

I was always kept away from mournful events and sadness, not to disturb my so happy and cheerful inner world. When later on in life, I had close friends who talked about their many relatives and big family, I asked my mother why we don't have a relative from my father's side. She made a long pause and answered, "Your dad was an orphan."¹

That confession made her life miserable and drove her to dig deeper. But again, not enough was confided in her. She confesses that sometimes she was afraid to learn more:

Festive days were always emotional for me. I waited with fear for the moment when... My father's robust voice filled the air with "Kanché krounk, kanché."² These were moments of nightmare for me. My father was in pain. That was not a song, but a prayer, a reunion with his lost loved ones. I would wish the song to end. Then, his voice would begin to tremble. He would swallow his tears silently. A suffering that seemed to never end.³

Anelka's testimony about her father's outbursts during happy family get-togethers is not an uncommon phenomenon. Earlier we discussed a similar experience retold by Mehmed

¹ Anelka Karmirian, "Hayrs [My father], Arpiar Markaryan," Montreal, 2005, in Der Markaryan, *Ardzagank yev Antsorde* (2006), p. 229.

² This is a popular song about migrants calling the crane to bring news of their loved ones far away. The first stanza goes like this:

*Kanché, krounk, kanché, kani garoun é,
Gharibneru sirte gound-gound aroun é....
Akh im sirts aroun é.*

A rough translation would be, "Sing o crane, sing insofar as it's Spring / Blood is the hearts of migrants.... Ah, blood is my heart." Here, blood signifies sorrow.

³ Karmirian, "Hayrs, Arpiar Markaryan," p. 232.