—Kurmanji Kurdish—
A Reference Grammar
with Selected Readings

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PREFACE

KURDISH BELONGS to the Western Iranian group of the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European family. The two principal branches of modern literary Kurdish are (1) Kurmanji, the language of the vast majority of Kurds in Turkey, Syria, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, and of a few in Iraq and Iran, the area designated by Kurdish nationalists as "North Kurdistan" *(Kurdistana Bakûr)*,[1] with an estimated fifteen to seventeen million speakers, and (2) Sorani, the language of most Kurds in Iraq (four to six million speakers) and Iran (five to six million speakers), the area designated as "South Kurdistan" *(Kurdistana Başûr)*. Although the two languages are closely related, Kurmanji and Sorani are not mutually intelligible and differ at the basic structural level as well as in vocabulary and idiom. Since all varieties of Kurdish are not only closely related to Persian but have also been mas-

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[1]The line dividing Kurmanji from Sorani runs roughly diagonally from northeast to southwest. The extreme northwest of Iran and the northernmost tip of Iraq fall into the Kurmanji-speaking area. An article in *Hawar* (No. 2 [1932], p. 9) explains the geographical distribution as follows: "La langue Kurde se divise en trois dialectes principaux: 1- Le dialecte du Nord, 2- Le dialecte du Sud, 3- Le dialecte du Nord-Ouest. (1) Le dialecte du nord est parlé par tous les Kurdes du Kurdistan occupé par les turcs, par les Kurdes de la Caucasie jusqu'à Kere-Bax [Qarabagh], par ceux de la république d'Erivan, par les Kurdes de la Syrie, par une partie des Kurdes de l'Irak habitant le Mont Sindjar et la contrée située au nord d'une ligne partant du sud du Sindjar par Mosil, et atteignant à l'est la ville de Rewandiz, ensuite par les Kurdes de la Perse habitant le nord et l'ouest du lac de Urmî, par les Kurdes du Khorasan, au nord-est de la Perse…. (2) Le dialecte du sud est parlé par les Kurdes de l'Irak et de la Perse à partir du sud de la ligne Mosil–Rewandiz et du lac de Urmî vers le sud et sud-est, jusqu'aux limites méridionales des Kurdes Bextiyarî. (3) Le dialecte Nord-ouest est le dialecte des Kurdes Dumilî. Du Dumilî on ne peut pas tracer une limite fixe quelconque, parce que trop melangé avec les Kurdes Qurdmanc parlant le dialecte du Nord le Qurdmancî. Tout de même les points de condensation de ce dialecte sont: Dêrsîm, Palo, Genc, Çepekçûr, Maden, Pîran, Egil, Sîwereq, Pêçar, Çermiq."

sively influenced by Persian, the dominant literary and cultural language of the area for the last millennium, Kurdish is best approached with a knowledge of Persian, and for that reason reference to Persian syntax has been freely made throughout the presentation of the grammar.

Sorani has been the second official language of Iraq since the creation of that country after World War I and has many decades of literary activity behind it. Kurmanji, which was given its present written form by Jeladet Ali Bedir-Khan in the early 1930's, is still far from being a unified, normalized, or standardized language. For historical and political reasons it has not been a written means of communication in the largest area in which it is spoken, and only recently has publication in Kurmanji begun in earnest—and that mostly among émigré communities in Europe, Sweden in particular. With the abundance of regional dialects, it is not possible to give a description of all the variants that may be encountered, although every effort has been made to describe the main ones that occur in the written language. There are, for example, regions in which the umlauted *ü* of Turkish is a regular feature of the spoken language, but it is not indicated in the writing system. There are areas in which Kurdish has become so inextricably entangled with Turkish and/or Arabic and/or Persian that the grammatical structure of the language has been affected, while the Kurmanji of former Soviet areas like Azerbaijan and Armenia, which has been written in Cyrillic letters since the late 1930's, has been influenced by Russian.[1] The language described herein is, to the extent possible, what has been adopted as a norm by the majority of writers.

The readings, chosen to give samples of a broad range of prose writing, are provided with running vocabulary glosses beneath the texts, and the glosses in the readings are also contained in the Kurdish–English vocabulary at the end of the book. Words considered to be absolutely basic vocabulary are not glossed in the notes, since it is assumed that these words either are known already or will be actively acquired by looking them up in the

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[1] Like most regional and ethnic languages of the early Soviet Union that did not have a traditional alphabet and a long history of literature, Kurmanji was given a Latin-based alphabet in 1929, but it, like the others, was Cyrillicized by Stalin's decree in 1937. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, Azerbaijan has switched to a modified Latin alphabet, and it is assumed that the little Kurdish written in Azerbaijan has followed suit. Kurdish produced in Armenia is now written in both Cyrillic and a slightly modified form of the normal Latin Kurmanji letters (see the conversion table for Arabic and Cyrillic on p. 80).

vocabulary in the back. Generally words are not glossed more than once in the notes because any word encountered a second time should be learned actively. Words are glossed after the first instance only if they are rare enough to warrant being ignored for acquisition. The Kurdish–English vocabulary contains over 3,000 words, which should represent a good basic working vocabulary for the language.

Kurmanji has been and is written in a variety of alphabets. Foremost today is the Kurmanji used in Turkey and Europe, which is written in a modified Turkish Latin alphabet. In Armenia and Azerbaijan,[1] Kurmanji is written in Cyrillic letters, and enough readings in Cyrillic Kurmanji have been given, together with a brief analysis of the main differences between Turkey Kurmanji and ex-Soviet Kurmanji, to enable the student to develop a facility in reading that medium. There were once Kurdish-speaking Armenians in the Ottoman Empire, and they wrote Kurmanji in the Armenian alphabet. With the exception of Syria, Kurmanji is not widely spoken in countries that use the Arabic alphabet, and since Syrian Kurds use the Latin script when they write Kurdish, the Arabic script is little used for modern Kurmanji. In the early days of literary Kurdish, however, when the Arabic alphabet was still widely known in Turkey and Latin-script Kurdish was new in Syria, Arabic was used in tandem with the Latin. Two articles by Jeladet Ali Bedir-Khan from early issues of the journal *Hawar*, when it was published in both alphabets, are given as examples. Some Iranian Kurdish journals include a few pages of Arabic-script Kurmanji for the Kurmanji-speaking Kurds who live in Iran, and a specimen of this type, a story by Perwîz Cîhanî, is given at the end of the reading selections both in the Sorani-based Arabic script in which it was printed in the Iranian Kurdish journal سروه *Sirwe* in 1990 and in the Latin Kurmanji in which it was re-printed in *Alole* (pp. 23–27), a collection of his stories published by Doz Yayınları in Istanbul in 2005. There are some minor differences between the two versions, and they are signaled by asterisks in the Latin text.

The readings, chosen to give a fair sample of the range of prose writing

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[1]The major concentrations of Kurdish population in the former Soviet Union are in Armenia and Azerbaijan. From 1923 to 1929 there was an autonomous Kurdish region in Azerbaijan called Kurdistana Sor (Red Kurdistan). There are a few Kurds in Georgia, and there is a Kurmanji-speaking Kurdish population of more than half a million people in northeastern Iran and Turkmenistan, to which they were exiled in the seventeenth century.

today, are provided with running glosses beneath the texts, and the glosses in the readings are also contained in the Kurdish–English vocabulary at the end of the book. Words considered to be absolutely basic vocabulary are not glossed in the notes, since it is assumed that these words either are known already or will be actively acquired as they occur. Generally words are not glossed more than once in the notes because any word encountered a second time should be learned actively. Words are glossed after the first instance only if they are considered rare enough to warrant being ignored for acquisition. The readings and biographical sketches of authors have been taken mainly from Mehmet Uzun, *Antolojiya Edebiyata Kurdî,* 2 vols. (Istanbul: Tümzamanlar Yayıncılık, 1995), which may be consulted for further reading. The readings in Cyrillic Kurmanji, which have not been glossed but have a separate vocabulary at the end of the book, have been taken from *R'ya T'eze*, a Kurdish newspaper published in Armenia.

For dictionaries of Kurmanji, the following may be consulted:

Chyet, Michael L. *Kurdish–English Dictionary*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003.

Галлиямов, Салават. Кордско–Башкордско–Англо–Русский Словарь. Ufa, 2000.

İzoli, D. *Ferheng Kurdi–Tırki Türkçe–Kürtçe*. Istanbul: Deng Yayınları, 1992. A comprehensive dictionary for those who know Turkish. Unfortunately the gender of Kurdish nouns is not indicated.

Курдоев, К. К. Курдско-Русский Словарь. Moscow, 1960.

Rizgar, Baran. *Kurdish–English English–Kurdish Dictionary*. London: M. F. Onen, 1993. With around 25,000 Kurdish words and phrases, this is a useful dictionary for reading.

Saadallah, Salah. *Saladin's English–Kurdish Dictionary*. Istanbul: Avesta, 2000. Contains around 80,000 entries.

Цаболов, Руслан Лазарович. Этимологический Словарь Курдсково Языка. Moscow: Восточная Литература, 2001.

For on-line and downloadable dictionaries and word lists for Kurdish and a variety of languages, see www.ferheng.org.

The Phonology of Kurmanji Kurdish

Alphabet and sounds. The Kurdish alphabet is based on the Turkish adaptation of the Latin alphabet, and for the most part words are written as they are pronounced, although there are several important features that are not indicated in the writing system. These are noted below. International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) equivalents are given in square brackets.

Vowels:

î	**û**
i	**u**
ê	**o**
e	**a**

î is like the 'ee' in 'beet,' IPA [i], as in *nîv* [niv] 'half.'

i is like the 'i' in 'bit,' IPA [ɪ] as in *dil* [dɪl] 'heart'; in closed syllables ending in *m, i* is often pronounced as a close central unrounded vowel [ɨ], i.e. very close to the Turkish *ı,* as in *vedixwim* [ˈvædɪxwɨm] 'I drink.'

ê is like the 'ai' in 'bait,' IPA [e], without the *y*-offglide of English, as in *hêz* [hez] 'power.'

e is like the 'a' in 'bat,' IPA [æ],[1] as in *berhem* [bærˈhæm] 'product,' except (1) in the sequence *ew,* where it is pronounced [ə] as in *ew* [əw] 'that' and *dewlet* [dəwˈlæt] 'state,' (2) when it is followed by *y* but not in the same syllable, in which case it is pronounced like the 'e' in 'bet' [ɛ], as in *odeya* [oˈdɛyɑ] 'room,' and (3) in post-stress positions, particularly word-finally, where it is pronounced [ɛ], as in *miróvek* [mɪˈro-

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[1] The [æ] pronunciation of this vowel is taken as standard; for many speakers, however, it is closer to [ɛ], the vowel of English 'bet,' in all environments.

vεk] 'a man' and *díçe* [ˈdɪtʃɛ] 'he goes.'

û   is like the 'oo' in 'boot,' IPA [u], as in *bûn* [bun] 'to be.'

u   is like the 'u' in 'put' and 'bull,' IPA [ʊ], as in *du* [dʊ] 'two'; the sequences *gu* and *ku* are pronounced by some as [gɯɛ] and [kɯɛ], particularly in closed syllables like *gur* 'wolf,' pronounced either [gɯɛɾ] or [gʊɾ].

o   is like the 'oa' in 'boat,' IPA [o], without the *w*-offglide of English, as in *nod* [nod] 'ninety.'

a   is like the 'a' in 'father' and 'balm,' IPA [ɑ], as in *bav* [bɑv] 'father.'

Consonants:

	bilabial	labiodental	dental/alveolar	palatal	velar	uvular	glotto-pharyngeal
plosive	**p, p̲**		**t, t̲**		**k, k̲**	**q**	
	b		**d**		**g**		
fricative		**f**	**s**		**x**		**h, h̲**
		v	**z**		**x̲**		**'**
			ş	**ç, ç̲**			
			j	**c**			
nasal	**m**		**n**				
approximate	**w**			**y**			
flap, trill			**r, r̲**				
lateral			**l**				

b   is the 'b' of English [b]

c   is pronounced like the 'j' in 'judge' [dʒ]

ç   is the aspirated 'ch' like the 'ch' in 'church' [tʃʰ] (see below)

ç̲   is the unaspirated 'ch' of English 'eschew' plus pharyngealization [tʃˤ] (see below)

d   is like the 'd' of English [d]

f   is like the 'f' of English [f]

g   is the hard 'g' of English, as in 'go' [g]

h   is like the 'h' of English [h]

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<u>h</u> is pronounced, in areas in which it occurs, like the ح of Arabic (a voiceless pharyngeal fricative, [ħ]); in areas where it is not so pronounced, it is not differentiated from *h*

j is the 'j' of French, the English 'g' in 'beige' [ʒ]

k is the aspirated 'k' of English 'key' [kʰ] (see below)

<u>k</u> is the unaspirated 'k' of English 'sky' plus pharyngealization [kˁ] (see below)

l is a liquid 'l' as in Persian, like the *l* in 'lee' [l]

m is the 'm' of English [m]

n is the 'n' of English [n]

p is the aspirated 'p' of English 'pie' [pʰ] (see below)

<u>p</u> is the unaspirated 'p' of English 'spy' plus pharyngealization [pˁ] (see below)

q is a voiceless uvular stop, like the Arabic ق [q]; it is pronounced like 'k' but farther back in the throat

r is a flap as in Persian and Italian [ɾ]; does not occur word-initially

<u>r</u> is a trill, like the 'rr' of Spanish [r]; all initial r's are trilled; the trilled *r* is only sporadically indicated in the orthography by *rr* (e.g. *pir̲* 'very,' which is sometimes written *pirr*), otherwise it is not indicated in the writing system

s is the 's' of English [s]

ş is pronounced like the 'sh' in 'ship' [ʃ]

t is the aspirated 't' of English 'tie' [tʰ] (see below)

<u>t</u> is the unaspirated 't' of English 'sty' plus pharyngealization [tˁ] (see below)

v is the 'v' of English [v]

w is the 'w' of English 'we' [w] except before *i, î,* and *ê,* when it is a close back unrounded semivowel [ɯ], like the 'u' in French *cuire* and *huit*

x is pronounced like the 'ch' in German 'Bach' and the Arabic خ, a voiceless uvular fricative [x]

<u>x</u> is a voiced uvular fricative [ɣ], the *ghayn* (غ) of Arabic; it is the voiced counterpart to *x*

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y   is the 'y' of English 'yes' [j]; also indicates the diphthongs *ay* and *ey*

z   is the 'z' of English [z]

'   is not part of the orthographic system, but it is given in the vocabulary to indicate the Arabic *'ayn* (ع). In parts of the Kurmanji-speaking area, particularly those closer to Arabic-speaking areas, the *'ayn* is pronounced as in Arabic (a voiced pharyngeal fricative, [ʕ]). Vowels pronounced with a preceding *'ayn* are marked with an underscore (*e* = *'e*, as in *ereb* 'Arab')

The aspirated and unaspirated stops.

p, **t**, **k**, and **ç** are aspirated stops, as in English 'pie,' 'tie,' 'key,' and 'chew'

p, **t**, **k**, and **ç** are unaspirated stops, as in English 'spy,' 'sty,' and 'ski,' and 'eschew,' and are accompanied by slight pharyngealization. They are not indicated in the writing system, and they are not universally observed by all speakers, but where they occur they contrast on the phonemic level. They are indicated in the this book by an underscore: cf. *pêlav* [pʰelɑv] 'wave' and *pêlav* [pˤelɑv] 'shoes,' *kal* [kʰɑl] 'unripe' and *kal* [kˤɑl] 'old man,' *tîn* [tʰin] 'thirst and *tîn* [tˤin] 'heat,' *çal* [tʃʰɑl] 'speckled' and *çal* [tʃˤɑl] 'pit, well'

Stress. All nouns and adjectives are lightly stressed on the final syllable. Most grammatical elements added to nouns (**-ek, -ê, -a**) are enclitic and thus unstressed *(miróv > miróvek, gúnd > gúndê, odé > odéya),* with the exception of the plural suffixes **-ên** and **-an**, which are stressed *(kúrd > kurdê´n, kurdán).*

The hierarchy of stress in verbs is as follows:

(1) The negative prefixes **na-** and **ne-**, as in *náçim* [ˈnɑtʃɨm] 'I don't go' and *néçû* [ˈnætʃu] 'he didn't go.'

(2) Preverbs like **ve-**, **hil-**, **da-**, and **wer-**, as in *védixwim* [ˈvædɨxwɨm] 'I drink,' *híldidin* [ˈhɪldɪdɪn] 'they lift,' *dáqurtand* [ˈdɑqʊrtˤɑnd] 'swallowed it,' and *wérgerand* [ˈwærgærɑnd] 'translated it.'

(3) The modal prefixes **di-** and **bi-**, as in *díaxiftim* [ˈdɪɑxɪftɨm] 'I was speaking,' and *bíaxive* [ˈbɪɑxɪvɛ] 'let him speak.'

(4) When there are no prefixes on finite verbal forms, the final syllable of the verb stem is stressed, as in *axíftine* [ɑˈxɪftɪnɛ] 'they have spoken.'

(5) The infinitive is stressed on the final syllable, as in *axiftín* [ɑxɪfˈtɪn] 'to speak.'

Orthographic variants. Some writers prefer to use the Turkish undotted 'ı' for 'i' and the dotted 'i' for 'î.' They write *dizanim* as *dızanım* and *zanîn* as *zanin.*

Doubled consonants. Doubled consonants are quite rare in Kurdish, and almost all the doubled consonants of Arabic and Persian loanwords are reduced to a single consonant, e.g. مـدت *muddat* > **mudet**, مـلا *mullâ* > **mele**, مؤسسه *mu'assasa* > **muesese**, and شـدت *shiddat* > **şidet**. The few double consonants that survive are in learned borrowings like **ummet** 'religious community,' **welle** 'by God,' **seff** 'class,' and **muswedde** 'draft copy.'

The furtive *i.* Kurdish does not tolerate all final consonant clusters. When an intolerable final consonant cluster appears, it is broken by the vowel *i*, called the 'furtive *i*,' which disappears when a vowel-initial enclitic or suffix is added to the word. Words like *aql* 'mind, intelligence,' *esl* 'origin,' *emr* 'age,' and *emr* 'order' are *aqil, esil, emir,* and *emir*[1] when by themselves or when followed by a consonant-initial suffix (*aqil* 'mind,' *kêmaqil* 'foolish,' *ew kêmaqil bû* 'he was foolish,' and *aqilmend* 'intelligent'). When followed by a vowel-initial enclitic or suffix the *i* is dropped, as in *aqlê te* 'your mind,' *ew kêmaql e* 'he is foolish,' *kêmaqlî* 'foolishness,' *bi eslê xwe* 'in one's origin, originally,' *emrê min* 'my age' and *emra serdar* 'commander's order.' The furtive *i* is indicated in the vocabulary by an italicized *i*, e.g. **aq*i*l, es*i*l, em*i*r, fêh*i*m**. Kurdish writers are not in agreement on the

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[1] *Aqil* 'mind' (with furtive *i*), from the Arabic عـقـل, is to be distinguished from the homograph *aqil* that means 'intelligent, reasonable' (from the Arabic عاقل). The latter is stable as *aqil* even in compounds (*aqilane* 'intelligently'). There are two words spelled *emir, emir* (a variant of *umr* عمر) 'age' and *emir* (from the Arabic امر) 'order'; they both contain furtives *i*'s.

writing of the furtive *i*, and many omit it, particularly when it is unstressed, i.e. some write *ez fêhim dikim* 'I understand' while others write *ez fêhm dikim*.

For practicing Kurdish pronunciation, there are stories with printed text and audio available on the internet at www.dibistanakurdi.com. For the stories, select "Çîrok" in the "Hilbijartî" list. The words in the stories are included in the vocabulary at the end of the book.

THE GRAMMAR OF KURMANJI KURDISH

SUBSTANTIVES

§ 1. The Noun. A Kurdish noun in the absolute state, i.e. without any ending of any kind, gives (1) the generic sense of the noun and (2) the definite sense. It is also the "lexical" form of the noun, i.e. the form in which a noun is given in a vocabulary list or dictionary. Thus, a noun like **kitêb** 'book' may, depending upon the context, mean 'books (in general)' or 'the book' (the one that has already been introduced). There are no articles of any kind in Kurdish.

§ 1.1. Gender. All Kurmanji nouns are either masculine or feminine. Each and every word must be learned along with its gender, and there is little helpful that can be said concerning determining gender, as grammatical gender appears to be randomly assigned. Beings that are male or female by nature are assigned to the corresponding grammatical gender class, and as a rule, the names of towns, cities, and countries are feminine; all abstract nouns ending in **-î** are feminine; all infinitives used as nouns are feminine; and nouns ending in vowels tend to be feminine.

Words borrowed from Arabic, which has gender, do not necessarily correspond to the gender assignment in Arabic. **Kitêb** 'book' is feminine in Kurdish; the Arabic word from which it is derived, كتاب *kitāb*, is masculine. Words borrowed from Persian and Turkish, neither of which has gender, are randomly assigned gender.

§ 1.2. Inflection. Nouns are inflected in four cases, nominative, oblique, construct, and vocative. The construct case will be treated in §4 below, and the vocative will be treated in §17.1.

There are no particular endings for the nominative, and the nominative

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plural is identical to the nominative singular. Nouns are actually masculine or feminine only in the singular; the plural is common, and there is no gender differentiation of plural nouns.

In the oblique case, feminine singular nouns add unstressed **-ê** (or **-yê** if the noun ends in a vowel; feminine nouns that end in **e** either add **-yê** or change the **e** to **ê**), unmodified masculine singular nouns do not change,[1] and all plural nouns add stressed **-an** (or **-yan** if the noun ends in a vowel). Words that end in **-î** change the **î** to **-iy-** before adding any endings. An example of a masculine noun is **mirov** 'man,' and examples of feminine nouns are **jin** 'woman' and **ode** 'room':

	NOMINATIVE		OBLIQUE
MASC. SING.	**miróv**	**+ —**	**miróv**
FEM. SING.	**jín**	**+ ê**	**jínê**
	odé	**+ yê**	**odéyê**
		or **e > ê**	**odê´**
PLURAL	**mirov**	**+ án**	**mirován**
	jín	**+ án**	**jinán**
	odé	**+ yán**	**odeyán**
	gundî´	**î > iyán**	**gundiyán**

The nominative case is used for (1) unmodified subjects and predicates of equational sentences (see §11)

Ode **paqij e.**	*The room* is clean.
Ev *mekteb* **e.**	This is *the school*.

(2) subjects of all intransitive verbs (see §14)

Gundî **di mêvanxana Reşo de rûniş-tîbûn û daxaftin.**	*The villagers* were sitting and talking in Resho's reception room.

and (3) the patients of all past-tense transitive verbs (see §18.2).

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[1] When a masculine singular noun is modified by a demonstrative (see §2) or indefinite (see §3), it does change.

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The oblique case is used for (1) direct objects of present-tense verbs:

Ez *miróv* **dibînim.**	I see *the man.*
Ez *mirován* **dibînim.**	I see *the men.*
Ez *jínê* **dibînim.**	I see *the woman.*
Ez *jinán* **dibînim.**	I see *the women.*

(2) complements of prepositions:

ji miróv	from the man
ji mirován	from the men
ji jínê	from the woman
ji jinán	from the women
di odéyê de **di odê´ de**	in the room

(3) the second member of a construct chain (see below §4):

gundên kurd*an*	villages of Kurds

(4) agents of past-tense transitive verbs (see below §18.2).

In the case of nouns coordinated by the conjunction **û** 'and,' only the last member of a series shows a case ending if there is one.

T̲u *kitêb û kovaran* **dibînî?**	Do you see the books and journals?
Ji bo rojên bê, ez *plan û bernaman* **çêdikim.**	I'm making plans and programs for the coming days.

There are a few nouns that contain the vowel **a**, usually in the final syllable, like **ba** 'wind,' **bajar** 'city,' **ziman** 'language,' **mar** 'snake,' **welat̲** 'country,' and **agir** 'fire,' that may show an internal change of the **a** to **ê** for the oblique case, i.e. **bê**, **bajêr**, **zimên**, **mêr**, **welêt̲**, and **êgir**. The use of the internal oblique is optional.

§ 2. Demonstrative Adjectives and *Her* 'Every.' When functioning as attributive adjectives, the nominative demonstratives are **ev** 'this, these' and **ew** 'that, those.' They modify both singular and plural nouns and show no differentiation between masculine and feminine. In the oblique, however, **ev**

and **ew** become **vî** and **wî** respectively with masculine nouns, and the noun echoes the ending by adding **-î**; with feminine nouns **ev** becomes **vê**, and **ew** becomes **wê**, and the noun echoes the ending by adding -**ê**; in the plural **ev** becomes **van** and **ew** becomes **wan**, and the plural nouns echo them by adding **-an**.

When modified by **her** 'every,' masculine singular nouns, which are not distinguished in the oblique case when they are unmodified, take the oblique ending **-î** and feminine nouns add the regular oblique ending **-ê**.

	NOM. SING. & PL.	OBL. SING.	OBL. PL.
MASC.	**ev …**	**vî … ´î**	**van …án**
	ew …	**wî … ´î**	**wan …án**
	her …	**her … ´î**	—
FEM.	**ev …**	**vê … ´ê**	**van …án**
	ew …	**wê … ´ê**	**wan …án**
	her …	**her … ´ê**	—

ev miróv	this man, these men (masc. nom. sing. & pl.)
ji vî miróvî	from this man (masc. obl. sing.)
ji her miróvî	from every man
ji van miروán	from these men (obl. pl.)
Ez wî miróvî dibînim.	I see that man.
Ez wan miروán dibînim.	I see those men.
ew odé	that room, those rooms (fem. nom. sing. & pl.)
ji wê odéyê	from that room (fem. obl. sing.)
ji her odéyê	from every room
ji wan odeyán	from those rooms (obl. pl.)

§ 3. The Indefinite State. The sign of the indefinite singular ('a, any, some') is an unstressed enclitic **-ek** (**-yek** for words ending in vowels) added to the end of the absolute singular noun. Both masculine and femi-

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nine indefinite nouns have an oblique case, the endings of which echo the oblique demonstrative endings (**-î** for masc. and **-ê** for fem.).

	NOMINATIVE	OBLIQUE
MASC.	**´-(y)ek**	**´-(y)ekî**
FEM.	**´-(y)ek**	**´-(y)ekê**

mirov > miróvek	the man > a man
Miróvek hat.	A man came.
Ez miróvekî dibînim.	I see a man.
kitêb > kitê´bek	the book > a book
Li ser masê kitêbek heye.	There's a book on the table.
Ez kitêbekê dibînim.	I see a book.
derî > deríyek	the door > a door
Ez deríyekî vedikim.	I'll open a door.

The relatively little-used indefinite plural is formed by adding **-(n)in** to the absolute singular for the nominative and **-(n)inan** for the oblique.

kur > kúrin	some boys
derî > derî´nin	some doors
îstgah > îstgáhin	some stations

§ 4. The Primary Construct Case. The construct links (1) two nouns in a limiting or possessive relationship and (2) an attributive adjective to the noun it modifies. The first noun in a construct string, the one that is limited, is in the construct case, the endings for which are as follows for all nouns ending in consonants:

	DEF. SING.	INDEF. SING.	PLURAL
MASC.	**-ê**	**-ekî**	**-ên**
FEM.	**-a**	**-eke**	**-ên**

These endings are exemplified by the nouns **mirov** 'man' (masc.) and **jin**

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'woman' (fem.):

MASC.	**mirovê**	**mirovekî**	**mirovên**
FEM.	**jina**	**jineke**	**jinên**

Nouns ending in **e** have the following endings and alternative forms exemplified by **perçe** *m* 'piece' and **ode** *f* 'room':

MASC.	{ **perçeyê** **perçê**	**perçeyekî**	**perçeyên** **perçên**
FEM.	{ **odeya** **oda**	**odeyeke** **odake**	**odeyên**

Nouns ending in **î** (like **xanî** *m* 'house' and **piranî** *f* 'majority') change the **î** to **iy** and then add the endings:

MASC.	**xaniyê**	**xaniyekî**	**xaniyên**
FEM.	**piraniya**	**piraniyeke**	**piraniyên**

There are very few nouns that end in **u** and **û**, but for the few that exist the following endings may take the place of the **u** or **û**:

MASC.	**iwê**	**iwekî**	**iwên**
FEM.	**iwa**	**iweke**	**iwên**

A noun or pronoun in the second part of a construct, the limiter, is in the oblique case, as in the following:

miróvê wî welátî	the man of that country
miróvekî wî welátî	a man of that country
mirovê´n wî welátî	the men of that country
hejmára kovárê	the issue of the journal
hejmáreke kovárê	an issue of the journal
hejmarê´n kovárê	the issues of the journal
odéya (or **oda**) **rûnîştínê**	the sitting room
odéyeke (or **odáke**) **rûnîştínê**	a sitting room
odeyê´n rûnîştínê	the sitting rooms

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xaníyê wî miróvî	the house of that man
xaníyeke wî miróvî	a house of that man
xaniyê´n wan mirován	the houses of those men

Theoretically constructs of successive nouns can be extended without limit; in practice they are limited to three or four successive nouns. In all construct strings the construct case takes precedence over the oblique case, i.e. only the last noun in a string is in the oblique case, and the others are in the construct case. For example, in the phrase

di gundan de	in the villages

the word **gundan** is oblique plural governed by the circumposition **di … de** 'in.' In the construct phrase

gundên kurdan	the villages of the Kurds

gundên is in the construct plural followed by **kurdan** in the oblique plural as second member of the construct. When such a construct phrase is the complement of a preposition, **gundên** remains in the construct case, i.e.

di {gundên kurdan} de	in the villages of the Kurds

and the string can be extended as follows:

di {gundên kurdên Kurdistana Tirkiyeyê} de	in the villages of the Kurds of Turkey's Kurdistan

Other examples of construct strings are as follows:

kitêbên kurê wî mirovî	that man's son's books
kitêbên keça mirov	the man's daughter's books
be<u>h</u>sa girîngiya wê rojê	discussion of the importance of that day

§ **4.1. The Adjectival Construct.** Attributive adjectives follow the nouns they modify. Nouns so modified by adjectives are in the construct case, but adjectives are indeclinable and show no case.

	mirovê mezin	the big man
	mirovekî mezin	a big man
	mirovên mezin	the big men
	kitêba nû	the new book
	kitêbeke nû	a new book
	kitêbên nû	the new books
	xaniyê biçûk	the little house
	xaniyekî biçûk	a little house
	xaniyên biçûk	the little houses

As in noun-noun constructs, the construct case ending takes precedence over the oblique case. As an example, in the string

be<u>h</u>sa girîngiya *wê rojê*	discussion of the importance of that day

wê rojê, as the third noun and last element in the string, is in the oblique case, but in the string

be<u>h</u>sa girîngiya *wê roja pîroz*	discussion of the importance of that celebrated day

wê roja is in the construct case because it is modified by a following adjective. Only the last noun in a construct string can be modified by an adjective, i.e. in the phrase in the example above it is grammatically impossible to modify either **behsa** or **girîngiya** with an adjective inside the string (see §5).

Syntactically related prepositional and circumpositional phrases (see §8 below) modify nouns in Kurmanji and are linked to them by the construct exactly as though they were adjectives.

mirovê di xanî de	the man in the house (vs. the man outside the house)
ev pirtûka di destê we de	this book in your hand
di hevpeyvîneke bi wî mirovî re	in a conversation with that man
rojnameyeke bi kurdî	a newspaper in Kurdish
şagirtê li tenişta min	the student next to me

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In a series coordinated by the conjunction **û**, only the last noun shows the construct ending.

gele̲k̲ sero̲k̲ *û* birêvebir*ên* partiyên siyasî	many heads and leaders of political parties
şexsiyet *û* rewşenbîr*ên* kurdan	personalities and intellectuals of the Kurds

§ 5. The Secondary Construct: The Construct Extender. The primary construct is used, as has been seen, to connect noun to noun (to noun, indefinitely) or noun to a single attributive adjective. These two categories cannot be mixed: the first noun in a noun-noun construct cannot be modified by an adjective, and a noun cannot be modified by more than one adjective with the construct. In cases other than these two, the secondary construct with a "construct extender" is used. The extenders are as follows:

MASC. SING.	FEM. SING.	COMMON PLURAL
yê	**ya**	**yên**

The extenders are used (1) to add a modifying noun to a noun-adjective construct, (2) to link an adjective modifying the first noun in a noun-noun construct, and (3) to add an additional adjective to a noun-adjective construct.

As examples, (1) a phrase like **hejmareke nû** 'a new issue' is a normal noun-adjective construct, but since this type of construct is closed, in order to modify the construct further in any way, such as 'a new issue of the journal,' the construct extender is used: **hejmareke nû *ya* kovarê**, where the feminine extender **ya** agrees with the feminine head noun in the construct, **hejmarek**.

destê rastê *yê* Cengî	Jengi's right hand
Cumhûriyeta Kurdî *ya* Mehabadê	The Kurdish Republic of Mahabad
navên din *yên* vê ekolê	other names of this school

(2) In a noun-noun construct string like **navê wî mirovî** 'that man's name,' the extender is used to modify the first noun in the string: **navê wî mirovî *yê* rastîn** 'that man's real name.'

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zimanekî min *yê* **taybetî**	a special language of mine
dîroka Kurdistanê *ya* **nêzîk**	the recent history of Kurdistan
xebat û fedekariyên xwe *yên* **şexsî**	his own personal struggles and sacrifices

(3) In a noun-adjective string like **rojnameyeke kurdî** 'a Kurdish newspaper' the extender is used to modify the noun with another adjective, as in **rojnameyeke kurdî** *ya* **rojane** 'a daily Kurdish newspaper.' Other examples are as follows:

helbestvanê Ferensî *yê* **ji sedsala nozdehan**	the French poet of the nineteenth century
rojnameyeke rojane *ya* **bi kurdî**	a daily newspaper in Kurdish
darbeyeke mezin *ya* **ekonomîk**	a great economic blow
keç û jinên Ewrupî *yên* **porzer û çav şîn**	blonde and blue-eyed European girls and women

In some dialects the extenders are **ê**, **a**, and **ên** (without the initial *y*), and they are used particularly when the preceding word ends in a vowel.

dilê wî *ê* **pola**	his heart of steel
mala birê min *ê* **mezin**	my big brother's house
kulma zêbit *a* **guvaştî**	the officer's clenched fist
şeva me *a* **dawî**	our last night
zendên xwe *ên* **xurt**	his strong arms
zarokên gund *ên* **belengaz**	the poor children of the village

An optional—and fairly rare—alternative masc. sing. construct extender uses the same ending as the indefinite, **î**.

nivîskarekî din *î* **zîrek**	another clever writer
şaîrekî kurd *î* **bijarte**	a recognized Kurdish poet
bi wî dengê xwe *î* **bilind**	in that loud voice of his

§ 6. Synopsis of Noun States and Cases.

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SUBSTANTIVES

	SINGULAR		PLURAL	
MASCULINE ABSOLUTE/DEFINITE				
NOM.	–	**mirov**	–	**mirov**
CONSTR.	**-ê**	**mirovê**	**-ên**	**mirovên**
OBL.	–	**mirov**	**-an**	**mirovan**
DEMONS. OBL.	**-î**	**wî mirovî**	**-an**	**wan mirovan**
MASCULINE INDEFINITE				
NOM.	**-ek**	**mirovek**	**-in**	**mirovin**
CONST.	**-ekî**	**mirovekî**	**-ine**	**mirovine**
OBL.	**-ekî**	**mirovekî**	**-inan**	**mirovinan**
FEMININE ABSOLUTE/DEFINITE				
NOM.	–	**jin**	–	**jin**
CONSTR.	**-a**	**jina**	**-ên**	**jinên**
OBL.	**-ê**	**jinê**	**-an**	**jinan**
DEMONS. OBL.	**-ê**	**wê jinê**	**-an**	**wan jinan**
FEMININE INDEFINITE				
NOM.	**-ek**	**jinek**	**-in**	**jinin**
CONSTR.	**-eke**	**jineke**	**-ine**	**jinine**
OBL.	**-ekê**	**jinekê**	**-inan**	**jininan**

The syntactical hierarchy of noun forms is: (1) the coordinating conjunction **û**, which supersedes all case endings; (2) the construct; (3) the oblique. That is, the oblique case is superseded by the construct, so a noun that should syntactically be in the oblique case but which is also the first member of a construct is in the construct case rather than the oblique. In turn, both the construct and the oblique cases are superseded by the coordinating conjunction, so only the last noun in a coordinated series in either case shows its case ending.

ji heval û hogir*ên* (const.) **wî mirovî**   from that man's friends and companions

ji heval û hogir*an* (obl.)   from friends and companions

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§ 7. Personal Pronouns. The personal pronouns in the nominative and oblique cases are as follows. There are no enclitic pronouns in Kurmanji.

	SINGULAR			PLURAL	
NOM.	OBL.		NOM.	OBL.	
ez	**min**	I	**em**	**me**	we
t̲u	**t̲e**	you (sing.)	**hun**[1]	**we**	you (pl.)
ew	**wî** (m)	he/it/that	**ew**	**wan**	they/those
	wê (f)	she/it/that			
ev	**vî** (m)	he/it/this	**ev**	**van**	they/these
	vê (f)	she/it/this			

There are no third-person pronouns other than the demonstratives. The **ew** set is the third-person pronoun of default; the **ev** set is used to direct attention to a nearby third person. Note that both **ew** and **ev** distinguish gender only in the oblique singular. Subject pronouns are necessarily expressed, as in English, except in impersonal constructions where English uses 'it' (as in "it's raining") and occasionally in connected prose where the referent of a third-person pronoun has already been introduced and is obvious from context.

The **nominative** pronouns are used as subjects of equational sentences, present-tense verbs, and past-tense intransitive verbs

Ez **kurd im.**	*I*'m a Kurd.
Ew **wî mirovî dibîne.**	*He* sees that man.
Em **rûniştin.**	*We* sat down.

and (2) as patients of past-tense transitive verbs (see §18.2).

Min *t̲u* **dîtî.**	I saw *you*.
Wî *em* **dît̲in.**	He saw *us*.

The **oblique** pronouns are used as (1) possessors in a construct

kitêba *min,* **kitêbên** *min*	*my* book, *my* books
kitêbeke *min*	a book of *mine*

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[1] In some dialects **hun** is **hûn**.

kitêbeke nû ya *min*	a new book of *mine*
xaniyê *me*	*our* house

(2) direct objects of all present-tense verbs (and all verbs formed from the present stem of the verb)

T̲u *min* dibînî?	Do you see *me*?
Ez *t̲e* dibînim.	I see *you*.
Ew *me* dibîne.	He sees *us*.
Em nik̲arin *wan* bibînin.	We cannot see *them*.

(3) complements of prepositions and circumpositions

ji *min*	from *me*
ji *wî*	from *him*
ji *wê*	from *her*
bi *wan* re	with *them*

(4) agents of all past transitive verbs (see §18.2 below)

T̲e ez dît̲im.	*You* saw me.
Min ew dît̲in.	*I* saw them.

§ 7.1 The Reflexive Pronoun *Xwe*. The reflexive pronoun **xwe** has, in and of itself, no person or number but takes its person and number from the subject of the verb in the clause in which it occurs. It can thus mean, as a possessive, 'my own, 'your own,' 'his/her own,' 'our own,' or 'their own' as well as the objective 'myself,' 'yourself,' 'him/herself,' 'ourselves,' 'yourselves,' or 'themselves.' **Xwe** must be used as both possessive pronoun and object pronoun to refer to the subject of the verb, i.e. the personal pronouns cannot be so used. Constructions like **kitêba min** 'my book' and **hevalên min** 'my friends' are viable in any clause in which 'I' is not the subject of the verb, but not in sentences like "I see my book" and "I went with my friends," where **kitêba xwe** and **hevalên xwe** must be used.

Dêlikek teva du cewrên *xwe* li ser riya	A bitch used to appear on my route with
min xuya dibûn.	*her* two pups.

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Li dora *xwe* **dinêrim.**	I look around *myself.*
Ferzende di ranê *xwe* **da birîn bû.**	Ferzende was wounded in *his* thigh.

With past transitive verbs (see §18.2), *xwe* takes its person and number from the logical subject (= agent).

Ezê vegeriyama Şamê, minê hevalên *xwe* **ên li wir bidîtana.**	I would have returned to Damascus; I would have seen *my* friends there.
Te *xwe* **ji bîr dikir û te çemê bajarê** *xwe* **tanî bîra xwe.**	You forgot *yourself,* and you remembered the river of your town.

§ 8. Prepositions, Postpositions, Circumpositions. Certain prepositions, particularly **bi**, **di**, **ji**, and **li**, occur as circumpositions that envelop the complement, that is, the preposition itself marks the beginning of the prepositional phrase, and the end of the complement is marked by one of the postpositions, **ve**, **de**, or **re** (or the variants, **va**, **da**, and **ra**).

The postpositional element does not always, in and of itself, add anything substantial to the meaning of the prepositional phrase, and most prepositions occur without the postpositional element without any significant distinction in meaning. Others need the postpositional element to define the signification of the preposition, as **di … de** 'in' vs. **di … re** 'with' and **ji … ve** 'from' vs. **ji … re** 'to, for, with.' Generally the postpositions have the following significations: **de** indicates stationary position in or at; **re** indicates accompaniment; and **ve** indicates motion away from.

Common prepositions and circumpositions:

ba to, towards	**di … re** by, via, with
ber in front of, toward	**di … ve** through
bêî (bêyî, bêy) without	**di bareya …de** about, concerning
berî before	**digel** with
bi with, by means of (see below)	**di nav … de** among, amidst, inside of
bi … re with, along with	
bi tenê except for	**di navbera … de** between
bi xêra due to, thanks to	**heta** until, as far as
derveyî outside of	**ji** from, of (partitive)
di … de in	**ji … re** to, for, with

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ji … ve from; as of, since	**li gora** according to
ji bilî other than, aside from	**li pey** after, behind
ji bo for, for the sake of	**li pêş** in front of
ji nava from amongst	**li rex** beside
ji xeynî other than, aside from	**li ser** on, above, about
li (… de) in, at, to	**mîna** like
li cem together with	**piştî** after
li ber in front of, before	**ser** on, to
li dijî against	**ta** until, up to
li dora around	**tevî** along with
ligel together with	**wek(e)** like

As a rule, prepositions are followed by nouns and pronouns in the oblique case. The exception is the preposition **bi**: when it is used to create an adverb (like **bi şermdarî** 'modestly') or a compound adjective (like **bi quwet** 'powerful'), the complement is in the nominative case.

Pêlên bayê hênik *bi şermdarî* **derbasî hundirê oda te dibûn.**	Waves of cool breeze were passing *modestly* into your room.
Û *bi rastî* **tu mîna gula ji lûla tufingê derkeve, tu ji malê derketî**	And *truly* you went out of the house like a bullet shot from the barrel of a rifle.
yek ji şaîr û nivîskarên herî *bi quwet*	one of the most *powerful* poets and writers

Since a circumposition envelopes the whole of its complement, it may extend through a relative clause (for which see §30), as in the following:

Gelo mirov kane *ji* **{berhemên ku bi zimanên din têne nivîsandin}** *re* **bibê-je berhemên kurdî an jî edebiyata kurdî?**	I wonder if one can speak of works that are written in other languages as Kurdish works or Kurdish literature.
Ew ê bixwaze *bi* **{yekî ku nêrîna wî nêzîkî nêrîna wê ye}** *re* **bizewice.**	He would like to get married to someone whose outlook is close to his own.

§ 8.1. Contracted Prepositions. Four prepositions have contracted forms

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with third-person singular complements:

bi + wî/wê > pê	**ji + wî/wê > jê**
di + wî/wê > tê	**li + wî/wê > lê**

If there is a postposition, it appears along with the contracted form of the preposition (**jê re, tê de,** etc.).

Kesê ku heval, hogir û şagirtê wî bû û pê re dimeşiya…	The person who was his friend, companion, and pupil and who walked *with him…*
Mêrik odaya min û nivînê ku ezê tê de razêm, nîşanî min da.	The man showed me my room and the bed *in which* I would be sleeping.
Mizgînî digihîje Emîn Alî Bedir-Xan, ku jê re lawikek çêbûye.	The news reaches Emin Ali Bedir-Khan that a son has been born *to him.*
Mela lê nêrî û got…	The mulla looked *at him* and said…
Te lê vegerand.	You replied *to him.*

§ 9. Cardinal Numbers. The cardinal numbers are as follows:

1 yek	17 hivdeh	102 sed û du, &c.
2 du, didu	18 hijdeh	200 dused
3 sê, sisê	19 nozdeh	300 sêsed
4 çar	20 bîst	400 çarsed
5 pênc	21 bîst û yek	500 pêncsed
6 şeş	22 bîst û du	600 şeşsed
7 heft	23 bîst û sê, &c.	700 heftsed
8 heşt	30 sî (sih)	800 heştsed
9 neh	40 çil	900 nehsed
10 deh	50 pêncî	1,000 (yek) hezar
11 ya(n)zdeh	60 şêst	2,000 du hezar
12 dwanzdeh	70 heftê	3,000 sê hezar
13 sêzdeh	80 heştê	4,000 çar hezar
14 çardeh	90 nod	5,000 pênj hezar
15 panzdeh	100 sed	6,000 şeş hezar
16 şanzdeh	101 sed û yek	7,000 heft hezar

8,000 he̱s̱t hezar   **9,000 neh hezar**   **10,000 deh hezar &c.**

Compound numbers are formed with the conjunction **û**, as in

    çil û ye̱k   forty-one

    pêncî û he̱ft   fifty-seven

The number **ye̱k** and all subsequent compound numbers ending in **ye̱k** are ordinarily declined as feminine singular with construct in **-a** and oblique in **-ê**.

    di 91'ê de   **di nod û ye̱kê de**   in '91

  Lê ew ye̱ka han wî bêhêvî nake.   But that one (thing just mentioned) does
                                       not make him despair.

  Ev ye̱ka han ji tradisyona Celadet   This one (thing just mentioned) is from
    Bedir-Xan û bi xêra kovara wî   the tradition of Jeladet Bedir-Khan and
    Hawarê dibe.   is thanks to his journal *Hawar*.

When **ye̱k** is used as a pronoun referring to a person, however, it takes the appropriate gender.

    ew ye̱kê wan   that one (masc.) of them

    ew ye̱ke wan   that one (fem.) of them

The numbers **du** through **neh**, and all subsequent compounds ending in 2 through 9, as well as the thousands, are inflected as plurals with a regular oblique in **-an**.

  di sala 1984'an de   **di sala he̱zar û nehsed û**   in the year 1984
                             he̱s̱tê û çar*an* de

  li 4'a aprîla 1946'an de   **li çara aprîla he̱zar û**   on April 4, 1946
                             nehsed û çil û s̱es̱*an* de

    All numbers ending in zero (except the thousands) are declined as masculine with construct ending in **-ên**, but the oblique ends in **-(y)î**.

  di salên 1300'î de   **di salên he̱zar û sêsedî de**   in the 1300s

di navbera 1968–70'yî de	**di navbera ẖezar û neẖsad û şes̱t û ẖeş̱t û ẖeftêyî de**	between 1968 and 1970
Oidupusa Sofokles bi kê-manî berî niha bi 2450 salî hat̲iye nivîsandin.	**Oidupusa Sofokles bi kêmanî berî niha bi du ẖezar û çarsed û pêncî salî hat̲iye nivîsandin.**	Sophocles' *Oedipus* was written at least 2450 years ago.

Numbers that modify nouns are indeclinable and are followed immediately by the noun counted, and the noun is plural—of course this will show only in the oblique and construct cases.

The numbers '2' and '3' by themselves are **didu** and **sisê**; when they modify nouns and when they are part of a compound number they are **du** and **sê**, and nouns following them are construed as plural, as are the nouns after all numbers.

Apê min û *du kes* çûn nava şikeftê.	My uncle and the two men went inside the cave.
piştê *du rojên* din	after two more days
Her *du çavên* wê sor, wek du pizotên êgir bûn.	Its two eyes were red, like two brands of fire.
***Sê hefte* û *çar roj* mabûn.**	Three weeks and four days remained.
piştî şeş meh û *14 (çardeh) rojan*	after six months and fourteen days

Temporal expressions of duration of time ("for X amount of time") and instance ("X number of times") are in the oblique case.

Sê roj û *sê şevan* di wî cihî da ma.	He stayed in that place for three days and three nights.
Ez *ẖeş̱t caran* hat̲im girt̲in.	I was arrested eight times.
***Pênc, ẖeş̱t, deh caran* ew lat bilind dibûn berî ḵu giranbûna wan wan bikişîne binê golê.**	Five, eight, ten times those stones skipped before their weight pulled them to the bottom of the lake.

§ 9.1. Ordinal Numbers. With the exception of '1st,' ordinal numbers are

formed from the cardinal numbers plus the suffix **-(y)an**, as in the following:

1st	**ewel(î)**	7th	**he<u>f</u>tan**
2nd	**diduyan, duduyan**	8th	**he<u>ş</u>tan**
3rd	**sisiyan**	9th	**nehan**
4th	**çaran**	10th	**dehan**
5th	**pêncan**	11th	**yanzdehan**
6th	**şeşan**	12th	**dwanzdehan &c.**

The ordinals are construed as normal adjectives.

Bi hatina cunta faşîst a diduyan re ez jê hatim avêtin.	With the coming of the second Fascist junta I was thrown out of there.
di hejmara Hawarê ya 4'an [çaran] de	in the fourth issue of *Hawar*
Roja sisiyan laşê kurê xwe da pişta xwe û bir mal.	On the third day he put his son's body on his back and carried him home.
Xeyn ji dengê segekî tu dengên din ne dihatin guhan, lê dirêj ne kir, dema dengê segekî bû yê duduyan û sisiyan û çaran.	Aside from the sound of a dog no other sounds could be heard, but it wasn't long before there was the sound of a second, third, and fourth dog.

There is an alternative set of ordinals formed in the Persian manner with the suffixes **-em** and **-emîn**, as follows:

1st	**ye<u>k</u>em(în)**	7th	**he<u>f</u>tem(în)**
2nd	**duyem(în)**	8th	**he<u>ş</u>tem(în)**
3rd	**sêyem(în)**	9th	**nehem(în)**
4th	**çarem(în)**	10th	**dehem(în)**
5th	**pêncem(în)**	11th	**yanzdehem(în)**
6th	**şeşem(în)**	12th	**dwanzdehem(în) &c.**

These ordinals tend to be used in set phrases like **şerê cîhanê yê ye<u>k</u>emîn** 'the First World War' and **cara ye<u>k</u>em** 'the first time.'

§ 9.2. Months of the Year and Days of the Week. There are several nomenclature systems in use for the months. The names of the first set are borrowed from French, and they are as follows:

janvîye/januar January	**fevrîye** February

mars March	**ût** August
aprîl April	**september** September
mê May	**oktober** October
jûen June	**november** November
jûîya July	**desember** December

The names of the second set either correspond to or were borrowed directly from the Arabic versions of the ancient Semitic month names that were adjusted to fit the Julian calendar months of the Roman Empire. May and July have fallen out of use in this set. The names are given with their Arabic equivalents in parentheses:

çileya paşîn January (كانون الثاني)	**ab** August (آب)
sibat February (شباط)	**eylûl** September (ايلول)
adar March (ادار)	**çiriya pêşîn** October (تشرين الاول)
nîsan April (نيسان)	**çiriya paşîn** November (تشرين الثاني)
hezîran June (حزيران)	**çileya pêşîn** December (كانون الاول)

The third set consists of traditional Kurdish names for a few months:

reşeme February	**tîrmeh** July
avdar March	**gelawêj** August
gulan May	**îlon** September

Dates are written and read as follows:

31'ê adara 1947'an	**sî û yekê adara hezar û nehsed û çil û heftan**	March 31, 1947
di 26'ê nîsana 1893'an de	**di bîst û şeşê nîsana hezar û heştsed û nod û sisiyan de**	on the 26th of April 1893
di 25.07.1974'an de	**di bîst û pêncê tîrmeha hezar û nehsed û heftê û çaran de**	on 25 July 1974

The days of the week (all feminine) are as follows. The *b* of *şemb* is normally deleted in the nominative case and restored in the oblique and con-

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struct cases, as in **şem** (nom.) but **roja şembê** (obl.):

şem(b) Saturday	**çarşem(b)** Wednesday
yekşem(b) Sunday	**pêncşem(b)** Thursday
duşem(b) Monday	**în** Friday
sêşem(b) Tuesday	

§ 9.3. Telling Time. In all expressions for telling time, the basis of the expression is **saet** (or the variant **seet**) 'hour.'

Saet çi ye?	What time is it?
Saet deh e.	It's ten o'clock.
Saet nêzîkî dudiyê piştî nîvroje (nîro) bû.	It was nearly two o'clock in the afternoon.
saet sisê sibehê/şevê	three o'clock in the morning/at night

§ 10. Comparative and Superlative Adjectives. The comparative degree of the adjective is made by suffixing **-tir**. There are only a few irregularly formed comparatives, viz. **pir** 'much' > **bêtir** 'more,' **baş** 'good' > **çêtir** 'better,' and **mezin** 'big' > **meztir** (as well as the regularly formed **mezin-tir**) 'bigger, older.' Adjectives ending in *t* drop the *t* before the addition of **-tir** (*pêwist* > *pêwistir*, not **pêwisttir*, and *xurt* > *xurtir*, not **xurttir)*. The preposition of comparison is **ji**, as in the following examples.

Min ji her tiştî *bêtir* ji wan hez dikir.	I liked them *more* than anything.
Hin ji wan, bi balefiran, ya jî bi gemiyên mezin *dûrtir* çûbû.	Some of them had gone *further* in planes or large ships.
Ew pêwist e ku nivîskarên me li ser jiyana gundî û axayan biaxivin, lê *pêwistir* e ku ew ji bîr nekin ku kurd li şehran jî dijîn.	It is important that our writers speak of the life of villagers and lords, but it is *more important* that they not forget that Kurds live in cities too.
Ez tenê şeş salan ji te *mezintir* im.	I'm only six years *older* than you.
Erebiya min ji kurdî û turkiya min *çêtir* bû û *çêtir* e jî.	My Arabic was and still is *better* than my Kurdish and Turkish.
Tu her roj *xurtir* dibî.	You get *stronger* every day.

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'More than' followed by a number is expressed by **bê<u>t</u>irî** (or **pirr<u>t</u>irî**) + the number:

Hûn *bê<u>t</u>irî pêncî* **mitrî di binê zemîna Parîsê de bûn.**	You were *more than fifty* meters beneath the ground of Paris.
Pirr<u>t</u>irî dused û pêncî **kuştî ji leşkerên tirkan hebû.**	There were *more than two hundred fifty* slain among the soldiers of the Turks.

The superlative is indicated by context, not by a special form. The first example in this section could just as well be translated as "I liked them the most of anything." A comparative adjective followed by a construct usually gives the superlative sense, and a following construct is the equivalent of the English "in."

Xurşîd *dewlemen<u>t</u>irê gund* **bû.**	Khurshid was *the richest (person) in the village*.
Wî li kurê xwe dinêrî û xwe *bextyar<u>t</u>irê dinê* **dizanî.**	He used to look at his son and consider himself *the luckiest (person) in the world*.

A true superlative adjective is made by adding **-<u>t</u>irîn** to the adjective, and such superlatives precede the nouns they modify:

Mezin<u>t</u>irîn nav <u>k</u>**u bi ziman û edebiyata kurdî ya klasîk re bûye yek, Ehmedê Xanî ye.**	*The greatest name* that has occurred in the classical Kurdish language and literature is Ahmad Khani.

A second type of superlative is made with **herî** preceding the adjective. Like *-issimo* in Italian, **herî** gives a superlative sense of "really," e.g. **herî girîng** means "most important" in the sense of "really important." Superlatives of compound adjectives like **bi quwet** 'powerful' and past participles used adjectivally like **lipaşmayî** 'backward,' where the addition of **-tir** would be awkward or impossible, are signaled by **herî**.

Ew ye<u>k</u> ji şaîr û nivîskarên *herî bi quwet* **ê mekteba "Hawar"ê bû.**	He was one of *the most powerful* poets and writers of the Hawar school.
Nêçirvanekî *herî dilêr* **jî newirî bû bi roj di nav re derbas bibûya.**	Even a *really intrepid* hunter would not have dared to pass through in the daytime.

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SUBSTANTIVES

Cumhûriyeta Mehabadê di dîroka Kurdistanê ya nêzîk de yek ji bûyerên *herî girîng* e.

The Republic of Mahabad is one of *the most important* events in the recent history of Kurdistan.

Kurdistan herêma Tirkiyeyê ya *herî lipaşmayî* ye; Mêrdînê bajarê Tirkiyeyê yê *herî lipaşmayî* ye; Nisêbînê qeza Mêrdînê ya *herî bi derd* e; Stilîlê nehiya Nisêbînê ya *herî belengaz* e; Zivingê gundê Stilîlê yê *herî lipaşmayî* ye. Li gorê nifûsa min ez li şikefta jimar dido ya vî gundî hatime dinyayê.

Kurdistan is *the most backward* part of Turkey; Mardin is *the most backward* city in Turkey; Nusaybin is *the most wretched* district of Mardin; Stilîl is *the most destitute* part of Nusaybin; Ziving is *the most backward* village in Stilîl. According to my identity card, I was born in cave number two of this village.

THE VERB

§ **11. Present Copulas.** The present-tense copulas ('am, is, are') are enclitics, i.e. unstressed, but they are usually written as separate words.

POSTCONSONANTAL		POSTVOCALIC	
im	**in**	**me**	**ne**
î	**in**	**yî**	**ne**
e	**in**	**ye**	**ne**

Examples of postconsonantal copulas:

  ez kurd im 'I am Kurdish'   **em kurd in** 'we are Kurdish'

  <u>t</u>**u kurd î** 'you are Kurdish"   **hun kurd in** 'you are Kurdish'

  ew kurd e 's/he is Kurdish'   **ew kurd in** 'they are Kurdish'

Examples of postvocalic copulas:

  ez bi wî re me 'I'm with him'   **em bi wî re ne** 'we are with him'

  <u>t</u>**u bi wî re yî** 'you're with him'   **hun bi wî re ne** 'you are with him'

  ew bi wî re ye 's/he's with him'   **ew bi wî re ne** 'they are with him'

The negative **ne** (stressed) is positioned before the complement (or whatever is negated, but not before the copula). Examples of copulas with negatives:

  ez ne kurd im 'I'm not Kurdish'   **em ne kurd in** 'we aren't Kurdish'

  <u>t</u>**u ne kurd î** 'you aren't Kurdish'   **hun ne kurd in** 'you aren't Kurdish'

  ew ne kurd e 's/he isn't Kurdish'   **ew ne kurd in** 'they aren't Kurdish'

Other examples are as follows:

<u>T</u>**u xwêndekár î.**   You *are* a student.

<u>T</u>**u xwêndekárekî báş î.**   You *are* a good student.

<u>T</u>**u *né* xwêndekárekî báş î.**   You *are not* a good student.

Báş *e*.   It *is* good.

Né **báṣ *e*.**	It *is not* good.
Ev xaníyek *e*.	This *is* a house.
Ev xanî´ *ne*.	These *are* houses.
Ev *né* xaníyek *e*.	This *is not* a house.
Ez *ne* ji eṣîra we *me*, ez *ne* çiyayî û *ne* jî deṣtî *me*; ez bajarî *me*. Lê beriya hertiṣtî, ez jî merivek *im*.	I *am not* from your tribe; I *am not* a mountaineer or from the plains either; I *am* an urbanite, but before anything else I *am* a person.

The combination of an oblique plural ending in **-an** and the first-person singular enclitic **im** usually becomes **-a me** instead of **-an im**.

Ez yek ji wan nivîskar*a me*.	I am one of those writers.
Ez jî yek ji wan kurd*a me* ku …	I too am one of those Kurds who …
Ez bi xwe yek ji wan kes*a me* ku …	I myself am one of those people who…

§ 12. 'To Have' and the Existential Verb *Hebûn*. The existential verb 'to exist' is **hebûn**, the present and past conjugations of which are as follows:

PRESENT		PAST	
ez héme	**em héne**	**ez hébûm**	**em hébûn**
tu héyî	**hun héne**	**tu hébûyî**	**hun hébûn**
ew héye	**ew héne**	**ew hébû**	**ew hébûn**

The third-persons singular and plural are used for 'there is' and 'there are' respectively.

Gotineke pêṣiyên me *heye*.	There is a saying of our ancestors.
Ger xwendevanên kurdî tunebin sedemê wê *hene*.	If there are no readers of Kurdish, there are reasons for it.
Pir kes li dora min *hebûn* ku ji ṣiîran hez dikir û ṣiîr dinivîsandin.	There were many people around me who enjoyed poetry and wrote poems.
Di çavên wî da ronahiyeke dijwar *hebû*.	There was a hard light in his eyes.

The negative of **heye** is **tune** 'there is not any…, there is no…,' and the

negative of **hebû** is **tunebû** 'there was not any…, there was no….'

Madem <u>k</u>u zimannivîs *tune*, **ev dewle<u>t</u>-<u>ç</u>ê<u>k</u>irin çi ye?**	As long as there are no writers, what's the use of creating this state?
Di vî warî da otorîteyeke resmî *tune*.	In this regard there is no official authority.
Divabû <u>k</u>u ew kêzik wê şevê biha<u>t</u>a ku<u>ş</u>t<u>i</u>n an na xew li min *tunebû*.	That bug would have to be killed that night or else there would be no sleep for me.

There is no verb in Kurdish equivalent to the English verb 'to have.' Kurdish expresses possession by the possessive construct followed by the appropriate third person of the existential verb—**heye** 'there is,' **hene** 'there are,' **hebû** 'there was,' or **hebûn** 'there were.'

Pirsiyareke min heye.	I have a question.
Pirsiyareke min hebû.	I had a question.
Pênc za<u>r</u>o<u>k</u>ên wî hene.	He has five children.
Cihekî bajarê Mehabadê yê taybetî di dilê me de heye.	The city of Mahabad has a special place in our hearts.

§ 13. The Infinitive. Kurdish infinitives end in **-in**, **-în**, **-an**, or **-ûn**, are stressed on the final syllable (**dî<u>t</u>ín** 'to see,' **meşiyán** 'to walk,' **ti<u>r</u>sî´n** 'to fear'), and are construed as feminine nouns. The use of the infinitive as a noun occasionally coincides with English usage, but it is more often used where the English gerund ("-ing") is used.

Axaf<u>t</u>in, xwendin **û** *nivîsîn***a bi zimanê zikmakî, ji her mirovî re <u>p</u>ê**wî<u>s</u>t<u>i</u>yek **e.**	*To speak, to read*, and *to write* in one's native language is a requirement for every person.
<u>p</u>i<u>ş</u>tî *weşandin***a kovara xwe bi salekê û** <u>p</u>i<u>ş</u>tî *avakirin***a Cumhûriyeta Tir<u>k</u>iyê bi deh salan**	a year after *publishing* his journal and ten years after the *founding* of the Republic of Turkey

An unmodified direct object of an infinitive precedes the infinitive and forms a generic compound with it. Thus, **qehwe vexwarin** 'to drink coffee,'

rojname xwendin 'to read newspapers,' **kovar weşandin** 'to publish journals,' and **hotêl çûyîn** 'to frequent hotels' are generic compounds. A modified direct object of an infinitive is linked to the infinitive by an objective genitive construct. So, **vexwarina qehweya xwe** 'to drink one's coffee,' **xwendina rojnameya xwe ya bi kurdî** 'to read one's newspaper in Kurdish,' **weşandina kovara xwe** 'to publish one's journal,' and **çûyîna min ya hotêlê** 'my going to the hotel,' where the objects and complements are definite, indefinite, or modified (i.e. not generic), become construct phrases.

Ez dixwazim her sibeh bi *vexwarina qehweya xwe* re rojnameya xwe ya bi kurdî jî bixwînim.	I want to read my newspaper in Kurdish every morning while *drinking my coffee*.
Bi *çûyîna min ya hotêlê* dilê xwe girtin.	They were offended by *my going to the hotel*.

The infinitive is also used with the preposition **ji bo** to express purpose:

***Ji bo dîtina* wan ez çûme Sûriyê.**	I went to Syria *in order to see* them.
Min bihîst ku li welatên Rohelat çil sal xebat divêt *ji bo çêkirina* şerbikekî ferfûrî.	I have heard that in the countries of the Orient forty years of labor are needed *in order to produce* a porcelain vase.

§ 14. The Present Tense. The present tense corresponds to the English present used for habitual action ("I work") and to the present progressive ("I'm working"). It is formed from the present stem of the verb.

The present stems of a few very common verbs are totally irregular and must be learned as a principal part of the verb (e.g. **dîtin** 'to see' > **bîn-**, **xwestin** 'to want' > **xwaz-**). With few exceptions, verbs with infinitives ending in **-an**, **-iyan**, **-în**, and **-ûn** are regular and form the present stem by dropping those endings. Verbs that end in **-andin** (for which type see §28 below) form their present stems by changing the **-andin** ending to **-în-** (e.g. **mirandin** 'to cause to die' > **mirîn-**).

To form the present tense, the stressed progressive/habitual modal marker **dí** is prefixed to the present stem, and the following suffixed personal endings are added to the stem.

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	CONSONANT STEMS		VOWEL STEMS
-im	**-in**	**-m**	**-n**
-î	**-in**	**-yî**	**-n**
-e	**-in**	**—**	**-n**

Examples of conjugation are as follows. In Kurmanji, pronominal subjects are not optional and must be expressed.

ÇÛN/-Ç- 'GO' (CONSONANT STEM)   **ŞUŞTIN/-ŞO-** 'WASH' (VOWEL STEM)

ez díçim	**em díçin**	**ez díşom**	**em díşon**
tu díçî	**hun díçin**	**tu díşoyî**	**hun díşon**
ew díçe	**ew díçin**	**ew díşo**	**ew díşon**

In the negative, the modal marker **di** is replaced by stressed **ná-**.

ez náçim	**em náçin**	**ez náşom**	**em náşon**
tu náçî	**hun náçin**	**tu náşoyî**	**hun náşon**
ew náçe	**ew náçin**	**ew náşo**	**ew náşon**

If the present stem begins with **a-** or **ê-**, the prefix **di-** may drop its vowel and becomes **d-**, as in **axaftin/axiv-** 'speak' and **êşandin/êşîn-** 'to hurt,' the present tenses of which are either **daxivim** or **diaxivim** 'I speak' and either **dêşînim** or **diêşînim** 'I hurt.'

There are two verbs with irregular conjugations in the present tense, **hatin** 'to come' and **anîn** 'to bring.' In both these verbs the **dí-** modal marker has assimilated to the present stem and appears as **t-**. Their present conjugations, affirmative and negative, are as follows:

HATIN		ANÎN	
ez têm	**em tên**	**ez tînim**	**em tînin**
tu teyî	**hun tên**	**tu tînî**	**hun tînin**
ew tê	**ew tên**	**ew tîne**	**ew tînin**
ez nayêm	**em nayên**	**ez naynim**	**em naynin**
tu nayeyî	**hun nayên**	**tu naynî**	**hun naynin**
ew nayê	**ew nayên**	**ew nayne**	**ew naynin**

THE VERB

There are also two verbs, **zanîn** 'to know' and **karîn** 'to be able,' that are irregular in the negative. They form the negative with **ní** instead of **na**.

ZANÎN		KARÎN	
ez nizanim	em nizanin	ez nikarim	em nikarin
t̲u nizanî	hun nizanin	t̲u nikarî	hun nikarin
ew nizane	ew nizanin	ew nikare	ew nikarin

The present tense is used for (1) present habitual action ("I go") and (2) present progressive action ("I'm going"), and context usually makes it clear which tense should be used in English. Normal word order in Kurdish is subject, object, verb.[1] Complements of verbs of motion (where one comes, goes, brings, etc.) tend to follow the verb in the oblique case, as in the first example below.

Ez naçim doktor. Ez derman vena-xwim. Derziyê jî naxwazim.	I'm not going to the doctor. I'm not taking medicine. I don't want stiches either.
Xelkên Mehabadê wê roja han mîna karnevalekê pîroz dik̲in, dehol û zur-nevanên bajêr lêdixin, Mehabadî jî bi destên hev digirin û direqisin.	The people of Mahabad celebrate that day like a carnival, they play the city drums and clarions, and Mahabadis join hands and dance.
Du jinên gundî nêzîktir dibin, heta ber derê lojmanê tên, Mamoste Kevanot çav li wan dikeve û bi matmayîn dibêje…	Two village women get closer. They come up to the door of the lodging. Master Kevanot looks at them and says with astonishment…

§ 15. Compound Verbs. Compound verbs, which do not differ significantly from their counterparts in Persian and Sorani, consist of a nonverbal element (preverb or complement) and a verb. In Kurmanji some compound verbs are consistently written as one word, like **hildan** 'to lift,' which consists of the preverb **hil** and the verb **dan** 'to give' (present stem **d-**), **vek̲irin**

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[1] Full normal word order is: (1) temporal expression, (2) subject, (3) direct object, (4) miscellaneous prepositional phrases, (5) verb, (6) directional complement. Many other orders are possible, but when any element is moved from its normal position it is highlighted or emphasized in some way.

'to open,' which consists of the preverb **ve** and the verb **kirin** 'to do' (present stem **k-**), and **rûniştin** 'to sit down,' which consists of the preverb **rû** and the verb **niştin** (present stem **nê-**); others are written as two separate words, like **behs kirin** 'to discuss' and **alîkarî kirin** 'to help.' The **di-** prefix is added to the verbal part of the compound, i.e. after the nonverbal part. Stress in the affirmative is on the preverb.

ez védikim	em védikin	ez béhs dikim	em béhs dikin
tu védikî	hun védikin	tu béhs dikî	hun béhs dikin
ew védike	ew védikin	ew béhs dike	ew béhs dikin
ez híldidim	em híldidin	ez rûdinêm	em rûdinên
tu híldidî	hun híldidin	tu rûdinêyî	hun rûdinên
ew híldide	ew híldidin	ew rûdinê	ew rûdinên

In the negative the stressed prefix **ná-** takes the place of **di-** in compound verbs:

ez venákim	em venákin	ez behs nákim	em behs nákin
tu venákî	hun venákin	tu behs nákî	hun behs nákin
ew venáke	ew venákin	ew behs náke	ew behs nákin
ez hilnádim	em hilnádin	ez rûnánêm	em rûnánên
tu hilnádî	hun hilnádin	tu rûnánêyî	hun rûnánên
ew hilnáde	ew hilnádin	ew rûnánê	ew rûnánên

Depending upon the semantics of a given compound, many compound verbs can be extended to include any and all matter that complements the nonverbal part of the compound. For instance, compound verbs like **alîkarî kirin** 'to help' and **behs kirin** 'to discuss' can be extended through a construct (or multiple constructs) as in the following examples. In extended constructs the construct takes care of modifications and relationships that are expressed by various means in English, usually with prepositions.

Ew jî *alîkariya kovara Enstîtuya kurdî ya Parîsê* **dike.**   He also *helps out on the journal of the Paris Kurdish Institute*.

Em *beḥsa beşê kurdên Kurdistana*   We are *discussing the role of the Kurds*
  Tirkiyeyê **diḵin.**   *in Turkey's Kurdistan.*

Close compound verbs of the **hildan** 'to raise' and **vekirin** 'to open' type do not admit extension through a construct. They take normal direct objects before the verb.

Ji peyayên gundî hinek ji dûr ve silavê A few of the village men raise a greeting
  li wî hildidin.   to him from afar.

Soviyetî pirtûkên dersan yên bi kurdî The Soviets print schoolbooks in Kurd-
  çap dikin û dibistanên kurdî vedikin. ish and open Kurdish schools.

§ 16. The Formation of the Present Subjunctive. Like the present indicative, the present subjunctive is formed from the present stem of the verb and the personal suffixes. The modal marker for the subjunctive is **bí-**. Unlike the **dí** prefix, **bí** does not usually drop its vowel in favor of an initial **a** in the stem, but in some dialects it may do so (i.e. **baxivim** for **biaxivim**).

ez **bíçim**	em **bíçin**		ez **bíaxivim**	em **bíaxivin**
t̲u **bíçî**	hun **bíçin**		t̲u **bíaxivî**	hun **bíaxivin**
ew **bíçe**	ew **bíçin**		ew **bíaxive**	ew **bíaxivin**

In compound verbs, the **bí-** prefix is optional, and it is usually omitted with close compounds (generally speaking, those that are written together as one word and, by and large, verbs compounded with **kirin** unless there is an extended complement). When the **bí-** prefix is omitted, the absence of a modal prefix identifies the verb as subjunctive, as in **ve-xwarin** (**ve-xw-**) 'to drink' and **hil-dan** (**hil-d-**) 'to lift':

ez **véxwim**	em **véxwin**		ez **híldim**	em **híldin**
t̲u **véxwî**	hun **véxwin**		t̲u **híldî**	hun **híldin**
ew **véxwe**	ew **véxwin**		ew **hílde**	ew **híldin**

The negative prefix for the subjunctive is **né-**, which replaces **bí-** where it occurs. Where there is no **bi-** prefix, the negative is attached to the verbal part of compounds.

ez néçim	em néçin	ez hilnédim	em hilnédin
<u>t</u>u néçî	hun néçin	<u>t</u>u hilnédî	hun hilnédin
ew néçe	ew néçin	ew hilnéde	ew hilnédin

There are two present subjunctives of the verb **bûn** 'to be, become,' with and without the subjunctive marker **bi-**. The conjugation without the marker is used when the verb means 'be'; the conjugation with the marker is used when the verb means 'become' and when it is part of a compound verb.

<div align="center">'BE'   'BECOME'</div>

ez bim	em bin	ez bíbim	em bíbin
<u>t</u>u bî	hun bin	<u>t</u>u bíbî	hun bíbin
ew be	ew bin	ew bíbe	ew bíbin

In the negative the distinction between 'be' and 'become' is lost, and there is only one negative present subjunctive.

ez nébim	em nébin
<u>t</u>u nébî	hun nébin
ew nébe	ew nébin

There are two present subjunctives of **hatin** 'to come.' One is regularly conjugated based on the stem **wer-** without the **bi-** prefix; the other is regularly conjugated based on the stem **bê-**, a contraction of **bi-** and **yê-**, the present stem of **hatin**.

<div align="center">WER- STEM   YÊ- STEM</div>

ez werim	em werin	ez bêm	em bên
<u>t</u>u werî	hun werin	<u>t</u>u bêyî	hun bên
ew were	ew werin	ew bê	ew bên

The negative present subjunctive of these two variants is as follows:

ez néwerim	em néwerin	ez néyêm	em néyên
<u>t</u>u néwerî	hun néwerin	<u>t</u>u néyêyî	hun néyên
ew néwere	ew néwerin	ew néyê	ew néyên

There are also two present subjunctives of **çûn** 'to go.' One is regularly

conjugated based on the stem **ç-** with the **bí-** subjunctive marker; the other is regularly conjugated based on the stem **her-** without the subjunctive marker.

Ç- STEM		*HER-* STEM	
ez biçim	**em biçin**	**ez herim**	**em herin**
<u>t</u>u biçî	**hun biçin**	**<u>t</u>u herî**	**hun herin**
ew biçe	**ew biçin**	**ew here**	**ew herin**

Negatives are predictably formed:

ez néçim	**em néçin**	**ez néherim**	**em néherin**
<u>t</u>u néçî	**hun néçin**	**<u>t</u>u néherî**	**hun néherin**
ew néçe	**ew néçin**	**ew néhere**	**ew néherin**

§ 16.1 Uses of the present subjunctive. The present subjunctive is used in the following instances:

(1) independently—i.e. not dependent upon a preceding construction—as a deliberative (English 'should').

Ez îro bêm?	Should I come today?
Îcar em çi bi<u>k</u>in?	Now what should we do?

(2) in the first persons singular and plural as a cohortative ('let me, let's') and in the 3rd persons as a hortatory ('let him…, may he …'). The hortatory is often preceded by **bila** 'let.'

Peşî ez bibêjim <u>k</u>u …	First let me say that …
Ew derî ve<u>k</u>e.	Let him open the door.
Em herin!	Let's go!
Bi siyasetê bila ew mijûl bibin.	Let them get involved in politics.

(3) as complement to all verbs and constructions of desire and wanting (see §16.2), ability (see §16.3), necessity, deciding, ordering, etc.

Lazim e <u>t</u>u* Kurmancî *biaxivî.	*It's necessary that you speak* Kurmanji.

Di vê babetê de *ez naxwazim* **ti̱ştekî bibêjim.**	*I don't want to say* anything in this regard.
Tu di̱karî **hinekî behsa xwe û jiyana xwe** *bi̱kî?*	*Can you speak* a bit about yourself and your life?
Em kurd in û kurd *gereke* **berî hemû zimanan, bi zimanê xwe** *biaxivin, bixwînin û binivîsin.*	We are Kurds, and Kurds *ought to speak, read, and write* in their own language before all other languages.
Berî her ti̱ştî *gereke ez nîşan bidim* **ku ji mefhûma "ḵovara îslamî" ez çi ti̱ştî fehim di̱ḵim.**	Before anything else, *it is necessary for me to indicate* what I understand by the concept of an "Islamic journal."
Gereke **ḵovar xwe** *zencîr neḵin.*	*It is necessary* that journals *not fetter* themselves.
Wî pirr caran *biryar dabû* **ḵu êdî li xurînî ci̱xarê** *nekişîne.*	Many times *he had decided not to smoke* cigarettes any more on an empty stomach.
Dokṭor *divê* **rêyekî nîşanî me** *bide* **û derman binivîsine.**	The doctor *must show* us a way and write a [prescription for a] remedy.

(4) after a number of conjunctions like **berî ḵu** 'before' (which is usually followed by the subjunctive), **çaxê ḵu** 'when' (which is followed by the subjunctive when it refers to the future), and **mîna ku** 'as though.' See §30.

Berî ḵu ez derkevim **derveyê welêt, min soranî nebihîstibû.**	*Before I went* outside the country, I had not heard Sorani.
Çaxê ḵu **firseta min** *çêbibe***, ez ê bi şev û rojan bo ziman û edebiyata kurdî** *bi̱şi̱xulim.*	*When I get* the opportunity, I will work day and night for Kurdish language and literature.
Mîna ku **di berê de naxoşiyek di navîna wan de** *hebe…*	*As though there was* some unpleasantness between them before…

(5) in the protasis (the "if" clause) of a possible conditional with reference to the present or the future:

Ger **ev rast** *be,* …	*If* this *is* true, …
Ger **ew** *bibin* **yeḵ, ew di̱ḵarin her ti̱ştî bi̱ḵin.**	*If* they *unite*, they can do anything.

(6) in all purpose clauses, usually introduced by **ji bo ku** 'in order that':

Ez diçim xwendegehê *ji bo ku* **ez** *bixwînim***.**	I go to school *in order to study.*
Ez dixwînim *ji bo ku bibim* **mamoste.**	I'm studying *in order to become* a teacher.
Ji bo ku tu **ji nexweşiyê** *bifilitî***, divê doktor li te binêre û bi nexweşiya te bizanîbe.**	*In order for you to get rid* of your illness, it is necessary for the doctor to have a look at you and diagnose your illness.

(7) in clauses complementary to adjectives, where English usually has a complementary infinitive:[1]

Gelê me, gotin û kelîmeyên **ku dizane jî ne** *amede* **ye** **ku ji sembol û herfan** *bixwîne***.**	Our society is not *ready to read* even words it knows from symbols and letters.

(8) In relative clauses introduced by indefinite relative pronouns like **herkesê ku** 'anybody who' &c.:

Herkesê **ku bi kurdî** *binivîse***, di destpêkê de û heta demeke dirêj, ê pergî zehmetiyên mezin were.**	*Anybody who writes* in Kurdish will encounter major difficulties at the beginning and for a long time.

(9) In relative and result clauses after negative expressions:

Tiştek *ne dihat* **xuya kirin** *ku mirov bibêje* **ev ê bikaribe bibe sedema ewte ewta kûçikên gund.**	*Nothing could be made out that one might say* it could be the reason for the barking of the dogs of the village.
Salên min *ne ewqas* **zêde ne** *ku ez bibêjim,* **ez pir jiyame û min gelek dîtiye.**	My years are *not so many that I could say* I have lived a lot and seen much.

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[1]But not in clauses dependent upon adjectives that describe situations or actions that actually pertain or have taken place, which are in the indicative mood, as:

Ez xwe *bextiyar* **dibînim** **ku mamostetiya gundeki weha** *bûye* **para min.**	I count myself *lucky that* a teaching job in such a village *has been* my lot.

(10) In relative clauses with indefinite antecedents, often preceded by **wek** or **mîna** 'like.' See §22 (3).

Mîna gula ji lûla tufingê *derkeve***, <u>t</u>u ji malê derketî.**	You lit out of the house like a bullet shot from the barrel of a rifle.
Dîtina wî bû mîna kêra <u>k</u>u <u>t</u>u di birînê de *bigerînî.*	Seeing him was like a knife you twist in a wound.

Two verbs, **karîn** 'to be able' and **zanîn** 'to know,' do not form their present subjunctives as other verbs do but use the form of the past subjunctive (see § 22 below) instead.

§ 16.2. The Future Tense.

The future tense is formed by adding **-ê** or **dê** to the personal pronouns followed by the present subjunctive conjugation. **<u>T</u>u + ê** is often contracted to **<u>t</u>ê** (**<u>t</u>û ê** and **<u>t</u>iwê** also exist), and **ew + ê** may be contracted to **wê**, although the contraction is not mandatory. The conjugation of the future tense of **çûn** (affirmative and negative) is:

ezê (ez dê) biçim	**emê (em dê) biçin**	**ezê (ez dê) neçim**	**emê (em dê) neçin**
<u>t</u>ê (<u>t</u>u dê) biçî	**hunê (hun dê) biçin**	**<u>t</u>ê (<u>t</u>u dê) neçî**	**hunê (hun dê) neçin**
ewê (ew dê) biçe	**ewê (ew dê) biçin**	**ewê (ew dê) neçe**	**ewê (ew dê) neçin**

When the subject of a future-tense verb is a noun, **wê**, **ê**, or **dê** comes after the noun. All the future markers are reflexes of the present stem (وێ *wê*) of the verb ویـسـتن *wîstin* 'to want,' which still exists in Sorani Kurdish and which has produced this synthetic tense much like the English future compounded with 'will.'

Dema *em dê bighêjin* **Ewropa,**[1] **keçên porzer li Ferensa û li Swêdê** *wê* **li ser porê me** *dîn bibin***.**	When *we get* to Europe, the blonde girls in France and Sweden *will go crazy* for our hair.
Ew dibêje <u>k</u>u *ewê* **bi siyasetê ve** *mijûl nebe***.**	He says *he won't get involved* in politics.

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[1]Kurdish, like French *(quand nous arriverons en Europe),* uses the future after 'when' when it has a future implication.

Ya meriv ê *israr bik̲e* **û bi kurdî** *bini-* *vîse***, yan jî meriv ê zimanekî din k̲u ji kurdî gelek̲î pêşket̲îtir e,** *tercîh bik̲e***.**	Either a person *will insist* and *write* in Kurdish, or a person *will prefer* another language that is much more advanced than Kurdish.
"Ya rebî, *ezê* **çi** *bikim***?" min di dilê xwe de got.**	"O Lord, what *will I do?*" I said to my-self.

§ 16.2. *Xwestin***, 'To Want.'** The Kurmanji verb for "to want" is **xwestin** (present stem **xwaz-**). Verbal complements are in the present subjective. A full inflection of the present tense of 'to want to go' is as follows:

ez dixwazim biçim	**em dixwazin biçin**
t̲u dixwazî biçî	**hun dixwazin biçin**
ew dixwaze biçe	**ew dixwazin biçin**

When the subject of **xwestin** and the subject of the following subjunctive complement are the same, the subjunctive follows in the same person, as in the following examples.

Ez naxwaz*im* **vê beh̲sê dirêj bik̲***im***.**	I don't want to prolong this discussion.
Ew dixwaz*e* **ji avakirina Cumhûriyetê re bib***e* **piştgir û alîkar.**	He wants to become a supporter and helper in the founding of the republic.

When the subjects are different, however, the conjunction **k̲u** usually inter-venes, and the subject of the subjunctive verb must be expressed.

Bavê wî dixwaze *k̲u ew* **bixwîne.**	His father wants him to study.
Bavê min dixwaze *k̲u ez* **bixwînim.**	My father wants me to study.

See note on the past tense of **xwestin** at §18.3 below.

§ 16.3. *K̲arîn***, 'To Be Able.'** The verb 'to be able' is **k̲arîn** (present stem **k̲ar-**). **K̲arîn** is regularly conjugated in the present, often without the **di-** prefix, and it is followed by a subjunctive complement. The negative pres-ent is formed with **ni-** instead of **na-**. Below is given the full present conju-gation, affirmative and negative, of 'I can go/I can't go':

ez di<u>k</u>arim biçim	**em di<u>k</u>arin biçin**	**ez ni<u>k</u>arim biçim**	**em ni<u>k</u>arin biçin**
<u>t</u>u di<u>k</u>arî biçî	**hun di<u>k</u>arin biçin**	**<u>t</u>u ni<u>k</u>arî biçî**	**hun ni<u>k</u>arin biçin**
ew di<u>k</u>are biçe	**ew di<u>k</u>arin biçin**	**ew ni<u>k</u>are biçe**	**ew ni<u>k</u>arin biçin**

Hevalê hêja, <u>t</u>u <u>k</u>arî xwe bi me bidî nasandin?	Dear friend, can you introduce yourself to us?
<u>T</u>u di<u>k</u>arî, ji kerema xwe re, hinekî be<u>h</u>sa xwe û jiyana xwe bi<u>kî</u>?	Can you please talk a bit about yourself and your life?
Meriv ni<u>k</u>are di hengamekê de li çend cihan be.	A person cannot be in several places at once.

Karîn does not form its present subjunctive in the normal manner. For it, see §22 below. For the past tense of **karîn** see §21.1 and note 3 on p. 54.

A dialectal variant of this verb, **kanîn**, is used by some writers.

§ 17. The Imperative. The singular imperative of verb stems ending in vowels is formed from **bí-** + the present stem. To present stems that end in consonants is also suffixed an unstressed **-e**. The plural imperative is identical to the 2nd-person plural subjunctive. As is the case in the subjunctive of close compound verbs, the **bí-** prefix is usually omitted; in open compounds it is generally found but may be omitted.

INFINITIVE	PRESENT STEM	SING. IMPT.	PL. IMPT.
bûn 'be'	**b-**	**bíbe**	**bíbin**
-bûn 'become'	**-b-**	**-be**	**-bin**
çûn	**ç-**	**bíçe**	**bíçin**
girtin	**gir-**	**bígire**	**bígirin**
hildan	**hil-d-**	**hílde**	**híldin**
kirin	**<u>k</u>-**	**bí<u>k</u>e**	**bí<u>k</u>in**
rûniştin	**rû-nê-**	**rûnê**	**rûnên**
şustin	**şo-**	**bíşo**	**bíşon**
ve<u>k</u>irin	**ve-<u>k</u>-**	**véke**	**vé<u>k</u>in**

Hatin and **çûn** form imperatives on their second present stems, **wer-** and

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her- respectively.

hatin	**wer-**	**were**	**werin**
çûn	**her-**	**here**	**herin**

The negative imperative prefix is **né-**.

bûn	**b-**	**nébe**	**nébin**
çûn	**ç-**	**néçe**	**néçin**
girtin	**gir-**	**négire**	**négirin**
hildan	**hil-d-**	**hilnéde**	**hilnédin**
ķirin	**ķ-**	**néķe**	**néķin**
rûniştin	**rû-nê-**	**rûnénê**	**rûnénên**
şustin	**şo-**	**néşo**	**néşon**
veķirin	**ve-ķ-**	**venéķe**	**venéķin**

§ 17.1. The Vocative. In the vocative the stress shifts to the first syllable of the noun and the following endings are added:

MASC. SING.	FEM. SING.	PLURAL
-o	**-ê**	**-ên/-no**

Hiş be, kúro!	Be quiet, boy!
Were, kéçê!	Come here, girl!
Kárkerên, yeķgirin!	Workers, unite!
Zû bin, hevalno!	Be quick, friends!

The difference between the **-ên** ending and the **-no** ending for the plural is dialectal.

§ 18. The Simple Past (Intransitive). The simple past (preterite) of intransitive verbs is formed by adding unstressed personal suffixes to the past stem of the verb. The past stem is derived by deleting the **-(i)n** ending of the infinitive; this will leave a past stem in a consonant, **û**, **î**, or **a**.

AFTER CONSONANTS	AFTER VOWELS

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-im	-in	-m	-n
-î	-in	-yî	-n
—	-in	—	-n

Examples of the simple past inflection are from **hatin** 'to come,' **bûn** 'to be,' **tirsîn** 'to fear,' and **man** 'to remain.'

HATIN   *BÛN*

ez hatim	**em hatin**	**ez bûm**	**em bûn**
tu hatî	**hun hatin**	**tu bûyî**	**hun bûn**
ew hat	**ew hatin**	**ew bû**	**ew bûn**

TIRSÎN   *MAN*

ez tirsîm	**em tirsîn**	**ez mam**	**em man**
tu tirsiyî	**hun tirsîn**	**tu mayî**	**hun man**
ew tirsî	**ew tirsîn**	**ew ma**	**ew man**

The negative is formed by prefixing **né-**:

ez néhatim	**em néhatin**	**ez nébûm**	**em nébûn**
tu néhatî	**hun néhatin**	**tu nébûyî**	**hun nébûn**
ew néhat	**ew néhatin**	**ew nébû**	**ew nébûn**
ez nétirsîm	**em nétirsîn**	**ez némam**	**em néman**
tu nétirsiyî	**hun nétirsîn**	**tu némayî**	**hun néman**
ew nétirsî	**ew nétirsîn**	**ew néma**	**ew néman**

The Kurdish simple past tense usually corresponds closely to the English past tense.

Tu bi pelikan *çûyî* jor.	You *went* down the stairs.
Demekê jî midûrê dibistanê *bûm.*	For a time I *was* a school principal.
Hemû *man* bêdeng.	They all *remained* silent.

However, since the Kurdish simple past tense indicates anything that took place or has taken place in the past, it sometimes corresponds to the English present perfect tense. In journalistic and advertising usage, the simple past tense is used in headlines and story titles, where English normally uses the

present, as in the following:

Kaset û cd derke<u>t</u> li hemû mûzîk marketan.	The cassette and CD *have come* to (are available in) all music stores.
Konferansa Tevgera Jinên Azad bi dawî bû.	The conference of the Liberated Women's Movement *has ended*.
Li başûrê Kurdistanê di 10 salên dawî de 2733 kes mirin, 4913 kes jî birîndar bûn.	2,733 people *have died* and 4,913 people *have been wounded* over the last ten years in the south of Kurdistan.

A distinction between the two meanings of the verb **bûn**, 'to be' and 'to become,' is shown in the past tense by the placement of the verb. When it means 'to be' it follows the predicate, but when it means 'to become' the verb comes between the subject and the predicate, as in the following:

Ew zabitekî jîr û jêhatî *bû*.	He was a talented and worthy officer.
Ew *bû* zabitekî jîr û jêhatî.	He became a talented and worthy officer.

§ 18.1. The Past Habitual/Progressive (Intransitive). The past habitual ('I used to go') and progressive ('I was going') is formed by adding the habitual/progressive prefix **dí-** to the simple past.

ez díha<u>t</u>im	**em díha<u>t</u>in**	**ez díçûm**	**em díçûn**
<u>t</u>u díha<u>t</u>î	**hun díha<u>t</u>in**	**<u>t</u>u díçûyî**	**hun díçûn**
ew díha<u>t</u>	**ew díha<u>t</u>in**	**ew díçû**	**ew díçûn**

Gava diçûm dibis<u>t</u>anê û vedigeriyam, dê<u>lik</u>ek teva du cewrên xwe li ser riya min xuya dibûn û bi min da direyan.	When I was going to school and coming back, a dog and her two pups used to appear in front of me and bark at me.
Leşkerên tir<u>k</u> we<u>k</u> pelkên daran di ser pi<u>şt</u>a hespan de diha<u>t</u>in xarê.	Turkish soldiers were coming down from the backs of horses like leaves of trees.

For past habituals in **di-**, the negative is regularly formed by prefixing **né-** to the affirmative (and not, as in the present tense, by combining the negative prefix with **di-**):

ez nediha<u>t</u>im	**em nediha<u>t</u>in**	**ez nediçûm**	**em nediçûn**
<u>t</u>u nediha<u>t</u>î	**hun nediha<u>t</u>in**	**<u>t</u>u nediçûyî**	**hun nediçûn**
ew nediha<u>t</u>	**ew nediha<u>t</u>in**	**ew nediçû**	**ew nediçûn**

Xweş tê bîra min xew *nediket* çavên min, heya diya min <u>ç</u>îro<u>k</u>ek ji min re nego<u>t</u>a.	I remember well that sleep *used not to come* to my eyes until my mother had told me a story.
Rojek *derbas nedibû*, bê <u>k</u>u ew û mirinê li çavên hev ne nihêrin.	*Not* a day *used to go by* that he and death did not look each other in the eye.

§ 18.2. The Simple Past (Transitive): The Ergative. The simple past tense of transitive verbs exhibits a phenomenon called ergativity, whereby (1) the agent is marked, (2) the patient is unmarked, and (3) the verb agrees with the patient.

The tense is formed from the past stem of the verb, and to it are added the personal endings of the intransitive past, but these endings agree in person and number with the patient (what we call the direct object). The agent (our subject) is in the oblique case, and the patient is in the nominative—i.e. just the reverse of the present tense.

AGENT OBL. CASE	PATIENT NOM. CASE		VERB AGREES WITH PATIENT
min	**ew**	←	**dî<u>t</u>**
I	him		saw-him
wî	**ez**	←	**dî<u>t</u>im**
he	me		saw-me
wê jinê	**<u>t</u>u**	←	**dî<u>t</u>î**
that woman	you		saw-you
<u>t</u>e	**ew**	←	**dîtin**
you	them		saw-them

The first conjugation below reflects changing agents, and even if the 3rd-person singular patient **ew** were not expressed, it would still be inextricably

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built into **dît**. The second conjugation reflects changing patients.

DIFFERENT AGENTS; STABLE PATIENT

min ew dî<u>t</u>	I saw him	**me ew dî<u>t</u>**	we saw him
<u>t</u>e ew dî<u>t</u>	you saw him	**we ew dî<u>t</u>**	you saw him
wî ew dî<u>t</u>	he saw him	**wan ew dî<u>t</u>**	they saw him

STABLE AGENT; DIFFERENT PATIENTS

wî ez dî<u>t</u>im	he saw me	**wî em dî<u>t</u>in**	he saw us
wî <u>t</u>u dî<u>t</u>î	he saw you	**wî hun dî<u>t</u>in**	he saw you
wî ew dî<u>t</u>	he saw him	**wî ew dî<u>t</u>in**	he saw them

Negatives are formed by prefixing **né-** to the affirmative.

wî ez nedî<u>t</u>im	he didn't see me	**wî em nedî<u>t</u>in**	he didn't see us
wî <u>t</u>u nedî<u>t</u>î	he didn't see you	**wî hun nedî<u>t</u>in**	he didn't see you
wî ew nedî<u>t</u>	he didn't see him	**wî ew nedî<u>t</u>in**	he didn't see them

The past habitual/progressive is regularly formed by adding the **dí-** prefix to the verb and **nédi-** for the negative.

min ew didî<u>t</u>	I used to see him	**wî ez nedidî<u>t</u>im**	he didn't use to see me

Pronouns in the oblique case are the clearest indicators of agency. Noun agents are also in the oblique case; however, masculine singular nouns are not marked for the oblique.

Alfred Nobel **piş<u>t</u>î mirina xwe, serwe-<u>t</u>eke mezin li dû xwe hiş<u>t</u>.**	Alfred Nobel left behind a large fortune after his death.
Mêri<u>k</u> **bi kenekî ne ji dil go<u>t</u>…**	The fellow said with a smile not from the heart…

Feminines, of course, are marked in the oblique, as are masculines modified by a demonstrative and all plurals.

Jini<u>k</u>ekê **çaya me anî.**	A woman brought our tea.
Wî mirovî **çay anî.**	That man brought tea.
Gundiyan **<u>t</u>iş<u>t</u>ek nego<u>t</u>.**	The villagers didn't say anything.

If any one in a series of co-ordinated verbs in the past tense is transitive, the ergative construction takes precedence and the agent is marked.

Rewşen Xanimê demekê bêdeng ma, kûr kûr fi<u>k</u>irî û cigarek vêxis<u>t</u>.	Mme Rewshen remained silent for a moment, lost in her thoughts, and lit a cigarette.

In the example above, neither **ma** nor **fikirî** is transitive, but since the final verb in the series, **vêxist**, is transitive and therefore ergative, the agent, **Rewşen Xanimê**, is in the oblique case.

The ergative verb agrees in person and number with its patient (logical object), but since the patient is in the nominative case and unmodified plural nouns do not have an external plurality, the number is indicated only by the verb, as in the following examples. Compare:

Wê ka<u>x</u>iz ji des<u>t</u> wî gir<u>t</u>.	She took the page from his hand.
Wê ka<u>x</u>iz ji des<u>t</u> wî gir<u>t</u>in.	She took the pages from his hand.

In the second example only the plural verb **girtin** indicates the plurality of the patient **kaxiz**.

Me ew helbes<u>t</u> xwend.	We read that poem.
Me ew helbes<u>t</u> xwendin.	We read those poems.

Here only the plural verb **xwendin** indicates the plurality of the patient **ew helbest**.

Just as in a series of co-ordinated nouns only the last noun shows case, in a series of co-ordinated past transitive verbs with a plural patient, only the last in the series shows the plural. In the following example, the patient, **destên xwe** 'their hands,' is plural, but only the second of the two verbs, **anîn**, shows the plurality.

Havalan des<u>t</u>ên xwe bi hus<u>t</u>iwên hev re bir û anîn.	The friends reached out and put their hands on each other's necks.

§ 18.3. Number Agreement in Extended Ergative Verbs. In the past tenses of compound verbs whose complements can be extended through the construct (like **be<u>h</u>s <u>k</u>irin** 'to discuss,' which can be extended as **be<u>h</u>sa ...**

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kirin 'to discuss something,' and **bal kişandin** 'to attract attention,' which can be extended as **bala … kişandin** 'to attract the attention of someone'), the verb agrees in number (singular or plural) with with the last element (not necessarily the last word) in the extension, i.e. if the last element in the extension is plural, it attracts a plural verb, as in the following:

Wî ji min re behsa serpêhatiyên xwe kirin.	He discussed his adventures with me.

Here the extended patient is **behsa serpêhatiyên xwe** 'discussion of his adventures,' and the past verb **kirin** agrees in the plural with the last element in the sequence, **serpêhatiyên xwe** 'his adventures.'

Wêneyên min bala rojname û hunermendan kişandin.	My pictures attracted the attention of newspapers and artists.

In this example the extended patient is **bala rojname û hunermendan** 'the attention of newspapers and artists,' and the plural verb **kişandin** agrees with the last element in the sequence, the plural **hunermendan** 'artists.'

Kemalîstên tirk fermana bi dardakirina Emîn Elî Bedirxan û hersê kurên wî jî derxistin.	The Turkish Kemalists issued an order to hang Emin Ali Bedirkhan and all three of his sons.

In this example the extended patient is **fermana bi dardakirina Emîn Elî Bedirxan û hersê kurên wî** 'an order to hang Emin Ali Bedirkhan and all three of his sons,' and the plural verb **derxistin** agrees with the last element in the extended patient, **hersê kurên wî** 'all three of his sons.'

§ 18.4. The Past Tense of *Xwestin*. The past tense of a transitive verb like **xwestin** is ergative, but the following subjunctive complement is not. Therefore, even when the subject of the two verbs is the same, the two pronouns—one oblique for the ergative and the other nominative for the subjunctive—must be expressed, and optionally **ku** may intervene between the two verbs. An example is the conjugation of the phrase "I wanted to say":

min xwest (ku) ez bibêjim	**me xwest (ku) em bibêjin**
te xwest (ku) tu bibêjî	**we xwest (ku) hun bibêjin**
wî xwest (ku) ew bibêje	**wan xwest (ku) ew bibêjin**

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Min xwest ku ez ji gund derkevim û ji | I wanted to get out of the village and
xwe re berî berî çem *bimeşim.* | walk by myself along the river.

Ew tiştê ku di ser û dilê min de bû û | The thing that was in my heart and mind,
min dixwest ez bidim, **pêk nehat.** | and which I wanted to give, didn't
| come to be.

§ 18.5. Loss of Ergativity. For stylistic reasons ergativity may be lost in past transitive verbs. Normally this happens only in expressions like "I saw that…" and "I said that…" when the verb is followed by a subordinate clause as its complement:

Min go̱tim ku̱… I said that… (not **min go̱t**)

Min dî̱tim ku̱… I saw that… (not **min dî̱t**)

Otherwise all tenses and moods constructed on the past stem of transitive verbs are normally ergative. In some eastern dialects, however, ergativity is sporadically lost. The criteria for this loss have not been determined.

Di hundurê kûlê da sosre̱teke reş û Inside the hut/hole ??? *they saw*
giran *dî̱tin.* something unusual, black and heavy.

§ 19. The Past Participle. The past participle is formed by adding **-î** to the past stem of verbs whose stems end in consonants. With past stems that end in **-a** and **-û** the participle is formed by adding **-yî** to the past stem. With past stems that end in **-î**, the past participle is identical to the past stem.

CONSONANT STEMS | VOWEL STEMS
hatin > hat > hatî 'come' | **man > ma > mayî** 'remained'
şustin > şust > şustî 'washed' | **çûn > çû > çûyî** 'gone'
kirin > kir > kirî 'done' | **kirîn > kirî > kirî** 'bought'

In meaning the past participle corresponds fairly closely to the English past participle: **hatî** 'come,' **vekirî** 'opened,' **şustî** 'washed' as in

cilên şustî washed clothes

welatekî pêşketî an advanced country

wela_tekî lipaşmayî	a backward country
kitêbeke çap_kirî	a published book

Negative participles are formed by prefixing **ne-**, as in

kitêbên neçap_kirî	unpublished books
cilên neşus_tî	unwashed clothes
benên nexuyayî	unseen bonds
tiştên negotî	unsaid things

§ 20. The Present Perfect Tense (Intransitive).

The present perfect tense of intransitive verbs is formed from the past stem with the following endings:

STEMS ENDING IN CONSONANTS		STEMS ENDING IN VOWELS	
´-ime	**´-ine**	**´-me**	**´-ne**
´-iye	**´-ine**	**´-ye**	**´-ne**
´-iye	**´-ine**	**´-ye**	**´-ne**

Note that the second and third persons singular are identical. Examples from **ha_tin** 'to come' and **çûn** 'to go' are:

ez ha_time	**em ha_tine**	**ez çûme**	**em çûne**
_tu ha_tiye	**hun ha_tine**	**_tu çûye**	**hun çûne**
ew ha_tiye	**ew ha_tine**	**ew çûye**	**ew çûne**

The negative is formed by prefixing **né-**

ez neha_time	**em neha_tine**	**ez neçûme**	**em neçûne**
_tu neha_tiye	**hun neha_tine**	**_tu neçûye**	**hun neçûne**
ew neha_tiye	**ew neha_tine**	**ew neçûye**	**ew neçûne**

§ 20.1. The Present Perfect Tense (Transitive/Ergative).

The present perfect tense of transitive verbs is made from the agent pronouns plus the endings given above, but the construction is ergative, as in the simple past.

Examples reflect changing agents ('I, you, &c. have seen him/her/it') and changing patients ('he has seen me, you, &c.'). The negative is formed by prefixing **né-** to the verb.

DIFFERENT AGENTS; 3rd-PERSON SINGULAR PATIENT		3rd-PERSON SINGULAR AGENT; DIFFERENT PATIENTS	
min ew dîṯiye	**me ew dîṯiye**	**wî ez dîṯime**	**wî em dîṯine**
ṯe ew dîṯiye	**we ew dîṯiye**	**wî ṯu dîṯiye**	**wî hun dîṯine**
wî ew dîṯiye	**wan ew dîṯiye**	**wî ew dîṯiye**	**wî ew dîṯine**
min ew nedîṯiye	**me ew nedîṯiye**	**wî ez nedîṯime**	**wî em nedîṯine**
ṯe ew nedîṯiye	**we ew nedîṯiye**	**wî ṯu nedîṯiye**	**wî hun nedîṯine**
wî ew nedîṯiye	**wan ew nedîṯiye**	**wî ew nedîṯiye**	**wî ew nedîṯine**

Generally, the present perfect tense of Kurdish corresponds fairly closely to the English present perfect ("I have come").

Min ḥeṯa niha çar kiṯêb *çap ḵirine*.	Until now I *have published* four books.
Gelo ew jî wek min *winda bûye*.	I wonder if he too, like me, *has become lost*.

But the Kurdish present perfect is in all respects the exact equivalent of the Persian past narrative (**hatime** = آمده‌ام, **maye** = مانده است). In Kurdish, as in Persian, the present perfect tense is used for anything that happened in the past, the effects or results of which are felt to be relevant to the present or to the topic at hand. Compare, for instance, the following two examples with their literal translations:

Wî tu caran ṯişṯekî wilo negoṯ.	"He never said any such thing."
Wî tu caran ṯişṯekî wilo negoṯiye.	"He has never said any such thing."

The first example in Kurdish is a simple statement of fact, as in English. The second example can only be said in English if the person about whom it is said is still alive; if he is dead, we have to say, "He never said any such thing." In Kurdish, however, the present state of the person is irrelevant; what pertains is whether his not having said any such thing is or is not felt to be relevant to the present—i.e., is it still true and relevant to the topic at

hand that he never said such a thing? If so, present perfect; if not, simple past.

Other examples of usage are as follows:

Jiyana min gelek<u>î</u> bi şequdeq bihuri-ya. Tenê dê bi kurtî bibêjim: Ez di Sibata 1953'an de, li Hedhedkê *ha<u>ti</u>-me* **dinê. Pêşî, min xwendina olî li cem bavê xwe** *xwendiye*. **Îcar piştre ez derke<u>t</u>ime feqîtiyê û li hin medrese-yên Kurdistanê** *geriyame*.	My life has been spent mostly in misery and hardship. I will only say in brief: I was born in February 1953 in Hedhe-dik. First I had religious instruction with my father. Then I became a reli-gious student and made the rounds of some schools in Kurdistan.

In this example, the writer's first verb, *bihuriya,* is in the simple past tense as a statement of fact, while English demands the present perfect. There-after, that the writer was born in 1953, studied with his father, became a religious student, etc. are all relevant to his having had a miserable life, which is the topic at hand. Therefore he uses the present perfect tense.

Diya min li wir *bûye* **û meriyên wê îroj li her du hêlên xeta hesin bi cîh dibin.**	My mother *was* from there, and today her people live on both sides of the "Iron Line."[1]

In this example the writer says literally, "my mother has been from there" because the fact that his mother was from there explains why he has rela-tives on both sides of the border.

§ 21. The Past Perfect Tense (Intransitive). For intransitive verbs with past stems ending in a consonant, the past perfect tense, which is function-ally equivalent to the English past perfect ('I had come, you had gone'), is formed from the past stem + **i** + the past tense of **bûn** 'to be.' Verbs with past stems ending in a vowel form the past perfect tense from the simple stem + the past tense of **bûn**. Some writers shorten a final **î** in the stem to **i** (i.e. **ez tersibûm** 'I had feared' for **ez tersîbûm**). Examples of conjugation are from **hatin** and **çûn**.

ez ha<u>ti</u>bûm   em ha<u>ti</u>bûn   ez çûbûm   em çûbûn

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[1] The "Iron Line," coined on the model of the "Iron Curtain," is Turkey's border with Syria and Iraq, which divides Kurdistan.

ţu haţibûyî	**hun haţibûn**	**ţu çûbûyî**	**hun çûbûn**
ew haţibû	**ew haţibûn**	**ew çûbû**	**ew çûbûn**

The negative is formed by prefixing **né-** to the verb:

ez nehaţibûm	**em nehaţibûn**	**ez neçûbûm**	**em neçûbûn**
ţu nehaţibûyî	**hun nehaţibûn**	**ţu neçûbûyî**	**hun neçûbûn**
ew nehaţibû	**ew nehaţibûn**	**ew neçûbû**	**ew neçûbûn**

Tu caran *nekeţibû* **bîra min ķu ezê rojekê ji hîvê jî nefreţ biķim.**	Never *had it occurred* to my mind that one day I would hate the moon.
Pirraniya mirovên bajêr *çûbûn* **havîna xwe li ber lêvên derî û dengizên başûr derbas kin.**	Most of the people of the city *had gone* to spend their summers on the shores of the seas in the south.
Heta demek pir dirêj bi heval û dostên xwe re jî *nepeyivîbû.*	He *hadn't spoken* to his friends and buddies for a very long time.

§ 21.1. The Past Perfect Tense (Transitive/Ergative). The past perfect tense of transitive verbs is formed, like that of intransitive verbs, from the past stem + **-i-** + the past tense of **bûn** on the ergative model. Past stems that end in vowels add **bû** directly without the **-i-**.

min dîţibû	I had seen (it)	**me dîţibû**	we had seen (it)
ţe dîţibû	you had seen (it)	**hun dîţibû**	you had seen (it)
wî dîţibû	he had seen (it)	**wan dîţibû**	they had seen (it)
wî ez dîţibûm	he had seen me	**wî em dîţibûn**	he had seen us
wî ţu dîţibûyî	he had seen you	**wî hun dîţibûn**	he had seen you
wî ew dîţibû	he had seen him	**wî ew dîţibûn**	he had seen them

Îngilîzan zimanê hindiyan *qedexe neķiribûn.*[1]	The English had not banned the Indians' language.
Wî pirr caran *biryar dabû* **ķu…**	Many times he had decided that…

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[1] For the reason for the plural verb, see §18.3.

Wê rojê, germa havînê ṯu *gêj ḵiribûyî.*	On that day the heat of summer had made you dizzy.
Bi fikira ku belkî mêrik li hemberî polîsan rabe û tiştekî bi kar bîne, polîsekî demanca xwe jî *kişandibû.*	Thinking that the man might resist the police and use something [as a weapon], a policeman *had drawn* his pistol.

As in Persian, the past perfect tense in Kurmanji is not necessarily tied to a temporal reference as it is in English. It is often used independently for a past tense with a somewhat more remote signification where English would have a simple past, particularly in narratives.

Gava min di hevpeyvîneke bi Osman Sebrî re, *pirs*a ḵu wî "kengî dest̲ bi nivîsandinê ḵiriye" ḵiribû, wî *goṯibû* ḵu …	When, during a conversation with Osman Sebrî, I asked (not "had asked") when he had started writing, he said (not "had said") that …[1]
Tu heta niha li ku bûî? —Ez bîskê *çûbûm* mala Ehmed. Ji wir jî em çûn komelê.	Where have you been till now? —I *went* to Ahmad's house for a bit. From there we went to the society.[2]

§ 21.2. The Past Perfect Tense of *Karîn* and *Zanîn*. The past perfect form of the verbs **karîn** 'to be able' and **zanîn** 'to know' is used as the normal past tense. Thus **ez/min diḵaribûm** means 'I was able, I could,' and **min dizanibû** means 'I knew.' As in the present tense, the negatives of these verbs are formed with **ni-**, as in **ez/min niḵaribûm** 'I wasn't able, I couldn't' and **min nizanibû** 'I didn't know.' Negatives with **di-** (past perfect progressive) are **nedi-**. Complements of the past perfect of **karîn** are either in the present subjunctive or in the past conditional (see §25.1 below). For sequence of tenses in clauses following the past perfect of **zanîn**,

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[1] In this example, both Persian and Turkish might very well have the past perfect tense in both positions (پرسیده بودم, *sormuştum* and گفته بود, *demişti)* to imply that significant time has passed since the exchange occurred. Since the example is without a secondary time reference, English would not use the past perfect.

[2] Here the first verb is in the past perfect because the speaker wants to convey that he *had gone* to Ahmad's house before he and the others went somewhere else.

see §33.

Çavên Nazê *nedikaribûn* **êdî hêstiran paş ve vegerînin.**	Nazê's eyes couldn't keep back the tears any longer.
Wî baş *dizanibû* **ku wê rê şaş ne kiriye.**	He well knew that he hadn't made a mistake.
A rastî me *nizanibû* **em bi ku da diçin.**	We really didn't know where we were going.

Although, strictly speaking, **karîn** is intransitive, in the past tenses the choice of nominative or oblique subject pronoun is generally dictated by the complementary verb. When the complementary verb is intransitive, the nominative pronoun is used and **karîn** is conjugated as an intransitive, as in the following:

Ez **êdî** *nikarîbûm* **li ser lingan** *rawesti-yama***.**	I was still not able to get up on my legs.
Ez nikarîbûm **jê re bibûma alîkar.**	I wasn't able to be helpful to him.

When the complementary verb is transitive, the oblique pronoun is used and **karîn** is conjugated as an ergative, as in the following:

Te nikaribû **awirên xwe ji destê çakêtê vala** *dûr bikî***.**	You couldn't take your eyes off the empty sleeve of the jacket.
Qederê mehekê *min nikarîbû* **dora xwe bidîta.**	For a month I wasn't able to see my surroundings..

§ 22. The Past Subjunctive. The past subjunctive is formed like the past perfect, but instead of the past tense of **bûn**, the present subjunctive of **bûn** is added, and to the whole is added the **bí-** subjunctive prefix (which may be omitted for stylisic reasons) or **né-** for the negative. As with all past tenses, the past subjunctive is nonergative with intransitives and ergative with transitives.

INTRANSITIVE		TRANSITIVE/ERGATIVE	
ez bihatibim	**em bihatibin**	**min bidîtibe**	**me bidîtibe**
tu bihatibî	**hun bihatibin**	**te bidîtibe**	**we bidîtibe**

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ew biha̱tibe	**ew biha̱tibin**	**wî bidî̱tibe**	**wan bidî̱tibe**
ez neha̱tibim	**em neha̱tibin**	**min nedî̱tibe**	**me nedî̱tibe**
tu neha̱tibî	**hun neha̱tibin**	**te nedî̱tibe**	**we nedî̱tibe**
ew neha̱tibe	**ew neha̱tibin**	**wî nedî̱tibe**	**wan nedî̱tibe**

The past subjunctive is used (1) after all constructions that take subjunctive complements (see §16.1) when the complement is in the past.

Gereke **baran** *barîbe*.	It *must have rained*.[1]
Ger **car caran di hin cihan de çirûskin** *pêketibin* **jî, dewlet bi xurtî çûye ser wan, bi girtin, lêdan û îşkencê dengê wan birîne.**	*If* occasionally in some places some sparks *have caught* fire, the state has attacked them forcefully and silenced them through arrest, beating, and torture.

(2) In past relative clauses with indefinite antecedents and in past clauses introduced by indefinite relatives like 'whoever,' 'whatever,' 'no matter who,' 'no matter what,' 'however much,' &c.

Kurdên ku **navên Salih û Celadet Bedir-Xan** *nebihîstibin* **pir kêm in.**	*Kurds who haven't heard* the names of Salih and Jeladet Ali Bedir-Khan are very few.
Herçiqas **me berhemên van nivîskaran baş** *nexwendibin* **jî …**	*However much* we *haven't read* the works of these writers well…
Te îşev *çi* **ki̱ribe** **divê tu ji min re bibêjî.**	*Whatever you've done* tonight, you have to tell me.
Kê **bi çi awayî nerazîbûna xwe ya li dijî dewletê** *anîbe* **ziman,** *kî* **bi çi awayî li dijî dewletê** *derketibe***,** *kê* **bi çi awayî ji bo bides̱txis̱tina mafên gelê kurd ṯêkoşîn** *dabe***, dewlet he̱ta niha bi eynî metodên nemirovane çûye ser wan.**	*Whoever has expressed* by any means whatsoever his discontentment with the state, *whoever has combatted* the state by any means whatsoever, *whoever has made* an effort by any means whatsoever to attain the goals of Kurds, until now the state has attacked them with the same base methods.

(3) after **weke ku** 'as though' in the past for hypothetical situations and in

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[1] Compare this with the present subjunctive: **gereke baran bibare** 'it must rain.'

relative clauses with an antecedent preceded by **wek** or **mîna** 'like.'

we_k _peza _ku _ço li serî _ke_tibe	*like a sheep* on whose head a stick *has landed*

   (4) The past subjunctive form of two verbs, **karîn** 'to be able' and **zanîn** 'to know,' is normally used as the present subjunctive.

Însan naxwazin _ku kesên din *bizanibin* **ew _ti_ş_tên weha dixwîne.**	People don't want others *to know* that they read such things.
Em dixwazin *bizanibin.*	We want *to know*.
Ev girîng e _ku mirov *bizanibe …*	It's important that one *know* that…
Ez ne bawer im _ku tu kes *bikaribe* **bibêje ku rewşa ziman û edebiyata kurdî baş e.**	I don't believe that anybody *could* say that the style of Kurdish language and literature is good.
_Kêm berhemên gel û miletên din yên evqasî kevin hene _ku mirov bêî alî- kariya ferhengan *bi_karibe* **jê _tê_bigihê.**	There are few works belonging to other such ancient groups and nations that one *could* understand without the help of a dictionary.
Ji bo _ku *bikaribim* **razêm, min di serê xwe de plana _ku ezê çawa û bi çi awa- yî bikaribim wî benderuhî bikujim, çêdikir.**	In order that *I be able* to sleep, I was for- mulating a plan in my head how and by what means I would be able to kill that creature.

§ 23. The Future Perfect Tense. The future perfect is formed, like the fu- ture, by adding **ê** to pronominal subjects or **wê** to nominal subjects, and the verb is in the past subjunctive. Effectively only two verbs, **zanîn** and **karîn**, occur in this tense, and they are used for a past modal of 'know' and 'can,' like the English modal 'would know' and 'would be able' (and not like the English future perfect 'I will have known'), as in the following conjuga- tions:

zanîn		*karîn*	
ezê bizanîbim	**emê bizanîbin**	**ezê bi_karîbim**	**emê bi_karîbin**
_tê bizanîbî	**hunê bizanîbin**	**_tê bi_karîbî**	**hunê bi_karîbin**

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ewê bizanîbe   **ewê bizanîbin**   **ewê bikarîbe**   **ewê bikarîbin**

Êdî her kes *wê bizanîbe* ku karê me
   çiqas bi zehmet e.

Now everybody *would realize* how diffi-
   cult our work was.

Tiştek ne dihat xuya kirin ku mirov
   bibêje ev *ê bikaribe* bibe sedema ewte
   ewta kûçikên gund.

Nothing could be made out that one
   might say it *could be* the reason for the
   barking of the village dogs.

§ 24. The Modal of *Karîn*. The verb **karîn** 'to be able' in the past subjunc-
tive and future perfect corresponds to the English modal 'could' or 'would
be able.' When the modal indicates present or future time it is followed by
the present subjunctive, as in the following examples:

Gava mirov pirsek wilo ji te bike, tu ê
   navê kîjan romana xwe bidî? —Mi-
   xabin, ez ê *nikaribim* bersiva vê
   bidim.

When someone asks you such a ques-
   tion, which novel of yours would you
   name? —Unfortunately I *wouldn't be
   able* to give him an answer.

Ji bo ku ew *bikaribe* alfabeya xwe di
   nava kurdan de belav bike, ew bir-
   yara derxistina kovarekê dide.

So that he *could* spread his alphabet
   among the Kurds he decided (hist.
   pres.) to bring out a journal.

Asûrî, ereb, ermen, û faris cîranên me
   ne û yên herî kevin in, lê mixabin di
   bareya edebiyata wan de tiştekî
   nizanim ku *bikaribim* ya me û yên
   wan bidim ber hev.

Assyrians, Arabs, Armenians, and
   Persians are our neighbors, and very
   anciently so, but unfortunately I don't
   know anything about their literatures
   that I *could* compare ours with theirs.

§ 25. The Irrealis Mood. Kurmanji Kurdish is particularly rich in irrealis—
or contrafactual—modals. There are two modal tenses devoted to the irre-
alis, a past conditional and a past perfect conditional, of which there are two
varieties.

§ 25.1. The Past Conditional. The past conditional is made by prefixing **bí-**
and adding the following endings to the past stem. In close compound verbs
the **bí-** prefix may be omitted.

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CONSONANT-FINAL STEM		VOWEL-FINAL STEM	
bí- stem **-ama**	**bí-** stem **-ana**	**bí-** stem **-ma**	**bí-** stem **-na**
bí- stem **-ayî**	**bí-** stem **-ana**	**bí-** stem **-ya**	**bí-** stem **-na**
bí- stem **-a**	**bí-** stem **-ana**	**bí-** stem **-ya**	**bí-** stem **-na**

The past conditional of intransitives is intransitive and non-ergative; the past conditional of transitives is ergative.

INTRANSITIVE		ERGATIVE	
ez bihatama	**em bihatana**	**wî bidîtama**	**wî bidîtana**
tu bihatayî	**hun bihatana**	**wî bidîtayî**	**wî bidîtana**
ew bihata	**ew bihatana**	**wî bidîta**	**wî bidîtana**
ez nehatama	**em nehatana**	**wî nedîtama**	**wî nedîtana**

The past conditional of **bûn** does not normally have the **bi-** prefix when it means 'be.' Its conjugation is as follows:

ez bûma	**em bûna**
tu bûya	**hun bûna**
ew bûya	**ew bûna**

In compound verbs and when it means 'become,' the past conditional of **bûn** does have the **bi-** prefix.

Nêçirvanekî herî dilêr jî newirî bû bi roj di nav re *derbas bibûya.*	Even a really intrepid hunter would not have dared to pass through in the day-time.
Wê ferqiyeta herdu zaravayên kurdî yên mezin hêdî hêdî hindiktir *bibûya.*	The difference between the two large Kurdish dialects would gradually have decreased.

The past conditional is used (1) as the complement to the past perfect tense of **karîn**, which is, as has been stated, the normal equivalent to the English past tense of 'be able.' While the present tense of **karîn** is followed by the present subjunctive, in some dialects the past perfect is followed by the past conditional. See the following examples.

Wek berê îdî *nikaribû* **barê giran** *hil-girt̲a*.	He *wasn't able to carry* heavy loads any more like before.
Heta dest̲pêka salên 1930'î jî, Celadet Ali Bedir-Xan *nikaribû* **nameyek bi kurdî** *binivîsanda*.	Until the beginning of the 1930s Jeladet Ali Bedir-Khan *couldn't write* a letter in Kurdish.
Her miletî di hundurê sînorên împere- toriyê de *dikaribû* **hunera xwe bi pêş̲ bixist̲a**, **edebiyata xwe** *biafiranda*, **bi zimanê xwe perwerdeya xwe** *bik̲ira*.	Every nationality within the borders of the empire *could advance* its own art, *create* its own literature, and *carry out* its education in its own language.

(2) It is similarly used as the complement to the past tense of **diviya** or **diva bû**, the past and past perfect tenses of **divê** 'must, have to,' and in some dialects as the complement to the past tense of **xwestin** 'to want.'

Mîr Zoro *nedixwast̲* **navê sult̲an** *bibihîst̲a*.	Mir Zoro *did not want to hear* the sultan's name.
Di vê dersê de her ş̲agirt̲ekî *diva bû* **li ser serpêhat̲iyek xwe** *bipeyiviya* **yan jî ç̲îrok̲ek ji ç̲irok̲ên k̲u bihîst̲ibû** *bigot̲a*.	In that class every student *had to speak* about an adventure or *to tell* a story he had heard.
Li gorî peymana Îngilîz û Sovyetiyan û li gorî biryara Yekîtiya Neteweyan, *diviyabû* **Sovyet di demeke kurt de ji Îranê** *derketa*.	In accordance with the Anglo-Soviet pact and in accordance with the decision of the League of Nations, the Soviets *were supposed to withdraw* from Iran in a short time.

(3) It is used for the verb **bûn** 'to be' in both parts of a past contrafactual conditional (see §25.2).

§ 25.2 The Past Perfect Conditionals. There are two past perfect conditionals in use, but they seem to be mutually exclusive, i.e. depending on dialect a given speaker will use either one or the other. (1) The first past conditional is formed by prefixing the subjunctive prefix **bí-** for the affirmative or **né-** for the negative and suffixing **-(y)a** to the past perfect:

INTRANSITIVE		ERGATIVE	
ez bíhat̲ibûma	**em bíhât̲ibûna**	**min bídît̲ibûya**	**me bídît̲ibûya**

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tu bíhaṭibûya	hun bíhaṭibûna	te bídîṭibûya	we bídîṭibûya
ew bíhaṭibûya	ew bíhaṭibûna	wî bídîṭibûya	wan bídîṭibûya
ez néhaṭibûma	em néhaṭibûna	min nédîṭibûya	me nédîṭibûya
tu néhaṭibûya	hun néhaṭibûna	te nédîṭibûya	we nédîṭibûya
ew néhaṭibûya	ew néhaṭibûna	wî nédîṭibûya	wan nédîṭibûya

(2) The second past conditional is formed by prefixing the subjunctive **bí-** or **né-** and substituting **ba-** in place of **bû** in the past perfect.

INTRANSITIVE		ERGATIVE	
ez bíhaṭibam	em bíhaṭiban	min bídîṭiba	me bídîṭiba
tu bíhaṭibayî	hun bíhaṭiban	te bídîṭiba	we bídîṭiba
ew bíhaṭiba	ew bíhaṭiban	wî bídîṭiba	wan bídîṭiba
ez néhaṭibam	em néhaṭiban	min nédîṭiba	me nédîṭiba
tu néhaṭibayî	hun néhaṭiban	te nédîṭiba	we nédîṭiba
ew néhaṭiba	ew néhaṭiban	wî nédîṭiba	wan nédîṭiba

The past conditional mood is used in the following instances:

(1) In past contrafactual conditional sentences, the verb of the protasis (the "if" clause) is in the past perfect conditional mood (with or without **bi-**), and the verb of the apodosis (the result clause) is in either the past perfect conditional or the future perfect conditional. When either part of a past contrafactual conditional contains the verb **bûn**, it is in the past conditional, not the past perfect conditional. When the apodosis contains the verb **karîn**, it is usually in the future perfect conditional.

Ma eger Aristo ne yunanî, lê çînî *bûya,* **wê** *bikaribûya* **felsefa xwe pêk bîne?**
If Aristotle *had been* not Greek but Chinese, *would he have been able* to put his philosophy together?

Mewlana eger ne parsî, lê meselen bi tirkî *nivîsandibûya,* **ma wê** *bikarîbûya* **Mesnewî biafirîne?**
If Mevlana *had written* not in Persian but, for instance, in Turkish, *he wouldn't have been able* to create the Masnavi, would he?

Ger ez *neçûbûma* **Dêrikê, min Girê Tûrcelê** *nedîtiba.*
If I *hadn't gone* to Dêrik, I *wouldn't have seen* Turjel Hill.

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Ez bawer im ger ez ne kurd *bûma* **jî, min ê dîsa li ser kurdan** *binivîsanda.*	I believe that, even if I *weren't* a Kurd, I *would have written* about Kurds anyway.
Ger wilo *dom bikira* **ew ê şerpeze û dîn** *bibûya.*	If it *had continued* like that, he *would have gone* crazy.
Ger wî destê xwe ji siyasetê *bikişanda,* **wî ê hewcedariya ku ew nameyeke dirêj ji Mustefa Kemal Atatürk re bişîne,** *nedîta.*	If he *had given* up politics, he *would not have considered* it necessary to send a long letter to Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

The phrase **ne ji … bûya** 'were it not for …' is a past conditional construction.

Ne ji **Celadet Beg** *bûya,* **me** *nizanîbû* **k̲u zimanê kurdî zimanê nivîsandinê ye an na.**	*Were it not for* Jeladet Beg, we *wouldn't have known* whether Kurdish was a language for writing or not.

(2) as a past or modal complement of past constructions that demand a subjunctive, like **lazim** in the first example and complement to an indefinite antecedent in the second:[1]

Lêbelê lazim bû k̲u me ji derekê ve dest̲ bi vî karî *bik̲ira* **û me k̲ir.**	On the other hand, it was necessary that we begin this labor somewhere, and so we did.
Rîskeke mezin hebû k̲u wan ez tewqif *bik̲irama.*	There was a great risk that they would arrest me.
Diviyabû Sovyet di demeke k̲urt de ji Îranê *derk̲et̲a.*	The Soviet [Union] was supposed to have withdrawn from Iran in a short time.
Xelkê wê çax̲ê newêrîbûn xwe nêzîkê kesên sosyalîst *bik̲irana.*	People at that time didn't dare to get close to socialist persons.

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[1] Some writers follow the Persian model and use the present subjunctive after these expressions, but the past conditional is much more commonly used.

Te dixwest jinek porzer û laş spî û dagirtî bi te re *baya.*	You wanted there to be a blond-haired, white-skinned, well-built woman with you.

Some writers use it after **berî ku** 'before' with reference to past time:[1]

Aw nivîsarên ku ji Hawarê re dihatin şandin, *berî ku bihatana weşandin* **kesî ew di ber çav re derbas dikirin?**	Did anyone review the writings that were sent to Hawar *before they were published*?

(3) Following a past perfect or modal of **karîn** 'to be able' for an unful-filled, unfulfillable, or unrealized situation, i.e. what one couldn't do, couldn't have done, could have done but didn't, or should or shouldn't have done.

Di mehên destpêkê de ez *nikaribûm* **jê re** *bibûma* **alîkar.**	In the initial months I *wasn't able to be* helpful to him.
Ew *dikaribû bibûya* **yek ji şaîrên dema xwe yê herî navdar.**	He *could have become* one of the most famous poets of his age.
Meriv *dikaribû* **ew bi her tiştî bi nav** *bikirina***, lê ne …**	One *could call* them anything but not …
Îmkanên min ku ez *bikaribûma vegeri-yama* **Batmanê, Sêrtê an jî Diyarbe-kirê** *bimama, bijiyama***, tune bû.**	There were no possibilities for me that I *could return* to Batman, Siirt, or even Diyarbekir *and remain and live* there.
Kesên ku *bikaribana binivîsiyana* **jî gelekî kêm bûn.**	Persons who *could write* were very few.

With the addition of **ê/wê/dê** to the past conditional, a future conditional modal ('would, should') is produced.

Berî min, kesin din ev şixul bi ser xistibûn. Çima min *ê nekira***?**	Others before me had put this business in their heads. Why *shouldn't I do* it?
Lê wî biryara xwe dabû, wî *ê bi-xwenda***.**	But he had made his decision: he *would study*.

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[1] Other writers prefer the present subjunctive exclusively after **berî ku**.

THE VERB

Ez pê bawer bûm <u>k</u>u meriv *ê bi<u>k</u>aribûya*, bi zimanê kurdî, romanek ava bi<u>k</u>ira.	I believed that one *should be able* to produce a novel in Kurdish.
Ji rûni<u>ş</u>tevanên wê, mirov *dê bigo<u>t</u>aya* Kurdistan e.	To judge by the inhabitants of it, one *would say* it was Kurdistan.
Ew *ê* gelek neba<u>ş</u> *bibûya.*	It *would have been* very bad.

(4) After **xwezî** 'would that, I wish' or the verb **xwiziyan** 'to wish' for unfulfillable wishes in the past, often without the **bi-** prefix.

Ax, *xwezî* wî *zanîbûya* ez çiqasî bi vê peyvê diê<u>ş</u>iyam.	Oh, would that he had known how pained I was by those words.
***Xwiziya* wî satila Nazî jî bi xwe re *anî ba* bo <u>t</u>ijî av bi<u>k</u>e.**	He wished he had brought Nazi's bucket too to fill it with water.

§ 26. The Passive Voice. The passive voice is constructed from the verb **ha<u>t</u>in** (conjugated in all persons, moods, and tenses) plus the infinitive. Examples of the passive are the following conjugations of **ha<u>t</u>in dî<u>t</u>in** 'to be seen.' For any other passive verb, simply substitute the infinitive for **dî<u>t</u>in**.

PRESENT INDICATIVE		PRESENT SUBJUNCTIVE	
'I am seen, &c.'		'that I be seen, &c.'	
ez têm dî<u>t</u>in	**em tên dî<u>t</u>in**	**ez bêm dî<u>t</u>in**	**em bên dî<u>t</u>in**
<u>t</u>u têyî dî<u>t</u>in	**hun tên dî<u>t</u>in**	**<u>t</u>u bêyî dî<u>t</u>in**	**hun bên dî<u>t</u>in**
ew tê dî<u>t</u>in	**ew tên dî<u>t</u>in**	**ew bê dî<u>t</u>in**	**ew bên dî<u>t</u>in**

FUTURE		SIMPLE PAST	
'I will be seen, &c.'		'I was seen, &c.'	
ezê bêm dî<u>t</u>in	**emê bên dî<u>t</u>in**	**ez hatim dî<u>t</u>in**	**em hatin dî<u>t</u>in**
tê bêyî dî<u>t</u>in	**hunê bên dî<u>t</u>in**	**<u>t</u>u hatî dî<u>t</u>in**	**hun hatin dî<u>t</u>in**
ewê bê dî<u>t</u>in	**ewê bên dî<u>t</u>in**	**ew hat dî<u>t</u>in**	**ew hatin dî<u>t</u>in**

PRESENT PERFECT		PAST PERFECT	
'I have been seen, &c.'		'I had been seen, &c.'	
ez hatime dî<u>t</u>in	**em hatine dî<u>t</u>in**	**ez hatibûm dî<u>t</u>in**	**em hatibûn dî<u>t</u>in**

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<u>t</u>u hatiye dî<u>t</u>in	hun hatine dî<u>t</u>in	<u>t</u>u hatibûyî dî<u>t</u>in	hun hatibûn dî<u>t</u>in
ew hatiye dî<u>t</u>in	ew hatine dî<u>t</u>in	ew hatibû dî<u>t</u>in	ew hatibûn dî<u>t</u>in

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PAST SUBJUNCTIVE

'that I have been seen, &c.'

</div>

ez hatibim dî<u>t</u>in	em hatibin dî<u>t</u>in
<u>t</u>u hatibî dî<u>t</u>in	hun hatibin dî<u>t</u>in
ew hatibe dî<u>t</u>in	ew hatibin dî<u>t</u>in

<div align="center">

PAST PERFECT CONDITIONAL I

'I would have been seen, &c.'

</div>

ez bíha<u>t</u>ibûma dî<u>t</u>in	em bíhâ<u>t</u>ibûna dî<u>t</u>in
<u>t</u>u bíha<u>t</u>ibûya dî<u>t</u>in	hun bíha<u>t</u>ibûna dî<u>t</u>in
ew bíha<u>t</u>ibûya dî<u>t</u>in	ew bíha<u>t</u>ibûna dî<u>t</u>in

<div align="center">

PAST CONDITIONAL

'had I been seen, &c.'

</div>

ez biha<u>t</u>ama dî<u>t</u>in	em biha<u>t</u>ana dî<u>t</u>in
<u>t</u>u biha<u>t</u>ayî dî<u>t</u>in	hun biha<u>t</u>ana dî<u>t</u>in
ew biha<u>t</u>a dî<u>t</u>in	ew biha<u>t</u>ana dî<u>t</u>in

<div align="center">

PAST PERFECT CONDITIONAL II

'I would have been seen, &c.'

</div>

ez bíha<u>t</u>ibam dî<u>t</u>in	em bíha<u>t</u>iban dî<u>t</u>in
<u>t</u>u bíha<u>t</u>ibayî dî<u>t</u>in	hun bíha<u>t</u>iban dî<u>t</u>in
ew bíha<u>t</u>iba dî<u>t</u>in	ew bíha<u>t</u>iban dî<u>t</u>in

In the present and present subjunctive of **ha<u>t</u>in**, the third-person singular forms are sometimes **tête** and **bête** (cf. Sorani بێته *betà*) instead of **tê** and **bê**, as in the first two examples below. The agent of a passive verb is expressed by the circumposition **ji aliyê … ve**.

Em hêvîdar in *ew ê* jî di nêzîk de *bête çap <u>k</u>irin*.	We are hopeful *it will soon be published*.
Her ziman û edebiyat bi hin nav û kesan ve *tête nasîn*.	Every language and literature *is known* by a few names and persons.
Ji xwe *ez* ji wela<u>t</u>ê xwe *ha<u>t</u>ibûm dûr-xis<u>t</u>in*.	*I had been exiled* from my country by my own self.
Bi salan bi vî navî ve *ha<u>t</u>iye nas<u>k</u>irin*.	He *has been known* for years by this name.
Ew di nava kurdên her çar perçeyên welê<u>t</u> de *tê nas<u>k</u>irin û hez<u>k</u>irin*.	It *is known and loved* among Kurds of all four parts of the country.
lê carekê *ha<u>t</u>ibû vêxis<u>t</u>in* û divabû <u>k</u>u were ki§andin.	but once *it had been lit* it would have *to be smoked*.
Gavên wî bi lez pê§ ve *diha<u>t</u>in avê<u>t</u>in*.	His steps *were being taken* quickly.

Sê rê hebûn; an *ez dê bihatama girtin*, **di girtîgehê de** *biriziyama*, **an ez ê ji aliyê MÎTê ve** *bihatma kuştin*, **an jî min ê welatê xwe ter<u>k</u> bi<u>k</u>ira.**	There were three alternatives: *I would be caught* there and *thrown* into prison, or *I would be killed* by the MIT,[1] or I would leave my country.
Stranên <u>k</u>u <u>h</u>e<u>t</u>a niha *neha<u>t</u>ine go<u>t</u>in*, **zimanê <u>k</u>u** *neha<u>t</u>iye vejandin*, **edebiyata <u>k</u>u** *neha<u>t</u>iye nivîsandin*, **klasîkên <u>k</u>u** *neha<u>t</u>ine çap<u>k</u>irin* **û** *belav<u>k</u>irin*, **kultura <u>k</u>u** *neha<u>t</u>iye nasandin* **û gele<u>k</u> <u>t</u>iş<u>t</u>ên din…**	Songs that *haven't been sung* yet, a language that *hasn't been revived*, literature that *hasn't been written*, classics that *haven't been printed or published*, a culture that *hasn't been recognized*, and a lot of other things…

§ 27. Postposed Verbal Complements. Directional complements often follow the verb directly and are in the oblique case without a preposition.

Min pêşniyaza xwe şand *Swîsreyê*.	I sent my proposal to Switzerland.
ew çend libên <u>k</u>u digihîş<u>t</u>in *wan wela<u>t</u>an* **jî**	even those few copies that reached those countries
Ew ji welatê xwe dengbêj û stranbêjên tîne *Stenbolê*.	He brings singers from his country *to Istanbul*.

The postposed complement is sporadically indicated by the addition of **e** to the verb, but this is not so regular a feature of Kurmanji as it is in Sorani (see Sorani §44). The addition of the directional **-e** to most forms of the past tense makes most resulting verbs indistinguishable from the present perfect tense, although the third-person singulars are different (pres. perf. **hatiye** 'has come' vs. directional **hate** 'came to'). Context usually makes the tense clear.

Ez çûme *Sûriyê*.	I went to Syria.
Me ji gund bar<u>k</u>ire *Nisêbînê*.	We moved from the village to Nusaybin.
Dengê xişxişekê ha<u>t</u>e *min*.	A scratching sound came to me (= reached my ears).

A postposed third-person pronominal complement is indicated by the ad-

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[1]MIT, *Millî İstihbarat Teşkilatı*, National Intelligence Organization, the Turkish secret police.

dition of **-(y)ê** to the verb.

Min got*ê***.	I said *to him/her*.
Bavê wî dest avêt*ê***, lê ne gihay***ê***.	His father stretched out his hand *to him*, but it didn't reach *him*.

§ **28. Factitive Verbs.** The factitive infinitive, by which an intransitive verb is rendered transitive, is formed from the present stem of the base verb + **-andin**. The present stem of all such verbs is in **-în-**.

INFINITIVE	PRES.STEM	FACTITIVE
mirin 'to die' >	**mir- >**	**mirandin mirîn-** 'to make die, kill'
şewitan 'to burn' >	**şewit- >**	**şewitandin şewitîn-** 'to make burn, set fire to'
tirsîn 'to be afraid' >	**tirs- >**	**tirsandin tirsîn-** 'to scare'

Mala wî şewita.	His house burned down.
Wan mala wî şewitand.	They burned his house down.
Ez pirr ditirsim.	I'm very afraid.
Çi wan ditirsîne?	What is scaring them?

Exceptional are the verbs **nivîsîn** and **nivîsandin**, both of which mean 'to write' without any apparent difference in meaning.

§ **28.1. The Periphrastic Factitive Construction.** "To have something done" or "to make something be done" is commonly achieved by the verb **dan** 'to give' plus the infinitive, as **naskirin** 'to know (a person)' > **dan naskirin** 'to introduce,' **zanîn** 'to know (a fact)' > **dan zanîn** 'to cause to know,' and **xuya kirin** 'to be clear' > **dan xuya kirin** 'to make clear.'

Ew xwe dide naskirin.	He introduces himself.
Wî derd û kulên gundiyan bi eskeran didane zanîn.	He used to communicate the villagers' troubles and sorrows to the soldiers.
Gelo tu ê bikaribî xwe bidî naskirin?	I wonder if you could introduce yourself.

THE VERB

Ew di wir de dide xuya <u>k</u>irin, <u>k</u>u kurd ne tir<u>k</u> in.   There he makes it clear that Kurds are not Turks.

OTHER SYNTACTICAL FEATURES

§ 29. Subordinate Clauses and Subordinating Conjunctions. Subordinating conjunctions in Kurdish consist generally of prepositions + **<u>ku</u>**. A short list of common subordinating conjunctions follows:

berî (or **beriya**) **<u>ku</u>** (+ pres. subj.) before

bê(î) <u>ku</u> (+ pres. subj.) without

ça<u>x</u>ê <u>ku</u> when

da <u>ku</u> (+ pres. subj.) in order that

digel <u>ku</u> although

dema (<u>ku</u>) when

gava (<u>ku</u>) when

gelo whether

gorî <u>ku</u> as

hema <u>ku</u> as soon as (+ past or pres. subj.)

herwekî <u>ku</u> just as

<u>h</u>eta (<u>ku</u>) (+ pres. subj.) in order that; (+ past) until

ji ber <u>ku</u> because, on account of the fact that

ji bo <u>ku</u> (+ pres. subj.) in order that

jibona (<u>ku</u>) (+ pres. subj.) in order that

<u>ku</u> (+ pres. subj.) in order that

madem <u>ku</u> as long as

mîna <u>ku</u> as though

paşê <u>ku</u> after

pi<u>şt</u>î <u>ku</u> after

ta <u>ku</u> as long as

we<u>k</u>e (<u>ku</u>) as

wexta (<u>ku</u>) when

Conjunctions that mean 'after' (*paşê <u>ku</u>, pi<u>şt</u>î <u>ku</u>*) are followed by an indicative verb, present or past according to sense.

Paşê <u>ku</u> min **pîsîtiya wan** *dît***, ez ji wan bi dûr ke<u>t</u>im.**	*After I saw* how bad they were, I avoided them.
Pi<u>şt</u>î <u>ku</u> vî merovî **çend go<u>t</u>inên xwe** *peyivî***, şagir<u>t</u> rûni<u>şt</u>in.**	*After this man spoke* his few words, the pupils sat down.

Conjunctions that mean 'before' are normally followed by a present subjunctive verb. The correct tense for English translation is gained from context.

Berî <u>ku</u> **ewrekî reş yê şînê bi ser vî bajarî de** *bigire***, ji pi<u>şt</u> çiyan rojeke bêhawe xweş bilind dibe.**	*Before* a black cloud of mourning *covers* this city, an extraordinarily nice day breaks from behind the mountains.

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***Beriya ku* em dest bi dersên xwe *bikin*, dixwazim ji we re çêlî tiştekî bikim.**
Before we *start* our lessons, I want to discuss something with you.

***Berî ku* ez bersiva vê pirsa te *bidim*, ez tiştekî biçûk li ser gotina we bêjim.**
Before I *answer* this question of yours, let me say a little something about what you all have said.

***Berî ku* ez *derkevim* derveyî welêt, min soranî nebihîstibû.**
Before I *wound up* outside the homeland, I hadn't heard Sorani.

***Berî ku* leşker li ber xwe *binêrin*, Ferzende ajote ser wan**
Before the soldiers *looked* in front of themselves, Ferzende attacked them.

Conjunctions that mean 'when'—*dema (ku), gava (ku), çaxê (ku), wexta (ku)*—are normally followed by an indicative verb (past, present, or future according to sense).

***Gava ku* mirov ji derve li avahiya hotêlê *dinihêrî*, hotel gelekî xweş û luks xuya dikir.**
When one *was looking* at the hotel building from the outside, it looked very nice and deluxe.

Pirr nivîskar, *dema dixwazin* li ser kurdan binivîsin, jiyana kurdî di pencerek teng de dibînin.
Many writers, *when they want* to write about Kurds, see Kurdish life through a narrow window.

***Dema em dê bighêjin* Ewropa keçên porzer li Ferensa û li Swêdê wê li ser porê me dîn bibin.**
When we get to Europe, blonde girls in France and Sweden will go crazy over our hair.

Dibe ku anuha pir neyêşe, lê *wexta ku êşiya,* tu bibêje, em derman bidine te.
It shouldn't hurt much anymore, but *when it hurts,* you tell us so that we may give you some medicine.

All conjunctions that mean 'in order that' are followed by a present subjunctive verb (except *karîn* and *zanîn*, which use the past subjunctive form for the present subjunctive).

***Ji bo ku* bê tirs û fikarê *bikaribim razêm*, min di serê xwe de pîlana ku ezê çawan bikaribim wî benderuhî bikujim, çêdikir.**
In order that I might be able to sleep without fear or worry, I was formulating a plan in my head how I could kill that creature.

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Divê <u>t</u>u herî bajêr, *ji bo <u>k</u>u <u>t</u>u têkevî* **mektebê.**	You have to go to town *in order that you attend* to school.
Serdar Îhsan Nûrî, Ferzende digel şêst siwarî şande nav e<u>ş</u>îrên serhedan da *<u>k</u>u sedek hes<u>p</u> peyda bi<u>k</u>e*.	Commander Ihsan Nuri, sent Ferzende with sixty cavalrymen among the tribes of the borders *in order to find* a hundred horses.
Em radipelikîn penceran *da <u>k</u>u em* **<u>ç</u>î<u>r</u>okan bibihîzin.**	We used to creep up to the windows *in order to hear* the stories.

Conjunctions like **we<u>k</u>e <u>k</u>u** 'as,' which do not necessarily take a following subjunctive, may do so when doubt is implied.

We<u>k</u>e <u>k</u>u hun zanin…	As you may know…

Compare the above example with the following, where no doubt is implied:

We<u>k</u>e <u>k</u>u hun dizanin…	As you know…

The conjunction **her <u>k</u>u** has a variety of meanings for translation, but the basic meanings are "the more…the more" when there is a comparative involved (or implied) and "every time" for temporals.

Her <u>k</u>u roj bilind dibe, Mehabadî dikevin tevgerê.	The higher the sun rises, the more the Mahabadis fall into activity.
Her <u>k</u>u ber bi dibistanê tê û nêzîktir dibe, bêtir jî diyar dibe ku kalekî salmezin e.	As he approaches the school, the closer he comes, the more it becomes apparent that he is an old man of great age.
Her <u>k</u>u hejmareke nû ya kovarê derdiket, ew mîna zarokekî dilşa dibû.	Every time a new issue of the journal would come out, he used to be as happy as a child.

Her <u>k</u>u with a 3rd-person singular form of **çûn** in an appropriate tense is used for the constant increase of something ("to keep getting…").

Dengê ji ezmên herku diçû bêtir dibû.	The noise from the sky kept getting louder.
Her ku diçe dunya piçûk dibe.	The world keeps getting smaller.

Tirs herku çû bêtir bû û tamarên Şerko sist kirin.	The fear kept getting more and weakening Sherko's nerves.

§ 30. Relative Clauses. Relative clauses in Kurdish are introduced by the relative pronoun **ku** (or the variant **ko**) 'who, which, that.' Unmodified antecedents of the relative are in the construct case (**tiştê *ku*** 'the thing that,' **sal*a ku*** 'the year which,' **welat*ekî ku*** 'a country that,' **tişt*ekî ku*** 'a thing which,' **tişt*ên ku*** 'things that,' **çîrok*ên ku*** 'stories which'). Modified antecedents have the construct extender (**zimanê me *yê ku*** 'our language, which,' **dayka xwe *ya ku*** 'his mother, who,' **tiştên din *yên ku*** 'other things which'). When relative clauses are embedded within the main clause, there is no distinction between restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses.

Min meqaleyên *ku bi zimanê kurdî hatibûne nivîsandin* dîtin.	I saw articles *that had been written in the Kurdish language.*
Ji dengê zarokên *ku li der û dor dilîstin* pêştir deng tunebû.	There was no sound from the children *who had been playing in the vicinity before.*
Digel ku gelek salên dirêj di ser re derbas bûne, ew alfabe û rêzimana *ku ji aliyê Celadet Bedir-Xan ve hatiye danîn û di kovarên wî de hatiye bikaranîn*, îro jî bersiva hewcedariya zimanê kurdî dide.	Although many long years have passed, the alphabet and grammar *that were established by Jeladet Bedir-Khan and were used in his journals* satisfy the needs of the Kurdish language even today.
Ew wî zimanê *ku li ber mirinê ye* jîndar dike.	He is revivifying this language, *which is on the verge of dying.*

When relative clauses follow the main clause they are introduced by **yê ku**, **ya ku**, and **yên ku** and are nonrestrictive.

Dengê segên gund Şerko dîsa hişyar kir, *yê ku ji kêfxweşiyê hema hindik mabû bifire*.	The sound of the village dogs once again awoke Sherko, *who was almost flying from happiness.*
Li ser milek wî jî tûrek mezin hebû, *yê ku di hindirê xwe de şekir û tiştên din yên ku ji qaçaxçiyan hatibûn kirîn, dihewandin.*	Over one of his shoulders there was a large sack, *which contained* sugar and other things that had been bought from smugglers.

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With the exception of temporal expressions ('the year in which,' 'the days during which,' etc), in relative clauses in which the antecedent is other than the subject or object of the verb in the relative clause (i.e. types like 'the thing *of which* I was afraid,' 'the man *with whom* I went'), the syntax of the relative is indicated by a referent pronoun (literally "the thing *which* I was afraid of *it*," "the man *who* I went with *him*").

Tiştê ku Celadet Bedir-Xan *jê* ditir-siya, bi serê kurdên Tirkiyeyê ve hatiye.	*The thing of which* Jeladet Bedir-Khan was afraid has happened to the Kurds of Turkey.
Gelo tu çima naçî *wî welatê ku* tu *li wir* ji dayikê bûyî û evqasî jê hez dikî?	I wonder why you don't go to *that country, where* you were born and which you like so much.
Mêrik odeya min û *nivînê ku* ezê *tê de* razêm, nîşanî min da.	The fellow showed me my room and *the bed in which* I would sleep.

Temporal expressions do not normally have a referent pronoun, and the relative **ku** after temporal expressions is usually best translated as 'when.'

Piştî sala 1972 *ku* derketim Ewrûpê…	After the year 1972, *when* I went off to Europe…
Piştî 12ê Êlûna 1980, *ku* cunta sisiyan a faşîst li Tirkiyê hate ser hikim…	After September 12, 1980, *when* the third fascist junta came to power in Turkey…

Relatives without noun antecedents use **yê ku** 'he who,' **ya ku** 'she who,' and **yên ku** 'those who' or **kesê ku** 'one who,' **kesa ku** 'one (f) who,' and **kesên ku** 'persons who.'

Ya ku ji min re derî vekir berdestka wê bû.	*The one (fem.) who opened the door for me* was her servant.
Îro di nava kurdên me yên Sûriyê de *yên ku kurdî bi alfabeya erebî dinivî-sînin*, çi bigire tune ye.	Today among our Kurds in Syria, *those who write Kurdish in the Arabic alphabet* are practically nil.
Ew kesên ku dixwazin huner û edebiyat bikevin bin bandora polîtîkaya rojê…	*Those persons who want* art and literature to come under the influence of the politics of the day…

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As in English, there is an occasional elipsis of the relative **ku** when the relative is the object of the verb in the relative clause.

Min fahm ķir ķu *tiştên min nivisîbûn,* **ne şiîr bûn.**	I understood that *the things I had written* were not poetry.
Ţe xwesţ bibî başoķe, *ew teyrê ţe pirr jê ḥez diķir.*	You wanted to become a falcon, *that bird you liked so much.*

§ 31. The Emphatic *Jî.* The Kurmanji enclitic **jî**, equivalent to the Sorani enclitic یـش *-îsh*, the Persian هم, and the Turkish *de/da*, emphasizes the word that precedes it. Its meanings range from 'even' to 'also,' but it is often untranslatable since the function it serves is taken care of in English by voice inflection and intonation (italicization or underscore in writing). It is often helpful to think of **jî** as a spoken underscore.

Bêguman ew ne Xweda ye. Ķêmasî û şaşiyên wî *jî* hene.	Of course, he isn't God. He *too* has weaknesses and faults.
Min mamostetiya zimanê ẹrebî diķir û ez demekê *jî* midûrê dibisţanê bûm.	I used to teach the Arabic language, and *also* for a time I was a school principal.
Di geleķ waran de ew *hê jî* mamosţayiya me diķe.	In many respects he is <u>*still*</u> teaching us.

§ 32. Expressions of Temporal Duration. There are two constructions for temporal duration, the first of which is the more commonly used.

(1) The formula for present expressions of temporal duration ("I've been here for two hours") is as follows: (**bi**) length of time + **e** (or **in**) + (optional **ku**) + present-tense affirmative verb or present-perfect negative verb.

Du saẹt e ķu ez li vir im.	I've been here for two hours.
…zimanekî mîna kurdî ķu bi sedsalan e nebûye zimanê nivîsandinê	…a language like Kurdish, which has not been a language of writing for centuries
Ji kengê ve ye ķu ţu bi kurdî dinivîsî?	Since when have you been writing in Kurdish?

Hefteyek e ku min ew nedîtime.	I haven't seen him for a week.
Bîst û yek sal e ku ez neçûme welêt.	I haven't gone to the homeland for twenty-one years.
Ev heftê sal in ku gelê kurd ji derdê vê nexweşiya han dinale.	The Kurdish nation has been complaining of the pain of that very sickness for these seventy years.

In past expressions of temporal duration ("I had been here for two hours when…"), the formula is: length of time + **bû** + (**ku**) + past-tense affirmative verb or past-perfect negative verb.

Du saet bû ku ez li vir bûm.	I had been here for two hours.
Bîst û yek sal bû ku ez neçûbûm welêt.	I hadn't been to the homeland for twenty-one years.

(2) The second construction literally means "this is my (X amount of time) that I am (doing something)," as in the following:

Ev panzdeh salên min in ez têgihîştime, ku welatekî bê ziman ne tu welat e.	For fifteen years now I've understood that a country without a language is no country (lit. "these are my fifteen years I have understood that…").
Ev 55 salên min in ku ez di nava vê xebatê de me.	I've been in the midst of this struggle for 55 years now (lit. "these are my 55 years that…").
Deh salên te li şehri Parîsê derbas bûbûn.	You had been in the city of Paris for ten years (lit. "your ten years had passed").

§ 33. Sequence of Tenses After Past Verbs of Perception. While present-tense verbs of perception (seeing, hearing, thinking, realizing, feeling, guessing, &c.) do not pose any particular problem for English-speakers, past-tense verbs of perception are followed, as in Persian, by the tense of the verb that would have been used by the speaker at the time of the perception. In English all such verbs are thrown back by one tense.

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Wî hîs kir ku tenê *ye*.	He felt he *was* alone.	(i.e., at the time, he would have verbalized his feelings as "I *am* alone")
Ez têgihîştim ku zimane-kî min yê taybetî *heye*.	I came to the realization that I *had* a special language.	(i.e. what I said to myself at the moment of realization was, "I *have* a special language")
Min dîtim ku mamoste ne tê *ye*.	I saw that the teacher *was* not there.	(i.e. what I would have said to myself at that moment was, "The teacher *is* not here")
Em difikirîn ku ev roj *ê neyê*.	We used to think that this day *wouldn't come*.	(i.e. what we used to think was, "That day *will not come*")
Mîna ku dizanibû *wê polîs destê wî kelemçe bikin*, herdu destên xwe dirêjî polîs kirin.	As though he knew the police *were going to handcuff* him, he extended both his hands toward the policemen.	(i.e., at the time, he would have said to himself, "the policemen are going to handcuff me")
Min zanîbû wê saetê ava germ *peyda nabe*.	I realized that at that hour *there was* no hot water to be found.	(i.e., at the time, I would have said to myself, "there *is* no hot water")

§ 34. Questions with *Ma*. The particle **ma**, which is the equivalent of the Persian مگر, introduces an affirmative question to which a negative answer is expected (English, "you don't know, do you?").

Ma rast e?	That's not right, is it?
Ma ez ê karibim careke din rûyê dinyê bibînim?	I won't ever be able to see the face of the earth again, will I?
Ma ji bo me tu derên bê tehlîke, bê tirs hene?	For us there aren't any places without danger, without fear, are there?

It also introduces a negative question to which an affimative answer is expected (English, "it rained last night, didn't it?").

Ma em jî eynî tişt nakin?	We do the same thing, don't we?

Ma <u>t</u>u ne herdem di odakê de yî?	You are always in a room, aren't you?

The reply to such a question need not be in the affirmative, but an affirmative expectation is implied by the asking of such a question, as in the following exchange:

Gava mêrik bêdeng ma, jinikê dîsa got,	When the husband remained silent, the wife said once again, "Yes, that's how it is, isn't it?"
—Erê, ma ne wilo ye?	
—Na, ne wilo ye! mêrik bi hêrs got.	"No," the husband said irritatedly, "it's not like that!"

Ma also has the contradictory force of 'but,' particularly in questions that also contain an interrogative ('who,' 'where,' 'why') or **gelo**, which introduces a "wondering" querry and can be implied.

Çavên te gir<u>t</u>î bûn û germa dijwar laşê <u>t</u>e sist <u>k</u>iribû, <u>t</u>e gêj <u>k</u>iribû. *Ma* hişê <u>t</u>e li ku bû dema telefona li ber <u>t</u>e, li ser masa <u>t</u>e, lê xis<u>t</u>?	Your eyes were closed, and the oppressive heat had weakened your body, had made you dizzy. *But* where was your mind when the telephone in front of you on your desk rang?
Erê, ez im, *ma* <u>t</u>u kî yî?	Yes, it's me, *but* who are you?
Min xwe dî<u>t</u> di Xoşnav de… *ma gelo* ewê xwe di hinekên din de bibîne?	I saw myself in Khoshnav, *but I wondered if* he would ever see himself in others.
***Ma* sa<u>e</u>t çand e?**	*I wonder* what time it is.