

## FIRST STOP: MADEIRA ISLAND

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### Resumo/Abstract

Bioinvasions is a research topic that brings together academics from the areas of biology, social sciences and humanities in order to understand the complex processes of prevention, introduction and mitigation. The natural studies approach the biological features that allow some species, at some times and some places, to become invasive. Alternatively, the cultural studies may contribute to show up values, ideas and perceptions, the way people intervene in transferring organisms and how societies are driven by harmful species in particular moments. A research project on environmental history of plant pests in Southern Europe, undertaken since March 2014 at the Institute of Contemporary History (IHC-FCSH, Univ. NOVA de Lisboa) is framed by a permanent dialogue between biological features and the study of the relationship between humans and nature.

Exploring a case-study, this paper examines the arrival, establishment and invasion of Madeira Island by the Argentine Ant (*Linepithema humile*, Mayr). Native to the Paraná River basin in South America, the species is currently widespread in the five continents due to human agency. Trade and travel were the pathways for this expansion, which had the first record outside its native range on Madeira Island, *ca.* 1850. For centuries the island was a stopover of the transatlantic routes. A mild climate favours the proliferation of an extended sort of plant pests introduced from elsewhere.

Historical material from different sources, origins and scales, such as scientific publications, academic theses, official documents, cartography and media are analysed. We propose a cartographic narrative from the 19th century onwards, supported by records of its occurrence and the responses given by people to damages in human welfare, agriculture and native biodiversity. Results are related with commercial and leisure routes, highlighting the role of this invasive species in the context of local environmental history.

### CV

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**Daniel Alves** is Assistant Professor in the Department of History and Researcher in the Instituto de História Contemporânea (IHC) at FCSH, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa. He has MA in Nineteenth Century History (2001) and a PhD in Economic and Social Contemporary History (2010). His areas of interest are Economic and Social History, Urban History, History of Revolutions, Historical GIS and the Digital Humanities in general. He has been involved in several funded research projects that deal with the use of relational databases and geographic information systems applied to historical research, such as “Atlas, Historical Cartography” (<http://atlas.fcsh.unl.pt/>) and “Atlas of Literary Landscapes of Mainland Portugal” (<http://paisagensliterarias.ielt.org/>). He is currently involved in the creation of a historical GIS of Lisbon (Portugal) in the end of the nineteenth century. He published a few books and papers in Portuguese and International peer reviewed journals, mainly about Economic and Social History, and Historical GIS. Recently he was guest editor of the special issue “Digital Methods and Tools for Historical Research” (vol. 8.1) of the International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing. He is a founding member of the Associação das Humanidades Digitais (Association for Digital Humanities <http://ahdig.org/>). CV: online; Email: [alves.r.daniel@gmail.com](mailto:alves.r.daniel@gmail.com)