

NON DESTRUCTIVE ANALYSIS OF A RED FIGURE VASE OF UNCERTAIN ATTRIBUTION FROM FALERII VETERES

L. Ambrosini¹ -- A.C. Felici² -- G. Fronterotta² -- M. Piacentini² -- M.
Vendittelli²

¹ *Istituto di Studi sulle Civiltà Italiane e del Mediterraneo Antico del C.N.R., Viale
dell'Università 11 - 00185 Roma, Italy*

² *Laboratorio di Analisi non Distruttive e Archeometria - Dipartimento di Energetica,
Università di Roma "La Sapienza", via A. Scarpa 16 - 00161 Roma, Italy*

The subject of this research was a red figure calyx krater of excellent workmanship found in the Celle necropolis in Falerii Veteres and kept in the Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia in Rome. Since its discovery, at the end of the XIX century, the vase has been the subject of a great archaeological dispute and it has been attributed, from time to time, to Faliscan, Campanian, Southern Italian or Greek production. Recently, some archaeologists advanced the hypothesis that it could be a work of the Athenian potter known as the Uppsala painter.

In order to try to settle this dispute the elemental composition of the ceramic and of the painted surface of the vase, determined by X-ray fluorescence (XRF) spectrometry, was compared to that of other red figure vases coming from different workshops and kept in the Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia in Rome and in the Museo Archeologico dell' Agro Falisco in Civita Castellana. The vases were analysed in situ using a portable XRF spectrometer operating in air and constituted by an X-ray generator with a Pd anode, a Peltier cooled Si-pin X-ray detector and an electronic chain for the amplification and the detection of the signal. The comparison of the relative percentage of the minority elements, in particular Cr, Ni, Sr, Rb and Zr, lead to exclude any similarity between the vase and the ones of Italic production while the presence of Ni and Cr with a relative percentage comparable with one measured in all the Greek vases could support the archaeological attributions to an Athenian workshop.