

rotas opera tenet arepo sator

rotas opera tenet arepo sator is a phrase that has intrigued historians, linguists, and enthusiasts for centuries. Its mysterious arrangement and historical significance make it a fascinating subject of study. This article explores the origins, meaning, symbolism, and cultural impact of the famous palindrome, providing a comprehensive understanding of its place in history and modern culture.

Understanding the Phrase: rotas opera tenet arepo sator

What is the Sator Square?

The phrase "rotas opera tenet arepo sator" is part of the Sator Square, a word square containing a five-word Latin palindrome:

- SATOR
- AREPO
- TENET
- OPERA
- ROTAS

This square is composed such that the words read the same horizontally and vertically, creating a symmetrical and intriguing pattern.

Structure and Layout of the Sator Square

The classic Sator Square is arranged as follows:

| S | A | T | O | R |

|---|---|---|---|
|A|R|E|P|O|
|T|E|N|E|T|
|O|P|E|R|A|
|R|O|T|A|S|

This structure allows the words to be read in multiple directions, contributing to its enigmatic nature.

Historical Origins of the Sator Square

Ancient Roots and Early Evidence

The earliest known examples of the Sator Square date back to the Roman Empire, with discoveries across Europe and the Mediterranean. Notable finds include:

- Pompeii (1st century AD)
- Dura-Europos in Syria
- Herculaneum

Its widespread presence suggests it held significant cultural or religious importance in antiquity.

Possible Origins and Theories

Despite its age, the precise origin of the square remains uncertain. Several theories propose different origins:

- **Religious Symbolism:** Some believe it has Christian connotations, possibly used as a protective charm during early Christianity.

- **Ancient Magic or Mysticism:** The pattern's symmetry and palindromic qualities suggest it may have been used in magical or mystical practices.
- **Linguistic Play:** It might be a form of wordplay or a mnemonic device used for educational purposes.

The true origin remains a topic of debate among scholars.

Deciphering the Meaning of the Sator Square

Translation and Interpretation of the Words

Each word in the square has specific meanings:

- **Sator:** Sower, or Creator
- **Arepo:** A proper name or possibly a invented word with no direct translation
- **Tenet:** Holds, keeps
- **Opera:** Works, efforts, or deeds
- **Rotas:** Wheels, rotations

Putting it together, some interpret the phrase as: "The sower Arepo holds the wheels with effort" or "The Creator, Arepo, maintains the cycles."

Common Interpretations and Theories

Because of its cryptic nature, multiple interpretations have emerged:

- **Christian Interpretation:** Some see it as a symbolic representation of God's omnipresence and eternal cycles, with the words symbolizing divine creation and maintenance.
- **Magical or Protective Charm:** The square might have been used as a talisman to ward off evil or bring good luck.
- **Linguistic Puzzle:** It may serve as a linguistic curiosity, showcasing the symmetry and versatility of Latin.

Despite varied interpretations, the phrase's symmetrical structure remains its most captivating feature.

Symbolism and Cultural Significance

Symbolism of the Palindrome

The palindromic nature of the Sator Square symbolizes eternity, cycles, and the interconnectedness of all things. Its symmetrical design suggests balance and harmony, qualities highly valued in various cultures and philosophies.

Religious and Mystical Uses

In early Christian contexts, the Sator Square has been discovered in churches and religious artifacts, leading some to believe it served as a covert Christian symbol during times of persecution. Its inclusion in sacred spaces might have been intended as a form of spiritual protection.

Modern Cultural Impact

Today, the Sator Square continues to inspire:

- **Art and Literature:** Artists incorporate the square into visual art, and writers reference it as a symbol of mystery and eternal cycles.
- **Puzzles and Games:** The square is used in puzzle design and cryptography due to its symmetrical properties.
- **Popular Media:** Movies, books, and TV shows reference the square to evoke ancient mystery and hidden knowledge.

Its enduring presence highlights its significance across centuries.

Modern Discoveries and Uses of the Sator Square

Recent Archaeological Finds

New discoveries continue to surface, revealing the widespread use and adaptation of the Sator Square in various contexts, including:

- Roman mosaics
- Medieval manuscripts
- Modern graffiti

These finds suggest the square's symbolism persisted through ages, adapting to different cultures and

beliefs.

Contemporary Interpretations and Applications

In the modern era, the Sator Square is often used as:

- A meditation tool to contemplate cycles and balance
- A cryptographic puzzle for enthusiasts
- A symbol in jewelry and tattoos representing eternity

Its versatility demonstrates the profound impact of this ancient palindrome.

Conclusion: The Enduring Mystery of *rotas opera tenet arepo sator*

The phrase "*rotas opera tenet arepo sator*" and the broader Sator Square embody a timeless mystery that continues to fascinate scholars, mystics, and the curious alike. Its intricate symmetry, historical significance, and potential symbolic meanings make it one of the most intriguing linguistic artifacts from antiquity. Whether viewed as a religious symbol, a magical charm, or a linguistic marvel, the square remains a testament to human creativity and the enduring quest to understand the cycles of life, eternity, and the universe.

Key Takeaways:

- The Sator Square is a 5x5 Latin palindrome with deep historical roots.
- Its words symbolize concepts of creation, holding, effort, and cycles.
- The square has been discovered across ancient and modern contexts, highlighting its enduring significance.
- Its symbolism encompasses religious, mystical, and philosophical themes.
- Today, it continues to inspire art, puzzles, and cultural references worldwide.

Understanding the "rotas opera tenet arepo sator" phrase offers insight into ancient beliefs, linguistic artistry, and the universal human fascination with symmetry, eternity, and hidden meanings. Its mystery persists, inviting exploration and interpretation for generations to come.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the meaning of the phrase 'rotas opera tenet arepo sator'?

The phrase is a Latin palindrome that can be translated as 'The sower Arepo holds the wheels with effort,' though its exact meaning is debated; it's often considered a mystical or magical inscription.

Why is 'rotas opera tenet arepo sator' considered a palindrome?

It reads the same forwards and backwards, making it a perfect example of a Latin palindromic phrase, which has intrigued scholars and enthusiasts alike.

What is the historical significance of the 'Sator Square' containing this phrase?

The Sator Square is an ancient Latin inscription found across Europe and the Middle East, believed to date back to Roman times, often associated with protection, magic, or religious symbolism.

Are there any known interpretations or theories about the phrase's hidden meaning?

Yes, some interpret it as a mystical or magical statement, while others see it as a wordplay or a cryptic message, with various theories suggesting connections to early Christian symbolism or pagan traditions.

Where can the phrase 'rotas opera tenet arepo sator' typically be found today?

It appears on ancient artifacts, inscriptions, and the famous Sator Square, which can be found in archaeological sites, churches, and museums worldwide.

Is 'rotas opera tenet arepo sator' used in modern culture or media?

Yes, the phrase and the Sator Square have appeared in literature, movies, video games, and art, often symbolizing mystery, magic, or historical intrigue.

What challenges are associated with translating or understanding this phrase?

The phrase's ambiguous grammar, the context of its use, and its palindromic nature make translation and interpretation complex, leading to multiple theories about its true meaning.

Can 'rotas opera tenet arepo sator' be considered a form of early cryptography?

Some scholars view it as an early form of cryptic writing or cryptogram, given its palindromic structure and mysterious origins, which may have served protective or secretive purposes.

Additional Resources

Rotas Opera Tenet Arepo Sator: Unraveling the Mystery of the Palindrome and Its Cultural Significance

The phrase "Rotas Opera Tenet Arepo Sator" is one of the most intriguing and enduring examples of wordplay and symbolism from antiquity. Known primarily as a palindrome—meaning it reads the same forwards and backwards—this enigmatic phrase has captured the imagination of historians, linguists, archaeologists, and mystics for centuries. Its origin, meaning, and the myriad contexts in which it has

appeared offer a fascinating window into ancient cultures, religious beliefs, and esoteric traditions. This article aims to explore the depths of this cryptic phrase, dissect its components, analyze its historical significance, and evaluate its enduring mystery.

Understanding the Phrase: What Does "Rotas Opera Tenet Arepo Sator" Mean?

The Literal Translation and Its Challenges

At first glance, the phrase appears as a nonsensical string of words. However, scholars have long attempted to interpret its components:

- Rotas: Generally understood as "wheels" or "circles" in Latin.
- Opera: Translates as "work" or "labor."
- Tenet: Means "holds" or "keeps."
- Arepo: An obscure term, possibly a proper name or an invented word.
- Sator: Means "sower" or "planter."
- Arepo (again): Repeated, emphasizing its importance.

The phrase is often presented as a palindrome, arranged in a square grid, allowing it to be read in multiple directions. The literal translation is difficult because some words are obscure or ambiguous, but a common interpretation is:

"The sower Arepo holds the wheels with care, the work."

Yet, this literal translation does not fully capture the phrase's layered symbolism nor its cultural

significance.

The Palindromic Structure

One of the most remarkable features of "Rotas Opera Tenet Arepo Sator" is its perfect palindromic nature. When arranged in a square grid, the words form a symmetric pattern that can be read:

- Horizontally, from left to right.
- Vertically, from top to bottom.
- Diagonally, in some configurations.

This symmetry has led to various interpretations, especially given the phrase's ability to be read in multiple directions while maintaining coherence.

Historical Origins and Archaeological Discoveries

The Earliest Evidence

The earliest known examples of the Sator Square date from the ruins of Pompeii, preserved by volcanic ash after the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. Archaeological excavations have uncovered several instances of the square inscribed on walls, tiles, and artifacts, indicating its widespread presence across the Roman Empire.

Other notable early findings include:

- A Roman basilica in Dura-Europos (modern Syria).
- Churches and cathedrals across Europe, particularly in the medieval period.
- Inscribed stones and artifacts from the 1st to 4th centuries CE.

The geographic spread suggests that the phrase was not confined to a single region but was part of a broader cultural phenomenon.

The Evolution of Its Use Across Cultures

While primarily associated with Latin and Roman contexts, similar palindromic phrases and motifs appear in other cultures, often linked to mystical or religious practices. The Sator Square's endurance through centuries suggests it was more than mere wordplay; it likely held symbolic or ritualistic significance.

Interpretations and Symbolic Significance

Possibilities of Hidden Meanings

Over the centuries, scholars and mystics have proposed numerous interpretations:

- Religious Symbolism: Some suggest the square encodes Christian ideas, especially considering its appearance in early Christian sites. The crossing of words might symbolize the union of divine and earthly realms.
- Mystical Power: The symmetrical and self-referential design has led some to believe it was used as a talisman or protective charm against evil spirits or misfortune.

- Philosophical Concepts: The idea of eternal cycles, cosmic order, or the interconnectedness of all things reflected in the symmetric pattern.

Common Theories and Their Details

- Christian Interpretation: Some see the phrase as an early Christian symbol, with the words "Sator" and "Tenet" representing divine principles like sowing and holding, while the surrounding structure symbolizes the universe's order.
- Gnostic or Esoteric Significance: In esoteric traditions, the square may encode hidden knowledge or serve as a mnemonic device for spiritual awakening.
- Secular or Practical Use: Others argue it was simply a playful or decorative inscription, perhaps serving as a form of word puzzle or an early form of a magical talisman.

The Sator Square in Art, Architecture, and Modern Culture

Architectural and Artistic Embodiments

Throughout history, the Sator Square has appeared in various artistic contexts:

- Medieval Churches: Inscribed on walls, floors, and pulpits.
- Renaissance Art: Incorporated into decorative motifs.
- Architectural Elements: Used as keystones, mosaics, or carved inscriptions.

The enduring appeal lies in its symmetry and mysterious aura, which continues to inspire contemporary artists and designers.

Modern Interpretations and Popular Culture

In recent decades, the phrase has gained popularity in literature, movies, and puzzles. Its cryptic nature makes it an attractive symbol for secret societies, conspiracy theories, and esoteric communities.

Notable examples include:

- Its appearance in Dan Brown's novels, where it symbolizes hidden knowledge.
- Use in puzzle games and escape rooms, where deciphering the square offers clues.
- Presence in pop culture references related to mystery, secret societies, and ancient wisdom.

Analytical Perspectives: The Significance of the "Arepo" and the Word Arrangement

The Mystery of "Arepo"

One of the most debated aspects of the phrase is the word "Arepo." Unlike the other words, it does not have a clear meaning in Latin or Greek, leading to various hypotheses:

- Proper Name: Some suggest Arepo was a person or deity.
- An Invented Word: Created solely for the purpose of the palindrome.
- A Hidden Acronym: Possibly an acronym representing a phrase or principle.

Its position within the square, flanked by other words, hints at its importance, but its true significance

remains elusive.

The Structural Genius of the Square

The Sator Square exemplifies linguistic and mathematical ingenuity:

- Palindromic Symmetry: The words read identically in multiple directions, reinforcing the idea of cyclical or eternal concepts.
- Cross-Reading: The words are arranged so they intersect at shared letters, creating a cohesive unit.
- Multiple Readings: The square can be read as:
 - "Sator Arepo Tenet Opera Rotas" (the full phrase).
 - "Rotas Opera Tenet Arepo Sator" (a reversed version).
 - Variations reading only parts of the square.

This versatility suggests an intentional design, possibly serving as a mnemonic device or a talisman meant to embody universal balance.

Contemporary Significance and Continuing Mystique

Why Does the Phrase Endure?

The enduring fascination with "Rotas Opera Tenet Arepo Sator" stems from several factors:

- Its aesthetic symmetry appeals visually.

- Its cryptic nature invites interpretation.
- Its historical associations lend it an aura of ancient wisdom.
- It exemplifies the human penchant for secret codes and hidden truths.

Modern Research and Debates

Academic research continues to analyze the phrase, with scholars exploring:

- Its origins in early Roman or pre-Roman cultures.
- Its possible connections to early Christian symbolism.
- Its role in magical or protective practices across centuries.
- The linguistic anomalies presented by "Arepo."

Despite extensive study, many aspects of the phrase remain unresolved, adding to its mystique.

Conclusion: The Enduring Enigma of the Sator Square

The phrase "Rotas Opera Tenet Arepo Sator" encapsulates a rich tapestry of history, symbolism, and linguistic ingenuity. Its palindromic structure and mysterious content have allowed it to survive millennia as a symbol of the cyclical nature of existence, divine order, or esoteric secrets. Whether viewed as a religious artifact, a mystical talisman, or simply an elaborate word puzzle, the Sator Square continues to inspire curiosity and debate. Its capacity to evoke wonder across centuries underscores the timeless human desire to find meaning in the cryptic and to connect with the ancient wisdom encoded in symbols.

As ongoing research uncovers more about its origins and interpretations, the phrase remains a testament to the enduring power of language, symmetry, and mystery in human culture. Whether it

served as a protective charm, a philosophical statement, or a playful innovation, "Rotas Opera Tenet Arepo Sator" remains an enigma—one that challenges us to ponder the depths of history, language, and the human psyche.

Rotas Opera Tenet Arepo Sator

rotas opera tenet arepo sator: The Sorcerer's Scholar Claude Lecouteux, 2025-09-23 • Contains hardcover editions of Dictionary of Ancient Magic Words and Spells, Traditional Magic Spells for Protection and Healing, and The High Magic of Talismans and Amulets in a collector's slipcase • Analyzes more than 7,000 spells from the magical traditions of Europe and provides a comprehensive history of the use of talismans and amulets from the Middle Ages to today Through meticulous study of his private collection of medieval manuscripts as well as his privileged access to the rare book archives of major European universities, Claude Lecouteux has become renowned in esoteric academic circles for his in-depth examinations of the myths and magical practices of the Middle Ages. In this deluxe boxed set are three outstanding examples of Lecouteux's masterful scholarship, each in a deluxe hardcover edition housed in a collector's slipcase. In Dictionary of Ancient Magic Words and Spells, Lecouteux analyzes more than 7,000 spells from the magical traditions and grimoires of Europe, presenting a comprehensive dictionary of magic words, phrases, and alphabets. In Traditional Magic Spells for Protection and Healing, he shares more than 600 magical prescriptions from both pagan and Christian sources from the last 2,000 years. He provides an in-depth look at protection magic, including healing spells from rare texts and from the heavily guarded gypsy (Rom) tradition. In The High Magic of Talismans and Amulets, he provides a comprehensive history of the use of talismans and amulets for protection, healing, and divine influence. He reviews many different kinds of amulets and talismans used throughout the ages, such as a rabbit's foot, horseshoe, gris-gris bag, and inscribed parchment charged through ritual, detailing the magical principles behind each object and showing that their use is still as widespread today as any time in the past.

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publisher description.

rotas opera tenet arepo sator: The Book of Revelation G. R. Beasley-Murray, 2010-07-01 Dr. Beasley-Murray has made a special study of the Revelation, the notorious difficulties of which have challenged and fascinated him for many years. An essential key to the understanding of its enigmatic character is the realization that it comes within the category of apocalyptic literature, in which acknowledged symbols were used to disguise the real meaning. According to the author, that which to the uninitiated modern reader appears grotesque imagery spoke with power to John's fellow-Christians . . . Due weight is also given to the Christology of the book, which the author sees as inseparable from its eschatology.

rotas opera tenet arepo sator: Explorations in Music and Esotericism Marjorie Roth, Leonard George, 2023 Scholars explore from many fresh angles the interweavings of two of the richest strands of human culture - music and esotericism - with examples from the medieval period to the modern age. Music and esotericism are two responses to the intuition that the world holds hidden order, beauty, and power. Those who compose, perform, and listen to music have often noted that music can be a bridge between sensory and transcendent realms. Such renowned writers as Boethius expanded the definition of music to encompass not only sounded music but also the harmonic fabric of human and cosmic life. Those who engage in pursuits called esoteric, from ancient astrology, magic, and alchemy to recent and more novel forms of spirituality, have also remarked on the relevance of music to their quests. Esotericists have composed music in order to convey esoteric meaning, performed music to create esoteric influences, and listened to music to raise their esoteric awareness. The academic study of esotericism is a young field, and few researchers have probed the rich interface between the musical and esoteric domains. In *Explorations in Music and Esotericism*, scholars from numerous fields introduce the history of esotericism and current debates about its definition and extent. The book's sixteen chapters present rich instances of connections between music and esotericism, organized with reference to four aspects of esotericism: as a form of thought; as the keeping and revealing of secrets; as an identity; and as a signifier. Edited by Marjorie Roth and Leonard George. Contributors: Elizabeth Abbate, Malachai Komanoff Bandy, Adam Bregman, Charles E. Brewer, Benjamin Dobbs, Anna Gawboy, Pasquale Giaquinto, Adam Knight Gilbert, Joscelyn Godwin, Virginia Christy Lamothe, Andrew Owen, Christopher Scheer, Codee Ann Spinner, Woodrow Steinken, and Daphne Tan.

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rotas opera tenet arepo sator: The Illinois Schoolmaster , 1876

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rotas opera tenet arepo sator: The Illinois Schoolmaster Albert Stetson, Ira S. Baker, Aaron Gove, Edwin C. Hewett, John Williston Cook, 1876

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rotas opera tenet arepo sator: **Everyday Writing in the Graeco-Roman East** Roger S. Bagnall, 2012-04-23 This is the most important and original study of literacy and the function of writing in ancient society to have appeared in the last twenty years. In a masterly and detailed survey of evidence from across the ancient Mediterranean world, Bagnall shows how and why 'routine' writing was essential to social and administrative infrastructures from the Hellenistic to the Byzantine periods. Essential reading for anyone interested in understanding the role and function of the written text in human social behaviour. —Alan Bowman, Camden Professor of Ancient History, Oxford University This richly illustrated and annotated book takes the reader on an extended tour from North Africa to Afghanistan. Bagnall's theme is the ubiquity and pervasiveness of writing in the long millennium from Alexander to the Arab conquests and beyond. Briskly challenging the currently fashionable low estimates on the extent of literacy and the prevalence of writing in the ancient world, Bagnall surveys and explains what has survived and what has been lost—and why. This is a book both for specialists and for the general reader, sure to inspire admiration and reaction. —James G. Keenan, Professor of Classical Studies, Loyola University Chicago "Bagnall's book is not only a study of everyday writing in the Graeco-Roman East, but also an investigation into how our documentation has been distorted by patterns of conservation and discovery and the choices made by modern editors. The sound reflections of an historian on the sources of history." —Jean-Luc Fournet, Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, Paris

rotas opera tenet arepo sator: An Anthropology of Puzzles Marcel Danesi, 2020-05-15 An Anthropology of Puzzles argues that the human brain is a puzzling organ which allows humans to literally solve their own problems of existence through puzzle format. Noting the presence of puzzles everywhere in everyday life, Marcel Danesi looks at puzzles in society since the dawn of history, showing how their presence has guided large sections of human history, from discoveries in

mathematics to disquisitions in philosophy. Danesi examines the cognitive processes that are involved in puzzle making and solving, and connects them to the actual physical manifestations of classic puzzles. Building on a concept of puzzles as based on Jungian archetypes, such as the river crossing image, the path metaphor, and the journey, Danesi suggests this could be one way to understand the public fascination with puzzles. As well as drawing on underlying mental archetypes, the act of solving puzzles also provides an outlet to move beyond biological evolution, and Danesi shows that puzzles could be the product of the same basic neural mechanism that produces language and culture. Finally, Danesi explores how understanding puzzles can be a new way of understanding our human culture.

rotas opera tenet arepo sator: GOD's GREEK & LATIN NAMES in ART JEFF FRIDAY, 2024-10-31 American researcher Jeff Friday has compiled the world's most extensive list of Newly Identified Art work with the Greek & Latin Names of God. Many Latin references too as the descendant images of the Greco-Hebrew Iconography. Place finds covered in this book are not just limited to the following: Afghanistan, Northern Africa, Roman-Britain, Anglo-Saxon Britain, Bulgaria, Western China, Egypt, France (Frankia & Merovingian), Georgian, Greece, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Korean, Scotland, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey and many more former Cultural places in History. - Multiple Artifacts in God's name discovered in some of the following: Mosaics, Jewelry, Coins, Clothing & Apparel, Tapestries, Illuminations, Candles/Lamps, Shield Armor and much more. - Brief description of each Motif - 217+ Photos or Illustrations

rotas opera tenet arepo sator: MLN. , 1907

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rotas opera tenet arepo sator: Dictionary of Ancient Magic Words and Spells Claude Lecouteux, 2015-10-15 A comprehensive handbook of more than 1,000 magical words, phrases, symbols, and secret alphabets • Explains the origins, derivatives, and practical usage of each word, phrase, and spell as well as how they can be combined for custom spells • Based on the magical traditions of Europe, Greece, and Egypt and recently discovered one-of-a-kind grimoires from Scandinavia, France, and Germany • Includes an in-depth exploration of secret magical alphabets, including those based on Hebrew letters, Kabbalistic symbols, astrological signs, and runes From Abracadabra to the now famous spells of the Harry Potter series, magic words are no longer confined to the practices of pagans, alchemists, witches, and occultists. They have become part of the popular imagination of the Western world. Passed down from ancient Babylon, Egypt, and Greece, these words and the rituals surrounding them have survived through the millennia because they work. And as scholar Claude Lecouteux reveals, often the more impenetrable they seem, the more effective they are. Analyzing more than 7,000 spells from the magical traditions of Europe as well as the magical papyri of the Greeks and recently discovered one-of-a-kind grimoires from Scandinavia, France, and Germany, Lecouteux has compiled a comprehensive dictionary of ancient magic words, phrases, and spells along with an in-depth exploration--the first in English--of secret magical alphabets, including those based on Hebrew letters, Kabbalistic symbols, astrological signs, and runes. Drawing upon thousands of medieval accounts and famous manuscripts such as the Heptameron of Peter Abano, the author examines the origins of each word or spell, offering detailed instructions on their successful use, whether for protection, love, wealth, or healing. He charts their

evolution and derivations through the centuries, showing, for example, how spells that were once intended to put out fires evolved to protect people from witchcraft. He reveals the inherent versatility of magic words and how each sorcerer or witch had a set of stock phrases they would combine to build a custom spell for the magical need at hand. Presenting a wealth of material on magical words, signs, and charms, both common and obscure, Lecouteux also explores the magical words and spells of ancient Scandinavia, the Hispano-Arabic magic of Spain before the Reconquista, the traditions passed down from ancient Egypt, and those that have stayed in use until the present day.

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