



## Summary :

Fikellura pottery was produced in Miletus (560-494 BC). The style was spread extensively in Rhodes, Samos, the Black Sea and Egypt. It is characterised by a rich geometric and floral decoration as well as a broad use of animal motifs. New elements attributed to the decoration of the style are the half-moon and the helix, as well as the free background. The main shapes are the amphora, the amphoriskos and the oenochoe.

## Date

560-494 BC.

## Geographical Location

Miletus, Caria

## 1. General Information

The Fikellura style, the last genuinely eastern Greek pottery style, appeared around 560 BC, and it probably disappeared around 494 BC, when Miletus was destroyed by the Persians.<sup>1</sup> It was a descendant of the middle [Wild Goat style](#), and shared stylistic affinities with it. However, the two styles are separated by an interval of approximately 30 years. The potters who introduced the style were innovators while they also tended to simplify earlier inventions.<sup>2</sup> The difference between the Fikellura and the Wild Goat style lies in the rendering of figures: the [silhouette technique](#) is employed not only for the bodies, but also for the heads. Details are rendered with thin lines in the colour of the clay. Although it imitates the [black-figure style](#), the lack of incised outlines of the figures prevented the creation of compositions with overlapping figures. Thus, Fikellura style is characterised by a sense of naivete and a certain degree of provincialism. Purplish-red details are rarely found, while white is used only for decorating the rim of the [oenochoae](#) (in the interior) as well as the eyes and the [rosettes](#) depicted on the exterior; it is also used for the rendering of dots on depictions of clothes and animal hides. The [slip](#) varies from yellowish white to white. The dye is dark brown to reddish. The clay is light red to pink with [mica](#) inclusions. The work of the potter is frequently hasty and careless and, as a result, the majority of the large vessels do not have a symmetrical outline.

## 2. Shapes

Most prominent and also most commonly found is the [amphora](#), usually 25-35 cm tall, stumpy with flattened shoulders and flat handles with two grooves.<sup>3</sup> The flattened body originated from the Wild Goat style, although it is also reminiscent of the Aeolian pottery of Pitane and the Milesian commercial amphorae of the early 6th c. BC.<sup>4</sup>

The second most popular shape is the [amphoriskos](#), 25-30 cm tall, with a tall conical leg, a narrow mouth, short grooved handles and an originally long and thin body, which later became increasingly thinner.<sup>5</sup>

Another common shape is the trefoil oenochoe found in two types. The first type originates from the oenochoe of the middle Wild Goat style, with a stronger neck, connected with the shoulder in an almost vertical axis, 25-30 cm tall. The second type has a flattened or spherical shape with a low centre of gravity and a relatively tall handle, 13-14 cm tall.<sup>6</sup> Less frequent are the [kylix](#) with a ring-shaped leg or the miniature kylix, the [stamnos](#), the [hydria](#), the amphoriskos with one handle, the [olpe](#), the [aryballos](#), the cup, the [pinakion](#), the [dinos](#), the [crater](#) and the lid.<sup>7</sup>

## 3. Decoration

The decoration of the amphorae always follows the same patterns: rough brush strokes applied on the rim, double [guilloches](#) on the neck, and a meander with squares or a meandering cross. Later examples bear a simpler ornament reminiscent of a meander or a guilloche. The triple handles are decorated with deep grooves.



Nevertheless, it is the body of the vessels which presents the greatest variety in decoration: when figurative scenes are selected, they are usually arranged in zones, with an emphasis originally on the decoration of the shoulder, while the upper side of the belly gradually attracts more interest under the influence of Attic pottery. The work of the 'Altenburg painter', where human figures prevail, is a typical example of the latter tendency, while in the last third of the 6th c. BC, the figures are replaced by a continuous volute pattern filled with sparse **anthemia** and lotus buds.<sup>8</sup>

In case the vessel does not bear any figurative scenes, it is decorated in successive zones, reaching from the shoulder to the lowest point of the body, filled with crescents, tongues, diagonal lines or rows of dots, ivy leaves, meanders, chains of flowers and lotus buds or even abstract rows of birds. The double myrtle leaves are rarer, and so are rows of enscribed anthemia and a pattern of overlapping rosettes attested also on aryballoi and kylikes. This tendency is prevalent in the late phases of the style characterized by hasty work and confusion in rendering details.

An important group of late amphorae suggests a revolutionary use of the decorating area, as the figures are depicted in motion in the centre of the **metopes**, on a free background.

The amphoriskos presents less variety: with the exception of rare cases where a solitary figure appears, it is usually decorated with a net pattern on the belly, which frequently consists of rows of dots.

Another innovative decorative pattern invented by the artists of the Fikellura style is observed on the oenochoai of group S. The front of the vessel's body is treated as a metope and is filled with a scale pattern. From there a broad hatched pattern runs from the front backwards and upwards as far as the zone of the handles.<sup>9</sup>

Pioneer of the Fikellura style is the 'Altenburg painter', who introduced a vivid, somehow hasty style where human figures prevail. The most important representative of the second generation is the 'painter of the running man', who along with his contemporary 'group M painter' established the style of the free background. Another remarkable painter of the same period is the 'painter of the running Satyrs', who is famous for the precision of his drawings, clearly an Attic influence, and his imaginative iconography.<sup>10</sup>

#### 4. Iconography

Few mythological motifs exist: Perseus, **Heracles** and the Centaurs, Busiris, Achilles chasing Troilus and the battle of cranes and pygmies. The most common scenes are those of Satyrs and Centaurs, while the only gods depicted are Dionysus at a symposium and **Ares** as a hoplite.<sup>11</sup> Worth mentioning are the unique figures of a dog-headed winged man and a hare-headed demon.<sup>12</sup>

The scenes depicting **komastai** are very common in the work of the 'Altenburg painter', while the 'painter of the running Satyrs' prefers to depict female figures and worshippers.<sup>13</sup> Finally, the 'painter of the running man' loves to draw adolescents chasing hares.<sup>14</sup>

The representations of animals and beasts descended from the middle Wild Goat style are more common: in the early phase of the style there is a greater variety of animals, most of which do not appear in the mature phase (lions, panthers, bulls, wild boars, dogs with upright ears). Regular themes in the later phase are hunting scenes or an occasional hare, hunting dog, wild goat, deer, sphinx, or griffon as well as groups of birds (mainly partridges and herons).<sup>15</sup>

#### 5. Provenance – Distribution – Imitation – Impact

For a long time the Fikellura pottery style has been attributed to Rhodian workshops due to the impressive finds from the cemetery of Fikellura (anc. Camirus) and other sites on the island of **Rhodes**.<sup>16</sup> Likewise, part of the production has been attributed to **Samos**.<sup>17</sup> Worth mentioning is the opinion that the style is representative of a 'koine' in eastern Greece, with **Miletus**, Rhodes, Samos and **Ephesus** being the main production centres. However, this idea does not agree with the internal cohesion of the Fikellura style.<sup>18</sup> Other researchers pointed at Miletus as the production centre, due to the wide distribution of the style in the colonies of the Black Sea



area.<sup>19</sup> Laboratory research, proved that Miletus was the production centre of this pottery style. These results were also confirmed archaeologically by the numerous finds that were recently uncovered in the city of Miletus.<sup>20</sup>

The main distribution centers were Miletus, [Caria](#), Rhodes, Samos and Naukratis. More limited quantities of vessels come from the coasts of southern and central Asia Minor, [Sardis](#), the Propontis, the Black Sea (mainly Istria, Olbia-Borysthene and [Berezan](#)), Cyprus and the Aegean Islands. The style is rarely found in the northern coasts of Asia Minor, [Aeolis](#), [Mytilene](#) and the colonies of Libya and the Middle East, while few specimens are attested in mainland Greece, Italy and Sicily.<sup>21</sup> Finally, very few vessels bear owners' marks, thus indicating their low commercialisation.<sup>22</sup>

The style undoubtedly influenced the work of Athenian, Boeotian and Cypriot potters.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, although it is difficult to identify the exact connection between the Fikellura style and the miniature kylikes of Samos, recently it has been supported that the latter borrowed elements from the former, contrary to the traditional opinion.<sup>24</sup>

An important workshop producing imitations of the style existed at [Mylasa](#) of Caria. Examples come from the cemetery of Damlibogāz and the sanctuaries at Sinyris and [Labraunda](#). Only a few copies of Fikellura style pottery have been preserved. These come from workshops of Milesian colonies, mainly Istria, Olbia and from some Egyptian and Libyan locations.<sup>25</sup>

---

1. Cook, R.M. - Dupont, P., *East Greek Pottery* (London 1998), p. 89. An earlier chronology concerning the introduction of the style, around 550 BC, is suggested by Schauss, G.P., 'Two Fikellura Vase Painters', *BSA* 81 (1986), pp. 284-288.

2. Cook, R.M., 'Antecedents of Fikellura', *Anatolia* 21 (1978-1980), pp. 71-74, pls. 1-4; Cook, R.M., 'The Wild Goat and Fikellura Styles: some speculations', *OJA* 11 (1992), pp. 262-263. The so-called early Fikellura style is actually a type of Lydian pottery, see Greenwalt, C.H., 'Fikellura and Early Fikellura Pottery from Sardis', *CSCA* 4 (1971), pp. 43-56.

3. Harvard 1959.126: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/image?lookup=1990.01.1269>.

4. Cook, R.M. - Dupont, P., *East Greek Pottery* (London 1998), pp. 77, 201, note 3.

5. Oxford 1939.3: <http://www.beazley.ox.ac.uk/Test/Vases/ViewBook.asp>.

6. CVA Louvre 1, pl. 21.12, and Cook, R.M., 'Fikellura Pottery', *BSA* 34 (1933-1934), p. 37, no. R1, pl. 16a respectively.

7. Shapes: Cook, R.M., 'Fikellura Pottery', *BSA* 34 (1933-1934), p. 45 ff., Cook, R.M. - Dupont, P., *East Greek Pottery* (London 1998), pp. 77-78.

8. Cook, R.M. - Dupont, P., *East Greek Pottery* (London 1998), p. 79 ff., pl. 10.1, 3 and 8.

9. S: Walter-Karydi, E., *Samos VI.1. Samische Gefässe des 6. Jahrhunderts v.Chr.* (Bonn 1973), nos 47-58.

10. Cook, R.M., 'Fikellura Pottery', *BSA* 34 (1933-1934), pp. 46-51; CVA British Museum 8, pp. 1-5; Cook, R.M. - Dupont, E., *East Greek Pottery* (London 1998), pp. 78-86; Schauss, G.P., 'Two Fikellura Vase Painters', *BSA* 81 (1986), pp. 251-296.

11. Tempesta, A., 'Le Raffigurazioni mitologiche sulla ceramica greco-orientale arcaica', *RdA Supplemento* 19 (Roma 1998), pp. 170-171, pls. 33-35.

12. Walter-Karydi, E., *Samos VI.1. Samische Gefässe des 6. Jahrhunderts v.Chr.* (Bonn 1973), pl 87, no. 639; Pottier, E., CVA Paris, Louvre 1 (Paris 1919), pl. 18.11.



13. Schauss, G.P., 'Two Fikellura Vase Painters', *BSA* 81 (1986), pp. 253-256, nos. 11-17, 19-31, 37-45, 51-52, and p. 271 ff., .nos. 55-56, 58-59, 62, 65, 68-71 respectively.
14. Cook, R.M. - Dupont, P., *East Greek Pottery* (London 1998), p. 84, pict. 10.6.
15. Cook, R.M., 'Fikellura Pottery', *BSA* 34 (1933-1934).
16. Rhodian origin: Cook, R.M., 'Fikellura Pottery', *BSA* 34 (1933-1934), pp. 90-93. Finds: Gates, C., *From Cremation to Inhumation: Burial Practices at Ialysos and Kameiros during the Middle Archaic Period, ca. 626-525 B.C.* (Los Angeles 1983), p. 9.
17. Bohlau, J., *Aus jonischen und italischen Nekropolen. Ausgrabungen und Untersuchungen zur nachmykenischen Kunst* (Leipzig 1898), pp. 34-35, 43; Walter-Karydi, E., *Samos VI.1. Samische Gefässe des 6. Jahrhunderts v.Chr.* (Bonn 1973), pp. 34, 118, pl. 14, no. 122.
18. Walter-Karydi, E., *Samos VI.1. Samische Gefässe des 6. Jahrhunderts v.Chr.* (Bonn 1973).
19. Lambrino, M., *Les vases archaïques d'Histria* (Bucarest 1938), pp. 311, 314-317.
20. Laboratory research: Dupont, P., 'Classification et détermination de provenance de céramiques grecques orientales archaïques d'Istros. Rapport préliminaire', *Dacia* 27 (1983), pp. 27-28, 34. Miletus finds: Schauss, G.P., 'The Distribution of Chian and Fikellura Pottery in the East', *MBAH* 15 (1996), p. 32, note 11; Ketteter, K., 'Ein Fikellurakassel aus dem Aphroditeheiligtum', *AA* (1999), pp. 213-221; Schotzhauer, U., 'Funde aus Milet. IV. Beobachtungen zu Trinksgefassen des Fikellurastils', *AA* (1999), pp. 232-239.
21. Distribution of Fikellura style: Cook, R.M., "Fikellura Pottery", *BSA* 34 (1933-1934), pp. 96-98. CVA British Museum 8, p. 5. *Les céramiques de la Grèce de l'est et leur diffusion en occident. Colloque International. Centre Jean Bérard, Institut français de Naples, 6-9 juillet 1976* (Paris - Naples 1978). Bouzek, J., *Studies of Greek Pottery in the Black Sea Area* (Prague 1990), pp. 22-31, 34. Schauss, G.P., "The Distribution of Chian and Fikellura Pottery in the East", *MBAH* 15 (1996), pp. 30-37.
22. Johnston, A., "Rhodian readings", *BSA* 70 (1975), p. 145 ff.
23. Jackson, D.A., *East Greek Influences on Attic Vases* (London 1976), chap. 2; Shefton, B.B., 'East Greek Influences in Sixth Century Attic Vase-Painting and Some Laconian Trails', in *Greek Vases in the Getty Museum* 4 (Malibu 1989), pp. 41-72; Wolters, P., *Das Kabirionheiligtum bei Theben 1* (Berlin 1940), pl. 35.1-3; Karageorghis, V., 'Two Pictorially Decorated Vases from Amathus', *RDAC* (1998), pp. 107-109, pl. 8.1-3.
24. Cook, R.M., 'The Wild Goat and Fikellura Styles: some speculations', *OJA* 11 (1992), p. 263.
25. Mylasa: Hemelrijk, E.A., "A Group of Provincial East-Greek Vases from South-Western Asia Minor", *BABesch* 57 (1982), pp. 33-55. Gercke, P., *Funde aus der Antike* (Kassel 1981). Devambe, P., *Le sanctuaire de Sinouri* 2 (Paris 1959), pls. 23, 24.1-9. Jully, J.-J., *Labraunda. Swedish Excavations and Researches*, vol. II, part III, *Archaic Pottery* (Stockholm 1981), p. 12, no. 40. For Istria see Dupont, P., "Classification et détermination de provenance de céramiques grecques orientales archaïques d'Istros. Rapport préliminaire", *Dacia* 27 (1983), pp. 27-28, 34. Egypt and Libya: Cook, R.M. - Dupont, P., *East Greek Pottery* (London 1998), pp. 90-91, 202, notes 38, 39.

---

#### Bibliography :

	<b>Boardman J.</b> , <i>Early Greek Vase Painting</i> , London 1998
	<b>Cook R.M., Dupont P.</b> , <i>East Greek Pottery</i> , London 1998



	<b>Tempesta A.</b> , <i>Le Raffigurazioni mitologiche sulla ceramica greco-orientale arcaica</i> , Roma 1998, RdA Supplemento 19
	<b>Walter-Karydi E.</b> , <i>Samische Gefässe des 6. Jahrhunderts v. Chr.</i> , Bonn 1973, Samos VI.1.
	<b>Cook R.M.</b> , <i>Ελληνική Αγγειογραφία</i> , 3, Αθήνα 1994, Τσουκλίδου, Δ. (μτφρ.)
	<b>Cook R.M.</b> , "Fikellura Pottery", <i>BSA</i> , 34, 1933-1934, 1-98
	<b>Dupont P.</b> , "Classification et détermination de provenance de céramiques grecques orientales archaïques d'Istros. Rapport préliminaire", <i>Dacia</i> , 27, 1983, 19-43
	<b>Schauss G.P.</b> , "Fikellura Vases and Painters", <i>Echos du Monde Classique / Classical Views</i> 27, 27, 1983, 226-230
	<b>Schauss G.P.</b> , "Two Fikellura Vase Painters", <i>BSA</i> , 81, 1986, 251-295

## Webliography :

	Fikellura Pottery <a href="http://www2.ocn.ne.jp/~greekart/vase/h_fikell_e.html">http://www2.ocn.ne.jp/~greekart/vase/h_fikell_e.html</a>
	Fikellura style amphora <a href="http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/gr/f/fikellura_style_amphora_with_a.aspx">http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/highlights/highlight_objects/gr/f/fikellura_style_amphora_with_a.aspx</a>

## Glossary :

	<b>amphora, the</b> from the greek words "αμφί" (on both sides) and "φέρω" (carry): vessel with long ovoid body and a considerably narrower neck made in various sizes from the smaller perfume oil container to the large storage receivers of liquids and solids. It stands on a small foot and it bears two invariable vertical handles on either side. Some of the distinguished types of the amphorae are these whose lower part is tapering to the point (narrow bottomed), the neck type, the Nicosthenian, the Nola, the Panathenaic, the Tyrrhenian, the SOS type.
	<b>amphoriskos</b> A vessel for holding perfume oil; its shape is that of an upside-down cone, and it features two handles at its shoulder.
	<b>anthemion (Palmette)</b> A floral decorative motif in the form of a palmette, very widespread in the Greek art and architecture.
	<b>aryballos, the</b> A flask for holding perfume oil of a spherical or globular shape.
	<b>black figure technique</b> Decorative technique of vase painting. It involves painting figures in black silhouette on the pale clay, while the anatomic details are given in incised lines.
	<b>crater, the</b> from the greek verb "κεράννυμι" (to mix). Big, open vessel for mixing wine with water. The wine was then poured into oinochoae. There are various craters' forms depending on body and handle shape: column-, volute-, calyx-, and bell crater. They were usually placed in the middle of the room where symposia were held-
	<b>dinos, lebes, the</b> Another name for lebes. Big, open, semispherical vessel without handles and very low neck. It bears no foot and it was used for mixing wine with water and as a prize. When it was standing on a high stand and had two tall vertical handles disposed on a tall neck and a mouth covered with a lid, it was called "lebes gamikos" and was used for marriage rituals.
	<b>guilloche, the</b> An ornament formed of interlaced bands.




 **hydria**

From the greek word "hydor" (water). It bears three handles, two for carrying and one placed vertical to the wide shoulder of the vessel for pouring. Water was usually carried, but hydria was also often used as ballot box and cinerary urn. The type of the hydria whose neck is not clearly separated from the body is called "calpis".

 **Komastes, the**


The person participating in the "Komos", the orgiastic dance in honour of Dionysus. For the archaeologists, the komastai are the dancers related to the symposium and the wine-drinking.

 **kylix, the**

The most essential ancient drinking cup. It bears a wide and shallow body raised on a stem from a foot. It always has horizontal handles disposed symmetrically, often swinging upwards. The interior, flat, round bottom of the vessel was used as surface for painted decoration. There are many different types of kylikes such as the Komast type, the Siana type, types A, B, C, the Droop and the Cassel cups.

 **metope (1. architecture, 2. painting)**


1. Rectangular element separating the triglyphs on a Doric frieze. Metopes often have figurative relief representations.
2. rectangular area, usually at the height of the vessel's handles, depicting figural or non figural ornamental representations.

 **mica**


Clay inclusions usually derived from eroded minerals and stones (mostly marble and schist).

 **oinochoe**

From the greek words "οἶνος" (wine) and "χέω" (pour). Ovoid, single-handled wine jug usually taller than it is wide. There have been distinguished 10 types based on variations of profile, mouth type and handle form.

 **olpe**

Some years ago it was considered as an oinochoe type. It is an ovoid and tall (if compared with its breadth) vessel with one high handle that surpasses its mouth. It is used for pouring liquids.

 **pinakion**

painted plate.

 **rosette, the**

An ornament with a generally circular combination of parts resembling a flower or plant.

 **Silhouette technique**

Technique of vase painting. It involves black-painted figures without incised lines.

 **slip**

Thin wash of liquid clay applied to the vessel or tile prior to firing in a kiln, in order to win a smooth surface after firing.

 **stamnos**

vessel used for serving and storing liquids. It was much squatter than the amphora and it had two stubby handles disposed on its broad shoulder. It also had a low neck and foot. Many examples have been found in Etruria.