

would bring her recognition and renown. When she read an advertisement sponsored by the Turkish government stating that what happened was not a genocide, as Armenians claim, but a civil war between Turks and Armenians, she was outraged. She remembered a manuscript that her mother's best friend, Vergeen Meghrouni, had entrusted to her twenty years earlier, before she died in 1975, asking her to prepare it for publication. Mae was the only writer Vergeen knew. The manuscript contained Vergeen's life story, focusing on her experience during the years of the Genocide and how she survived. Mae set to work. The result was *Vergeen: A Survivor of the Armenian Genocide*,³⁴ a book that received well-deserved accolades for its author-editor. Some reviewers considered it the Armenian version of Anne Frank's Diary.³⁵ The book was Derdarian's powerful response to Turkish denial.

Mae Derdarian was born in Detroit, Michigan. She lived a productive professional life before and after her retirement in 1985 from her position as director of public relations and education for United Community Services. A resolution by the Washtenaw County (Michigan) Board of Commissioners in 2008 honoring her years of dedicated service provides ample evidence of her multiple accomplishments.

The Turkish notice denying the Armenian Genocide which galvanized Derdarian into publishing Vergeen's memoir also provoked her to quote Adolf Hitler's infamous statement as an

³⁴ Mae M. Derdarian, *Vergeen: A Survivor of the Armenian Genocide* (Los Angeles: Atmos Press, 1997).

³⁵ In an important monograph, *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2006), Adam Jones selected Vergeen Meghrouni's story as a case study in his chapter on "The Armenian Genocide." See "One Woman's Story: Vergeen," pp. 109–11.