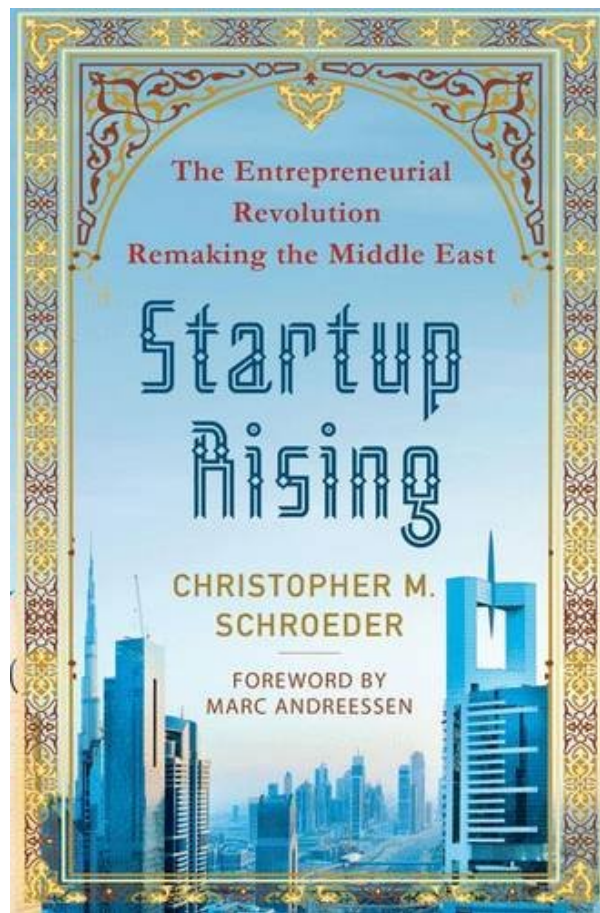
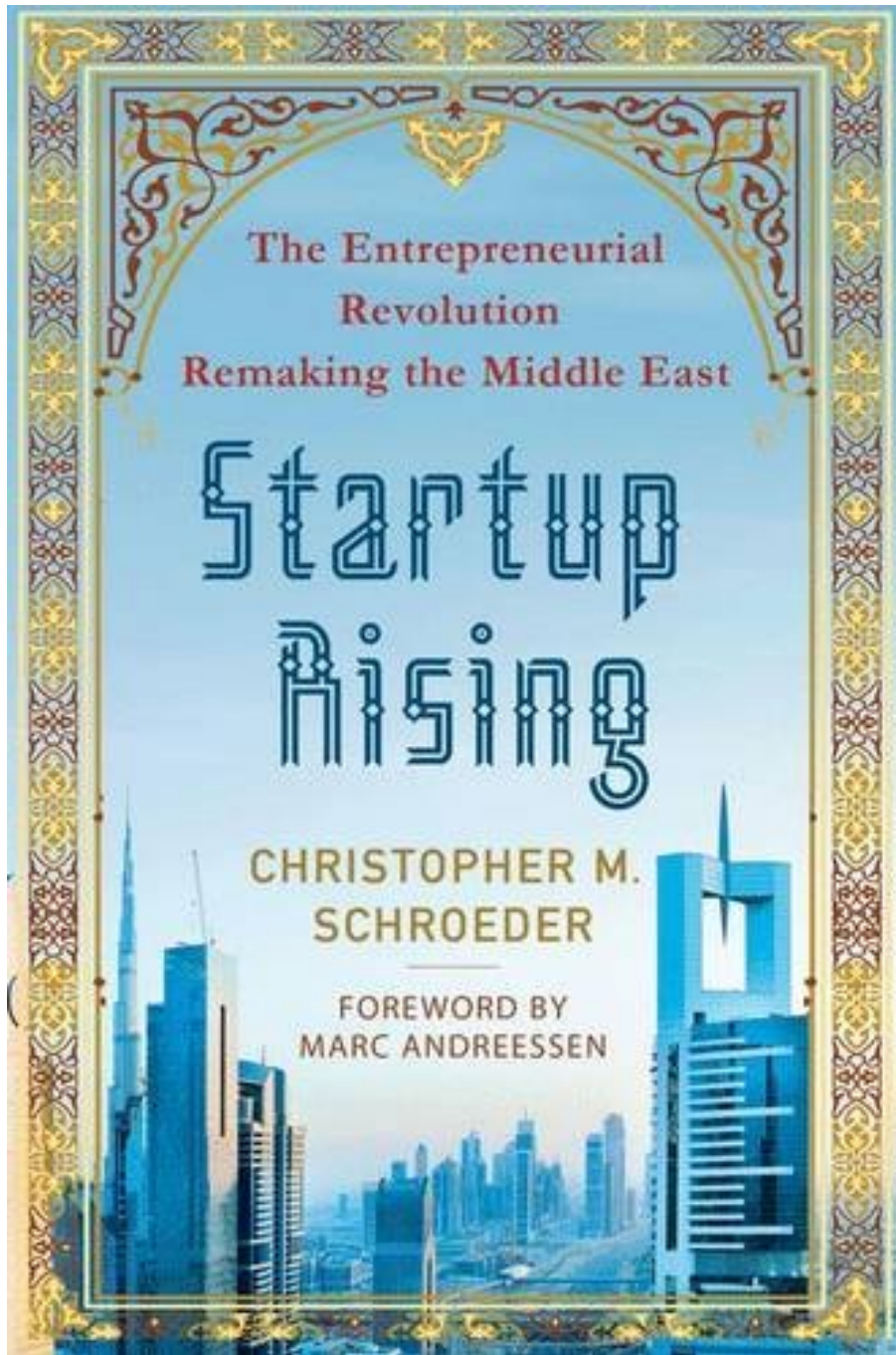


**STARTUP RISING: THE
ENTREPRENEURIAL REVOLUTION
REMAKING THE MIDDLE EAST BY
CHRISTOPHER M. SCHROEDER**



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Despite the world's elation at the Arab Spring, shockingly little has changed politically in the Middle East; even frontliners Egypt and Tunisia continue to suffer repression, fixed elections, and bombings, while Syria descends into civil war. But in the midst of it all, a quieter revolution has begun to emerge, one that might ultimately do more to change the face of the region: entrepreneurship. As a seasoned angel investor in emerging markets, Christopher M. Schroeder was curious but skeptical about the future of investing in the Arab world. Travelling to Dubai, Cairo, Amman, Beirut, Istanbul, and even Damascus, he saw thousands of talented, successful, and intrepid entrepreneurs, all willing to face cultural, legal, and societal impediments inherent to their worlds. Equally important, he saw major private equity firms, venture capitalists, and tech companies like Google, Intel, Cisco, Yahoo, LinkedIn, and PayPal making significant bets, despite the uncertainty in the region. With *Startup Rising*, he marries his own observations with the predictions of these tech giants to offer a surprising and timely look at the second stealth revolution in the Middle East—one that promises to reinvent it as a center of innovation and progress.

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A Primer On The Middle East Startup Scene

By Michael Armao

Christopher Schroeder has written a very good primer to understanding the startup scene within the Middle East. The key to appreciating this book is realizing that the author is not trying to boil the proverbial ocean. He limits the scope to a few key countries within the region and graciously acknowledges other works for coverage not included within Startup Rising, e.g., the Israeli technology scene. Scope issues aside, Mr. Schroeder does cover a number of areas that any investor or business contemplating entry into the region should note. Too many to list within this review, I found some of the most thought provoking conclusions to be: the pressing need for entrepreneurs to supply job opportunities as traditional industry falters; the increase in online spending--despite historical aversion to credit card usage; the growing opportunities in mobile technology, solar energy and social networks; and the concept of "disconnected development" where the impact of individual projects, in aggregate, lead to transformation of the technology ecosystem.

Of course anyone looking at the region cannot ignore the geopolitical instability, as the recent ouster of the Morsi government in Egypt exemplifies. In response, Mr. Schroeder astutely points out that through the focus on technology, entrepreneurs and investors in the region can withstand any current and future upheaval. The anecdotal examples of perseverance given within the book are truly inspiring.

To close, I would encourage anyone who has an interest in emerging and frontier markets to read Startup Rising. It will force you to rethink your stance and enable you to begin understanding opportunities in the Middle East.

Michael Armao
Washington, DC
13 August 2013

8 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

A Spark of Optimism

By Tamara Belt

At a time when the headlines from the Middle East never seem to get better, Startup Rising is a compelling antidote.

The book offers a very different view of what is happening in the Middle East - one not covered by the mainstream media. Schroeder paints a the picture via compelling stories of entrepreneurs throughout the region (with a focus on Arab countries, rather than Israel). Stories of entrepreneurial perseverance are always compelling - even more so here given the macro and micro challenges these entrepreneurs face. The book is a great read from Marc Andreessen's provocative foreword to Schroeder's compelling thesis -- "its not a question of if, but when."

Unlike the litany of non-fiction books that I have recently bought, but not read, Startup Rising pulled me in. Though Schroeder himself is an entrepreneur, not a writer, it's highly readable, and I flew right through it. This is a great read for entrepreneurs, people interested the role of technology in a rapidly globalizing world, and anyone looking for a sliver of optimism about the Middle East.

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

A great read at a very important time in our history

By Mr. Dany Farha

As someone who has had the privilege of being a part of the internet ecosystem in the Middle East since the year 2000, I learned a lot and found this book to be an extremely useful journey of stepping back, taking stock and reflecting on the past and future state of our regions start-ups and the key forces at play, shaping the future of innovation and entrepreneurship.

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