

# Panini Encyclopedia Article

## Panini

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# Panini

**fl. fifth century B.C.**

Indian grammarian whose system of rules for the Sanskrit language is regarded as a precursor of modern formal language theory. In his *Astadhyayi*, Panini gave some 4,000 aphoristic rules for the language, which—in part thanks to his systematization—remained largely unchanged for the next two millennia. Panini's linguistic formulae have often been likened to mathematical functions, and it has been suggested that the Hindu number system and mathematical reasoning are linked to the structure of the Sanskrit language.