



ČISTĀ

ČISTĀ and Čisti, Avestan derivatives of the verb *cit* “to notice, to understand.” Čistā is in many respects an enigmatic term. It designates a minor goddess mentioned only in *Yt.* 16, which is dedicated to her although it is known as the *Dēn yašt*, and once in *Yt.* 10.126. Her various epithets, the circumstances in which she is invoked, and her association with the *daēnā* seem to indicate that she is closely related to the concept of the path, both the ritual path and the path of the hereafter, although the exact relationship eludes us (Benveniste and Renou). The word itself poses a grammatical problem. The common interpretation as an abstract noun in *tā* is difficult to reconcile with the fact that the suffix *tā* is never used for primary derivation. More probably *čistā* is the feminine of the participle *čista* “noticed, noticeable.” The name of Zarathustra’s younger daughter, Pouručistā, thus probably means “the one who is noticed by many people, the charming one,” not “the one who has many ideas” (*AirWb.*, col. 899: “viel Einsicht besitzend”). The action noun *čisti* “intuition, idea” (cf. OInd. *citti* “thinking, understanding”) belongs to the special vocabulary of the Gathas and the *Yasna haptanḥāiti*. In the younger Avesta (*Yasna, Vispered, Vīdēvdād*) Čisti occasionally appears as a divinity associated with Aši.



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