PRONUNCIATION ETYMOLOGY QUOTATIONS DATE CHART

[L., f. *rat*-, ppl. stem of *rērī* to think: see also RATION, REASON.]

1. a. Reason, rationale. *spec.* in *Law*, reason or rationale upon which a juridical decision is based; = *ratio decidendi* (see sense 1b).

1636 MEDE *Reverence God's House* ii. Wks. (1672) 343 The true Ratio..of this Shecinah or Speciality of Divine Presence. **1752** WARBURTON *Serm.* i. Wks. 1811 IX. 16 Now, in this consists the ratio and essential ground of the Gospel-doctrine.

1964 G. ABRAHAMS *Police Questioning & Judges' Rules* i. 20 Therein, it is submitted, is the *ratio* of that decision against the admissibility of statements. **1971** *Mod. Law Rev.* XXXIV. VI. 691 The judge considered..that *Torquay Hotel Co.* v. *Cousins* was authority, 'that this tort of interference with contracts applies not only where there is interference with contracts already made but where there is interference with contracts to be made in accordance with a regular course of dealing.' Is this the *ratio* of the *Torquay* case? **1976** J. M. KELLY *Stud. Civil Judicature of Roman Republic* v. 112, I have, by negative implication, foreshadowed certain characteristics of the *unus iudex* inasmuch as the factors which form the *ratio* of the *centumviri* or *recuperatores* will not be present in his case. **1977** *Times* 23 Dec. 18/5 That restricted definition was unnecessary for the ratio of that decision.

b. In Lat. phrases, esp. *Philos.* and *Law*: **ratio cognoscendi**, that in virtue of which knowledge of something is possible; that in virtue of which something is known to exist; **ratio decidendi** (pl. **rationes decidendi**), rationale of judgment; a principle underlying and determining a judicial decision; **ratio essendi**, **existendi**, that in virtue of which something exists.

1830 W. HAMILTON in *Edin. Rev.* LII. 178 The existence of external things, which is given only *through* their intuition, it admits; the intuition itself, though the *ratio cognoscendi*, and *to us* therefore the *ratio essendi* of their reality, it rejects. **1862** in C. CLARK *House of Lords Cases* VIII. 392 The observations made by Members of the House, whether law Members or lay Members beyond the *ratio decidendi* which is propounded and acted upon in giving judgment, although they may be entitled to respect, are only to be followed in as far as they may be considered agreeable to sound reason and to prior authorities. **1865** S. H. HODGSON *Times & Space* vii. 488 Now both the cause, or ratio existendi, and the reason, or ratio cognoscendi, in every particular case must be given by actual experience. **1877** *Law Rep. Exchequer Division* II. 233 The ratio decidendi in these cases does not appear in the reports. **1890** W. JAMES *Princ. Psychol.* I. x. 337 But if the brand is the *ratio cognoscendi* of the belonging, the belonging, in the case of the herd, is in turn the *ratio existendi* of the brand. **1902** J. W. SALMOND *Jurisprudence* viii. 176 A precedent, therefore, is a judicial decision which contains in itself a principle. The underlying principle which thus forms its authoritative element is often termed the *ratio decidendi*. **1903** G. E. MOORE *Principia Ethica* iv. 127 Kant..admits that Freedom is the *ratio essendi* of the Moral Law, whereas the latter is only *ratio cognoscendi* of Freedom. **1923** C. D. BROAD *Sci. Thought* viii. 267 Sensa are..in some way the *ratio cognoscendi* of the physical world, whilst the physical world is..the *ratio essendi* of sensa. **1948** *Law Q. Rev.* LXIV. 463 The court is always at liberty to propound alternative rules of law, each of which it may elevate to the status of a ratio decidendi. **1970** *Internat. & Compar. Law Q.* XIX. I. 37 Which of these *rationes decidendi* possesses binding force? **1972** *Evangelical Q.* XLIV. 241 These activities compose the *ratio cognoscendi* of the pardoning grace of God; they make us aware of God's activity which is the *ratio essendi* that calls forth man's response. **1977** *Law Q. Rev.* XCIII. 378 The importance of the *ratio decidendi* is that it is the rule of law for which a case is authority.

2. a. *Math.* The relation between two similar magnitudes in respect of quantity, determined by the number of times one contains the other (integrally or fractionally).

This is sometimes distinguished as ***geometrical ratio*** (see GEOMETRICAL *a.* 1b), in contrast to ***arithmetical ratio***, or the extent by which one magnitude exceeds another (now practically obs., though still mentioned in some text-books). For *alternate*, *anharmonic*, *compound*, *duplicate* (etc.) *ratio*, see the adjectives.

1660 BARROW *Euclid* v. Def. 3 Ratio (or rate) is the mutual habitude or respect of two magnitudes of the same kind each to other, according to quantity. **1706** W. JONES *Syn. Palmar. Matheseos* 56 When two Ratio's are equal, the Terms that Compose them are said to be Geometrically Proportional. **1772** *Junius Lett.* lxviii. 356 The ratio..is exactly one to a hundred. **1854** BREWSTER *More Worlds* iv. 70 The matter of Jupiter is much lighter than the matter of our Earth, in the ratio of 24 to 100. **1884** tr. *Lotze's Logic* 114 Heat expands all bodies, but the ratios of the degree of expansion to an equal increase of temperature are different in different bodies.

b. The corresponding relationship between things not precisely measurable.

1808 SOUTHEY *Lett.* (1856) II. 66 Wishes to appropriate to himself the reputation which he had only a right to share, and that in no great ratio. **1820** LAMB *Elia* Ser. I. *South-Sea House*, Executorships..which excited his spleen or soothed his vanity in equal ratios. **1858** BUCKLE *Civiliz.* (1869) II. i. 103 The progress of knowledge bore the same ratio to the decline of ecclesiastical influence. **1872** LIDDON *Elem. Relig.* v. 174 The amount of will which we severally carry into the act of prayer is the ratio of its sincerity.

3. *spec.* In monetary science, the quantitative relation in which one metal stands to another in respect of their value as money or legal tender.

1879 E. CAZALET *Bimetallism* 26 Such a fixed ratio is eminently desirable for the welfare of all civilized nations. **1881** EVART in Horton *Silver Pound* (1887) 309 The adoption of the ratio of 15½ to 1, would accomplish the..object with less disturbance in the monetary systems..than any other ratio.

†**4.** = RATION *n.* 3. *Obs.*

1760 STERNE *Tr. Shandy* III. xxxviii, A cow..eat up two ratios and half of dried grass. **1806** A. DUNCAN *Nelson* 51 The Governor..furnished the..invaders with a ratio of biscuit and wine. **1824** LAMB *Elia* Ser. II. *Captain Jackson*, Sliding a slender ratio of Single Gloucester upon his wife's plate.

5. Special Comb.: **ratio detector** *Electronics*, an F.M. detector whose two output voltages are such that their sum is constant and their ratio, rather than their difference, is proportional to the ratio of the two applied frequency-dependent voltages, so that its insensitivity to changes in amplitude is not confined to the carrier frequency. Also RATIOMETER.

1947 *RCA Rev.* VIII. 201 A new circuit for f-m detection known as the ratio detector is coming into wide use. **1965** *Wireless World* July 8 (Advt.), Printed circuit for I.F. amplifiers and ratio detector. **1974** HARVEY & BOHLMAN *Stereo F.M. Radio Handbk.* v. 99 Normally, in a ratio detector of the balanced type, the centre-point of the load is earthed and the output signal is taken from the tertiary winding.

TOP