



# Fonte Aretusa Πηγή Αρέθουσα

[www.fontearetusa.org](http://www.fontearetusa.org)

Eleventh Interdisciplinary Symposium  
on the Hellenic Heritage of Sicily and Southern Italy  
with the theme of

*Gorgōnes kai Gynaikes:*

The Many Faces of Female Virtue in Greco-Roman Culture

Exedra Mediterranean Center, Syracuse, Sicily, November 22-26, 2026

With a post-conference tour November 27-28

Was *aretē* in ancient Greece and Rome different for females and males? Pericles' much-vaunted claim that the virtue of *gynaikes* is "not to be talked of" (*Thucydides* 2.45.2) seems to suggest as much, but his words are aimed specifically at war-widows and wives. The surviving evidence suggests that mortal and immortal females fulfilled a great diversity of roles and expressed a great diversity of virtues, from choral dancers to athletic maidens, rebellious wives, prolific poets, mysterious priestesses, charismatic nymphs, and even powerful goddesses. The purpose of this conference is to explore the many faces of female virtue in Greco-Roman antiquity, attempting as far as possible to discern the perspectives of historical women.

Our conference takes place at the [Exedra Mediterranean Center](#) in Syracuse, Sicily – the cultural center of Western Greece known by Epicharmus, Empedocles, Plato, Aeschylus, Sappho, Theocritus, Archimedes, Cicero and many others. It will include academic presentations, visits to the Neapolis archeological park and Paolo Orsi museum, and a post-conference excursion. We will also enjoy traditional Sicilian food and hospitality, plus an American style Thanksgiving dinner (with families invited) Thursday afternoon.

Proposals for presentations related to any aspect of the topic are welcome. Abstracts for papers should be 200-300 words in length, prepared for blind review, and saved in .docx or .rtf. They should include a title, but no footnotes or references. Evaluation criteria include quality, relevance to the conference theme, and relevance to the heritage of Sicily and Southern Italy. Scholars are welcome to participate without presenting a paper, and can request to be on the program as a session chair. Selected proceedings will be published by Parnassos Press and indexed open access on JSTOR.

Send abstracts directly to Heather L. Reid at [fontearetusa1@gmail.com](mailto:fontearetusa1@gmail.com). Abstracts received by **July 15, 2026** will be considered for early acceptance. Final deadline for abstracts is **October 1, 2026**.