Citations of authors and critics are somewhat individual. This CrimeRead piece not only contains information that had not been discussed before my book made the argument (Kafka’s role for understanding the development of Italian crime fiction), but also several individual quotes that are the same. If it were one to three, it could be a coincidence.

**Saskia Ziolkowski, *Kafka’s Italian Progeny* (2020)**
The term suspense in Italian is a 1950s English import. The Mondadori yellow-covered gialli series, initiated in 1929, is generally considered the beginning of the detective story in Italy.

**Piece in CrimeReads:**
Terms like suspense (in reference to the genre popularized by Hitchcock) were an English import and only introduced in the language in the 1950s.

**Saskia Ziolkowski, *Kafka’s Italian Progeny* (2020)**
Gadda’s choice of genre has been noted as a sign of his anti-fascism, of being against the most recent form of Italian government, in part because the genre was outlawed under late fascist rule. While discussions of crime novels are now remiss if they overlook Italian ones, one of the few mentions of Italy in Howard Haycraft’s 1941 study, *Murder for Pleasure*, is the fact that the fascist government eventually banned foreign mystery novels, like Agatha Christie’s, because of their potentially subversive influence.

**Piece in CrimeReads:**
Carlo Emilio Gadda and, later, Leonardo Sciascia are unanimously considered the founding fathers of the anti-detective novel Italian style, even though they didn’t necessarily think of themselves as crime writers. Perhaps, the choice of the genre was, at least in Gadda’s case, a sign of protest, a way to channel a strong anti-fascist sentiment.

**Saskia Ziolkowski, *Kafka’s Italian Progeny* (2020)**
Luca Somigli makes the intriguing observation that, for years, the only way for Italian authors to write detective stories that would be accepted by the public were to produce postmodern (Eco) or literary (Sciascia) detective fiction.

**Piece in CrimeReads:**
In *Form and Ideology*, Luca Somigli suggests that for a long time after World War II, Italian authors had no choice but to deviate from the canon of classic crime fiction in order to write detective stories that would be accepted by the public (67). And this is exactly what Gadda and Sciascia set out to do.

**Saskia Ziolkowski, *Kafka’s Italian Progeny* (2020)**
The Mondadori yellow-covered gialli series, initiated in 1929, is generally considered the beginning of the detective story in Italy. Frassinelli published the Italian translation of *The Trial* in 1933. The belated idea of an Italian detective story, therefore, contributes to the later flourishing of Italian literary detective novels since detective stories and novels like The Trial, which have been described as a postmodern take on the detective story, were received in the same period, resulting in a simultaneous imagining and re-imagining of the detective form.

**Piece in CrimeReads:**
The publication of Kafka’s *Il Processo* (*The Trial*), introduced in the country in 1933—at a time when the Italianate crime novel had yet to find a clear voice and identity—was arguably the catalyst that proffered the genre its distinctive aesthetic. Deemed by many critics as one of the first examples of what came to be regarded as a postmodern take on the detective story, *The Trial* provided an ideal blueprint for a type of detective novel that blurred the lines between popular crime fiction and highbrow literature.
Saskia Ziolkowski, *Kafka’s Italian Progeny* (2020)

Gadda had known about Kafka since at least 1935, the year he mentioned writing publishers in the hope that they would commission him to translate the author from Prague. [The book contains a footnote to my original research with references. Where did the author of CrimeReads get the date from?]

**Piece in CrimeReads:**

Gadda, who had known of Kafka at least since 1935, was the pioneer and leading exemplar of the simultaneous rise of the giallo and its metamorphosis into letteratura alta (high literature).

Saskia Ziolkowski, *Kafka’s Italian Progeny* (2020)

“Breve storia del romanzo poliziesco” (A short history of the detective novel), ends with the much-cited quote, “It's enough now to end with Gadda: who wrote the most absolute 'giallo' that has ever been written, a giallo without a solution.” The mysterious ending of Gadda’s Quer pasticcio brutto de via Merulana (That Awful Mess on the Via Merulana) and its multiple searches without clear answers recall Kafka’s mysterious, open investigations.

**Piece in CrimeReads:**

In a 1975 article titled Breve storia del romanzo poliziesco (A Short History of the Detective Novel), Sciascia claims that Gadda “wrote the most absolute ‘giallo’ that has ever been written, a ‘giallo’ without a solution.” The novel’s lack of a straightforward conclusion has been the subject of much debate.

Saskia Ziolkowski, *Kafka’s Italian Progeny* (2020)

Merging Kafka’s terrifying portrayals of judicial systems and its own system, Tabucchi’s novel ends with a fragmented reflection on justice and a partial examination of it, a “surreal, Kafkaesque conclusion.”59 As in so many Italian detective works, the novel concludes without a satisfying resolution to the crime, leaving the reader instead with the sense that the official systems in place protect only themselves and that there is no clear path to justice.

**Piece in CrimeReads:**

Like the Czech author, Gadda is not concerned with providing a clear resolution. In his view, truth is messy, elusive, and often impossible to prove. What matters to him is the exploration of the chaotic and tangential nature of the search for the truth.

Saskia Ziolkowski, *Kafka’s Italian Progeny* (2020)

While Haycraft argues that non-democratic societies such as Italy's, in contrast with those of America, England, and France, do not foster detective fiction, later critics, like Calvino, posit that Italy prompted a new kind of detective fiction, in part because of its corruption. 38 Calvino praises Sciascia for revealing with his investigative fiction the impossibility of setting traditional detective fiction in Sicily: “I read your detective thriller which is not a thriller with all the excitement with which people read detective stories, and in addition with amusement at seeing how the thriller is deconstructed, or rather how you prove the impossibility of writing a thriller in the Sicilian environment.”39 [This is a letter and the Italian is in the footnote, it would be an unusual thing to cite for a more casual scholar.]

**Piece in CrimeReads:**

Italo Calvino, upon reading Sciascia’s latest manuscript A ciascuno il suo (To Each His Own), in a letter to the author, remarks on this point: Ho letto il tuo giallo che non è un giallo, con la passione con cui si leggono I gialli, e in più il divertimento di vedere come il giallo viene smontato, anzi, come viene dimostrata l’impossibilità del romanzo giallo nell’ambiente siciliano. (I read your giallo that is not a giallo with all the passion with which one reads gialli, and in addition with amusement at seeing how the giallo is deconstructed, or rather how you prove the impossibility of writing a giallo in a Sicilian environment.)
Again, if traditional detective stories have been associated with democratic governments and populations that respect their laws, metaphysical detective novels and unconventional detective films that invoke Kafka raise questions about how (or whether) the government works and have played a special role in the Italian literary and cultural landscape. In La testa perduta di Damasceno Monteiro (The Missing Head of Damasceno Monteiro), which explores the problems of a judicial system, Tabucchi’s narrator also directly references Kafka in a contemplation of the law.

**Piece in CrimeReads:**
They challenged and re-imagined the conventions of the crime novel and elevated its literary status. Their experimentations led to the creation of a uniquely Italian anti-detective novel, laying the groundwork for subsequent authors such as the internationally renowned Antonio Tabucchi (The Missing Head of Damasceno Monteiro), Umberto Eco (The Name of the Rose), and many others.