Literary Celebrity and the Discourse on Authorship in Dutch Literature

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Abstract

Literary celebrity results from a clash between two discursive configurations: literary authorship and popular celebrity. In order to gain an understanding of the contradictions that lie at the heart of literary celebrity, the authorial subjectivity of two Dutch authors are analyzed: Menno ter Braak (1902-1940) and Jan Cremer (1940-). Ter Braak will be shown to personify a classic, high modernist notion of authorship, which entails a resistance to commodification, a critique of personality cult, and a privileging of originality. Cremer, on the other hand, constructs his authorial subjectivity by embracing commerciality, posing as an overtly public individual, and preferring repetition over originality. Yet literary celebrity cannot be understood as a simple inversion of the hierarchical oppositions that characterize the discourse on literary authorship: by analyzing Cremer's work and reception, I demonstrate that literary celebrity entails a 'staging' of high modernist authorship.

Keywords: Authorship, High Modernism, Mass Culture, Celebrity, Reception

On 15 June 2010, *The South African*, an online portal for South Africans living and working in the United Kingdom, reported on a remarkable event that took place at Oxford. 'Seeing the hundreds of people queuing outside Oxford's Sheldonian Theatre last Thursday night', the article opens, 'you would be forgiven for thinking that they were waiting to see a head of state or a rock-star'. Yet the people outside the theatre, 'the lucky thousand or so who had managed to bag a ticket', were not waiting for a famous politician or an idolized performer at all: the celebrity of the evening turned out to be the 'grey-haired, bearded, soft spoken' novelist 'J.M. Coetzee'. Puzzled by the 'special type of excitement' hanging in the air, the reporter spoke to a number of Coetzee's fans. One person present confessed that she would never have forgiven herself had she missed the chance 'to see South Africa's greatest writer in the flesh', another claimed he was 'simply starstruck' and gushed 'that Coetzee "looked me right in the eyes when he signed my book afterwards"'.[1]

The reporter's reaction to Coetzee's celebrity-style reception is quite revealing. The assumption underlying the article seems to be that it is highly unusual to perceive a literary author, however successful he may be, as an idol or a star. The wonderment we find expressed in this particular report in *The South African* is hardly uncommon: it is a typical response to the manifestation of a rather controversial figure in the domain of literature – the literary celebrity. This figure often arouses unease and sometimes meets with strong resistance. This is because it results from the clash of two different, seemingly incompatible socio-aesthetic configurations: literary authorship and popular celebrity. The incongruity of these two phenomena is persistent and deeply rooted in our 'cultural competence'.[2] The appearance of the literary celebrity on the scene of literature thus challenges our understanding of what it means to be an author.

This article will explore the manner in which popular celebrity has influenced the general discourse on literary authorship. I argue that literary celebrity reveals, while it also transgresses and transforms, a 'classic' construction of authorship that is typical of high modernism. In other words, literary celebrity can be understood as a performance or a 'staging' of this classic form of authorship. With the concept of staging, I refer to an interpretive process during which, due to a clash of expectations, specific discursive events are brought to light and put into play. As I will explain in the following sections, the result of this performance is that we experience literary authorship as something simultaneously familiar and other. It is this effect of literary celebrity that arouses unease and criticism.

In order to gain a better understanding of the discursive construction of literary celebrity, I will analyze the authorial subjectivity of two Dutch authors: Menno ter Braak (1902-1940) and Jan Cremer (1940-). Ter Braak is an attractive case study because he personifies high modernist authorship. Cremer is also an ideal subject of a case study, since this author is well-known for his commercial attitude, his skill at promoting himself, and his fascination with celebrity.[3] Cremer's work and its critical reception, I argue, testify to the breakthrough of the literary celebrity in Dutch literature.

Literary Celebrity as a Challenge to Literary Theory

A common feature of the author and the celebrity is that both figures are (co-) produced by the actors and institutions that are responsible for their presentation and reception. They are products of socio-aesthetic discourses. In his influential essay 'What is an Author?', Michel Foucault describes the manner in which the 'author function' is brought about by the converging beliefs, operations and interpretive decisions of readers, critics or editors. Authors can influence this process by commenting publicly on their oeuvre and their craft, for example in interviews or programmatic essays. Together, these factors construct literary authorship as a particular 'subject' out of 'existing texts and discourses'.[4] Discourses, according

to Foucault, are socially and culturally embedded clusters of statements, beliefs and claims, which provide systems of signification that structure and produce knowledge about a certain topic.[5] In this case, that topic is authorial subjectivity. In similar terms, scholars studying celebrity such as Richard Dyer or P. David Marshall argue that a star's reputation results from a 'star image', which consists of 'media texts' – images of celebrities and statements made by them and about them, which are produced and consumed by a particular audience.[6] The star itself is not deprived of agency, but 'the audience', Marshall writes, 'is central in sustaining the power of any celebrity sign', because its 'discursive power' is derived from 'the collective configuration of its meaning'.[7] While authorship manifests itself as a result of the author function, the distribution and reception of a star's subjectivity reveals a 'celebrity function',[8] which resembles its literary counterpart.

Yet despite their similar discursive origins, the author and the celebrity differ in several respects. By charting these differences, we can begin to get a sense of why the convergence of authorship and stardom seems so improbable. In the first place, literary authorship is tied to what Pierre Bourdieu calls an 'anti-economic logic'. This logic, which came into being during the nineteenth century, is 'founded on the obligatory recognition of the values of disinterestedness and on the denegation of the "economy" (of the "commercial") and of "economic" profit'.[9] Even though it is not the only logic an author can adopt, this anti-economic attitude, which is dominant in an autonomous literary field, has become a part of the conventional discourse on literary authorship. Many authors and critics still believe that literary writers ought to distance themselves from commercial success and the wider audience. According to this rationale, an author is supposed to strive unselfishly for an economically and politically autonomous, highly elitist culture.[10] The celebrity, on the other hand, is produced by a discourse that unambiguously acknowledges its commercial nature. Marshall, for example, notes that a celebrity can be viewed as a 'public individual who participates openly as a marketable commodity'; and Dyer writes in a similar vein that 'stars become models of consumption for everyone in a consumer culture'.[11]

A second difference between the celebrity and the author is that the latter is also expected to be 'unselfish' in a very literal sense. After all, an inherent element of the discourse on literary authorship since modernism has been the notion of the effacement of the writer's personality before the literary work.[12] This structural disavowal of the importance of the individual author is the result of several analogous developments in literature, criticism and theory. These have been extensively discussed, refined and even refuted, but they continue to influence our understanding of modern literature. In the wake of T.S. Eliot's 'Impersonality Theory of Poetry', for example, or the New Critics' call for objective criticism and Roland Barthes' proclamation of the 'Death of the Author', we still like to believe that a literary work is an autonomous artefact – and that consequently, the per-

sonality of the author should be disregarded when interpreting or evaluating the work he put to paper.[13] On the other hand, the criterion of being 'overtly public individuals', is crucial to understanding the workings of celebrity.[14] Our fascination with stars is not based only on their artistic merits – their exceptional acting style or stage performance – but extends also to their private lives. Our relationship with stars is best understood as a compulsive quest for the 'real'; an attempt to find the true 'self' behind the image of the star.[15]

Thirdly and finally, the celebrity differs from the literary author in that the former is (not quite justifiably, as we will see) associated with repetition, and the latter with innovation. 'The traditional ideological stance of all modernizing theory and practice from the Romantics to the Tel Quel group', Fredric Jameson reminds us, reveals a 'strategic emphasis on innovation and novelty, the obligatory break with previous styles'.[16] This quest for innovation has become the seemingly unavoidable scenario underlying all revolutions in literary history, up to the point that Octavio Paz felt it was legitimate to speak of a 'tradition of discontinuity' – a rapid alternation of traditions, all exalting novelty and change.[17] Celebrity culture on the other hand, and popular mass culture at large, is often believed to be repetitious. Indeed, it does not take much examination to observe that mass production and the mass-media that make up the celebrity system rely on repetition in a very general sense. Mass production and mass-media, after all, are responsible for the large-scale reproduction or recirculation of the star's image. But the celebrity system can be said to be repetitious in a narrower, ideological sense as well. Dyer points out that scholars such as Herbert Marcuse and Orinn Klapp maintain that the star 'reproduces the *status quo*' or 'reinforce[s] a person in social roles'.[18] Quite rightly, this view of celebrity as being repetitious and ideologically conservative has been nuanced,[19] but we can assume nonetheless that repetition continues to play a key role in the discourse on popular celebrity.

When we take all the above-mentioned differences and incompatibilities between the celebrity and the literary author into consideration, we begin to understand that the star author is a highly problematic figure, in whom contradictory conditions and expectations must be reconciled. On the one hand, the discourse on literary authorship consists of anti-economic logic, scepticism about the figure of the individual author, and the pursuit of innovation. Components of the discourse on celebrity, on the other hand, include the logic of profitability, the foregrounding of personal and private issues, and the necessity of repetition.

It is thus all the more surprising that literary celebrity has turned out to be such an important part of modern literature. The first appearance of this phenomenon is generally assumed to coincide with the development of mass-market publishing during the romantic period.[20] With the rise of the culture industry, the mass-media revolution and the growing influence of popular (consumer) culture during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the celebrity system has now become an integral part of literary culture. Quite a number of scholars of literary studies have

turned their attention to this phenomenon: a growing body of analytic literature testifies to the pervasiveness of literary celebrity, while it simultaneously acknowledges that the star author is a historically and geographically situated phenomenon.[21] The contradictory nature of the literary celebrity thus continues to be a source of wonder and intrigue to both the literary tradition and contemporary literary studies.

What follows, then, in this article, is an account of how the star author has manifested itself within a Dutch context. We will see that literary celebrity involves the performance of a classic, high modernist notion of authorship. This staging process is a form of discursive work, which transgresses and transforms the conventional discourse on classic authorship, and which succeeds in working through – whilst not resolving – the stresses and contradictions that lie at the heart of literary celebrity. But before we can focus on the manner in which the star author has been construed, we must first understand why and how this figure is interrelated with the subjectivity of the high modernist author. It is this form of authorship that I will now address.

Authorial Subjectivity and the Legacy of High Modernism

When we trace back the tensions between literary authorship and popular celebrity as described in the previous section, we find that they are brought into prominence by the discourse on high modernist authorship, which crystallized out during (roughly) the first half of the twentieth century. This is not surprising when we take into consideration, as Jameson urges us to do, that the poetics of high modernism can be seen as a reaction to late capitalism and its commodification of culture.[22] This development is not only crucial to the emergence of popular mass culture, but has also ultimately created the 'industry of desire' that we now know as stardom.[23] According to Jameson, modernism – that is, the tradition of high modernism, which includes figures such as Wallace Stevens, James Joyce, Gertrude Stein or Marcel Proust – can be understood as a reaction to this commodification of culture. For modernism, he states, 'the omnipresence of the commodity form determines a reactive stance, so that modernism conceives its formal vocation to be the resistance to commodity form, *not* to be a commodity, to devise an aesthetic language incapable of offering commodity satisfaction, and resistant to instrumentalization'.[24] Following Jameson's lead, we can take this argument further and argue that the patterns we discerned earlier in the discourse on authorship converge in the figure of the high modernist author. The authorial subjectivity of a high modernist, then, unifies a disavowal of economic logic (what Jameson refers to as 'resistance to instrumentalization'), a critique of the personality cult as manifested in popular mass culture, and a privileging of innovation and originality.

The classic Dutch example of this high modernist construction of authorship is personified by the critic and novelist Menno ter Braak (1902-1940). The son of a country doctor, Ter Braak studied history at the University of Amsterdam before he turned to essay writing and criticism. Literary historian Reinder P. Meijer characterizes Ter Braak as an individualistic, Nietzschean intellectual who 'rejected all systems, all dogmas and all collectivities'. Though he did publish two novels, his 'real strength lay in the essay'. Together with novelists Edgar du Perron and Maurice Roelants he established the magazine *Forum* (1932-1935), which, according to Meijer, 'was to exert a very strong influence on the development of Dutch literature'.[25]

For Ter Braak, the culture industry is one of the 'systems' any intellectual should reject. Hence, resistance to commodity form is an essential feature of his view on literature in general and authorship in particular. In an essay published in 1928, for example, he attacked the all-pervasive urge for efficiency, productivity and instant consumer gratification of 'Americanism', which for him epitomized popular mass culture. Ter Braak cultivated an anti-American sentiment that was rather fashionable amongst European intellectuals in the 1930s. It is an intriguing essay, which opens with a description of an encounter the author had on a tram with an unknown paperboy. In the midst of busy traffic, the boy is wrapped up in the study of a musical score for violin. Ter Braak observed: 'There was a striking and unexpected faithfulness in this concentrated engrossment; this creature was *engrossed*, absent under his tangible, present skin, immersed or neutralized, but no longer a part of the social business around him; a hermit of the moment, a shape, a princely, unapproachable figure.'[26]

The anecdote about the paperboy being completely captivated by the musical score is used to set off a sustained critique of Americanism. 'The symptoms of American life impress us', Ter Braak continues: 'Being impressed is the ersatz version of being amazed. He who is impressed has not achieved understanding through the silent medium of the secret code; he is dumbfounded by quantity. The machine is astounding. The Tiller Girls are astounding. The American laboratories are astounding.'[27] Ter Braak explicitly rejects this Americanism. By dissociating himself from industrialization (the 'machine'), instrumentalization (the 'laboratories') and popular mass culture (the 'Tiller Girls', a precision dancing group, popular in the 1920s), he models his identity on that of an autonomous, intellectual author. Artistic creation, according to Ter Braak, can never be reduced to a form of productive labour, for the true artist is by definition a person of disinterested meditation. This reflective attitude, summarized by the maxim 'I think uselessly, therefore I am', is typical of a 'European' mentality, according to Ter Braak.[28] The 'secret code' that he mentions in the essay refers to that form of high cultural production – whether it be the boy on the tram car's musical score, a film or literature – that enables the artist to adopt this meditative mode. Thus, Ter Braak rejects the tyranny of the market and calls for an ethos of unproductive-

ness: 'We value the only possession that cannot be disowned: the useless, unproductive secret code, which will not bring more social well-being, but in which one immerses oneself for the sake of being engrossed.'[29]

A skeptical attitude towards the personality of the artist in popular mass culture is also a feature of Ter Braak's work. Admittedly, 'personality' is the ultimate critical touchstone for Ter Braak. In his opinion, a literary work should be an encounter with a critical individual – with a 'fellow' or '*een vent*', to use the exact Dutch phrase that he prefers.[30] Yet the personality that he has in mind has little to do with the public individuality of celebrity. For Ter Braak, the '*vent*' must always be at odds with the community and the wider audience, in order to remain capable of unproductive meditation.[31] The celebrity, of course, being a product of the culture industry, cannot satisfy this expectation. It is therefore not surprising that Ter Braak does not think very much of the personality cult around famous people or movie stars. In one of his essays, for instance, Ter Braak claims that every form of hero-worship is merely a 'projection of a wish of the masses'.[32] And in his writings on film, he attacks the 'the dominion of the actors' in the movie culture, maintaining even that 'there is nothing more pernicious than the star system'.[33] This critique of the Hollywood star system boils down to the argument that movie stars have reduced their personalities to mere commodities: they are 'paid to pack in the crowds with their names', he writes, 'and they must use their eyes, hands and costumes accordingly'.[34] It is quite telling in this context that Ter Braak repeatedly qualifies a movie star such as Greta Garbo in commodity terms. For instance, he writes that 'Hollywood, by luring the actress across the ocean and making her a star', has in fact 'speculated' on her acting abilities and turned her into the 'finest Havana brand of [...] "sex appeal"'.[35]

Finally, a typically high modernist feature of Ter Braak's view on authorship is his appreciation of originality. In *Literature of the Low Countries*, Meijer quite rightly concludes that Ter Braak 'put in a strong claim for more originality and character'.[36] In his essays the front man of *Forum* argues that a literary author ought to be innovative and independently creative. As a result, the true writer stands in direct opposition to what he calls the 'epigone' – the writer that merely elaborates on the thought of others or copies their techniques. The review of the poetry anthology *Prisma* (1930) offers a good illustration of Ter Braak's preference for originality; *Prisma*'s crucial shortcoming, in Ter Braak's estimation, is that it 'in no way discerns between originality and epigonistic writing'.[37]

As the example of Ter Braak illustrates, the discourse on literary authorship holds a prominent place in high modernist aesthetics. By resisting the commodification of cultural production, criticizing the personality cult of popular culture and privileging originality, high modernist authors have discursively created an authorial subjectivity which continues to affect our understanding of what it means to be a literary author. It is this understanding of authorship, as we shall

see, which is undermined – while also reinforced – by the manifestation of the literary celebrity.

Literary Celebrity: Opposing High Modernist Authorship

The relationship between high culture and popular mass culture in the Netherlands changed drastically during the 1950s and 1960s. Frans Ruiter and Wilbert Smulders describe the developments that occurred in Dutch literary history during this period in their study *Literatuur en moderniteit, 1840-1990*. They argue that the pre-war hostilities between the high modernists and the adherents of popular mass culture were suspended after the Second World War. Accelerated social democratization, countercultural movements and a rapid professionalization of the literary market, meant that many authors, critics and cultural professionals began to question the opposition between creative production and commodity production.[38] Some even explicitly rejected the existence of such an opposition. However, as will become clear below, this rejection simultaneously reaffirms the influence of classical authorship. It is precisely this blurring of the boundaries between modernism and popular mass culture that creates the conditions for the breakthrough of the literary celebrity.

The impact of the developments on the discourse on authorship described by Ruiter & Smulders is exemplified by the work of the painter, novelist and teen idol, Jan Cremer. Cremer, born in 1940 to Dutch-Hungarian parents, enrolled in a number of art academies in the late 1950s. After making his artistic debut as a painter in the slipstream of the avant-garde movement CoBrA, Cremer turned to new journalism and fiction writing. In the 1960s, he published a number of novels, including *Ik Jan Cremer* ('I, Jan Cremer') in 1964 and *Ik Jan Cremer Tweede Boek* ('I, Jan Cremer Book Two') in 1966. The novels, in which a hyper-masculine I-narrator named 'Jan Cremer' describes his youth and reflects on his career as a painter and a writer, caused a great deal of controversy. *Ik Jan Cremer*, according to literary historian Annie Marie Musschoot, is 'a picaresque novel in which sexual adventures take pride of place in an environment replete with drugs, violence, and alcohol'.[39] Unsurprisingly, critics struggled with the unpolished, hard-boiled style, Cremer's shameless machismo, and the numerous pornographic, libelous and self-glorifying passages. Yet in terms of profit and publicity, the novels were hugely successful. Within two years of its publication, *Ik Jan Cremer* was reprinted twenty-two times. The debut was translated into English by the notorious Scottish novelist Alexander Trocchi as *I, Jan Cremer* (London: Calder and Boyars, 1965). Beat critic Seymour Krim wrote a somewhat hyperbolic introduction to the American edition (New York: Shorecrest, 1965), in which he called Cremer the 'brilliant illegitimate son of such giants of imaginative autobiography as Louis-Ferdinand Céline, Henry Miller, Jean Genet and Maxim Gorki'. In 1969, a translation of the sequel was published as *Jan Cremer Writes Again* (New York: Grove Press, 1969);

translations in other languages soon followed. Roughly forty years later, in 2008, Cremer published *Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek* ('I, Jan Cremer Book Three'). To a certain extent, this third book is an odd follow-up: for even though *Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek* picks up where the author had left off in the late 1960s and supplies us with a comparable first-hand account of his adventures as upcoming writer in the American celebrity circles, there remains a big gap in time between the conception of the first two volumes and the last book. Nonetheless, Cremer's strategies of authorial self-fashioning turn out to be remarkably constant throughout the trilogy, as we will see, and it is therefore rewarding to include *Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek* in the analysis.

Cremer's trilogy is worth investigating, for the novels can be read as an extensive reflection on the discourse of authorship and literary celebrity. Moreover, the novels and the criticisms raised against them not only illustrate how the discursive construction of the star author is realized, but also reveal that literary celebrity is structurally interrelated with a classic, high modernist notion of authorship. Cremer prompts us to work through the tensions between literary authorship and celebrity. Hence, we find that all the components of a high modernist authorial subjectivity – resistance to commodification, a critique of the personality cult, and a quest for innovation – reappear in the construction of Cremer's authorship.

Cremer takes full advantage, in the first place, of the culture industry so sharply criticized by Ter Braak. It is common knowledge that this author takes the promotion of his work very seriously, for example.[40] He was closely involved in the design of the cover of *Ik Jan Cremer*, which was intended to boost sales, and insisted that every edition of the book had to be labelled with the phrase 'the unrelenting bestseller' – in Dutch, '*de onverbiddelijke bestseller*'. He also made use of a range of media channels, appearing on television shows, giving interviews to popular magazines such as *Panorama* and *Playboy*, and exploiting his knowledge of how to generate media attention by using provocative slogans and catchy sound bites.[41] Moreover, Cremer explicitly underlined the commodity status of his work and image. 'A writer is the bread winner of the common man', Cremer claimed, adding: 'I am not an artist, I'm a worker, just a labourer' – and again, elsewhere: 'I am really just my own publicity agent'.[42]

Even *in* his literary works he draws attention to the fact that his books are merely goods, comparable to supermarket products, which can be adjusted to the needs of the market if necessary. With a footnote in *Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek*, Cremer reminds us that *Ik Jan Cremer Tweede Boek* 'was found to be "vulgar" by many book shops, because of the bright colors and the daring cover design, and so they refused to put it on display. They thought it resembled a box of oatmeal and the publisher had to make an additional cover for it'.[43] The image of a book being like a box of oatmeal stuck with Cremer, for he returned to it in another text: 'When you make a product, whether it is a box of oatmeal, a gramophone record

or a book, that particular product will have to be sold when it comes on the market.'[44] Similar quotes are easy to find. Clearly, Cremer goes out of his way to expose literary writing as a form of commercial production: he refers to his royalty checks, goes into the details of his contracts with publishers and galleries, and boasts about the fact that his American publisher has ordered life-sized billboards with his picture on them.[45]

Second, Cremer capitalizes on the personality fetishism that we tend to associate with celebrity culture. Instead of claiming that *Ik Jan Cremer*, for instance, is an impersonal, autonomous artefact, Cremer deliberately blurs the boundaries between his personal identity and his fictional persona. He thus creates 'uncertainty with regard to notions of a separate self and public self-presentation, performance, [or] role-playing' which is fundamental to the manifestation of stardom.[46] This uncertainty is achieved by his use of the (quasi) autobiographical genre, obviously, but also by interweaving the intrigue of his novels with the life stories of real authors and celebrities. *Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek* is an outstanding example of this strategy. The novel is a parade of celebrities that have supposedly been the main character's closest friends and lovers – Bob Dylan, Andy Warhol, Nico of the Velvet Underground, Willem de Kooning, Edie Sedgwick and Jayne Mansfield to name just a few. Though we know for a fact that Cremer was indeed a part of these stars' circles, it is unlikely that he knew them as intimately as he claims. But then, telling the truth is not his avowed goal anyway. By suggesting that he rubbed shoulders with the greatest stars imaginable, Cremer attempts to increase the celebrity value of his own image. That this is indeed the case can be concluded from the self-glorifying terms in which the author refers to himself: he presents himself as a 'Something Great', 'Our Hero' and 'Our Phenomenon Jan Cremer', as someone who is burdened by the 'yoke of celebrity' and for whom 'Holland had become too small'.[47] In *Ik Jan Cremer* the author already makes sure that his popularity is not to be underestimated:

> I became a well-known figure. Thanks to the press, radio and television. People on the streets asked for my autograph, greeted me and called me "Jan", asked why I painted that way, patted me on the back, gave the thumbs up and said "nice work", I got drunk in bars and pubs from all the drinks they offered me, and when I entered a shop or walked by a café they whispered: "look it's Jan Cremer."[48]

Cremer ridicules the stereotypical image of the 'Real Artist' with a 'beard' and 'corduroy suit': 'For an artist without a beard is like a fish without a fish-bone', he observes sarcastically.[49] One cannot help but be reminded here of the portrait of the 'grey-haired, bearded, soft spoken' Coetzee in *The South African*, quoted above. However, Cremer wants to adopt a very different authorial pose: with a

'greased quiff' on his head, he stares into the camera with 'arrogant aggression', and implies that he leads the life of a 'pop star'.[50]

It is of course impossible to determine to what extent Cremer was truly successful in 'celebrifying' himself, but the fact of the matter is that he was idolized by his audience. In the 1960s any public appearance by Cremer was newsworthy. He was considered a cult figure, whose comings and goings – whether related to literature or not – were a popular topic of discussion. He received large amounts of fan mail and in 1967 he even became the chief editor of a newspaper devoted solely to him, the *Jan Cremer Krant*.[51] To get an idea of Cremer's celebrity, it suffices to read what Dutch teenagers had to say about Cremer, as collected in *Hij Jan Cremer* ('He, Jan Cremer', 1965), an interesting spin-off publication by journalist Denis Arnolds.[52]

Finally, Cremer deviates from a high modernist conception of authorship by downplaying the requirement of originality. His most scathing attack on this requirement occurs in his essay about 'The Jan Cremer Myth', first published in 1972. In this essay, he again outlines his view of literature as a marketable product like any other. After having mocked 'Mister Artist' – that 'misunderstood spirit' who 'drivels on about "inspiration" and "creative talent"' – Cremer states that being a successful artist has nothing to do with philosophizing about 'creative talent'.[53] In his opinion, a strategy of psychological conditioning is all that is needed:

> One of the main tactics for generating publicity is the so-called "pin-prick technique"; by causing constant irritation through what you say, how you behave, how you carry yourself and how you are, you get a grip on the audience. [...] To draw attention to your "product", the name of the product or the person who made it has to ring a bell.[54]

To reach the hearts and minds of the audience, you have to get the 'wheels of publicity' grinding; when they are in gear, it suffices to repeat those 'pin-pricks' every once in a while.[55] The key to successful authorship, according to Cremer, is not so much originality, but repetition.

Literary Celebrity as the Performance of Literary Authorship

As we have seen in the previous section, Cremer's authorship is constructed according to discursive regularities that are part and parcel of the discourse on celebrities. It is tempting to conclude that literary celebrity, as personified by Cremer, is the opposite of a classic, high modernist form of authorial subjectivity. Yet such a conclusion would not do justice to the complexity of the literary celebrity. It is more accurate to say that the appearance of the star author transgresses as well as highlights, even re-affirms, the traditional discursive regularities of lit-

erary authorship. Literary celebrity, in other words, entails a performance of a form of high modernist authorship. This type of staging occurs, according to literary theorist Derek Attridge, when a literary phenomenon 'fails to answer to our habitual needs in processing language'. Such a phenomena 'estranges' our habitual expectations and results in 'the singular putting into play of – while also testing and transforming – the set of codes and conventions that make up the institution of literature and the wider cultural formation of which it is part'.[56] In the case of Cremer, what is put into play is the set of codes and conventions that constitutes literary authorship. In the following section, I aim to demonstrate how Cremer actively deploys these codes and conventions in the way he presents himself in his literary work and the way he orchestrates his critical reception.

A first significant example of the way Cremer stages his literary authorship is his paradoxical reaffirmation of the author as an autonomous artist. We have already seen that although Cremer presents himself as his 'own publicity agent', as a salesman intent on selling his products (which happen to be literary works), he still cannot escape the anti-economic logic ingrained in our understanding of literary authorship. For at the same time, he constantly prides himself for being indifferent to financial rewards. In *Ik Jan Cremer*, for instance, he writes: 'I am invited to exhibitions, *salons*, and I can sell my work for a good price. I don't do it. I don't want a contract: I'm a painter, not a street vendor.'[57] In *Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek* he repeats this remarkable claim: 'I don't write to make money, I perform an act.'[58] Especially revealing is the passage from the same novel, in which Cremer confesses to feeling uneasy about the 'Americanization' of his novel *Ik Jan Cremer*. In order to tailor the book to the demands of the American market, Cremer's publisher wants to make several alterations to the novel. 'This is America!', the editors explain to the Dutch author, 'We can make a fortune with your book.' At this point, Cremer starts to raise objections to this total commodification of his work – and he does so in terms that recall Ter Braak's plea for a European form of autonomous authorship:

> These discussions [on the alterations to the text of *Ik Jan Cremer*] started to lie heavy on my conscience. I was a European, a serious Dutch author. Every word, every comma, every full stop was important to me. [...] Too much had been invested in me already. I felt as if I had sold my soul to the devil.[59]

In passages such as these, Cremer re-animates high modernist authorship: apparently, he cannot shake off the ethos of unproductiveness it implies. And Cremer is not alone in this, for we can infer *ex negativo* from his reception that literary critics expect him to acknowledge this ethos as well. Most critics are intensely critical of Cremer's highly commercial outlook on literary writing: a critic in the *Rotterdams Nieuwsblad* denounces 'the rock-hard commercial publishing politics' which led to the publication of *Ik Jan Cremer*. Another critic, reviewing *Ik Jan Cremer Tweede Boek*,

concludes that 'Jan Cremer is the victim of a literary industry'.[60] Another interesting review in this context is by Pierre H. Dubois, who states that there is no doubt that *Ik Jan Cremer* is a success, but Dubois goes on to remind us that 'it would be a mistake to think that such a "success" proves the literary significance' of Cremer's first novel.[61] Needless to say, it is telling that Dubois puts the word 'success' in quotation marks. These critics agree that a *true* author would have stayed clear of the logic of the culture industry and its pursuit of financial success. These examples illustrate that the concept of the high modernist author continues to determine their critical standards.

The staged literary authorship furthermore leads to an ambiguous attitude towards the personality cult surrounding authors and stars. Cremer, as we have seen, cultivates his own image and blurs the boundaries between his private self and his public self. Furthermore, he capitalizes on his supposedly personal relationship with various stars, hoping that their celebrity will increase his fame. Yet on closer inspection, Cremer appears to be highly sceptical of the exceptional individuality that is looked for in stars. Although in *Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek* he surrounds himself with celebrities, each time he finally discovers the 'true self' behind the star's image, their greatness is exposed as an illusion. Elizabeth Taylor is described as a 'midget', for example, Bob Dylan is a 'cunning little business man', and Jayne Mansfield is found to be 'simple', 'ordinary' – a woman just like 'any other broad with big tits'.[62] Such comments recur frequently in *Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek*: it could even be stated that the novel is a demystification of American celebrity culture in general. And Cremer does not just play down the extraordinariness of others, but deflates his own image as well. He insists that he is a 'proletarian', or a 'healthy Dutch guy', averse to pretensions.[63] Of course, we could surmise that by posing as the guy next door, Cremer is simply playing into the oscillation between images of 'stars-as-special' and images of 'stars-as-ordinary', which is part and parcel of the discourse on stardom.[64] But even if that is the case, the fact remains that Cremer effaces himself in such passages, or at least casts doubts on the importance of a star's inherent uniqueness.

Cremer's reception also invites similar conclusions. On the one hand, critics are fascinated by Cremer's image and seem to be looking for the private self behind it. 'Who is Jan Cremer?' wonders one critic: 'After finishing his book, one does not know. One only knows how he wants us to see him.'[65] Another reviewer concludes that *Ik Jan Cremer* is not an autobiography, but a 'self-created legend'; a third reviewer is intrigued as well and wonders about the man 'behind the legend'.[66] Yet on the other hand, reviewers also criticize Cremer for his persistent self-promotion. One critic maintains that *Ik Jan Cremer* 'propagates nothing but Jan Cremer himself'; another accuses the author of 'shameless narcissism, self-glorification and ego tripping', concluding that 'Cremer loves only himself'.[67] The tendency is clear enough: Cremer's debunking of the personality cult around stars in addition to the sometimes highly skeptical attitude towards the personality of

the author displayed in his reception, point to the legacy of high modernism once again. The true author or artist continues to be at odds with overtly public individuality.

Finally, the literary celebrity also performs the requirement of originality, a third component of high modernist discourse. Cremer suggests that repetition is the key to successful authorship, but at the same time, he continues to adhere to the traditional standard of originality. Already in his debut novel, he mocks aspiring authors who hope to repeat his success. 'A word of advice to the young lads', he writes: 'Write as much as you can, but tell your own histories! Because it's so painful to read "Adventures of Jan Cremer" in somebody else's little book.'[68] In his later novels, he continues to chide all 'crooks and copycats'.[69] It is therefore ironic that some of his critics attack him for being repetitious, even though as an author he does embrace the need to be innovative after all. They object to Cremer's 'pathological need to elaborate', his tendency to 'relapse into narrative repetition'.[70] *Ik Jan Cremer Tweede Boek* is considered 'a repetition' of the first novel: it contains 'the same sort of adventures, told in the same manner'.[71] Almost forty years later, the same objections were raised to Cremer's third *Ik Jan Cremer*-novel. In *Vrij Nederland*, a critic states: '*Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek* is basically more of the same, which, in the year 2008, has really become a problem.'[72] Admittedly, the critics differ greatly in their appreciation, for others praise Cremer for his originality and his 'almost perfect authenticity'.[73] But they all seem to agree on one point: true authorship is still associated with a quest for originality.

The literary celebrity of Cremer, then, cannot be understood as a simple inversion of the hierarchical oppositions that we found characterized the discourse on literary authorship. Both his work and his critical reception repeatedly re-invoke this classic form of authorial subjectivity. The clash between the discourse on celebrity and the discourse on authorship reveals a structural interrelatedness between the two: the literary celebrity demands that we work through the oppositions entailed by it – and yet it constantly defers the possibility of resolution. Wherever the star author appears, the high modernist cannot be far behind. Even Cremer cannot escape the legacy of high modernism. Hence, these modernist undercurrents in his self-fashioning policy and in the reception of the trilogy point to a fundamental question: *why* is classic authorial subjectivity, as illustrated by Ter Braak, so hard to shake off?

Several explanations offer themselves. In the first place, the carry-over of the values and opinions of *Forum* editors Ter Braak and Du Perron is hard to overestimate: their opinions on literature and authorship continued to exert a strong influence on literary production and criticism in the post-war period. This is clearly demonstrated by the famous attack on Ter Braak and Du Perron by the author W.F. Hermans in his collection of polemic criticism *Mandarijnen op Zwavelzuur* ('Mandarins in Sulphuric Acid'), which was published as late as 1964.[74]

In the second place, the persistence of high modernist authorship may be the result of what Bourdieu identified as the 'objective complicity' which underlies all struggles in the literary field. Comparing the struggle for monopoly between the 'newcomers' and the 'dominant agent' in the literary field to a 'ritual game', Bourdieu states that 'those who take part in the struggle help to reproduce the game by helping [...] to produce belief in the value of the stakes'. If the newcomers are not to incur total exclusion from the game, therefore, their revolution has to remain a 'partial' revolution, which does 'not call into question the very foundations of the game, its fundamental axioms'.[75] This 'objective complicity' might account for Cremer's partial, highly ambiguous subversion of the discourse on high modernist authorship: by taking part in the struggle, he already reproduces some of its axioms. Cremer can only cause a scandal in the literary field, in other words, by complying – at least partially – with the fundamental discourse on authorial subjectivity.

In the third and final place, the tenacity of the high modernist discourse can be explained by taking into account the gendered nature of the relationship between popular mass culture on the one hand and authorship and literary celebrity on the other hand. For in an analysis of the modernist response to popular mass culture, Andreas Huyssen observes that the modernist intellectuals associated 'mass culture [...] with woman while real, authentic culture [remained] the prerogative of men'.[76] The 'constant fear of the modernist artist', Huyssen continues, was 'the nightmare of being devoured by mass culture through co-option, commodification, and the "wrong" kind of success'.[77] This gendering of mass culture and the cultural marketplace as feminine resulted in 'the emergence of a male mystique in modernism'.[78] Taking his lead from Huyssen, Loren Glass argues that this 'hypermasculine image of the author' was not only typical of high modernism: it continues to play a role in the discourse on literary celebrity. According to Glass, 'masculine celebrity authorship' is a double-edged strategy for the star author: it becomes 'a sort of armor for entering into the mass cultural public sphere', while at the same time it continues to configure resistance to the cultural marketplace.[79] The machismo that characterizes Cremer's literary persona and his programmatic statements can thus be viewed as a gendered response to the rise of mass culture and the culture industry. It is this 'male mystique' that inevitably links his authorial self-fashioning to the legacy of high modernism.

No doubt, Cremer's uneasy relationship to the classic form of literary authorship results from a combination of the factors mentioned above. Cremer himself has never commented on his relation to literary tradition, except in disapproving terms. Nonetheless, it is interesting to note that his work sometimes does seem to reflect a subliminal awareness that he is haunted by the spectre of high modernism. Consider, as a final example of Cremer's double-voiced self-presentation, the scene from *Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek*, in which the main character is waiting for his friend Frank O'Hara in a Chinese restaurant:

> I sat there looking around the restaurant. [...] Over there, at a table far away under the big red Chinese lantern, that old Chinese man was there again, wearing his exotic fur hat, Chino-Chin, a sallow man with a long grey goatee and thick spectacles. "The philosopher" they called him. [...] As usual, the philosopher was staring out in front of him, his eyes focused on his shadow on the wall. Probably becoming one with the glorious history of the empire he came from. What sort of thoughts would that fellow be pondering?, I wondered in silence. He was absorbed in nothingness. [...] The hubbub and the buzz of the guests' voices, the ticking of the chop sticks, it all seemed to pass him by. Would his thoughts be just as transparent and serene as the enchanting tones of the bamboo flute? I had no time to start thinking about that.[80]

The meditative Chinese man, oddly isolated in the busy restaurant, is strikingly reminiscent of Ter Braak's paperboy on the tram, that 'princely figure', 'absent under his tangible, present skin'. In other words, in this portrait Cremer outlines the classic, high modernist, unproductive author-intellectual who is indifferent to the needs of the consumer market. To be fair, it is a faded and distorted portrait, something of a caricature even, but the likeness is there nonetheless. For a brief moment, the phrase 'I had no time to start thinking about that' seems to convey some remorse, or even nostalgia. But Cremer cannot stay immersed in the study of this portrait for very long, for he cannot resist the attraction of instant consumer gratification: 'In fact, I couldn't give a damn what the old guy was thinking', he writes: 'Frank had arrived. Time for noodles!'[81]

Notes

1. Anonymous, 'J.M. Coetzee makes a rare UK appearance', *The South African*, 17 June 2009, [accessed 17 June 2010].
2. 'Cultural competence' is an extension of Culler's concept of 'literary competence'. See Jonathan Culler, *Structuralist Poetics: Structuralism, Linguistics, and the Study of Literature* (London: Routledge, 1975, repr. 1997), pp. 113-31.
3. I would like to thank Lidewey van Noord, Lisanne Snelders, Kanta van Zonneveld and Marleen van Zwieten, students at the University of Amsterdam, for their helpful explorations of this case study. Furthermore, I would like to thank the editors and reviewers of *Journal of Dutch Literature* for their insightful comments.
4. Michel Foucault, 'What is an Author?', in *Textual Strategies: Perspectives in Post-Structuralist Criticism*, ed. by J.V. Harari (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1979), p. 150.
5. Michel Foucault, *The Archeology of Knowledge* (London: Tavistock, 1977), pp. 21-76; see also Michel Foucault, 'The order of discourse', in *Untying the Text: A Poststructuralist Reader*, ed. by Robert Young (Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 48-78.
6. Richard Dyer, *Stars* (London: BFI, 1982), p. 60.
7. P. David Marshall, *Celebrity and Power: Fame in Contemporary Culture* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 65.

8. Marshall, *Celebrity and Power*, p. 245.
9. Pierre Bourdieu, *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), p. 142.
10. This belief is fuelled by the often-repeated theoretical opposition between (high) literature and popular mass culture. See, for example, Fredric Jameson, 'Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture', *Social Text* 1 (1979), pp. 130-48.
11. Marshall, *Celebrity and Power*, p. x; Dyer, *Stars*, p. 39.
12. Admittedly, even the major modernist spokespeople for the theory of self-effacement indulged in 'self-aggrandizement and even shameless self-promotion' (Loren Glass, *Authors Inc.: Literary Celebrity in the Modern United States, 1880-1980* [New York: New York University Press, 2004], p. 5), but in the final analysis this does not diminish the emphasis on impersonality in the traditional, more commonplace discourse on authorship.
13. For an insightful overview of this line of thought, see Antoine Compagnon, *Literature, Theory, and Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 29-68. That the expectation of authorial self-effacement continues to play a role in contemporary literary criticism in the Netherlands, has been demonstrated in Gaston Franssen, *Gerrit Kouwenaar en de politiek van het lezen* (Nijmegen: Vantilt, 2008), pp. 69-105.
14. Marshall, *Celebrity and Power*, p. ix.
15. P. David Marshall, 'Intimately Intertwined in the Most Public Way: Celebrity and Journalism', in *The Celebrity Culture Reader*, ed. by P. David Marshall (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 320.
16. Jameson, 'Reification', p. 136.
17. Octavio Paz, *Children of the Mire: Modern Poetry from Romanticism to the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), p. 1.
18. Dyer, *Stars*, p. 13, 24.
19. See Marshall, *Celebrity and Power*, or P. David Marshall, 'The Meanings of the Popular Music Celebrity: the Construction of Distinctive Authenticity', in *The Celebrity Culture Reader*, ed. by P. David Marshall (New York: Routledge, 2006), pp. 196-222.
20. See for instance Ghislaine McDayter, 'Conjuring Byron: Byromania, Literary Commodification and the Birth of Celebrity', in *Byromania: Portraits of the Artist in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Culture*, ed. by Frances Wilson (London: MacMillan Press, 1999), pp. 43-62; Corin Throsby, 'Byron, Commonplacing and Early Fan Culture', in *Romanticism and Celebrity Culture*, ed. by Tom Mole (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 227-44.
21. See for instance Joe Moran, *Star Authors: Literary Celebrity in America* (London: Pluto Press 2000); Glass, *Authors Inc.*; Lorraine York, *Literary Celebrity in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).
22. Jameson, 'Reification', p. 134.
23. The term 'industry of desire' comes from Christine Gledhill (ed.), *Stardom: Industry of Desire* (New York: Routledge, 1991).
24. Jameson, 'Reification', pp. 134-5.
25. Reinder P. Meijer, *Literature of the Low Countries: A Short History of Dutch Literature in The Netherlands and Belgium* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1978), p. 323.

26. Menno ter Braak, 'Waarom ik "Amerika" afwijs', *Verzameld werk Menno ter Braak*, ed. by M. van Crevel and others, Commissie tot Redactie van het Verzameld Werk, 7 vols. (Amsterdam: Van Oorschot, 1949-1951), I, p. 255: 'Er was een opvallende en onverwachte trouw in dit geconcentreerd verdiept zijn; dit wezen was *verdiept*, onder zijn tastbare, aanwezige huid afwezig, verzonken of opgeheven, maar geen deel van het maatschappelijk bedrijf rondom hem; een heremiet van het ogenblik, een figuur, een gestalte met iets prinselijks en ongenaakbaars: [...]'.
27. Ter Braak, 'Amerika', pp. 260-1: 'Wat wij de ziekte van het amerikanisme zouden kunnen noemen, is, dat de symptomen der amerikaanse cultuur ons imponeren. Geïmponeerd worden is het valse surrogaat voor de verwondering. De geïmponeerde is niet door het zwijgend medium der geheimtekens tot de zin gekomen; hij is overbluft door de quantiteit. De machine overbluft. De Tiller-girls overbluffen. De amerikaanse laboratoria overbluffen.'
28. Ter Braak, 'Amerika', p. 262: 'Ik denk nutteloos, derhalve ben ik.'
29. Ter Braak, 'Amerika', p. 262: '[Wij stellen prijs] op het enige niet te loochenen bezit, het nutteloze, improductieve geheimteken, dat geen groter maatschappelijk geluk zal brengen, waarin men zich verdiept om het verdiepen zelf.'
30. Menno ter Braak, 'Prisma of dogma', *Verzameld werk Menno ter Braak*, ed. by M. van Crevel and others, Commissie tot Redactie van het Verzameld Werk, 7 vols. (Amsterdam: Van Oorschot, 1949-1951), I, p. 355.
31. Léon Hanssen, *Want alle verlies is winst. Menno ter Braak, 1902-1930* (Amsterdam: Balans, 2000), p. 298.
32. Menno ter Braak, 'Heldenverering', *Verzameld werk Menno ter Braak*, ed. by M. van Crevel and others, Commissie tot Redactie van het Verzameld Werk, 7 vols. (Amsterdam: Van Oorschot, 1949-1951), IV, p. 284: 'projectie van een massale wens'.
33. Menno ter Braak, 'Cinema Militans', *Verzameld werk Menno ter Braak*, ed. by M. van Crevel and others, Commissie tot Redactie van het Verzameld Werk, 7 vols. (Amsterdam: Van Oorschot, 1949-1951), II, pp. 441-443: 'de acteursheerschappij', 'er is niets verderfelijkers dan het stersysteem'.
34. Menno ter Braak, 'Kritiek', *Filmliga* 8 (March 1928), p. 12: 'gehuurd om met hun naam volle zalen te trekken, en zij hebben in dien zin hun oogen, handen en costumes te gebruiken'.
35. Menno ter Braak, 'Greta Garbo als Anna Karenina', *Filmliga* 1 (October 1928), p. 3: 'Hollywood, door de tot ster gepromoveerde actrice naar den overkant te lokken', 'gespeculeerd'; Menno ter Braak, 'Kritiek', *Filmliga* 6 (March 1929), p. 76: 'het allerfijnste havanamerk van [...] "sex appeal"'.
36. Meijer, *Low Countries*, p. 321.
37. Ter Braak, 'Prisma of dogma', p. 355: 'in het geheel geen onderscheid maakt tussen oorspronkelijkheid en epigonisme'.
38. Frans Ruiter and Wilbert Smulders, *Literatuur en moderniteit, 1840-1990* (Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers, 1996), pp. 310-25.
39. Anne Marie Musschoot, 'The Revolution of the Sixties, 1960-1970', in *A Literary History of the Low Countries*, ed. by Theo Hermans (Rochester: Camden House, 2009), p. 619.
40. Nel van Dijk, 'Een onverbiddelijke bestseller! De promotie van literair werk in de twintigste eeuw', *Jaarboek voor de Nederlandse boekgeschiedenis* 6 (1999), pp. 173-5.

41. Klaus Beekman, 'Jan Cremer en de literaire kritiek', in *Jan Cremer Documentaire*, ed. by Hans Dütting (Utrecht: Signature, 2005), pp. 379-81.
42. Quoted in Hans Dütting, *Jan Cremer Documentaire* (Utrecht: Signature, 2005), p. 103: 'Een schrijver is de kostwinner van Jan Publiek'; Jan Cremer, *Ik Jan Cremer* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1964; repr. 2000), p. 287: 'Ik ben geen kunstenaar, ik ben 'n arbeider, gewoon een werkman'; quoted in Dütting, *Documentaire*, p. 381: 'Ik ben gewoon de publiciteitsman van mezelf.'
43. Jan Cremer, *Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 2008), p. 461: 'werd vanwege de felle kleuren en het uitdagende omslagontwerp door veel boekwinkels "ordinair" bevonden, zodat men weigerde het in de etalage te zetten. Ze vonden het op een pak havermout lijken en de uitgever moest er een extra kaftje omheen laten maken'.
44. Jan Cremer, 'De Jan Cremer Mythe', in *Jan Cremers Logboek*, ed. by Jan Cremer (Amsterdam: Loeb, 1978), pp. 79-80: 'wanneer je een produkt maakt, of dat nou een pak havermout, een grammafoonplaat of een boek is, dát bepaalde produkt verkocht moet worden wanneer het op de markt komt'.
45. See for example Cremer, *Ik Jan Cremer*, p. 68, 343; Jan Cremer, *Ik Jan Cremer Tweede Boek* (Amsterdam: De Bezige Bij, 1966; repr. 2008), p. 44; Cremer, *Derde Boek*, p. 13, 58, 83.
46. Dyer, *Stars*, p. 21.
47. Cremer, *Ik Jan Cremer*, p. 9: 'Iets Groots'; Cremer, *Tweede Boek*, p. 9: 'Onze Held', 'Ons Fenomeen Jan Cremer'; Cremer, *Derde Boek*, p. 12: 'juk van beroemdheid', 'Holland was mij te klein geworden'.
48. Cremer, *Ik Jan Cremer*, p. 287: 'Ik werd een bekende figuur. Dank zij de pers, radio en televisie. Mensen vroegen mijn handtekening op straat, groetten mij met "Jan", vroegen waarom ik zo schilderde, klopten op mijn schouders, staken de duimen op en zeiden "mooi versierd", in bars en cafés werd ik dronken van de mij aangeboden drankies, er werd gefluisterd als ik in een winkel stond of langs een terras liep: "kijk daar gaat Jan Cremer."'
49. Cremer, *Tweede Boek*, p. 70: 'Kunstenaar', 'baard', 'manchesterpak'; Cremer, *Ik Jan Cremer*, p. 81: 'Want een kunstenaar zonder baard is als een vis zonder graat.'
50. Cremer, *Ik Jan Cremer*, p. 287: 'enorme vetkuif', 'arrogant agressief kijkend'; Cremer, *Derde Boek*, p. 83: 'pop ster'.
51. Dütting, *Documentaire*, p. 114, 146.
52. Denis Arnolds, *Hij Jan Cremer* (Antwerpen: Walter Soethoudt, 1965).
53. Cremer, 'Mythe', p. 82: 'meneer de kunstschilder', '[erop] los leuterde over "inspiratie" en "creatief talent"'.
54. Cremer, 'Mythe', p. 84: 'Eén van de grote bestanddelen tot het maken van publiciteit is de tactiek van de zogenaamde "speldepriktechniek"; door constante irritatie door middel van uitspraken, gedragingen, houding en wezen krijg je vat op het publiek. [...] Om de aandacht te vestigen op je "produkt" moet de naam van het produkt of de maker ervan een bel doen rinkelen.'
55. Cremer, 'Mythe', p. 96: 'publiciteitsmolen'.
56. Derek Attridge, *The Singularity of Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2004), pp. 105-6.

57. Cremer, *Ik Jan Cremer*, p. 264: 'Ik word uitgenodigd voor tentoonstellingen, salons en kan mijn werk verkopen voor goeie prijzen. Ik doe het niet. Een contract wil ik niet: ik ben een schilder, geen marktkoopman.'
58. Cremer, *Derde Boek*, p. 540: 'Ik schrijf niet om geld te verdienen, ik stel een daad.'
59. remer, *Derde Boek*, p. 58: '"This is America! [...] Met jouw boek kunnen we een fortuin maken." [...] Deze discussies gingen steeds meer tegen mijn geweten in. Ik was een Europeaan, een serieuze Nederlandse schrijver. Elk woord, elke komma, elke punt woog zwaar voor mij. [...] Er was te veel in mij geïnvesteerd. Ik had mijn ziel aan de duivel verkocht, zo voelde het.'
60. Quoted in Beekman, 'De literaire kritiek', p. 369, 377: 'glasharde commercialiteit die aan deze uitgeverspolitiek ten grondslag ligt', 'Jan Cremer is het slachtoffer van een literaire industrie'.
61. Pierre H. Dubois, 'Van ondergrondse naar onderwereld met Ik Jan Cremer', *Het Vaderland*, 14 March 1964: 'De vergissing zou zijn te menen dat een dergelijk "succes" de literaire betekenis aantoont.'
62. Cremer, *Derde Boek*, p. 462, 100, 152, 260: 'dwerg', 'geslepen zakenmannetje', 'eenvoudig [...] gewoon', 'elk ander wijf met grote tieten'.
63. Quoted in Beekman, 'De literaire kritiek', p. 381: 'proletariër'. Cremer, *Derde Boek*, p. 357: 'gezonde Hollandse jongen'.
64. Dyer, *Stars*, p. 43.
65. Alfred Kossmann, 'Barbaar Jan Cremer als knap amuseur', *Het Vrije Volk*, 14 March 1964: 'Wie is Jan Cremer nu? Men weet het niet als men zijn boek uit heeft. Men weet alleen hoe hij wenst dat men hem ziet.'
66. Adriaan Morriën, 'Ik Jan Cremer, deel twee', *Het Parool*, 23 December 1966: 'legendarisering'; Hans Sleutelaar, 'Ik Jan Cremer: literatuur van de vuistslag', *Het Parool*, 21 March 1964: 'achter de legende'.
67. J. van Doorne, 'Ik Jan Cremer 2 leeg, loos en sterk puberaal', in *Trouw*, 14 January 1967: 'propageert [...] niets anders dan Jan Cremer'; Johan Bakker, 'Eigen meester, niemands knecht', *Nederlands Dagblad*, 27 June 2008: 'schaamteloos narcisme, zelfverheerlijking en navelstaarderij', 'Cremer houdt alleen van zichzelf'.
68. Cremer, *Ik Jan Cremer*, p. 288: 'Één goede raad aan de jongelui: "schrijf zoveel mogelijk, maar vertel je eigen histories!" Want het is zo pijnlijk om "Avonturen van Jan Cremer" in een ander boekje te moeten lezen.'
69. Cremer, *Tweede Boek*, p. 71: 'jatmozen en reproduktiejongens'.
70. Pieter Steinz, 'In de schaduw van bloeiende vagijnen', *NRC Handelsblad*, 6 June 2008: 'pathologische neiging tot uitweiden'; Bakker, 'Eigen meester': 'valt bovendien qua vertelling nogal eens in herhaling'.
71. Quoted in Beekman, 'De literaire kritiek', p. 377: 'herhaling', 'dezelfde soort avonturen op dezelfde manier verteld'.
72. Jeroen Vullings, 'Saaie seks', *Vrij Nederland*, 14 June 2008: '*Ik Jan Cremer Derde Boek* is vooral meer van datzelfde en dat is nu, in 2008, echt een probleem geworden.'
73. See Beekman, 'De literaire kritiek', p. 373; Anne Wadman, 'Ik Jan Cremer Tweede Boek', *Leeuwarder Courant*, 13 May 1967: 'bijna volmaakte authenticiteit'.
74. Meijer, *Low Countries*, p. 355.
75. Pierre Bourdieu, *Sociology in Question* (London: Sage, 1995), pp. 73-4.

76. Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), p. 47.
77. Huyssen, *The Great Divide*, p. 53.
78. Huyssen, *The Great Divide*, p. 50.
79. Glass, *Authors Inc.*, p. 18.
80. Cremer, *Derde Boek*, p. 48: 'Ik zat wat om me heen te kijken in het restaurant. [...] Daar, aan een veraf tafeltje onder de grote rode lampion, zat die oude Chinees weer met zijn exotische bontmuts op, Chino-Chin, een vergeelde man met een lange grijze sik en een dikke bril. "De filosoof" werd hij genoemd. [...] De filosoof zat zoals gewoonlijk strak voor zich uit te staren, zijn blik gericht op zijn schaduw op de muur. Eén waarschijnlijk met de roemrijke historie van het keizerrijk waar hij vandaan kwam. [...] Waar zou die goede man zijn gedachten over laten gaan? vroeg ik mij in stilte af. Zo verdiept als hij was in het niets. [....] De drukte en het geroezemoes van de gasten, het tikken van de chopsticks, alles leek aan hem voorbij te gaan. Zouden zijn gedachten even transparant en sereen zijn als de betoverende tonen van de bamboefluit? Ik had geen tijd om me daarin te verdiepen.'
81. Cremer, *Derde Boek*, p. 48: 'En in feite kon het me ook geen reet schelen wat die oude dacht. Frank was gearriveerd. Tijd voor de noedels!'

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