ARCHAEOLOGICAL-SOCIAL PROJECT IN CHIARAMONTE GULFI (RG)

The necropolis, located in the district of **San Nicola/Giglia**, is part of a large rural settlement developed during the imperial, late antique and, presumably, Byzantine period. In the area, also known thanks to the end of the 19th century writings by **Baron Corrado Melfi**, numerous **objects of personal ornamentation** (earrings, rings and necklaces in bronze, silver, gold or glass), **coins**, **ceramic containers** (cups, plates, jugs and oil lamps) and **metals** were found in addition to the tombs.

The site constitutes an exceptionally important work site for at least **three reasons**. First of all, the size of the necropolis and the consistency of the human remains that are being found allow us to set up a **paradigmatic anthropological research** on the village community: anthropometric characters, the age of death of individuals, paleopathologies, food habits, mobility of individuals and processes of ethnic interaction (DNA analysis).

Secondly, in our case the **study of funerary rituals** is particularly significant because the chronology of the burial ground extends, in the area affected by the excavation, between the III and the beginning of the V century d. C. This is a period of transition between paganism and Christianity, characterized by processes of continuity and change in the concept of the afterlife, in the relationship between the living and the dead, as well as in the memory of the dead.

Thirdly - another reason of great interest - given that the archaeological investigation is beginning to highlight the town at about 150m as the crow flies from the necropolis, the **possibility of a comparative investigation** between the two areas constitutes a situation privileged for the analysis of the relationship between the cult organization of the dead and the social, economic and productive structure of the village.