

MONDAY MORNING: TARANTELA [UPDATE]

I could listen to this piece on a loop. It's Santiago de Murcia's "Tarantela," performed by noted lutist Rolf Lislevand. The instrument he is playing is as important as the music and his artistry; it's an extremely rare Stradivarius guitar called the Sabionari. While tarantellas more commonly feature additional instruments and percussion like tambourines, this instrument is stunning by itself.

You can learn more about the Sabionari at Open Culture, a site I highly recommend for all manner of educational and exploratory content.

And now to dance the tarantella we call Monday.

Wheels

- What's the German word for 'omertà'? Because Volkswagen has it (Forbes) – Besides the use of obfuscation by translation, VW's culture obstructs the investigation into Dieselgate by way of a "code of silence." And money. Hush money helps.
- Growing percentage of VW investors want an independent investigation (WSJ) – An association 25,000 investors now demands an investigation; the problem continues to be Lower Saxony, the Qatar sovereign-wealth fund and the Porsche family, which combined own 92% of voting

stock.

- VW production workers get a 5% pay raise (IBT) – Is this “hush money,” too, for the employees who can’t afford to be retired like VW’s executives? The rationale for the increase seems sketchy since inflation is negligible and VW group subsidiary workers at Audi and Porsche won’t receive a similar raise.
- Insanity? VW Group a buy opportunity next month (The Street) – Caveat: I am not a stockbroker. This information is not provided for investment purposes. Your mileage may vary. But I think this is absolute insanity, suggesting VW group stock may offer a buy opportunity next month when VW publishes a strategy for the next decade. If this strategy includes the same utterly opaque organization committing fraud to sell vehicles, is it smart to buy even at today’s depressed prices? The parallel made with Apple stock is bizarre, literally comparing oranges to Apples. Just, no.

- NPR uses the word “torture”
– but not about the U.S.
(NPR) – Focus of this audio article is on doctors’ investigating torture using the Istanbul Protocol for documentation, but neatly avoids any torture conducted by the U.S. with the aid of doctors. Or any torture performed by U.S.’ law enforcement and prison complex. Syria is repeatedly mentioned, though.

Cybersec

- Organized criminals steal \$13M in minutes from Japanese ATMs (The Guardian)
– And then they fled the country. What?! The mass thefts were facilitated by bank account information acquired from an unnamed South African bank. Both Japan and SA use chip-and-pin cards – so much for additional security. Good thing this organized criminal entity seeks money versus terror. **Interesting that the South African bank has yet to be named. (*)**
- Slovenian student receives 15-month suspended sentence for disclosing state-created security problems

(Softpedia) – The student at Slovenia's Faculty of Criminal Justice and Security in Maribor, Slovenia had been investigating Slovenia's TETRA encrypted communications protocol over the last four years as part of a school project. He used responsible disclosure practices, but authorities did not respond; he then revealed the encrypted comms' failure publicly to force action. And law enforcement went after him for ~~exposing their lazy culpability~~ hacking them.

- Related? Slovenian bank intended target for Vietnamese bank's SWIFT attempted hack funds (Reuters) – Huh. Imagine that. Same country with highly flawed state-owned encrypted communications protocol was the target for monies hackers attempted to steal via SWIFT from Vietnamese TPBank. Surely just a coincidence, right?

Just for the heck of it, consider a lunch read/watch on a recent theory: World War 0. Sounds plausible to me, but this theory seems pretty fluid.

Catch you here tomorrow morning!

*** UPDATE – 1:20 P.M. EDT –**

Standard Bank reported it had lost 300 million rand, or USD \$19.1 million to the attack on Japanese ATMs. First reports in South African media and Reuters were roughly 11 hours ago or 9:00 a.m. Johannesburg local time. It's odd the name of the affected bank did not get wider coverage in western media, but then South Africa has a problem with disclosing bank breaches. There were five breaches alleged last year, but little public information about them; they do not appear on Hackmageddon's list of breaches. This offers a false sense of security to South African banking customers and to banks' investors alike.

Japan Times report attribute the thefts to a Malaysian crime gang. Neither Japan Times nor Manichi mention Standard Bank's name as the affected South African bank. Both report the thefts actually took place more than a week ago on May 15th – another odd feature about reporting on this rash of well-organized thefts.