and accessory parts for the emerging radio and broadcasting industry. It was a widely known specialty company that also exported to European countries.

Selma Mayer was instrumental in the factory management. She handled commercial matters on her own responsibility and had power of attorney. Her duties included bookkeeping, payroll, canvassing customers and taking orders. She also negotiated with banks.

From 1933 onwards, Selma and Hugo Mayer were increasingly exposed to harassment by the national socialists as Jews, as was their company, due to its Jewish ownership. Hugo Mayer was therefore forced to sell the factory on July 28, 1936. Payment of the purchase price was immediately blocked by the Berlin-Schöneberg tax office.

The daughter Helene Mayer emigrated to Palestine in 1936 without her parents. Hugo and Sema Mayer could not imagine leaving for Israel because they saw insurmountable difficulties in rebuilding their factory there. Instead, in 1938, they emigrated as political refugees via Italy to Brussels, Belgium. There Hugo Mayer and his wife hoped to start a new factory. However, they and her husband Hugo Mayer were arrested in Brussels, which was occupied by the national socialists, because they were Jews, and on 09/10/1942 they were taken to the collection camp at the Dossin barracks in Mechelen (Malines), Belgium. On 12.09.1942 they were deported by the national socialists from the assembly camp with transport IX to Koźle (Kozel), today Poland, and from there to Auschwitz-Birkenau.

There are no documents on the death of Selma Mayer. Selma and Hugo Mayer were declared dead by the Berlin-Schöneberg District Court on December 21, 1942. In view of her advanced age, there is much to suggest that she - if she survived the transport - was murdered immediately after arrival in Auschwitz-Birkenau on 14.09.1942.