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FIFTH EDITION

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THE WORLD'S MOST TRUSTED DICTIONARIES

rev (cause to) turn, wheel, or roll round **M17**. **circumgyration** noun the action or an act of turning, wheeling, or rolling round **E17**. **circumgyratory** adjective marked by circumgyration **M19**. **circumjovial** adjective & noun (ASTRONOMY) (a satellite) revolving round Jupiter **L17**. **circumjovial** adjective = **CIRCUMJOVIAL** adjective **M19**. **circumlittoral** adjective bordering the shore **L19**. **circumlunar** adjective moving or situated round the moon **E20**. **circum-meridian** adjective (of a body when) at or near the meridian **M19**. **circum-mure** verb trans. wall round **E17**. **circumnu'tate** verb intrans. (BOTANY) perform circumnutation **L19**. **circumnu'tation** noun (BOTANY) helical movement of the growing part of a plant **L19**. **circum'oral** adjective (ANATOMY & ZOOLOGY) situated around the mouth **M19**. **circumpo'sition** noun (HORTICULTURE) the propagation of plants in a particular surrounding environment or medium; spec. = **air-layering** s.v. **AIR** noun¹; **M17**. **circumro'tation** noun (a) a changing about in rotation; (b) a revolution as of a wheel or on an axis; a complete rotation; **E17**. **circum'scissile** adjective (BOTANY) dehiscing or opening by a circum-fissure **M19**. **circum'solar** adjective moving or situated round the sun **M19**. **circum'tabular** adjective sitting round a table **E20**. **circumter'restrial** adjective moving or situated round the earth **M19**.

circumambient /sə:kəm'ambiant/ adjective & noun. **M17**. [from **CIRCUM-** + **AMBIENT**. Cf. late Latin *circumambire*.]
A adjective. Esp. of the air or other fluid: surrounding, encompassing. **M17**.
B *absol.* as noun. The surrounding air or atmosphere. **L17**.
 ■ **circumambience** noun the act or fact of surrounding **E18**. **circumambienly** noun surrounding quality or condition; an environment; **M17**.

circumambulate /sə:kəm'ambju:leɪt/ verb trans. & intrans. **M17**. [from **CIRCUM-** + **AMBULATE**. Cf. late Latin *circumambulare*.]
 Walk round or about.
 ■ **circumambulation** noun **E17**. **circumambulator** noun a person who circumambulates **L18**. **circumambulatory** adjective **M17**.

circumbendibus /sə:kəm'bendibʊs/ noun. **L17**. [from **CIRCUM-** + **BEND** noun¹ + Latin *-ibus* abl. pl. ending.]
 A roundabout method; a twist, a turn; a circumlocution.

Circumcellion /sə:kəm'selɪən/ noun. **LME**. [ecclesiastical Latin *circumcelliones* pl., formed as **CIRCUM-** + *cella* noun¹.]
 1 **ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY**. A Donatist fanatic in 4th-cent. Africa. *Usu.* in pl. **LME**.
 †2 A vagrant. **LME-M17**.

circumcircle /sə:kəm'saɪz/ verb trans. **M19**. [from **CIRCUM-** + **CIRCLE** noun.]
 A circle passing through each vertex of a polygon.

circumcise /sə:kəm'saɪz/ verb trans. **ME**. [Old French *circunciser* or *circuncis*-pa. ppl stem of *circuncire*, from Latin *circuncidare* (translating Greek *peritomein*), formed as **CIRCUM-** + *caedere* to cut.]
 ▶ **I** 1 Cut off the foreskin of (a male), as a religious rite (esp. Jewish or Muslim) or for medical reasons; cut off the clitoris or the labia minora (of a female). **ME**.
 2 fig. In biblical translations and allusions: purify (the heart etc.). **ME**.
 ▶ **II** 3 Cut round, trim. **LME-E18**.
 †4 fig. Cut short, curtail, limit. **M16-M17**.
 ■ **circumciser** noun **M16**.

circumcision /sə:kəm'sɪʒ(ə)n/ noun. **ME**. [Old & mod. French *circumcision*, from late Latin *circumcisio(n)-* (translating Greek *peritome*), from *circumcis-* pa. ppl stem of *circuncidare*: see **prec.**, **-ION**.]
 ▶ **I** 1 The act or rite of circumcising a person, for religious or medical reasons. **ME**.
 2 fig. In biblical translations and allusions: spiritual purification. **LME**.
 3 In biblical translations and allusions: the Jews. **LME**.
 4 **ECCLESIASTICAL**. The feast of the Circumcision of Jesus, 1 January. **LME**.
 †1 *female* **circumcision**: see **FEMALE** adjective.
 ▶ **II** 5 Cutting round; a cut round. **L16-M18**.

circumduce /sə:kəm'dju:z/ verb trans. **M16**. [Latin *circumducere*, formed as **CIRCUM-** + *ducere* to lead.]
 †1 = next. **M16-M17**.
 2 **SCOTS LAW** (now *Hist.*). Reject as legally invalid; spec. declare (the term) elapsed for producing proof or evidence in court proceedings. **M16**.

circumduct /sə:kəm'dakt/ verb trans. **L16**. [Latin *circumducere*-pa. ppl stem of *circumducere*: see **prec.**]
 Lead or move around or about. *Now spec.* in **ANATOMY**, cause (an eye, a limb, etc.) to make a circular movement.

circumduction /sə:kəm'dak(ə)n/ noun. **M16**. [Latin *circumductio(n)-*, formed as **prec.**: see **-ION**.]
 1 **SCOTS LAW** (now *Hist.*). The action of circumducing. **M16**.
 2 The action of circumducting. **M16**.

circumference /sə:kəm'fɛr(ə)ns/ noun. **LME**. [Old & mod. French *circumference* from Latin *circumferentia*, from *circumferre*, formed as **CIRCUM-** + *ferre* to carry, bear: see **-ENCE**.]
 1 An enclosing boundary, esp. of a circle or other figure enclosed by a curve; the distance round this. **LME**.

†2 An arc; a circle; the surface of a sphere, cylinder, or other body of circular section. **LME-E18**.
 3 Environment. *rare*. **LME**.
 †4 A circuit; a roundabout course. **M16-E18**.
 5 Boundary, compass, enclosure. **L16**.
 ■ **circumferential** adjective of or pertaining to a circumference **E17**. **circumferentially** adverb **M19**.

circumferentor /sə:kəm'fɛrəntə/ noun. **E17**. [from Latin *circumferent-* pres. ppl stem of *circumferre*: see **prec.**, **-OR**.]
 A surveyor's instrument consisting of a flat bar with vertical sights at each end and a compass in the middle.

circumflex /sə:kəm'fleks/ adjective & noun. **L16**. [Latin *circumflexus* pa. pple of *circumflectere*, formed as **CIRCUM-** + *flectere* to bend, translating Greek *perispomenon* drawn around.]
 ▶ **A** adjective. 1 **GRAMMAR**. Designating an angular or curved accent-mark (´, ¨, or ˘) placed over a vowel in some languages (orig. Greek) to indicate rising and falling tone, contraction, length, or special quality (of the vowel) or of an adjacent consonant. **L16**.
 2 Bent, bending round. *Now rare* in gen. sense. **E18**.
 3 **ANATOMY**. Curved; bent round another part; spec. designating a nerve and artery of the upper arm. **M19**.

▶ **B** noun. 1 A circumflex accent-mark. **E17**.
 †2 Bending round, winding. **E17-L18**.
 3 A curved line, (or |, bracketing two or more lines of writing etc. *rare*. **E19**).

circumflex /sə:kəm'fleks/ verb trans. **M16**. [Sense 1 from **prec.**; sense 2 from Latin *circumflex-*, formed as **prec.**.]
 1 Write with a circumflex accent; pronounce as indicated by a circumflex accent. **M16**.
 2 Bend or wind round. **M17**.

circumfluent /sə:kəm'fluənt/ adjective. **L16**. [Latin *circumfluent-* pres. ppl stem of *circumfluere*, formed as **CIRCUM-** + *fluere* to flow; see **-ENT**.]
 Flowing round; surrounding.
 ■ **circumfluence** noun **L19**.

circumfluous /sə:kəm'flu:əs/ adjective. *literary*. **E17**. [from Latin *circumfluus*, from *circumfluere*: see **prec.**, **-OUS**.]
 1 Flowed round, surrounded by water. **E17**.
 2 = **CIRCUMFLUENT**. **M17**.

circumforaneous /sə:kəm'fɔ:reɪnəs/ adjective. *Now rare*. **E17**. [from Latin *circumforaneus* (formed as **CIRCUM-** + **FORUM**) + **-OUS**.]
 Strolling from market to market; vagrant, vagabond; quack.

circumfuse /sə:kəm'fju:z/ verb trans. **L16**. [Latin *circumfus-* pa. ppl stem of *circumfundere*, formed as **CIRCUM-** + *fundere* pour.]
 Pour about, diffuse, (around, about); surround with or in a fluid medium etc.
 ■ **circumfusion** noun **E17**.

circumgestation /sə:kəm'dʒe'steɪʃ(ə)n/ noun. *Long rare*. **M16**. [from **CIRCUM-** + **GESTATION**.]
 Carrying about (ceremonially or in procession).

circumcession /sə:kəm'ʃeɪʃ(ə)n/ noun. *Also -session*. **M17**. [medieval Latin *circumcessio(n)-* (translating Greek *perikhōrēsis* going round), formed as **CIRCUM-** + *incessio(n)-* from *in-* pa. ppl stem of *incedere* move, proceed: see **-ION**. Spelling with *-s-* through misinterpretation as 'reciprocal indwelling'.]
CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY. The reciprocal existence of the persons of the Trinity in one another.

circumjacent /sə:kəm'dʒeɪʃ(ə)n/ adjective. **L15**. [Latin *circumjacent-* pres. ppl stem of *circumjacere*, formed as **CIRCUM-** + *jacere* lie down: see **-ENT**.]
 Situated around, adjacent on all sides. (Foll. by *to*)
 ■ **circumjacence** noun the fact or quality of being circumjacent **L19**. **circumjacency** noun (a) in pl., circumjacent parts; (b) = **CIRCUMJACENCE**. **M18**.

circumlocution /sə:kəm'lɔ:kju:ʃ(ə)n/ noun. **LME**. [French, or Latin *circumlocutio(n)-*, formed as **CIRCUM-** + *locutio(n)-* **LOCUTION**, translating Greek *PERIPHRAISIS*.]
 Expression of meaning indirectly or in more words than necessary; evasive talk; an instance of this, a round-about expression.
 ■ **circumlocutional**, **circumlocutionary** adjectives pertaining to or given to circumlocution **M19**. **circumlocutionist** noun a person who uses circumlocution **M19**. **circumlocutory** /sə:kəm'lɔ:kju:t(ə)rɪ/ adjective marked by circumlocution **M17**.

circumnavigate /sə:kəm'nævɪgət/ verb trans. **M17**. [from **CIRCUM-** + **NAVIGATE**. Cf. Latin *circumnavigare*.]
 Sail round (esp. the world).
 ■ **circumnavigable** adjective able to be circumnavigated **L17**. **circumnavigation** noun **E18**. **circumnavigator** **L18**.

circumpolar /sə:kəm'pəʊlə/ adjective. **L17**. [from **CIRCUM-** + **POLAR**.]
 1 **ASTRONOMY**. Situated or occurring above the horizon at all times of the day in a given latitude. **L17**.

circumambient | circumstance

2 Around either pole of the earth; inhabiting such a region. **L17**.

circumscribe /sə:kəm'skraɪb/ verb trans. **LME**. [Latin *circumscribere*, formed as **CIRCUM-** + *scribere* draw lines, write.]

1 Lay down the limits of, confine; restrict; mark off, define logically. **LME**.
 2 Draw a line round; form the boundary of; encircle, encompass. **L16**.
 3 **GEOMETRY**. Draw (a figure) round another, meeting it at points but not cutting it. **L16**.
 †4 Inscribe around. Only in **L17**.

□ 1 SHAKES. Ham. Therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd. B. P. BENSON To play lawn tennis on the exceedingly circumscribed court. 2 W. HOGARTH'S straight line and the circular line... bound and circumscribe all visible objects. DEFOE I was alone, circumscrib'd by the ocean.

■ **circumscriber** noun (arch) a person who or thing which circumscribes; spec. a person who signs a round robin: **E17**. **circumscrip't** adjective (now *rare*) circumscribed **M16**.

circumscription /sə:kəm'skrɪpʃ(ə)n/ noun. **LME**. [Latin *circumscription-*], from *circumscrip-* pa. ppl stem of *circumscribere*: see **prec.**, **-ION**.]
 1 An inscription around a coin etc. **LME**.
 †2 The fact or quality of being confined to definite limits of space, as a property of matter. **L15-M19**.
 3 The action or an act of laying down limits; the fact of being limited; confinement; (a) restraint, (a) restriction; (a) definit^{bn}; (a) description. **M16**.
 4 A boundary, an outline, a periphery, a border, an edging. **L16**.
 5 **GEOMETRY**. The action of circumscribing one figure around another. **L16**.
 6 A circumscribed space; a district or region of definite limits. **M19**.

□ 3 MILTON No injurious Alteration or Circumscription of Mens Lands. E. POUND Criticism is not a circumscription of a set of prohibitions. 4 M. BRADBURY The main horizon of their lives, the limit and circumscription of their world.

■ **circumscriptive** adjective pertaining to or having the attribute of circumscription (esp. of matter) **L15-M18**. **circumscriptively** adverb **L15-M18**.

circumspect /sə:kəm'spekt/ adjective. **LME**. [Latin *circumspectus* pa. pple of *circumspicere*, formed as **CIRCUM-** + *specere* to look.]
 Showing caution; cautious, wary; taking everything into account.

□ 1 STRIBBACK The brothers were quiet, orderly and circumspect. 5. BULLOCH He was a circumspect driver.

■ **circum'spection** noun cautious observation of circumstances; circumspect action or conduct. **LME**. **circum'spectious** adjective circumspect **M17**. **circum'spectively** adverb looking around; given to circumspection; **M17**. **circum'spectively** adverb **E17**. **circum'spectively** adverb **LME**. **circum'spectness** noun **M16**.

circumsphere /sə:kəm'sfɪə/ noun. **M20**. [from **CIRCUM-** + **SPHERE** noun, after **circumcircle**.]
MATH. A sphere that touches all the vertices of a given polyhedron; Cf. **IN-SPHERE**.

circumstance /sə:kəm'stɑ:ns/ noun & verb. **ME**. [Old & mod. French *circumstance* or Latin *circumstantia*, from *circumstant-* pres. ppl stem of *circumstare*, formed as **CIRCUM-** + *stare* to stand: see **-ANCE**.]
 ▶ **A** noun. 1 Something surrounding (lit. & fig.).
 †1 That which stands around or surrounds; surroundings. **ME-L19**.
 2 In pl., or *sing.* (as a non-count noun). The material, logical, or other environmental conditions of an act or event; the time, place, manner, cause, occasion, etc., of an act or event; the external conditions affecting or that might affect action. spec. as indicating criminality. **ME**.
 †b In *sing.* (as a count noun). Any of such conditions. **M16**.
 †c spec. In pl. State of financial or material welfare. **E18**.
 3 Formality, ceremony, or fuss surrounding an act or event. *Now chiefly* in **pomp and circumstance**. **LME**.
 ††b Importance. **L16-L17**.
 4 Detail about the external conditions of an act or event; arch. circumlocution, indirectness. **E16**.

□ 2 J. WEBSTER We have thought but circumstance to charge her with, about her husband's death. 3. P. HAYTER Who found himself in circumstances to which he was unequal. L. P. HAYTER A soldier hardy as the lion when circumstances demand it. 4. H. T. T. That man should die was a matter of necessity which men should die; it was a matter of circumstance. J. BAKER When I was a boy, it was under entirely different circumstances. J. BAKER Ernestina was a victim of circumstance. 5. J. GALSWORTHY A solid and prolonged happiness perhaps no other circumstance in life had afforded. 6. N. MITFORD Summer came and went without any in Polly's circumstance.

▶ **II** Something accessory.
 5 An accessory matter; a particular, a detail. *Usu.* in pl. **ME**. ††b spec. A material adjunct; a physical feature. **L16-L18**.