

REVIEWER'S REPORT

Manuscript No.: JNHST-020

Title: A Historical and Geographical Reading of Rusadir (Melilla) through the Writings of Historians and Geographers

Recommendation:

- Accept as it is
- Accept after minor revision.....
- Accept after major revision
- Do not accept (*Reasons below*)

Rating	Excel.	Good	Fair	Poor
Originality	...			
Techn. Quality		...		
Clarity	...			
Significance	...			

Reviewer's ID: JNJST-06

Detailed Reviewer's Report

The paper titled “*A Historical and Geographical Reading of Rusadir (Melilla) through the Writings of Historians and Geographers*” presents a comprehensive interdisciplinary analysis of the ancient city of Rusadir, combining historical narratives with geographical interpretation. The study is well-structured, beginning with a clear abstract and introduction that establish the research problem, objectives, and significance. It effectively highlights the importance of Rusadir as a strategic Mediterranean port and frames the central inquiry around how classical and modern sources contribute to reconstructing its historical and spatial development. The literature foundation of the paper is strong, drawing on classical historians such as Strabo, Ptolemy, and Pliny, alongside Arab scholars like Al-Bakri and Ibn Khaldun, and supported by modern geographical and archaeological studies. This wide range of sources strengthens the academic credibility of the research. The author successfully demonstrates how different historical periods produced varying representations of Rusadir from a maritime port in classical writings to a fortified city in medieval Islamic texts, and finally to a subject of structural analysis in modern scholarship. This diachronic approach adds depth and originality to the study.

The “Results and Discussion” section is particularly detailed and analytically rich. It traces the historical evolution of Rusadir across Phoenician, Carthaginian, Roman, and Islamic periods, emphasizing continuity in its commercial and strategic roles. The geographical analysis is equally compelling, as it explains how physical features such as the rocky peninsula, natural harbor, and transitional location between mountains and sea shaped the city’s long-term development. The integration of Fernand Braudel’s concept of the *longue durée* further strengthens the theoretical framework and helps explain the persistence of Rusadir’s significance despite changing political regimes. Another strength of the paper lies in its analytical reading of historical and geographical writings. The author goes beyond simple description to show how perceptions of Rusadir evolved across intellectual traditions. This comparative perspective—classical, medieval Islamic, and modern—demonstrates a clear understanding of historiography and geographical thought, making the study more interpretative rather than merely descriptive.

However, the paper could be improved in certain areas. While the discussion is detailed, some sections tend to be repetitive, particularly in emphasizing the city’s strategic importance. The language, though academic, occasionally becomes overly dense, which may affect readability. Additionally, the study would benefit from more direct engagement with recent archaeological findings or empirical data to complement the textual analysis. Including maps, figures, or clearer visual references within the discussion could also enhance clarity.

In conclusion, the paper is a well-researched and insightful contribution to the field of historical geography. It successfully demonstrates that Rusadir was not merely a local settlement but a dynamic Mediterranean hub shaped by geography and historical processes. The study’s interdisciplinary approach, strong theoretical grounding, and use of diverse sources make it valuable for scholars interested in Mediterranean history, urban studies, and geo-historical analysis.