THE PROBLEM OF THE “LONZA,” WITH AN UNPUBLISHED TEXT.

The famous “three beasts”—*lonza*, *leone*, *lupa*—which Dante mentions in the first canto of the *Inferno* have already caused so much discussion, mostly profitless, that one may well hesitate before adding to the bibliography of the subject—unless, indeed, one is able to bring forward some really new material. In particular, the identity and the symbolism of the *lonza* have challenged ingenuity. As usual, the older commentators are in substantial agreement; the word *lonza* was evidently no stumbling-block to them, and with one or two exceptions they interpret the three beasts as symbols respectively of lust, pride and avarice. Let us take Boccaccio as the type (*Comento*, ed. Milanesi, p. 173):

 Dice adunque... essere state tre bestie quelle che il suo salire impedivano, una leonza, o *lonza* che si dica, e un leone e una lupa; le quali quantunque a molti e diversi vizj adattare si potessono, nondimeno qui, secondo la sentenza di tutti, par che si debbano intendere per questi, cioè per la *lonza*, il vizio della lussuria, e per lo *leone*, il vizio della superbia, e per la *lupa*, il vizio dell' avarizia. E percióch' io non intendo di partirmi dal parere generale di tutti gli altri, verrò a dimostrare conte questi animali a' detti vizj si possono appropriare.

While agreeing in the traditional views as to the lion and the wolf, for the *lonza* the significance of *vanagloria* was suggested by Jacopo della Lana, and of *invidia*, envy, by Castelvetro. This latter interpretation and in general the principle that the three beasts stand for three particular sins, has recently been stoutly defended by D'Ovidio, who at the same time does not exclude the possibility that Dante had political as well as allegorical significations in mind.

1 *Le tre fere*, in *Studii sulla Divina Commedia*, Milano, 1901, pp. 302-325, 585-7. The same view is held by G. Lajolo, *Simboli ed enigmi danteschi*, Roma, 1906; and by D. Guerri in his review of Lajolo in *Bullettino della Società Dantea Italiana*, XIV, 9-17. The significance *vanagloria* has recently been defended by L. Raffaele, *La Corda di Dante*, in *Giornale Danteo*, XIV, 97-106. Evidently the *corda* of *Inf.*, XVI has some bearing on the problem of the *lonza*, but it is such a troublesome problem itself, that I do not discuss it here.
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On the other hand, Torraca in his commentary on the Divina Commedia (1905) accepts lussuria and avarizia, but proposes gola, gluttony, for the lion. An entirely different interpretation is now in favor with many scholars, who, however, differ among themselves as to details. The essence of this is in making the three beasts stand, not for three particular sins, but for the classes of sin in the Inferno. This idea was first proposed by G. Casella, who, identifying the selva selvaggia with the Inferno, made the wolf stand for sins of incontinence, the lion for those of violence, the lonzia for those of fraud. P. Chistoni defends this view, and further identifies the lonzia with Gerione (Inf. xvii). F. Flamini adopts the same general system, but with a distinction that he regards as very important: the three beasts are not the categories of sin, but the forms of evil disposition which lead to sin—the lonzia is la malizia, the lion la malizia bestiale or bestialità, the wolf l' incontinenza. G. Pascoli, in order to have the symbol of the lighter sins come first, proposes to invert this order, and make the lonzia stand for incontinence, which agrees fairly well with the traditional view. Naturally, all these different theories, and various others that might be mentioned, are defended by their sponsors with weighty and plausible arguments; but many a bewildered reader has doubtless followed with relief those modern scholars who still accept the simple interpretation of the early commentators.

1 Canto a Dante Alighieri con un discorso intorno alla forma allegorica e alla principale allegoria della Div. Com., Firenze, 1865, pp. 82-96.
2 La lonzia dantesca, in Miscellanea di Studi critici edita in onore di A. Graf, Bergamo, 1903, pp. 817-48.
4 Sotto il Velame. See D'Ovidio, op. cit., p. 311; Flamini, op. cit., p. 125.
6 Concludo adunque che non vi è alcuna seria ragione di abbandonare la comune interpretazione degli antichi."—Casini, Aneddoti e studi danteschi, Città di Castello, 1896, pp. 51-9; cf. his commentary on Inf. I in the Lectura Dantis (1905). Scartazzini at one time made the three beasts stand for incredulità, superbia, falsa dottrina (Prolegomeni della Div. Com., 1890, p. 473; cf. Dante Handbuch, 1892, p. 450); but he returned to the traditional view later (Enciclopedia Dantesca, 1896, p. 1131; second Leipzig edition of the Inferno, 1900). The present writer, in reviewing (Modern Language Notes, April,
Not incompatible with the allegorical and ethical symbolism of the canto is the political, which is associated with the name of Gabriele Rossetti, although suggested before him by Dionisi and Marchetti. Many of the writers referred to above expressly admit that the three beasts may be at the same time both ethical and political symbols. Thus if in Dante's mind lustfulness, or incontinence, or fraudulent dealing, was characteristic of the Florentines of his day, there is no reason why

Una lonza leggera e presta molto,
Che di pel maculato era coperta,

should not represent simultaneously the sin and the city. Similarly, the lion may stand for the sin of pride, and for the haughty King of France; while the appropriateness of the wolf as a symbol not merely of avarice but of the avarice of Rome, is sufficiently evident. Rossetti, however, denies the propriety of the double symbolism, and in particular denies the appropriateness of the lonsa, whatever animal may be indicated by this name, as a symbol of lust:

Nessun naturalista ha mai appropriato alla Lonza una tal caratteristica lascivia che la distingua da altri animali . . . ed in vero a nessun de' tanti commentatori eruditissimi, che han seminato di citazioni le lor carte, è bastato l' animo di rapportare un' antica o moderna autorità intorno a questa pretesa lascivia della Lonza; e l' avrebbero sicuramente fatto ove l' avessero potuto.  

The argument certainly has some force. Several commentators declare that the lonsa is lustful, as Boccaccio; "La lonza, la quale è di sua natura lussuriosissimo animale;" Vellutello: "La Leonza, noi la intendiamo per il Leopardo, per esser tra gli'animali che hanno maculato il pelo il più libidinoso." These assertions are not, however, supported by citation of definite statements from authorities, and Rossetti's challenge has gone unanswered. The chief purpose of the present paper is to present an unpublished description of the animal in question, which reads as follows:

1903) Holbrook, *Dante and the Animal Kingdom*, New York, 1902, expressed a preference for D'Ovidio's view, while Holbrook (chap. viii) advanced various arguments in support of the traditional interpretation; new evidence has modified the critic's views on this point.


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Dela natura et dela figura et della propieta dela Lancia.

Lancia e animale molto crudele e fiera, e nasce de coniungimento carnale de leone con lonça ouero de leopardo con leonissa, e cussi nasce lo leopardo. La lonça sempre sta in calura d'amore et in desiderio carnale, launde sua ferecca e molto grandissima. Et naturalmente lo leopardo e la lonça quando amontano l'altre bestie se al terço ouero al quarto salto non prendeno, per grande dispecto et disdego piu la preda non seguisceno ma lassano andare, e lui remane per corrucio patendo e sufferendo grande fame, de fine tanto che uenue loro facto de prendere la preda in fine al terço o al quarto salto. Quando auiene che prendeno alcuno uenenososo cibo curase e purgase collo stercho del homo, vnde la cacciatoro loro engannano in cotal guisa, cioe che quello portano in uno uselio et appendolo ad uno arbore, si che li dicti animali li uegono e allora li dicti cacciatori li assaglie e uccide. Auene ancora che quando questi animali amala d'alcuna enfirmita, curase con sangue de capra salutatica, lo quale beue e con questo guariscone.

This text is found in two manuscripts of the Italian bestiary; one (Par), in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris (Ital. 450, f. 33 b); the other (Ch), in the Chigi Library at Rome (f. 29 b). It is given here exactly as it reads in Par, except that punctuation is used and abbreviations are solved. The variants of Ch, except for the insertion of a few words near the end of the chapter, are merely orthographical; the most important is the spelling lonza instead of lonica. In 1905, after a brief study of the Paris manuscript, I published a description of it, with table of contents and copious bibliographical references, in an article on Italian bestiary manuscripts. Since then I have collected considerable additional material, and in collaboration with my colleague Dr. M. S. Garver, who has made a complete copy of Par, I hope to publish soon a critical text of the bestiary. In the meantime, a few remarks will make clear the importance of this chapter in connection with the problem of Dante's lonza.

Instead of de fine tanto che venne loro facto, Ch has: in fin a tanto che uiene loro facto; instead of curase e purgase, curansi et purgansi; instead of la cacciatore, li cacciatori; instead of curase con sangue, curanosi e guariscenosi huo al altro con sangue; etc.

The essential elements of the problem, as already mentioned, are the identity of the animal indicated by the word *lonza* (which I have purposely refrained from translating); incidentally, the etymology of this word; and finally, the symbolic meaning of the animal. Obviously, a chapter on the *lonza* in a bestiary that Dante might have known, would be of the greatest value; but except in the case of the text now presented, no bestiary contains such a chapter. The manuscripts, Par and Ch, are of the fourteenth century, and too late to have been used by Dante; but there is good reason to believe that the lost archetype of the dozen or more extant manuscripts containing the Italian bestiary was written in the thirteenth century. All the manuscripts have in common a number of bestiary chapters, and the majority of them also contain a collection of fables. In Par and Ch there is a third part, not found elsewhere,—several chapters on lions, then *leonessa*, *leopardo*, *loncia* (*lonza*), *artalupo*, *urso*, *lupo*, *lupa*, etc. This third part evidently did not belong to the archetype; at what time, and from what sources, it was added to the bestiary, I cannot say. At any rate, it gives standing to the *lonza* as a bestiary animal, with definite characteristics; and these characteristics, it will be at once noted, are in striking harmony with Dante's epithets *leggiera e presto molto*, while the evidence, so far as it goes, supports the interpretation of the symbolism as "lustfulness," without a suggestion of "fraud" or "envy." Whether or not Dante was, as seems probable, familiar with a traditional description of the *lonza*, it is scarcely possible that our bestiary text was influenced by Dante. On the other hand, it is quite possible that the early commentators were influenced by the bestiary. At any rate, the existence of the bestiary description strengthens the presumption in favor of the traditional interpretation.

The next thing to note is that in the added chapters of Par and Ch occur three pairs of animals, each pair including one of Dante's three beasts—lion and lioness, wolf and she-wolf, *leopardo* and *lonza*. This at once suggests the idea, confirmed by the statement about the parentage of both beasts, that the writer of our text, at

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least, regarded the *lunza* as a female leopard. Like the *lunza*, the leopard is not regularly a bestiary animal; he does occur, however, in several animal-books, with the characteristics here ascribed to his mate. Different characteristics are given in the preceding chapter of Par (f. 33a), and Ch (f. 29a), which begins as follows:

Leopardo e bellissima bestia del quale se notano principalmente due nature. La prima ch'ella e una de le piu ingengnoso animale che sia. La seconda che in se a legerezza grandissima. Trovase probabilmente che lo suo ingengno vince e confonde lo leone, ecc.

All the characteristics ascribed to both animals in these two chapters are found in a chapter *De Leopardo* in Bartholomeus Anglicus, *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, and some of them again *De pardo*. A part of this lore apparently comes from Isidore of Seville (*Etymologiarum*, lib. XII, cap. ii, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 82):


Pliny does in fact make a statement something like this (*Nat. Hist.*, lib. VIII, cap. xvi); but the story grows by repetition. The leopard's habit of making only a limited number of jumps after its prey is mentioned by many medieval writers, in Latin, German and

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13 Edition of 1492, lib. XVIII, cap. 65: *Leopardus est bestia sevissima de leonis et pardi adulteria generata... Est et femina major et crudelior quam sit masculus... Colorem habet varium sicut pardin. Saliendo non currendo insequitur predam, et si in tercio saltu predam non rapit vel in quarto per indignatione sistit et quasi victus retrocedit... [Here follows an account of how the leopard deceives the lion]... Quando comedit alicui venenosum et tunc querit stercus hominis et comedit ipsum. Et ideo venatores finum illum in vaso aliguo suspensum super arborem, et cum venit leopardus ad arborem saltat ut accipiat stercus et interim ipsum interficiunt venatores... Leopardus quando egrotat sanguinem capre agrestis bibit, et sic inde languores evadit... Cap. 81. *Pardus ut dicitur est bestia velocissima colore vario orbiculata, preceps ad sanguinem, et saltu ruit in mortem. Et habet talen dispositionem sicut panthera, nec habet ab eo alicuius differentiam nisi quam panthera habet maculas albiore... Est autem animal libidinosum, et colt cum leæna ex cuius adulterio generatur leopardus.*
The number of jumps and the application of the story vary. Cecco d' Ascoli has this stanza on the subject:

Da leonessa il leopardo nasce,  
O se leone giace con leoparda,  
È nudo di pietà, quando s'irasce,  
Si sdega, se non prende quattro salti,  
E per vergogna in terra fisso guarda,  
Pensando sdega dell’ovli gli assalti.

Similarly, Luigi Pulci (Morgante, XIV, 75):

Il leopardo pareva sdegnato,  
Perch’ e’ non prese in tre salti la preda;

and a few lines further on, in the same list of animals decorating the pavilion, Pulci mentions (stanza 81):

La lonza maculata e la pantera.

A poet of the thirteenth century, Fredi da Lucca, refers to the deception of the lion by the leopard:

Fui miso in giuoco e frastenuto im pianto,  
Si falsamente m’ingannò lo sguardo,  
Si come lo leone lo lepardo  
C’ a tradimento li lieva lo manto.

Another poet, Folgore da San Gimignano, refers to the quality of swiftness:

Leggero più che lonza o liopardo.

Evidently, then, the word lonza was sometimes, if not always, used for the leopardess. Its etymology is still disputed, some deriving it from an adjective leonteis or leontis, “lionlike;” more
probably it is the popular derivative, through *lyncia* or *luncea*, of the Greek and Latin *lynx*, of which the direct derivative is *lince.*

In French the initial has been transformed into an article, and we have *l'once*, whence English ounce. Once, at least, we have the form without *l* in Italian (*Proverbia que dicitur super natura feminarum*, ed. Tobler, *Zeitschr. f. Rom. Philol.*, IX, p. 314, stanza 116):

La onça è una bestia mala e perigolosa;
Cercare poi lo segolo, no troui peçor cosa;
D' ognunca creatura este contrariosa,
Non faria una mestega, quanti in terra posa.

Beside the forms already noted—*lonza, leonz, lancia*—we find in Italian *lonze* (sg.), *lonça, ilonza, lionça, leonça,*\(^2\) in Latin *leuncia*


Ché, s' una *lonze* fosse,
si perderia natura
ed avrìane pietanza.

Rustico di Filippo (Cod. Vat., no. 860; ed. Federici, Bergamo, 1899, no. 48):

e di *leonza* e d' altro assai fragore;

(Cod. Vat., no. 927; mentioned by Casini, *Un poeta umorista del secolo decimotero*, in *Nuova Antologia*, vol. 109, Feb., 1890, p. 502, as showing that the Florentines associated this and other beasts with human defects):

Ché ci à una *lonza* si fiera ed ardita
che se Carlo sapesse i suo confini
e de la sua prodeza avesse udita,
tosto n' andrebbe sopra i Saracini.
Ma chi è questa *lonza*, or lo saccate;
Panicia egli é . . .

The so-called *Detto del Gatto Lupesco* (line 127, in Monaci, *Crestomazia*, pp. 449-50):
(Florentine document quoted by Casini, op. cit., p. 53), *lonza* (quoted by Du Cange: hyænas, quas vulgus vocat lonzas, leone velociores et audacios), *lonsanus* (Du Cange, quoting Jacques de Vitry), *lontia* (Benvenuto da Imola), *uncia* (Gesner, *Icones Animalium quadrupedum*, Tiguri, 1560, p. 68, equivalent to Ital. *lonza*, German *Ein Unts oder Kleiner Leppard*; cf. Topsell, *The Historie of Foure-footed Beastes*, London, 1607, p. 568—ounce, "which many in Italy, France and Germany call *Leunsa*, and some *Vnsia*?"). *Leonza* was doubtless due to influence of *leone* (cf. *leo-fante*, and what is said below about *leopardus*). Except in quotations from Dante, the use of the word is prevalingly if not exclusively Tuscan.\footnote{There is another word *lonza* < *lumbas* (see Flechia in *Arch. Glottologico*, II, 361) used by Dante in one of the sonnets to Forese Donati.}

As to the identity of the animal in question, the lynx, the panther and the leopard have been proposed. Modern naturalists apply the words panther and leopard to the same species, *Felis pardus*, and in some cases make no distinction between them; the American panther or jaguar, which is not spotted, is a distinct species, *Felis onca*. The snow-leopard or ounce, *Felis uncia*, is a comparatively rare animal from the highlands of central Asia. The lynx, also belonging to the *Felidae*, is sometimes called *Felis lynx*, and sometimes ascribed to a distinct genus, and called *Lynx lynx*. But in studying medieval literature the modern classifications are as apt to mislead a non-specialist as they are to help him, even if he can reconcile the conflicting statements of naturalists. In fact, it is notoriously difficult to identify the animals mentioned by old writers.\footnote{Cf. C. R. Eastman, *Recent Literature on ancient animal names and effigies*, in *American Journal of Philology*, XXX, 322–31; and F. E. Beddard, *Mammalia* (*Cambridge Natural History*, X), London, 1903, 395–7.}

Let us, then, turn our attention to the medieval authorities.

As is well known, certain qualities were attached to certain animal-names. Bartholomeus Anglicus and other writers regarded

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\text{E si vi vidi lo tigro e l tasso e una lonça e un tinasso.}
\]

Of course, Dante mentions the *lonza* of *Inf.*, I, a second time, *Inf.*, XVI, 108:

\[
\text{Prender la lonza alla pelle dipinta.}
\]
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the panther and the pard as almost identical, and some said that the panther was the female of the pard. Yet no medieval writer would have applied to the pard the chief quality which the panther has in the original Physiologus and in nearly every bestiary and encyclopedia,—its fragrant breath. The leopard, not regularly a bestiary animal, was regarded as a hybrid like his name, which is not found earlier than about the fourth century; although Pliny speaks of intercourse between the lion and other beasts in the same way in which later writers discuss the origin of the leopard.22 As to the lynx, etymologically it is the ancestor of the lonna; in spite of this fact, however, the connection was absolutely broken.23 The lynx was joined to the wolf family, preserving from ancient times his proverbial keen sight and other faculties, mentioned by Pliny,—chiefly the function of producing a valuable stone which through envy he hides from men. Isidore of Seville (Etymol., XII, 2) gives this description:

Lynx dictus, quia in luporum genere numeratur: bestia maculis terga distincta, ut pardus, sed similis lupo . . . Hujus urinam converti in duritiam pretiosi lapidis diciunt, qui lincurius appellatur . . . egestum liquorem arenis, in quantum potuerint, contegunt, invidia quadam naturae, ne talis egestio transeat in usum humanum. (Cf. Pliny, Nat. Hist., VIII, xxxviii.)

This becomes in the old Italian version of Brunetto Latini, Il Tesoro (ed. Gaiter, Bologna, 1877; lib. V, cap. 57):

Un' altra maniera di lupi sono, che si chiamano cervieri, che sono taccati di nero come leonza [French original: comme l'once], ed in altre cose sono simili a lupo. E hanno si chiara veduta, che li loro occhi passano li monti e li muri . . . E dicono quelli che gli hanno veduti, che del suo piscio nasce una pietra preziosa che si chiama ligures. E questo cognosce bene la bestia medesima, secondo che gli uomini l' hanno veduto coprire col sabbione la sua orina, per una invidia di natura, che cotal pietra non vegna a mano d' uomo.

22Bochart, Hierosolicon, Lugduni Batav. 1712, lib. III, cap. vii, speaks of panthera as pardi famina; cap. viii, declares that leopards is none other than pardus, and that the hybrid origin is a fable; also quotes from Ambrosius: Leopardus caprace agrestis sanguinem bibit et vim langrioris evitat. Bochart regards the lynx as similar to the panther rather than to the wolf, thus differing from the older writers.

23Holbrook, op. cit., p. 100, mentions isolated exceptions.
Bartholomeus Anglicus (cap. 67) repeats Isidore's statements in slightly different wording:

Lynx . . . est autem bestia similis lupo dorsum habens maculis distinctum sicut pardus, vrina eius convertitur in gemmam preciosam, etc.

This passage is thus translated by Vivaldo Belcalzer of Mantua (see V. Cian, V. Belcalzer ed l' enciclopedismo italiano, in Giornale Storico, Suppl. no. 4, 1902, p. 124):

Lof cerver è bestia simel al lof, abiant la pel ocùl de macule partide a mod de pard, ecc.

The important thing to note in these passages is that *pardus* is translated *l' once*, *lonza*, and that the lynx is *compared to* this animal with the clear implication that they are not the same.\(^{24}\) This is absolute proof, it seems to me, in connection with what has gone before, first, that when he said *lonza* Dante did not mean "lynx," and secondly, that the significance of the *lonza* is not "envy." Dante probably did not suspect the etymology of *lonza*; if he had meant lynx, he could have said *lince*—a perfectly comprehensible word, and preserving the alliteration equally well. But his description gives no hint of the well-known characteristics of the lynx, which was commonly called *lupo cerviero*; and the mere fact of its being closely allied to his third beast, *lupa*, would have rendered such a choice less suitable. Further arguments and abundant references are given in an erudite article by E. Proto, who identifies the *lonza* as the female of the *pardo*, or, in other words, as the panther. I prefer to distinguish between pard and leopard, leaving to the panther its well-known traditional characteristics, and calling the *lonza* "leopardess." Still, the distinction was probably not commonly made, and all these animals were surely often confused with one another. As to the symbolism, Proto makes the *lonza* stand for *concupiscientia carnis*.\(^{25}\)

\(^{24}\) So far as Brunetto is concerned, this was pointed out by Casini, *Ann. e St. Dant.*, I. c. The three beasts of Jeremiah V, 6—*leo, lupus, pardus*, confirm my argument. Cf. E. Proto, *La Lonza Dantea*, in Giornale Dantea, XV, 1–5.

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It seems no more likely that the beast now called "ounce" was indicated by the name lonsa; this beast seems to have usurped the name in comparatively recent times. Some other variety of leopard than the ordinary one may have been known, as the cheetah or hunting leopard, a less dangerous beast. But in this case we still have the leopard, an animal mentioned in the Bible as fierce (Is. XI, 6; Hos. XIII, 7), swift (Hab. I, 8), spotted (Jer. XIII, 23), and used as a type of a kingdom in Daniel's vision (Dan. VII, 6). And as a final piece of evidence in favor of identifying lonsa as a Tuscan word for leopard we have the frequently quoted statement of Benvenuto da Imola (Comentum, Florentiae, 1887, I, p. 35) in reply to his question "que fera sit ista lontia?"

Credo tamen quod autor potius intelligat hic de pardo, quam de aliis, tum quia proprietates pardi magis videmur convenire luxuriae, ut patet ex dictis, tum quia istud vocabulum florentinum lonsa videtur magis importare pardum quam aliam feram. Unde, dum semel portaretur quidam pardus per Florentiam puero concurrentes clamabant: vide lonciam, ut mihi narrabat suavissimus Boccatius de Cer
taldo.

A document of 1285 speaks of a place in Florence "in quo morabatur leuncia," and this lonsa Dante doubtless saw.

It may seem to some readers that too much has been made of a bestiary chapter in two manuscripts which are later than Dante; but it seems to me that this testimony is valuable, when taken in connection with the other material, largely familiar, which is here presented. I hope to have demonstrated that by lonsa Dante meant a "leopardess," and that symbolically this beast could not stand for "envy," while the presumption in favor of the traditional interpretation as "lust" has been considerably strengthened. I have not, of course, gone into the many aspects of the discussion that has arisen over this problem, and I have ignored many arguments. Those who hold the view that the three beasts represent the divisions of Hell may say that the discussion as to envy and lust is irrele-

Petrarch alludes to hunting with leopards, Trionfo di Pudicizia, 37-9.

Non corse mai si levemente al varco
D' una fugace cerva un leopardo
Libero in selva, o di catene scarso.

See Casini, l. e.
evant. Still, even so, the elimination of envy is not unimportant; and many scholars hold the view that the selva selvaggia is not a foretaste of Hell with its classifications, but is a figure of the life of this world where individual sins are more in evidence. The temptation to see a parallel between the three beasts and the words of Ciaccio (Inf., VI, 74) and Brunetto (Inf., XV, 68) is great; but in these cases the words apply definitely to Florence, not to human life in general nor to Dante's personal life. But are the beasts to symbolize Dante's personal sins, or sins of others which impeded his way? On these and similar questions I hope to have presented a modicum of new evidence; and I trust that the discussion will not seem useless either to those who, with Flamini, regard the forest and the beasts as the corner-stone of Dante's allegorical system, or to those who, with D' Ovidio, regard the first canto rather as a collection of more or less important problems.

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