(the first council of Constantinople was originally a mere council or synod of the East), or to councils of the Reformed churches, *e.g.* the Synod of Dort. Provincial synods were held in the 2nd century, and were not completely organized before the advent of oecumenical councils. The two terms are still used side by side; thus there are patriarchal, national and primatial councils, as well as provincial councils (under the metropolitan of a province) and diocesan synods, consisting of the clergy’ of a diocese and presided over by the bishop (or the vicar-general). The supreme governing body in the Russian branch of the Orthodox Eastern Church *(q.v.)* is known as the Holy Synod. In the Pres­byterian churches (see Presbyterianism) a synod is an assembly containing representatives of several presbyteries and inter­mediate between these and the General Assembly; similarly in the Wesleyan and other Methodist churches the synod is the meeting of the district which links the circuits with the conference. The term is not in use in. self-governing churches like the Congregationalists and Baptists, though these from time to time hold councils or assemblies (national and international), íor conference and fellowship without any legislative power.

**SYNODIC PERIOD,** in astronomy, the apparent period of a planet or satellite when its revolution is referred to the line passing through the earth or the sun. In the case of the planets it is the period between successive conjunctions of the same kind, inferior or superior, with the sun. In the case of the satellites it is the period relative to the radius vector from the sun.

**SYNTHESIS (Gr.** *συvθeσιs,* from *συvτιθιvaι,* to put together), a term used both generally and technically, with the fundamental meaning of composition, opposed to analysis *(q.v.),* the breaking up of a whole into its component parts. In teaching, for example, when a new fact is brought into connexion with already acquired knowledge and the learner puts them together (“ synthesizes ”), the result is “ synthetic ” and the process is “ synthesis.” The reverse process is analysis, as in grammar when a child breaks up a sentence into subject, verb, object, &c. Thus all inductive reasoning is synthetic in character. The term “ synthesis ” is much used in philosophy. Thus Kant makes a distinction, fundamental to his theory of knowledge, between analytic and synthetic judgments, the latter being those judgments which are not derivable from the nature of the subject, but in which the predicate is obtained rather by experience or by the operation of the mind (the “ synthetic judgment a priori see Kant). Perhaps the most famous use of the term is in Herbert Spencer’s “ Synthetic Philosophy,” the name given to the several treatises which contain his philosophic system—the “ unification of knowledge ” from the data of the separate sciences.

**SYNTIPAS,** the Greek form of Sindibad or Sendabar, an Indian philosopher supposed to have lived about 100 b.c., and the re­puted author of a collection of tales known generally in Europe as the story of the Seven Wise Masters. They enjoyed immense popularity, and appeared in many Oriental and Western languages. A Greek translation (probably from a Syriac version), the earliest specimen of Romaic prose (11th century), is extant under the title of *The mosl pleasing Story of Syntipas the Philosopher.* It is preceded by an introduction in iambic verse by a certain Michael Andreopulos, who states that it was executed by order of Michael, probably the duke of Melitene in Armenia. The translator is evidently a Christian, although he has generally preserved the Oriental colouring. The main outline is the same in the different versions, although they vary in detail and include different stories. A certain prince, who had taken a vow of silence for a time on the advice of his tutor, was tempted by his stepmother. Her advances having been rejected, she accused him to his father, who decided to put him to death. The device of the *Arabian Nights* is introduced by the wise men of the court, who in turn relate stories to dissuade the king from over-hasty punishment, each story being answered by the queen, who desires instant action to be taken. When the period of silence is over the prince speaks and establishes his innocence. In the Greek version the king is a king of Persia, named Cyrus, and Syntipas himself is the prince’s tutor (text in A. Eberhard, *Tabulae Romanenses,* i., 1872, “ Teubner Series ”).

For a discussion of the whole subject, see D. Comparetti, *Ricerche intorno al libro di Sindibad* (1869; Eng. trans, by H. C. Coote, *Folk- Lore Society,* 1882); ∖V. A. Cloustonl *The Book of Sindibad* (from the Persian anil Arabic, 1884; from the Syriac, by H. Gollancz, 1897); J. C. Dunlop, *Hist, of Prose Fiction* (new ed., 1888), vol. ii. ; C. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litt.* (2nd cd., 1897). Sjxty-two Aesopic fables, also translated from Syriac into Greek, are attributed to this same Syntipas (ed. C. F. Matthäi, 1781).

**SYRA,** or Syros (anc. ∑υρος, perhaps Homeric *∑υρiη),* a Greek island in the middle of the Cyclades, which in the 19th century became the commercial centre of the Archipelago, and is also the residence of the nomarch of the Cyclades and the seat of the central law courts. The length of the island is about 10 m., the breadth 5, and the area is estimated at 421/2 sq. m. The population rose to about 33,700, of whom about 20,500 were in the chief town, Hermoupolis, but that of the town had in 1907 declined again to 18,132. Syra is also a province of the depart­ment of the Cyclades (pop. 1907, 31,939). The importance of the island in prehistoric times is attested by considerable remains of early Aegean antiquities. In ancient times it was remarkably fertile, as is to be gathered not only from the Homeric description (*Od*. xv. 403), which might be of doubtful application, but also from the remains of olive presses and peculiarities in the local nomenclature. The destruction of its forests has led to the loss of all its alluvial soil, and now it is for the most part a brown and barren rock, covered at best with scanty aromatic scrub, pastured by sheep and goats.

Hermopolis (better Hermoupolis), the chief town, is built round the harbour on the east side of the island. It is governed by an active municipality, whose revenue and expenditure have rapidly increased. Among the public buildings are a spacious town-hall in the central square, a club-house, an opera-house and a Greek theatre. Old Syra, on a conical hill behind the port town, is an interesting place, with its old Roman Catholic church of St George’s still crowning the summit. This was built by the Capuchins, who in the middle ages chose Syra as the head­quarters of a mission in the East. Louis XIII., hearing of the dangers to which the Syra priests were exposed, took the island under his especial protection, and since that time the Roman Catholic bishops of Syra have been elected by the pope. About the beginning of the 19th century the inhabitants of Syra numbered only about 1000; whenever a Turkish vessel appeared they made off to the interior and hid themselves. On the out­break of the war of Greek independence refugees from Chios, after being scattered throughout Tenos, Spezia, Hydra, &c., and rejected by the people of Ceos, took up their residence at Syra under the protection of the French flag. Altogether about 40,000 had sought this asylum before the freedom of Greece was achieved. The chief city was called Hermoupolis after the name of the ship which brought the earlier settlers. Most of the immigrants elected to stay, and, though they were long kept in alarm by pirates, they continued to prosper. In 1875 1568 sailing ships and 698 steamers (with a total of 740,731 tons) entered and 1588 sailing ships and 700 steamers (with a total of 756,807 tons) cleared this port; in 1883 3379 sailing and 1126 steam vessels (with a total of 1,056,201 tons) entered and 3276 sailing and 1120 steam vessels (with a total of 960,229 tons) cleared. Most of the sailing vessels were Greek and Turkish, and most of the steamers were Austrian, French and Turkish.

But since the energetic development of Peiraeus, Syra has ceased to be the chief commercial entrepôt and distributing centre of this part of the Levant, and consequently its trade has seriously declined. Whereas in 1890 the foreign commerce was valued at £1,313,730, in 1900 it only amounted to £408,350. Coal, textiles and iron and steel goods figure prominently amongst the imports, and emery, leather, lemons, sponges, flour, valonia and iron ore amongst the exports. Syra is the seat of several industries, ship-building, tanneries, flour and cotton mills, rope-walks, factories for confectionery (“ Turkish delight”), hats, kerchiefs, furniture, pottery and distilleries. the harbour, which is pro­tected by a breakwater 273 yds. long, has a depth of 25 ft., diminishing to 12 ft.