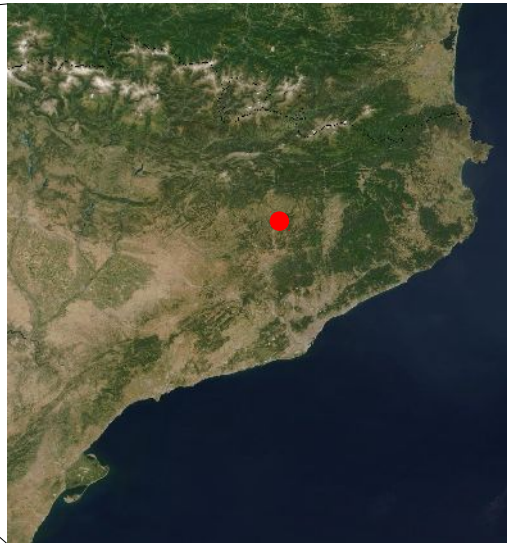
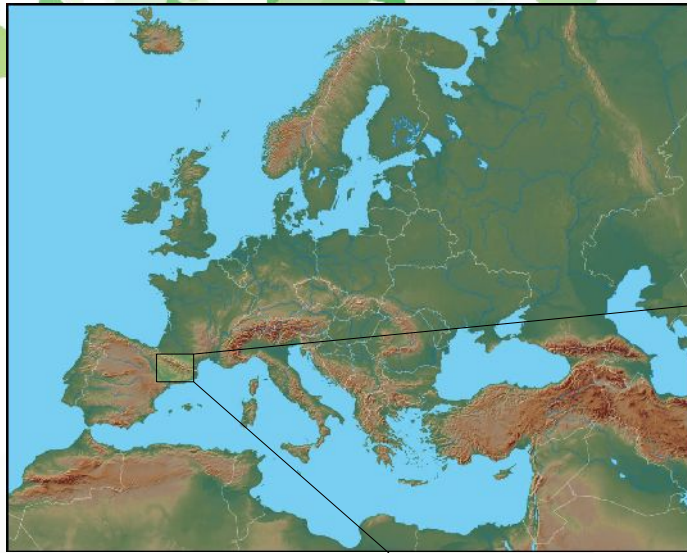


# Tracing a Roman siege from Late Roman Republic wars

## Puigciutat (NE Iberian Peninsula)

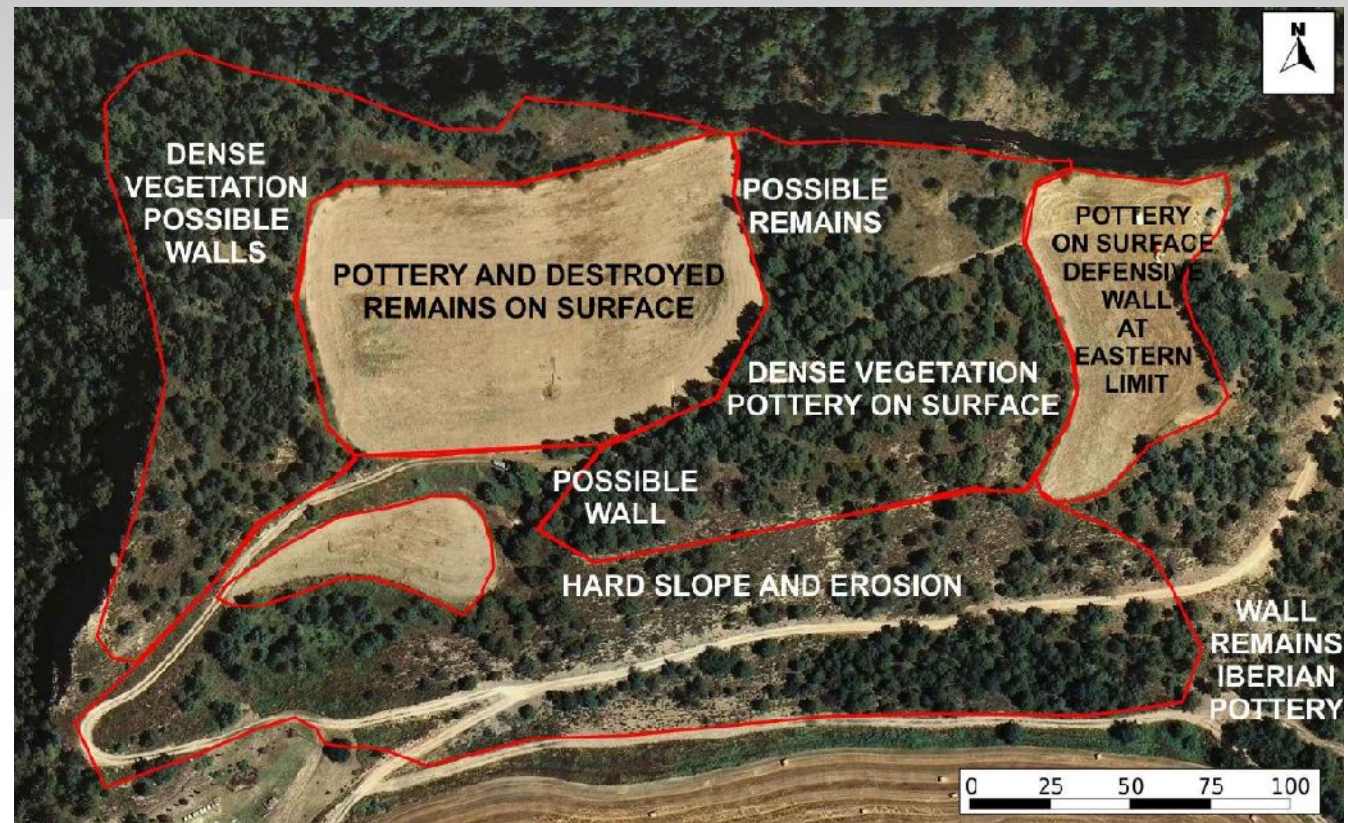


**Eduard Ble Gimeno** - Universitat de Barcelona - GRACPE  
**Xavier Rubio Campillo** – Barcelona Supercomputing Centre - CASE  
**Pau Valdés Matías** – Universitat de Barcelona - GRACPE  
**Maria Yubero Gómez** – Universitat de Barcelona - SERP

# Summary

- ▼ The site
- ▼ Some questions
- ▼ Planning the research project
  - ▼ Small scale
  - ▼ Meso scale
  - ▼ Large scale
- ▼ Discussion
- ▼ Concluding remarks

# The site



- ▼ Puigciutat (literally, city on the hill) was surveyed during in 1975 & 1982
- ▼ Fieldwork surveys show that there is an unusual concentration of Italian pottery from I BC
- ▼ The site was abandoned after that
- ▼ Illegal metal detectorists found a coin treasure in the site

# Some questions

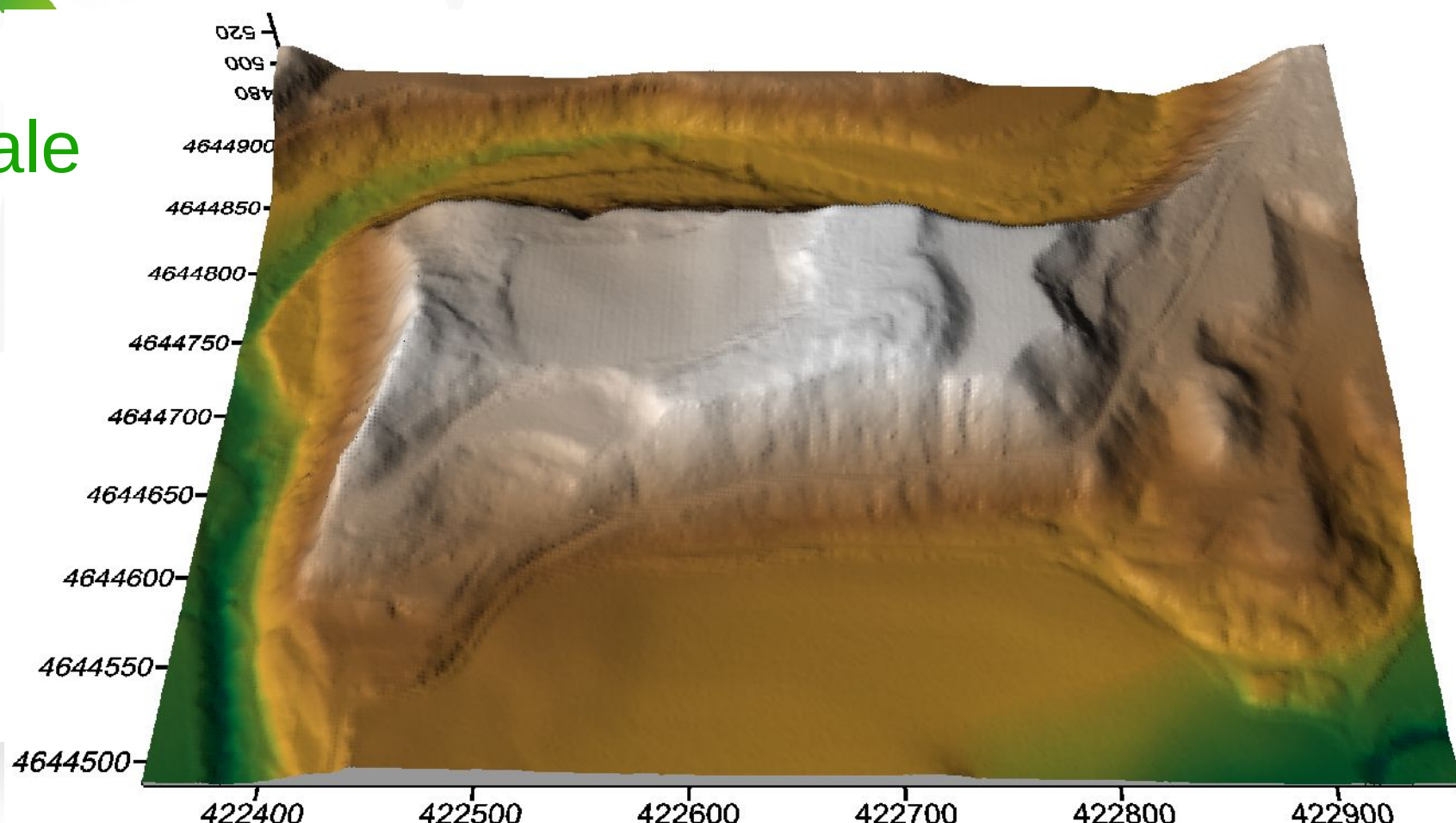
- ▼ Is the site a battlefield between Roman armies?
- ▼ Can we relate it to a particular conflict?
- ▼ Was it destroyed during an assault? Can we trace the action?



# Planning the research project

- ▼ Small scale (intrasite)
  - ▼ Develop a geophysical survey plan to understand the site
  - ▼ Excavate the most promising zones
- ▼ Medium scale (site and surroundings)
  - ▼ Detect potential assault approaches using spatial analysis
  - ▼ Metal detecting surveys of these zones
  - ▼ Detection and survey of besieger's camp sites
- ▼ Large scale (geostrategy)
  - ▼ Geographical modelling of the environment

Small scale



# Geophysical surveys

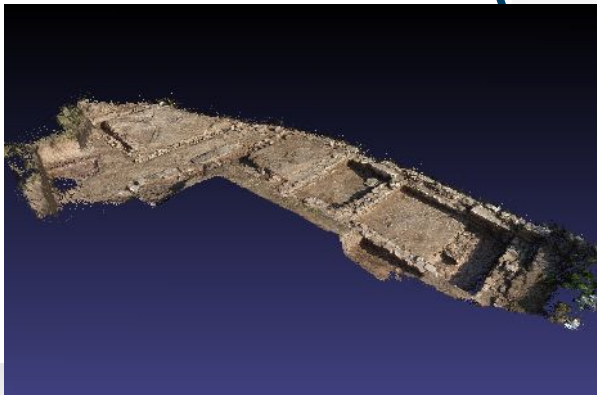
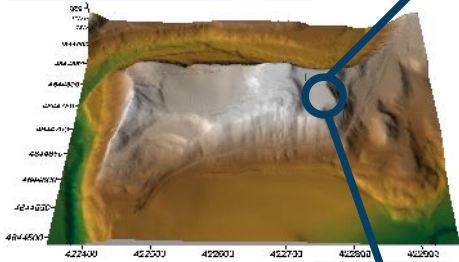
- ▼ Different studies were undertaken to detect structures:
  - ▼ Magnetometer
  - ▼ Ground Penetrating Radar





# Excavations

- Based on geophysical surveys the team worked in two zones, one of them near the wall.





# Equipment

- ▼ The zone revealed several findings related to Roman military equipment.

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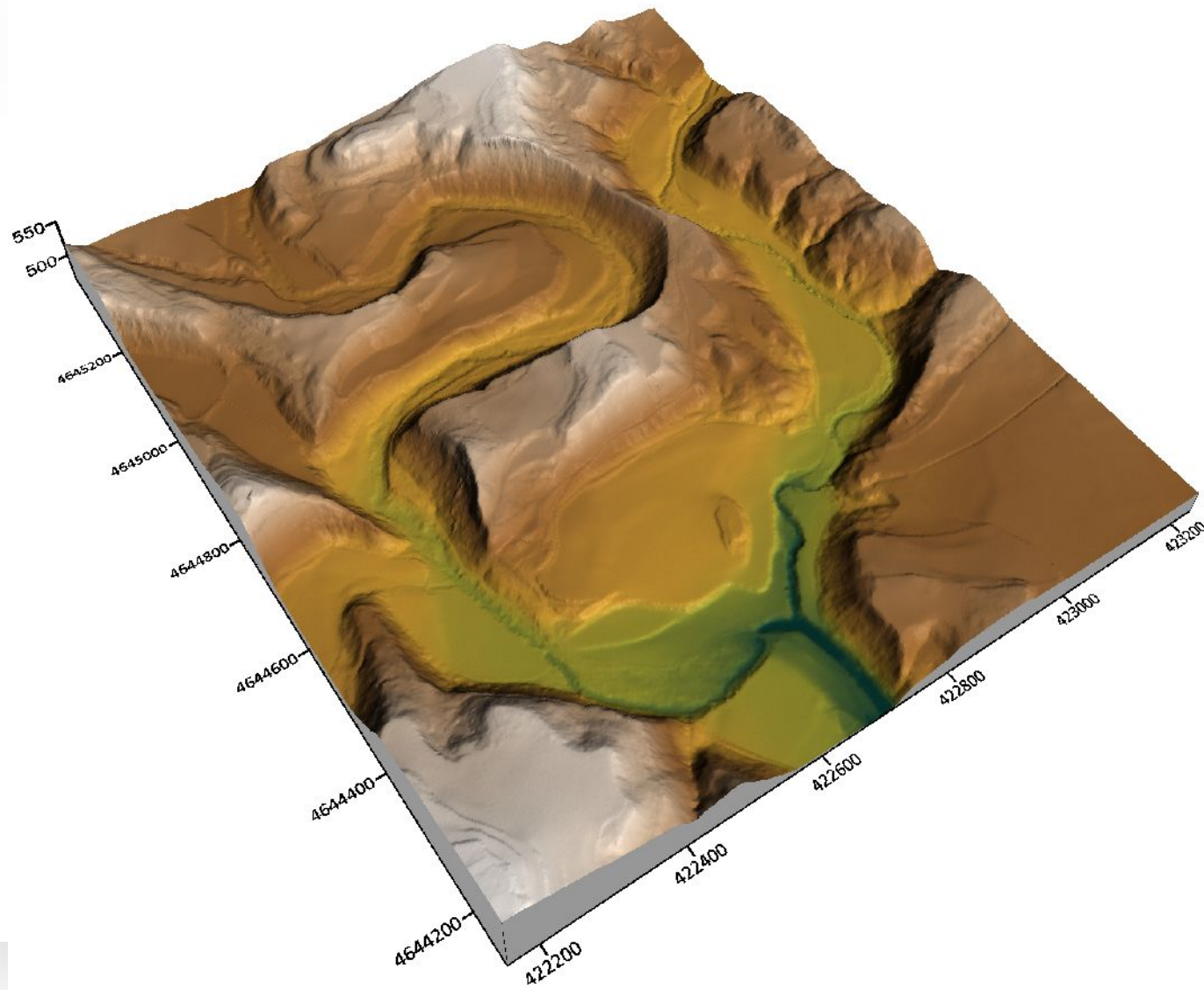
# Equipment

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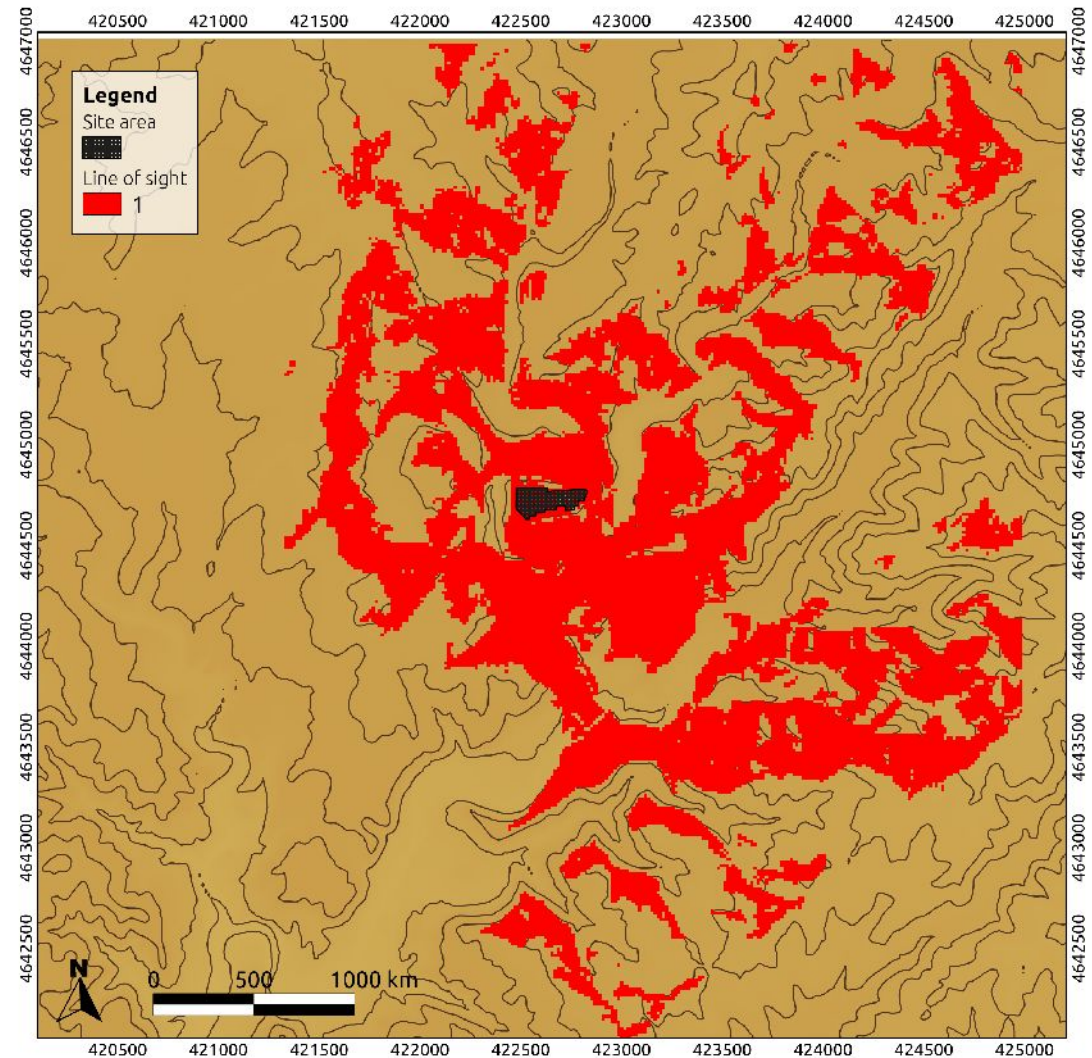
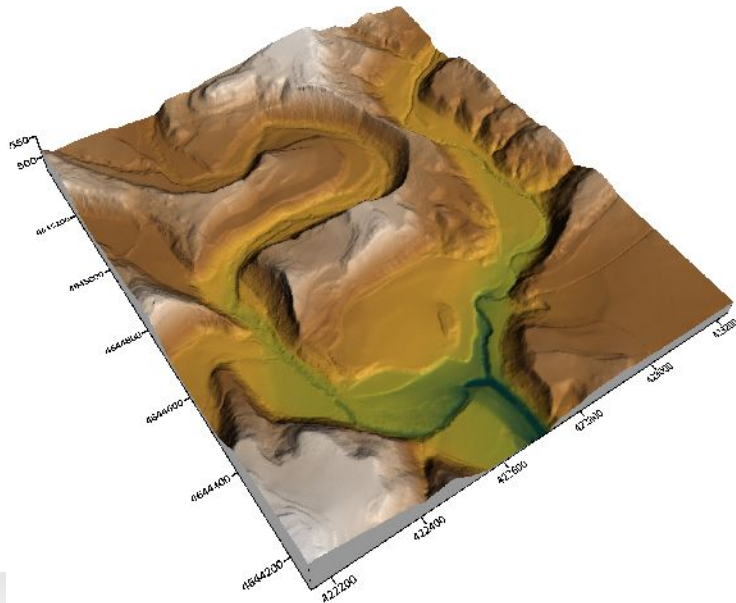
Mesoscale





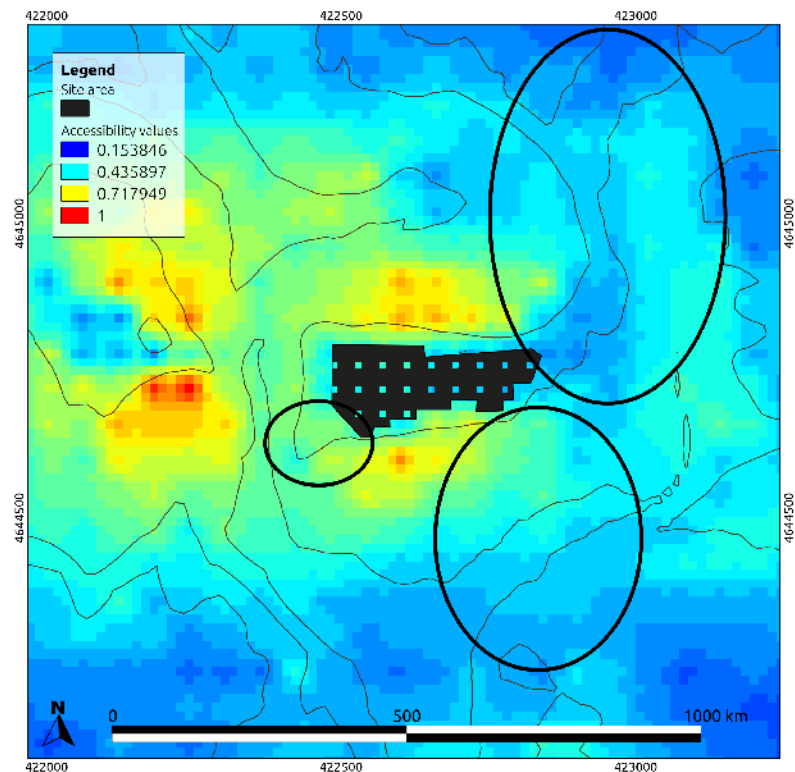
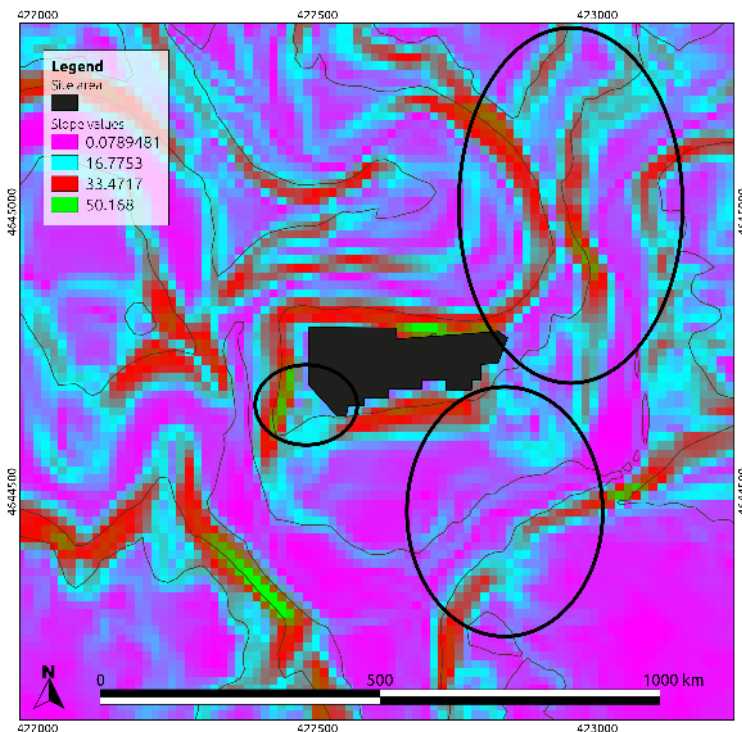
# The site and its surroundings

- ▶ Puigciutat's location is well suited for defense:
  - ▶ Controls the zone around it
  - ▶ It is difficult to approach without notice



# Tracing the assault

- Several surveys were made around the perimeter.
- Our hypothesis is that the site was assaulted and destroyed
- Accessibility and slope analysis showed the most promising zones





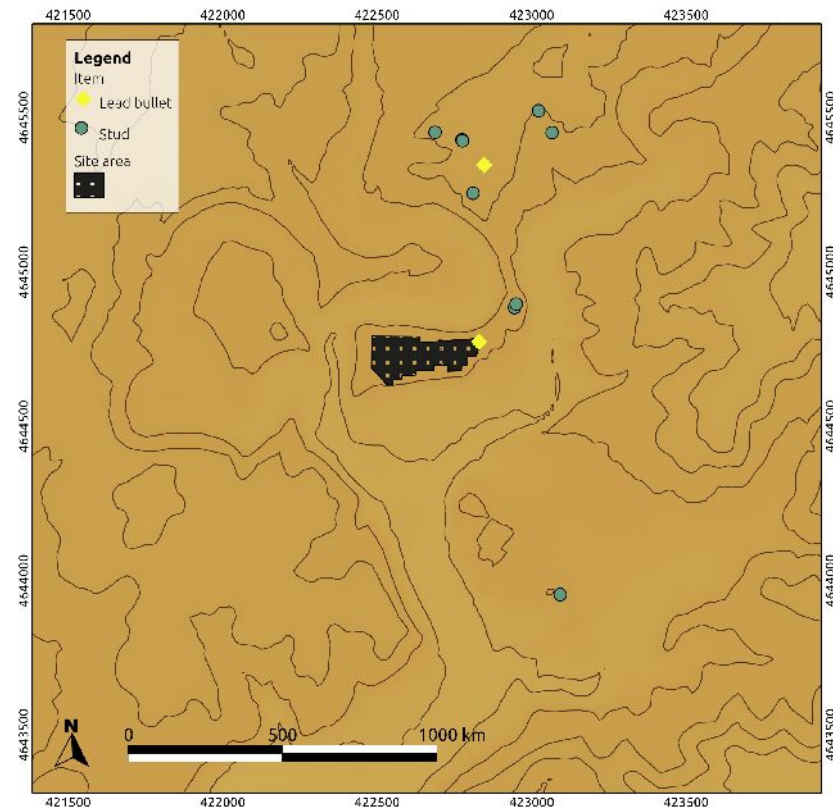
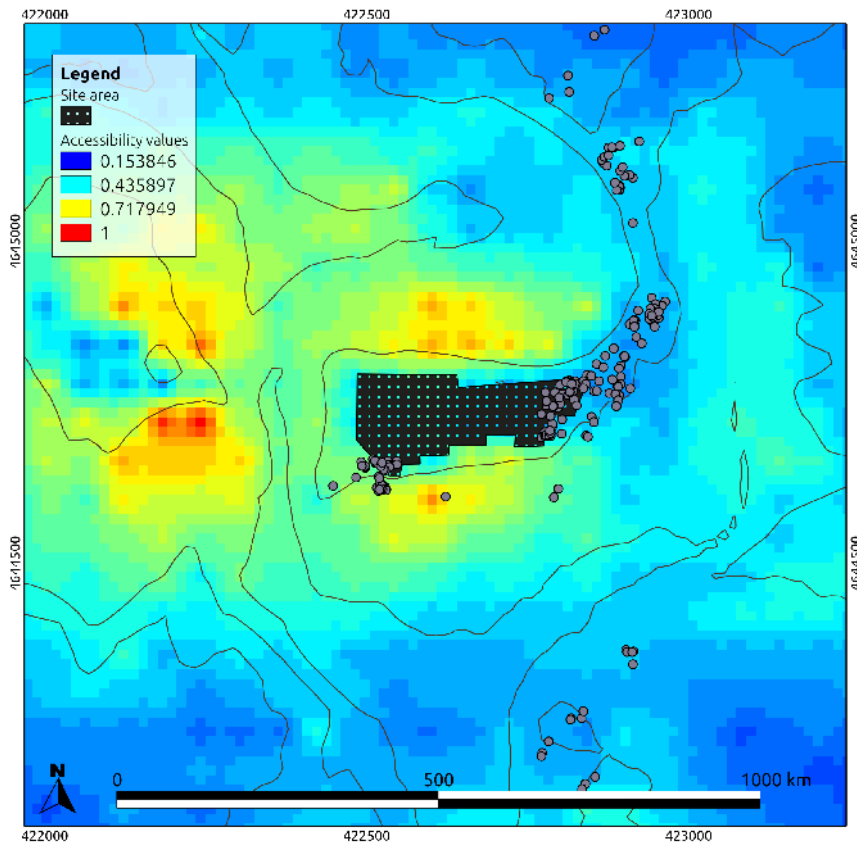
# Tracing the assault





# Tracing the assault

- Additional military equipment was uncovered on one of the two potential approaches:
  - Studs
  - Lead bullets



# Detecting camp sites

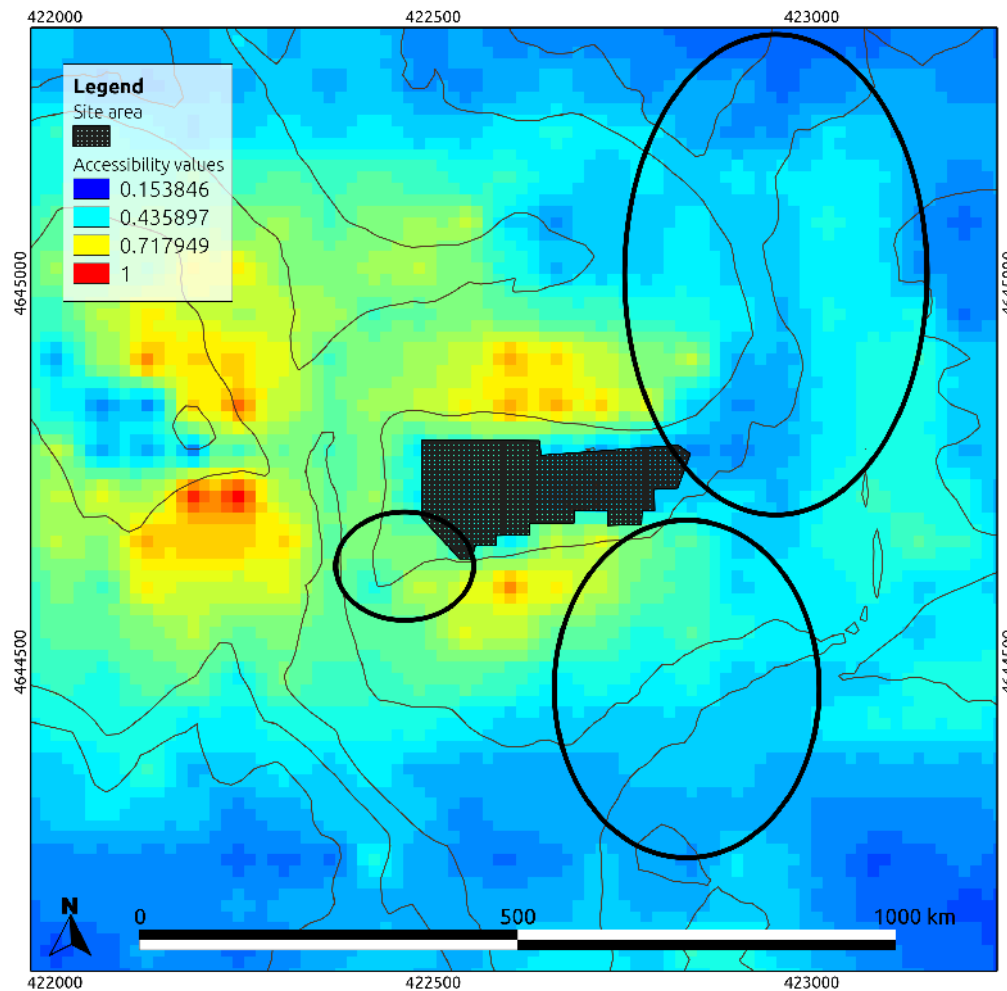
- ▼ If the site was destroyed by assault, it is possible that:
  - ▼ The attackers built a camp the night before...

**OR**

- ▼ A siege was established, deploying troops on different camps.

# Detecting camp sites

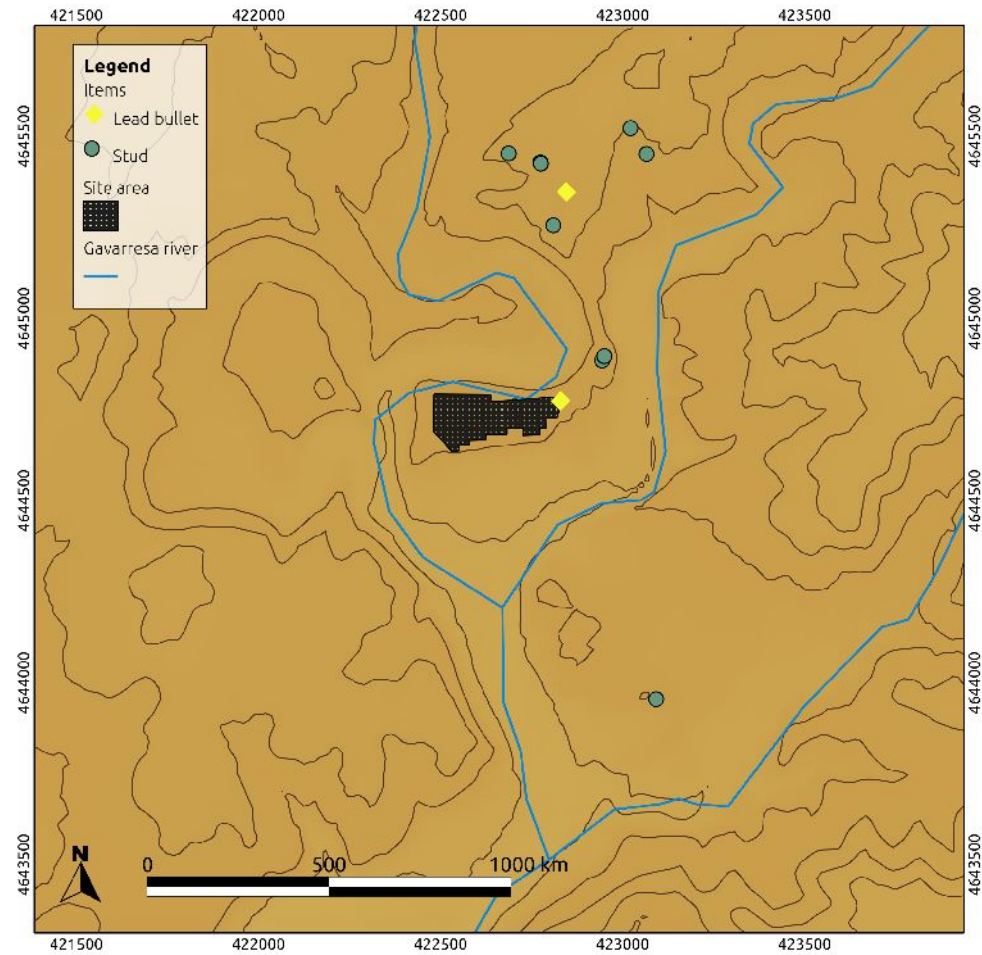
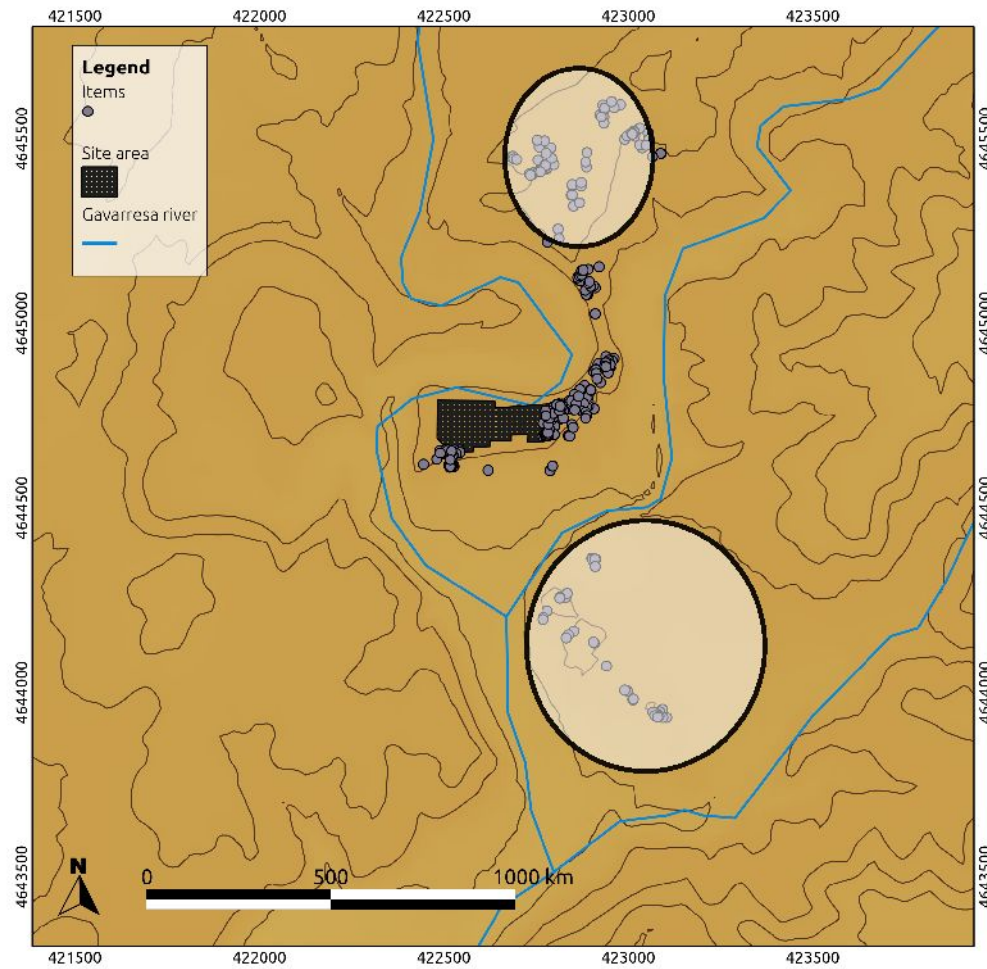
- We used the same approach to detect and survey potential camps



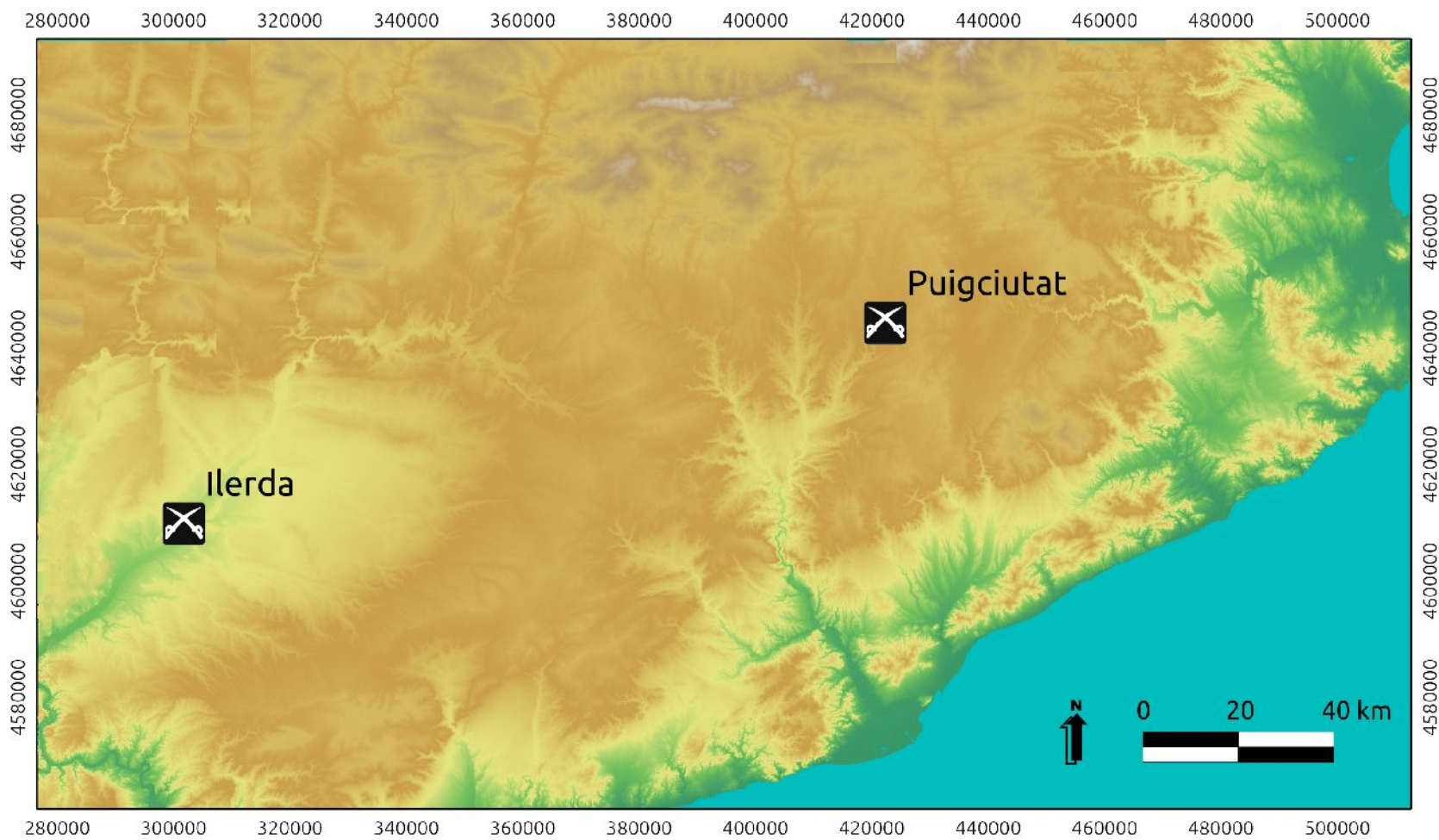


# Detecting camp sites

- Some interesting findings appeared, but we need additional fieldwork



# Large scale



# Why Puigciutat?

- ▼ There is no evidence of this combat in classical textual sources:
  - ▼ Caesar
  - ▼ Sallustius
  - ▼ Plutarch
- ▼ This fact introduces an interesting methodological issue:
  - ▼ What can we get from these sources?
  - ▼ How can we understand the battle without them?

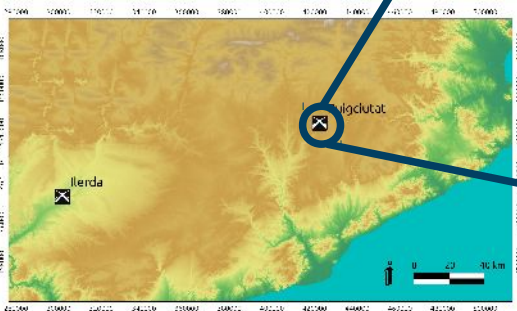
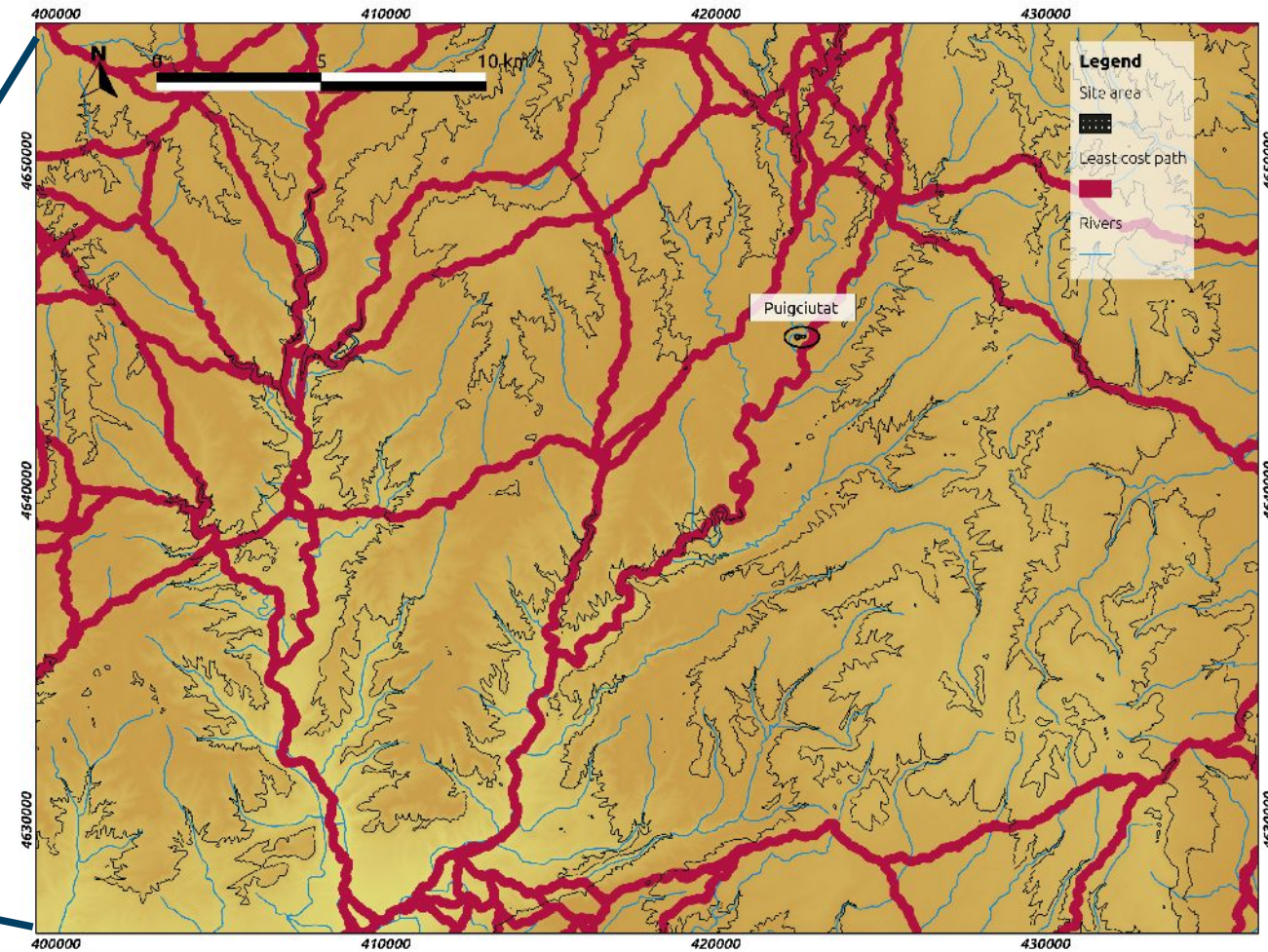


# Geostrategy

- ▼ Nevertheless, we have some hints:
  - ▼ Gallia was an important supplier for this zone
  - ▼ These were huge armies (>40.000 soldiers), that couldn't live just from local resources:
    - ▼ They needed logistic centres (cities and outposts)
    - ▼ In any case, they also required support from *oppida* an cities in the theatre of operations.
  - ▼ Local *oppida* played a vital role during Ilerda's campaign.

# Geostrategy

- ▶ Path analysis show that Puigciutat does not seem to be in a particular key route
- ▶ We need to explain the importance of the site on its own



# Discussion

- ▼ Puigciutat was destroyed during a Roman Civil War, probably during the Ilerda campaign (49 BC).
- ▼ Although no classical textual sources talked about this battle, it seems that the attacking army was not small, and deployed a camp before the assault.
- ▼ A question remains...how to improve the integration between intrasite excavations and outer side metal detector surveys?
- ▼ What are the limits of battlefield archaeology when no textual sources explain the engagement?



# Thank you!

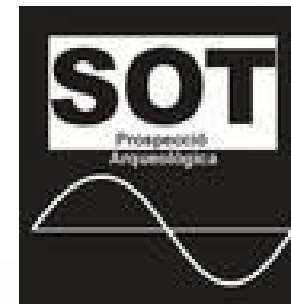
**GRACPE**

Grup de Recerca d'Arqueologia  
Clàssica, Protohistòrica i Egípcia



**Barcelona  
Supercomputing  
Center**

*Centro Nacional de Supercomputación*



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