

3. The Adjective

1. Gender and Number

No gender distinction is shown in Middle Cornish adjectives, and there is in general no concordance in number between the noun and its adjective. Plural adjectives occur in P only when used independently as a noun, in which case they always refer to people. In ORD and BM some examples of concordance between plural noun + plural adjective do occur.¹

Except in some loanwords the plural marker is always /-yon/ (with vowel affection).² For the lenition of such plurals, see II.2.(2) and 12#, below. Examples of plural adjectives are:

<an glevyon>, <clevyon>, <clefyon> ‘(the) sick (ones)’ P.25a, O.2796, D.3109 from /klav/ ‘sick, ill’;
<an vuscogyon> ‘the crazy ones’ P.26c from */muskog/ ‘mad, crazy’; <the vohosogyon>, <bohosogyon>, <the voghesegyon>, <bohosugyon>, <the vohosugyon> ‘(to) the poor’ P.36c, 37c, D.538, 543, 3108 from */boghosog/ ‘poor’;
<aflythygyon> ‘rough ones’, ‘ruffians’ O.2745 from */aflythys/ ‘hardened, obdurate’;
<cardowyon> ‘dear ones’ D.1357 from /karadow/;

Examples of concordance are:

<arlythy caradowyon> ‘dear lords’ D.3163;

2. Comparison

Three degrees of comparison are found with adjectives in Middle Cornish: the equative, comparative, and superlative. The equative can be formed in various ways:

a. By prefixing /kem-/ to a noun, which is then, by way of suppletion, used as an equative adjective:

/kemmys/ ‘as much, as many’ from /myns/ ‘amount’ forms the equative for /meur/ ‘big, large’ (cf. B *kement*, W *cymaint*; for the loss of /n/ in the unstressed syllable see PHC.17.2.4). The orthographic forms in which this form occurs are: P <kymmys>, P <kymm<sup>es>, P O <kemys>, P O D <kemmys>.³ I-affection is a regular feature in this form. For examples see 8# below.

/kenniver/ ‘as much, many’ from /niver/ ‘number’ has the same function. It occurs twice in P, written <kynyuer> and <keneuer>, and shows secondary i-affection as a regular feature. In O only the form <kynyuer> occurs. For examples see 8# below.

/ketoth/ ‘as quick as’ from /toth/ ‘hurry, speed’ has the meaning ‘as quick as’, ‘as soon as’. Examples are given below in 8#.

¹ Cf. Padel, ‘Plural adjectives in Cornish’, SC.14.237-240. Padel also gives two early place-names (<Meinwinion> c. 1200, and <Meynwinion> 1318, both meaning ‘white stones’) which suggest that the principle of concordance must have been known in Cornish when CE and P were written also.

² An exception to this rule are <tebeles> ‘evils’ O.1466, where the meaning is abstract, <an debeles>, <an tybeles> ‘the evil ones’ O.1849, D.3047, and <gockyes> ‘fools’ D.1149. Perhaps these forms should be considered plural nouns, where the noun is derived (without a change) from an adjective.

³ Of these <kymmys> is with 16 occurrences by far the most frequent in P, the other forms occur in P only once each.

b. By placing the adverbial particle /mar/ ‘as, so’ before the adjective. For the lenition caused by /mar/ see II.2(18). Examples are given below in 8 and 14#.

c. By placing the conjunction /maga/ ‘as’ before the adjective. For the mixed mutation caused by this conjunction, see II.5(2). For examples see below, 8#.

3. The comparative and superlative are both formed by addition of the ending /-a/ to the adjective. This ending causes unvoicing of preceding voiced stops and doubling of final nasals and liquids in the adjective, even when followed by a resonant:⁴

<purra>, <purre>, <pure> (/pur/ ‘pure’) P.74d, 90d, D.1174; <haccre> (/hagr/ ‘ugly’) P.151b; <tecke>, <tekke> (/teg/ ‘beautiful, pretty’) P.226d, O.1177, 1730; <kerra> (/ker/ ‘dear’) O.615, 1311, 2341; <hyrre> (/hir/ ‘long’) O.2511; <garwo> /garw/ ‘rough’ D.1197; <pella> ‘further’ D.1612;

For the syntactical differentiation between comparative and superlative, see 9#.

4. Irregular comparison. The comparative and superlative of some adjectives is based on a different stem from the positive form of the adjective:

positive	comparative	superlative
/boghes/ ‘little, few’	/le/	/lyha/
‘early’	/kyns/	/kynsa/ ⁵
/da/, /mas/ ‘good’	/gwell/	/gwella/
/drog/ ‘bad’	/gweth/	/gwetha/
/meur/ ‘great, big’	/moy/	/moygha/
/ogas/ ‘near’	/nes/	

The orthographic shapes in which these forms occur are:

/boghes/ O <bohes>
 /le/ D <le>
 /kyns/ P D <kyns>, O <kens>
 /kynsa/ O <kynse>
 /da/ CE P O D <da>
 /mas/ P O D <mas>
 /gwell/ P O D <gwel>, P <gwell>, O D <guel>, O <gvel>
 /gwella/ P O D <guella>, P <gwelha>, O <gvella>, D <guel-ha|>, <gwella>

⁴ Historically only the ending of the superlative caused provection because of the -s- with which this ending originally began (*-samos > *-hav > MC /-a/). The occasional spellings with <h>, like in <moygha> ‘most’ P.112d, 196c, <gwelha>, <gwel-ha> ‘best’ P.115b, D.3012, may reflect the earlier stage of this ending.

⁵ These forms are made on the base of /kyn/ ‘ere, before’ which itself functions as a conjunction or a preposition.

/drog/ P O <drok>, O <drog>
 /gweth/ P <gweth>, D <gweyth>
 /gwetha/ P <gwe3e>, D <guetha>
 /meur/ P O <mur>, P <meyr>, P O <mer>, O D <mvr>
 /moy/ P O D <moy>
 /moygha/ P <moygha>, O D <mogha>, D <moghya>, D <moghye>
 /ogas/ P D <ogas>, O <oges>
 /nes/ CE O D <nes>

5. Syntax of the adjective

Most adjectives follow the noun which they specify. Some examples are:

<lavarow da> 'good words' P.12b; <an pren glays> /an prenn glas/ 'the green tree' P.170c; <marya wyn> 'blessed (lit. 'fair') Mary' P.221a; <pen cok> 'empty head' O.1529; <margh dal> 'a blind horse' D.1658;

In rare instances the adjective may be separated from the noun it qualifies, as e.g. in: <hys the baal luen> 'the full length of your spade' (lit.: 'the length of your spade in full') O.380;⁶

Sometimes two adjectives may follow a noun, as e.g. in:

<En e3ewon skyntyll keth> 'the cunning, slavish Jews' P.216a; <ha|y branchys (...) vhel golow> 'and its branches lofty, bright' O.786; <ov arluth ker caradow> 'my dear beloved lord' O.2113; <a mester ker caradow> 'O dear beloved master' D.73; <arluth cuf ker> 'dear precious lord' D.641;

On occasion, a noun may be both preceded and followed by an adjective:

<the|n fals yethewon dygnas> 'to the false perverse Jews' D.1098;

Two adjectives may also be co-ordinated by the conjunction /ha/ 'and':

<Bos segh ha tek an awel> 'the weather being dry and fair' O.1147; <vn alter tek ha da> 'an altar fair and good' O.1170; <castilly bras hagh huhel> 'great and lofty castles' D.133; <the resons yns da ha fyn> 'your reasons are good and fine' D.822;

Longer sequences are possible too and may be broken up by inserting a verb form, as e.g. in <lell os ha trest ha steadfast> 'you are faithful and trusty and steadfast' D.948-49.

Some adjectives, all defining quantity or quality, as well as all the pronominal adjectives, precede the noun. When in such constructions the article is used it precedes the adjective, except with /oll/ where it is inserted between /oll/ and the noun. These adjectives are:

/ber/ 'short': <war ver lavarow> 'in few words' O.127; <a ver termyn>, <a ver|dermyn>, <a ver dermyn> 'in a brief time' O.1362, 1441, 1601, etc.; <a ver spys> 'shortly' D.509; /chif/ 'chief, prime': <chyf guythoryon> 'the chief workmen' O.2331; <ov chyf prive

⁶ Rhyme does not play a role in this example, but it could be argued that /leun/ is here used adverbially.

guyth-thysy> 'my chief private guards' O.2397;
 /drog/ 'bad, evil': <drok 3en> 'an evil man' P.192a, 259d; <drok 3ewas> 'an evil drink' P.202a; <drok venen> 'wicked woman' O.221; <drog lam>, <drok lam> 'a bad chance' O.2742, D.1125; <pup drok tra> 'every evil thing' D.264;
 /ewn/ 'right, just': <y evn hanow> 'his just name' O.678; <yn evn forth> 'in the right way' O.1972; <evn hys> 'the right length' O.2525, 2563; <rak evn kerenge> 'for very love' D.483; <rak ewen anwous>⁷ 'for very chill' D.1222;
 /fals/ 'false': <fals huder> 'a false deceiver' O.565; <fals duwow>, <fals dewow> 'false gods' O.1882, 2692; <an fals ievan> 'the false fiend' D.154; <an fals crystyon> 'the false Christian' D.1112;
 /fykl/ 'false': <fekyl cher> 'a feigning greeting' P.65c; <fykyl lauarow> 'treacherous words' O.234;
 /gwan/ 'weak': <gwan wecor> /gwan wykor/ 'weak (i.e. 'bad') trader' P.40a;
 /gwell/ 'better': <guel guyn> 'better wine' O.1914;
 /gwella/ 'best' is preceding the noun in P, but following it in O and D: <an guella gwas> 'the best fellow' P.112d; <an guyn guella> 'the best wine' O.1904; <ow marrek guella> 'my finest knight' O.2139; <ow dyllas guella> 'my best clothes' D.256; <an gusyl wella> 'the best plan' D.555;
 /gwir/ 'true': <gvyr thege> 'a true tithe' O.440, 513, 515, etc.; <guyr dev> 'a true God' O.1862, D.241; <guyr vres> 'a true decision' D.515; <guyr gos dev> 'the true blood of God' D.1506;
 /hagr/ 'ugly': <hager bref> 'ugly serpent' P.122c; <hager mowys> 'ugly grimaces' P.196a; <hager gowes> 'an ugly shower' (i.e. 'a fierce downpour') O.1080;
 /hakra/ 'more, most ugly': <haccre mernans> 'a more hideous death' P.151b;
 /kales/ 'hard, severe': <cales feyn> 'a hard end' P.196d;⁸
 /kamm/ 'evil, crooked': <cam dremene> 'an evil passing over' O.337; <rak ty th|y gam-worthyby> 'for you have answered him rudely' D.1268;
 /kemmys/ 'so much'. For examples see 8# below.
 /ken/ 'another, different': <towl ken maner> 'a plan of another kind' P.15c; <ken onan> 'another one' P.145b; <3e gen le> 'to another place' P.255c; <ken pow> 'another country' O.344, 1596; <ken tra> 'another thing' O.794;
 /kenniver/ 'so many'. For examples see 8# below.
 /kense/ 'first': <an kynse benfys> 'the first benifice' O.2613;
 /keth/ 'the same': <y|n keth vaner ma> 'in this same manner' P.100c, 104a; <an keth welen> 'the same rod' P.138a; <l|n keth gyth|na> 'on that same day' P.252a; <an keth frut-ne> 'that same fruit' O.192;
 /kuv/ 'dear, beloved':⁹ <kveff colon>, <kuf colon>, <cuf colon> 'the dear heart' P.101a, 256c, O.1873;
 /len/ 'faithful, honest' precedes the noun in D, but not in P (O?#): <the len servygy> 'your faithful servants' D.279; <len reulye the wlascor> 'a faithful government (lit. 'rule', a verbal noun) of your country' D.1707;
 /leun/ 'full': <lwen gummyas> 'full allowance' O.410; <lwen grath> 'full grace' O.495; <lwen dyal> 'full vengeance' O.1233;
 /lies/, a pronominal adjective meaning 'many a': <yn leas le>, <yn lyes le> 'in many a place' P.22b, 73c, 204c, D.1168; <leas myll> 'many a thousand' P.165c, 226c; <leas ehen>

⁷ Since this line contains eight syllables it may be assumed that <ewen> is a misspelling for /ewn/ here.

⁸ For the mutation see II.3N1.

⁹ But we also find <arluth cuf> 'dear lord' O.395, 997, D.621, 641, 887 while in <a mester cuf arluth nef> D.869 the adjective also seems to belong to the first, not to the second noun, though the translation 'O master, dear lord of heaven' cannot be excluded.

'of many a kind' P.236a; <lues galar> 'many a sorrow' O.633; <lues pow> 'many a country' O.1136; <lyes wrynch> many a shift' D.1001;

When the noun is plural /lies/ follows it like a normal adjective and is translated 'many': <buxow leas heb ken> 'many blows without cause' P.138c;

/lower/ 'many a': <yn lower le> 'in many a place' P.210a;

/meur/ when meaning 'great':¹⁰ <mur gerense> 'great love' P.5a; <mur byte>, <a vur byte> '(of) great pity' P.132c, 134d; <mur vylyny> 'much harm' (lit. 'great harm') P.216a; <the vur anken> 'to great sorrow' O.282; <dre ver lafurye> 'by much work' O.2049; <mur onor>, <mur onour> 'great honour' D.303, 1712; <gans mur greys> 'with great force' D.1220;

When it has the meaning 'much, many' the preposition /a/ is placed between the adjective /meur/ and the noun, the sense of the whole being 'much of, many of': <mur a beyn>, <mur a bayn> 'much pain' P.54a, 137d; <Mur a dus>, <mur a tus> 'many people' P.85a, 88d, O.1560; <mur a lu> 'a great host' P.163c; <mur a tewolgow> 'great darkness' O.784; <mur a reoute bras> 'much high respect' O.1751; <a veur a pow> 'of many a country' D.127; <mur a scryptours> 'much of the Scriptures' D.1673;

(An exception to this rule is <mur yethewon> 'many Jews' D.1548.)

/moy/ 'more': <moy ioy> 'more joy' P.21d; <gans moy colon> 'with more heart' P.128c; <moy mar3us> 'more wonder(s)' P.200d; <moy dysenour> 'more dishonour' O.2793;

/neb/ 'any', a pronominal adjective (cf. 5.27#): <yn neb ehan> 'in any kind' P.15b; <dre neb forth> 'through some way' P.15d; <in neb gulas> 'in any country' O.1120;

/oll/, a pronominal adjective (see also 5.29#), when it means 'all, the whole': <ol(l) myns> 'the whole amount' P.59d, 60d; <ol tus an beys>, <ol tus an bys> 'all men of the world' O.594, D.441, 470, 1334; <ol tus ov chy> 'all men of my house' O.1961; <ol bewnes> 'the whole of life' D.66;

Often a possessive pronoun or an article comes between /oll/ and the following noun or verb-noun: <ol 3e vo3> 'all your will' CE.20, <ol an gowe3e> 'the entire company' P.150b; <oll y gorf> 'the whole of his body' P.184d, 236c; <oll y drok> 'all her crime' P.237d; <ol an bestes> 'all the beasts' O.312; <ol an tyr> 'all the earth' O.581; <ol y bobel> 'all his people' O.1687; <ol an re-ma> 'all these' D.134; <ol agas cowethe> 'all your company' D.1689;

When used as an adjective meaning 'every, completely' /oll/ follows the normal syntax and is placed after the noun which it qualifies (which itself is often preceded by the adjective /pob/ (see below for examples): <en box oll> 'the whole box' P.36b; <a bub drok ol> 'of every evil' P.194b; <yn nos oll> 'all night' P.241c; <the|n beys ol> 'for all the earth' O.34; <ha|y ost ol> 'and the whole of his host' O.1713; <maystri bras ol> 'all the great power' D.148; <ha|m pen ol> 'and the whole of my head' D.526;

/pob/ a pronominal adjective meaning 'every' (cf. 5.28#): <pub er oll>, <pup vr ol> 'at all times' (lit. 'every hour all') P.23a, O.101, 604, 1686, etc., D.525; <pub tra>, <pup tra> 'every thing' P.24a, 148a, O.2, 21, 533, etc., D.3, 197, 471, etc.; <pub tyller>, <pup teller>, <pup tyller> 'every place' P.250b, O.579, 939, 1909, etc., D.106, 114, 1103, etc.;

/pur/ 'pure': <dre bur envy> 'through pure malice' P.126a; <3e pur treytours> 'to (the) very traitors' P.157a; <pur gerense> 'pure love' P.227d; <pur thoth bras> 'a very great speed' O.542; <pur voren plos> 'very foul wench' O.2736; <pur lorel> 'very knave' (a derogatory form of address) D.1382;

/purra/ 'purest, veriest': <an purra lader>, <an purra laddron>, <an pure lader> 'the

¹⁰ The word order in <gans onor mer> 'with great honour' D.161 may have been influenced by the rhyme.

veriest thief/thieves' P.74d, 90d, D.1174;
 /tebel/ 'wicked': <en tebell el>, <an tebel el> 'the wicked angel' P.13b, 122a, 122c; <En debell wrekk casadow> 'the hateful wicked wife' P.159a; <tebell lycour> 'a wicked liquor' P.202b; <tebel ethen> 'an evil bird' O.223; <an debel bobel>, <an debel bobal> 'the wicked people' O.1815, 1843;
 /teke/ 'more beautiful': <tekke alter> 'a fairer altar' O.1177; (but cf. <lowenna tekca> 'the finest joy' O.1042)
 /ughel/ when meaning 'loud': <vgchel gry> 'a loud cry' P.207d;
 /vil/ 'vile': <pur vyl scout> 'most vile traitor' O.2667; <|n vyl hora>, <an vyl hore> 'the vile whore' O.2705, 2728; <an vyl losel> 'the vile knave' D.940; <vyl despyt> 'vile abuse' D.1267;

Note 1. Exceptions occur, probably to fit the rhyme, as e.g. in <dewow tebel> 'evil gods' O.1818; <dev mur> 'great God' O.1987; <an tas mer> 'the great father' D.684;

Also exceptional is <gollyough gynef (...) ov keyyon ker colonow> 'watch with me (...) my beloved ones, dear hearts' D.1025-26, where /ker/ 'dear' precedes a plural noun. Here again rhyme may be the cause of this anomaly.

Note 2. The same pattern of adjective plus noun is followed in <yn nobyl aray> 'in noble array' O.1967 and <yfle grath> 'evil grace (i.e. revenge)' D.1404. In both cases we are most probably dealing with English syntax rather than Cornish.

Note 3. The generally accepted translation of <the|n plosek guas kasadow> D.451 runs 'to the filthy stubborn fellow' and would suggest that we have here an order of adjective - noun - adjective. Another possibility is to take <plosek> as a noun here and translate 'to the filthy one, (the) stubborn fellow'.

Note 4. The form <coth-was> 'fellow, helpmate' D.1695 seems to be a compound rather than a loose sequence of adjective + noun.

6. Composite adjectives are word-groups with an adjectival function. They may consist of (a) adjective + the preposition /a/ 'of' + noun, or (b) the preposition /a/ 'of' + adjective + noun.¹¹

(a) <ha|n sperys sans leun a ras> 'and the holy ghost, o how graceful' P.3c; <box ryche leun a yly> 'a rich box, full of salve' P.35a; <ruth veyr a dus> 'a great throng of people' (lit. 'a crowd, great of people') P.108d; <mar pue drok a oberys> 'if what it did was evil' (lit. 'if it had been evil-of-deeds') O.291; <poynyn gans mur a grys> 'run with great haste' O.2789; <dev ow thas luen a verci> 'God, my merciful father' D.169-70;

Note. A variant of this construction uses a possessive pronoun in place of the preposition: <vn flough yonk gwyn y 3yllas> 'a youth (lit. 'a young child'), white his clothing' P.254c; <dev mer y ras> 'God of great virtue' D.117; <schereywys drok aga gnas> 'evil-natured miscreants' D.1142; <den drok y gnas> 'a man of evil nature' D.2969;¹²

In D.1197 a similar construction is used adverbially:

<ma kertho garwo y cam> 'so that he may walk with a rougher gait' ('... rougher his gait').

¹¹ For the term 'composite adjective' see HMB.48, which has been used as a model for the present description of Middle Cornish composite adjectives. Likewise, the term 'exclamative' is borrowed from HMB.46. That constructions like this do actually function as adjectives may well be illustrated by such forms of address as e.g. <syr arluth whek mur y ras> 'Sire, dear lord of much grace' O.2329, where a literal translation ('much his grace') would not make good sense.

¹² Lit. 'villains, evil their nature'. Norris read <guas> 'boy' in both examples in D, but Nance's reading (cf. *Gerlyver Noweth*, s.v. *gnas*) is most likely to be correct and has been followed here.

(b) <mab du a vur brys> ‘the son of God, highly valued’ P.14d; <payn a vur byte> ‘pain of great pity’ P.134d; <spycis a vur rasow> ‘spices of great virtues’ P.234d; <ha henna (...) my a greys a luen colon> ‘and (...) that I believe with full heart’ O.1264; <benen thym a wel plekye> ‘a woman who better pleased me’ (lit. ‘a woman of better pleasing to me’) O.2108; <map dev a mur prys> ‘the son of God, of great worth’ D.99; <a luen golon me a|th pys> ‘fullheartedly I pray you’ D.1446;

Note. <Symon o a|y ewn hanow> ‘Symon he was, by his right name’ P.174a is probably based on this construction too, extended here to contain an infixed possessive pronoun.

7. Exclamatives

Often, an adverbial expression following this pattern of adjective + preposition /a/ + noun as described above has the meaning of an exclamative adjective with the meaning ‘o, how ...!’ or ‘o, what ...!’:¹³

<du drok a los> ‘God, o what an evil pang!’ P.224d; <drog a galar ev thymmo y anclethyas> ‘what an evil grief it is for me to bury him’ O.868;¹⁴ <tek a bren rag stylyow> ‘what a beautiful tree for rafters’ O.2441; <drok a ober o henna lathe map dev y honan> ‘what an evil deed to kill the son of God himself’ D.3081-82; <tan yfarn drok a le> ‘the fire of hell, what an evil place!’ D.3094;

A more extended form of exclamative seems to be <mar luen os a skenteleth> ‘so full are you of wisdom’ (i.e. ‘o, how wise you are!’) D.1804, where /leun a skenteleth/ can be understood as a composite adjective (cf.3.6#).

8. Syntax of the compared forms

Equatives may be used in various ways:

(1) An equative can be a comparison with something of the same size or quality. When formed with the prefix /kem-/ the equative in such cases is followed by /ha(g)/, /del/ or /ha del/, all meaning ‘as’ (for the lenition caused by /del/ see II.2(22)): <ha bederow keneuer hag a owleow ese yn corf lhesus worth neuer> ‘of paternosters as many as of wounds that were in Jesus’ body, in number’ P.228cd; <dus thymmo ketoth ha|n ger> ‘come to me, quick as the word’ O.2272;

Note 1. In O the equative /kennyver/ is found in similar constructions, but also without any connective: <kynyuer den vs y|n wlas> ‘as many men as are in the land’ O.1029; <kynyver best vs yn tyr> ‘as many beasts as are on earth’ O.1215. In D a similar example occurs with /kemmys/: <y a wor leuerel kemmys thethe re gevsys> ‘they can tell as much as I have said to them’ D.1261-62.

When formed with the conjunction /maga/ or the adverbial particle /mar/ the equative is followed by the adverb /avel/ ‘like, as’: <mar venys avel skyl brag> ‘as small as scatterings of malt’ O.2720; <maga guyn auel an guryys> ‘as white as crystal’ D.1790;

¹³ Cf. Padel, ‘The *mawr a beth* construction in Cornish’, CS.6.7-8, and idem, ‘More of the *tek a wel* construction’, CS.7.39-40.

¹⁴ Here, the spelling of /drog/ with <g> confirms that <drog a> cannot be a superlative, where provection of the final consonant would have taken place.

Note 2. No constructions of this kind are found in CE or P. However, /avel/ does occur in P in sentences with a general equative meaning. For examples see 8.74#.

When the equation is given in a relative clause, an equative formed with /maga/ or /mar/ is followed by the adverb /del/: <maga tek del re|bye> ‘as fair as he had been’ P.71d; <maga town ty del wo3ye> ‘as deep an oath as he could’ P.85c; <mar fur (...) del omwressys> ‘as wise (...) as you did pretend’ P.191bc; <mar scon (...) del ymmy> ‘as soon (...) as you do kiss me’ O.1764;

An equative with /kem-/ may start a relative clause without being followed by a conjunction: <vn deyth a thue (...) ma|n taluethaf ol thywhy kemmys enor thym yv guryys> ‘a day will come (...) when I will repay it all to you – so much honour that is done to me’ D.268-70;

(2) An equative can express a comparison with an undefined or abstract standard. In many instances this implies something like a comparison with the object itself, so that the implicit meaning is something like e.g. ‘as big as this’: <kymmys cawsys> ‘so much opinion’ P.100a; <kemmys a gare> ‘whom she loved so much’ P.171b; <a|n barth arall maga|ta> ‘on the other side as well’ P.198b; <prag yth|ose mar wokky> ‘why are you so foolish?’ D.1290; <the naghe mar thyfflas ow arluth> ‘to deny so shamefully my lord’ D.1418-19;

Note. In D.1424-25 a similar implied comparison with the object itself is followed by a more explicit comparison introduced by the preposition /dres/ ‘beyond’: <ow bones mar anflugyk dres pup den ol vs y|n beys> ‘my being so unfortunate, beyond every person that is in the world’.

(3) An equative may be used to express the cause of something (‘so much that ...’). In such cases the clause expressing the result is introduced by the conjunction /may(dh)/ ‘(so) that’. The longer form /maydh/ is used before words beginning with a vowel; the conjunction is followed by the mixed mutation, cf. II.5(4): <kymmys payn (...) ma|teth an|goys ha dropye war y fas> ‘so much pain (...) that the blood came and dripped on his face’ P.59ab; <gans kymmys nell ma-t|eth an dreyn ha cropye 3e|n empynnyon> ‘with so much violence that the thorns went (in) and penetrated (in)to the brain’ P.134bc; <hy a wolas kymmys gans mar ver nerth ha galloys an fynten may trehevys ran> ‘she wept so much, with so much strength and power, that from the well rose a part’ P.224cd; <gvelynny a gemmys ras (...) thyworthe ma|gan bo gras> ‘rods of so much grace (...) that from them we may have grace’ O.1747-49;

In negative sentences /may(dh)/ is replaced by the negative particle /na/ or /ny/: <I beyn o mar greff ha tyn caman na ylly bewe> ‘his pain was so strong and keen that in no way he could live’ P.204a; <ha|y veynys mar drewesy (...) yn oll an bys ny ylly den cafos kymmys anfueth> ‘and her pains so doleful (that) in all the world man might not find so much misery’ P.225cd; <kymmys (...) na-g|ens [y] hard 3e wortos> ‘so many (armed men) that none was bold (enough) to stay’ P.250cd;

A complex example of all this occurs in D.1519-24: <mar vur me re peghas (...) moy yv ys mercy an tas nag vs forth thymmo (...) the vos sylwys> ‘so greatly have I sinned (...) that it is greater than the mercy of the Father, so that there is no way for me (...) to be saved’.

In one instance in P, where the result is given in a parenthetic clause and introduced with the preposition /rag/ ‘for, because of’, /may/ is not used either: <mar du o kymmys grevijs rag tomder ef a wese dowr ha goys yn kemeskys> ‘so much

distressed was the son of God – for heat he sweated – water and blood mingled’ P.58cd.

9. **The difference between comparative and superlative** is expressed only by the fact that the superlative is normally preceded by the article: <an purra lader y|n pow>, <an purre laddron y|n pow> ‘the veriest thief/thieves in the land’ P.74d, 90d; <an kynso>, <an kynse> ‘the first’ O.2162, 2613; <an brasse den> ‘the greatest man’ D.773;

Especially with the irregular comparative forms, where the difference between comparative and superlative is expressed formally, the article is often omitted with the superlative: <gwe3e go3yans> ‘the worst they could’ P.196b; <hag ef moygha yn beyn> ‘and he most in his pain’ (i.e. ‘while he was in his greatest pain’) P.196c; <ov marrek guella> ‘my best knight’ O.2139; <why a wor pyth yw guella theugh> ‘you know what is best for you’ D.468-69;

But we also find examples with the article: <moygha 3o3o drok a wre henna ve3a an guella gwas> ‘whoever did most harm to him, that (one) would be the best fellow’ P.112d; <an tas gvella>, <|n tas guella> ‘the best father’ O.1061, 1184; <an gusyl wella> ‘the best plan’ D.555; <bythens kepar-ha|n lyha> ‘let him be like the least’ D.794;

When there is no explicit comparison the adjective is – naturally – used without any conjunction: <dus nes>, <dues nes> ‘come closer’ CE.4, O.179, D.576; <dew3ek lygyon (...) ha moy> ‘twelve legions (...) and more’ P.72cd; <bytqueth den ny wo3evys payn alla 3|y golon nes> ‘never suffered a man pain that might go closer to the heart’ P.172d; <Nang|o hanter dyth y|n wlas po moy> ‘it was now midday in the land, or more’ P.209a; <ny welys tekke> ‘I have not seen finer’ O.1730; <ny allaf pella trega> ‘I cannot stay longer’ O.2190; <ow thas ker-a>, <the das ker-a> ‘my/your dearest father’ D.110, 1049; <na vye guel> ‘it has not [ever] been better’ D.1311;

10. When a comparison is made the adjective in the comparative is followed by the conjunction /ages/, /es/ ‘than’ before nouns or by /es del/ ‘than, as’ before verbs (for the lenition caused by /del/ see II.2(22)): <folle (...) ys del wra lyon> ‘more madly (...) than a lion does’ P.21c; <gwe3h agis cronek> ‘worse than a toad’ P.47d; <moy pegg o pa|n dyspresyas ys del|o pan y|n guer3e> ‘a greater sin it was when he misprized him than when it was he sold him’ P.104d; <claff ny ve|e vylle ys dell|o dyskis> ‘a leper never was more vilely unclothed than he was’ P.176d; <leden o ha poys ha bras moy agis gael treden> ‘broad it was, and heavy and large, more than the grasp of three men’ P.237b; <moy es dev ny a vye> ‘more than God we should be’ O.219; <tekke alter (...) es del vs genen> ‘a fairer altar (...) than such as we have’ O.1177-79; <guel yv vn den the verwel ages ol an bobyl lel the vos keyllys> ‘it is better for one man to die than for all the faithful people to be lost’ D.446-48; <moy yw arluth es spencer> ‘a lord is greater than a butler’ D.802; <moy es yn-della> ‘more than that’ D.1232;

Note 1. In one instance the conjunction /ages/ has been changed by a second hand in the manuscript into /es/ (making the line one syllable short of the norm): <guel ages/es kyns> ‘better than before’ D.1698. The comparison in this case is with another comparative adjective (/kyns/ ‘earlier’) used adverbially. In a parallel passage <guel ys kyns> is used again in D.1763.

Note 2. In rare instances the conjunction may be left out: <lowenna tekca gothfy> ‘the finest joy you may know’ O.1042.

11. **Increase** is expressed by the use of a comparative adjective preceded by the preposition /dhe/ ‘to’, which causes lenition (II.2(6)): <may fens y parys 3e well> ‘so

that they were the better prepared' P.238c;¹⁵ <ny a yll (...) bonas kellys ha may fo dynny 3e weth rag bonas lhesus le3ys> 'we may (...) be lost; and so that it may be the worse for us because Jesus was slain' P.239cd; <hy yv the|wel> 'it is the better' O.1628; <eyf ten guyn py|meth ha the srafe sur yth|eth> 'drink a draught of wine or mead, and the nimbler, surely, will you go' O.2294-95; <mara quelyn thys anken neffre ny a vyt the weyth> 'if we see distress for you we shall ever be the worse' D.733-34; <the voy denuyth ny|m gorse> 'the more man(kind) will not honour me' (i.d. 'no man would honour me more') D.1679;

12. Adjectives used as noun occur both referring to persons and to abstractions. All such nominal adjectives are treated as being masculine. Referring to persons in the singular are: <dal na bo3ar ny ase nag omluar na-g|onon na claff vyth ow crowethe> 'blind nor deaf he left not, nor dumb, not a single one, nor any sick one lying down' P.25bc; <an caradow> 'the dear one' P.59b, 193c; <an fals> 'the false one' P.67b, O.914; <kekyffrys byan ha bras> 'both small and great (people)' O.1673, 1695; <an casadow>, <an gasadow> 'the hateful one' O.2119, 2691; <y vos goky> 'his being a fool' D.1781;

Examples in the plural are given in 3.1 above.

Abstract are: <ol en da ha|n drok kepar> 'all the good and the bad alike' P.24d; <war fals y-3|ens growndys> 'on falsity they were founded' P.118b; <a 3yghow> 'on the right' P.186b, 236b, 242c;

13. Both simple and composite **adjectives** can be **used predicatively**. Examples of simple adjectives used as predicate are: <benegas yw neb a the> 'blessed is he that comes' P.30c; <an spykis o garow> 'the spikes were rough' P.159d; <te yw dall> 'you are blind' P.192b; <mylleges nefre re by> 'accursed ever may you be' O.580; <squyth of> 'I am tired' O.2049;

Composite adjectives, especially those of type (b) (cf. 3.6#), may also be used in this way: <oynment o a gymmys ras> 'an ointment it was, of so much (i.e. 'such great') virtue' P.235b; <lwen a grace os> 'graceful you are' O.436; <del yw|e lwen a versy> 'as he is full of mercy' O.1822;

An examples with a compound adjective with the possessive /y/ 'his' instead of the preposition /a/ 'of' is: <levn y golon a voreth> 'full (was) his heart with sorrow' P.186c.

14. **Adjectives used adverbially** may be preceded by the adverbial particle /yn/, which causes mixed mutation (II.5(1)#). The adverbial use of adjectives without this particle may be illustrated by the following examples: <sens|e fast> 'hold him firmly' CE.36; <scon y-3|eth ef> 'quickly he went' P.122b; <ny strechyaff pell> 'I will not dally long' P.158c; <gans re a gymmys colon en loven a ve tennys> 'by some the rope was pulled so full-heartedly' (lit. 'by some with so much heart the rope was pulled') P.181c; <scon y-th|af> 'I will go at once' O.339; <lwen me a greys> 'I fully believe' O.1446; <ef a|m hembrocas pur compus> 'he led me quite directly' D.1205-06; <gruys da vye> 'it would be well done' D.1608;

Nearly all instances of the equative formed with the adverbial particle /mar/ are used adverbially, without forming a real comparison or equation: <mar wan> 'so weak' P.6b, 166d; <mar dyn> 'so keenly' P.66b, 100b, 171d; <mar veyll> 'so vilely' P.165a,

¹⁵ The text has been altered here according to N.J.A. Williams, BBCS.23, 322. The Ms. has <may 3ens y parys 3e well> (see also Herniman's annotation).

177b, 220c; <mar scon> 'so soon' O.834, 1764, D.973, 1006; <mar tha>, <mar da> 'so good' O.912, 1229, 1740, etc., D.2725; <mar coynt> 'so rudely' D.340; <mar wokky> 'so foolish' D.1290; <mar thyfflas>, <mar dyflas> 'so shamefully' D.1418, 2604;

An adverbial adjective may follow and qualify another adjective preceded by a noun: <den skentyl pur> 'a right learned man' P.8a; <I vam wheg-ol> 'his wholly sweet mother' P.164a. But the adverbial adjective may come first as well: <flogh byen nowyth genys> 'a small child, newly born' O.806; <coyth ha marthys guan> 'old and wondrous weak' O.855; <mara peth|e lel iuggys> 'if he will be judged justly' D.1344. That the rhyme may in such instances influence the word order can be illustrated by the following two examples, both meaning 'my heart is wondrous sick': <ow colon yv marthys claf> O.1337; <ov colon yv claf marthys> O.1568.