

# INTRODUCTION

---

Marcel Proust said « the voyage of discovery is not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes ».

Living in Western societies where information's flow is endless, what do we really know about others? Does learning about other people and understanding them represent a key for success?

Despite surrounding international conflicts between Western and Eastern, Middle-Eastern market fascinates us. Many of us perceive this land as an Eldorado synonym of wealth and excessiveness. With its huge towers, extraordinary artificial beaches and famous malls where it is possible to go skiing in the middle of the desert, Middle East throws our Western perception off. Shared between tradition and modernity, this new oriental paradise of over Luxury consumption is also a permanent cultural contrasted land. As religion takes a central place, consumers come to comprise every day in order to satisfy their traditional duties but also their modern desires.

Aware of the strong luxury business potential in this region and also of our, even very strong linked prejudices, we chose to study Western perception for a product that appears to be a contradiction itself. Synonym of seduction, femininity, intimacy and in particular sexuality in our societies, lingerie is today a major and exclusive woman's asset. Both useful and desirable, this little piece of lace is an impressive and private weapon. Related to liberty in Western, it is nevertheless very popular in the Middle East. How? Why? From a Western mind-set, this topic seems very difficult to understand. How a society which is so much repressing femininity and forbidding sexuality talks, can be the land of such a success?

Between misunderstanding, wrong market awareness and prejudices, we wished to discover how -in our area- we feel and explain this success. We wanted to glimpse this market perception based on contemporary political conflicts and public imaginary, influencing our personal vision. From the Western mind-set, how can we explain the lingerie success in the Middle East market, despite tradition and religion?

Through this study, we would like to prove that our opinions don't reflect the entire truth. Only a part of what it is today distilled in media, but they don't highlight everything. We

want to understand how it influences our vision of this specific region where luxury market is growing and opportunities seem to be limitless. Moreover, we wish to determine business guidelines to help lingerie business challengers to get into this market. We aim to set a clear recommendation up, those which will be part of this success.

Fist of all, we will talk about the lingerie market as a global matter and then only in Middle East. Then, we will move on to opinion survey made here in Western. Finally, we will open the theme by discussing about possible perspectives in the Middle East.