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**PAPER FOR THE X INTERNACIONAL CONGRESS OF THE SPANISH SOCIETY OF IRANIAN STUDIES TO BE HELD IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TBILISI (GEORGIA) WITH THE SUPPORT OF OTHER GEORGIAN LEADING INSTITUTIONS IN THE FIELD OF IRANIAN STUDIES AND DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.**

**TITLE:** The iconographic representation of Persia as a dystopia of decadence and splendour in the Modern and Contemporary Age in connection with prevailing orientalist discourses in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Summary:** The purpose of this paper is to investigate, from the perspective of iconography from the 16th to the 19th centuries, the stereotype that we already find in the first Greek historians such as Herodotus and Xenophon of Persia as the territory of splendor and excess. This discourse will promote a Western approach to the decline of empires, typical of the moral and political treatises of the Baroque and the Enlightenment, which will reach its peak during Orientalism due to the territorial disputes between the great powers known as the Great Game. The image of Persia and the Persians that still exists in the West and which plays an important part in the approach of different countries will relation to diplomatic, commercial and cultural relations with Iran is to a great extent conditioned by a prevailing post-Orientalist discourse that finds support in a widespread literature of an imaginary Persia which having been the cradle of civilizations became in the Modern Age a territory for encroachment and dispute between Great Britain and Russia.