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Un/des Charlus du roman à la toile : passage à gué d'une antonomase

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- **Author:** Henrot Sostero (Geneviève)
- **Abstract:** Modifying a proper name designating a person by adding an article can produce figures of speech in different contexts, including antonomasia. This leads the hearer/reader to decode the resulting noun phrase [det + NP] not as the rigid designator of a unique individual, but as an expression of one example taken from a group of individuals having some striking resemblance with the original. Charlus, the famous baron in Marcel Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* inspired one of literature's most recent cases of antonomasia, aiming at characterizing a particular type of homosexual. An analysis of Frantext and more broadly from the web shows that NP *Charlus* has indeed gained the status of antonomasia, to judge from the number of occurrences having this meaning, which appear not only in critical works published since the novel came out, but more recently, and more importantly, in a large number of blogs or discussion groups. Antonomasia thus appears to be the final stage in the process of lexicalisation, following repeated metaphoric, emphatic and exemplary instances of this usage.
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