Bu maçta Bo Burlingham'ın *Small Giants* isimli büyümek yerine ufak kalmayı tercih eden işletmeleri anlattığı kitabıyla Fred Donner'ın *Muhammad and the Believers* isimli *kuruluş devrinde İslam* kitabını karşılaştıracağım.

Burlingham'ın kitabının şöyle bir *avantajı* var: Bu kitap bir yandan da dinlediğim kitaplardan biri ve 15 dakikada okuduğum kısımlarını zaten genel olarak biliyordum. Ancak Donner'ın kitabında da okuduğum kısımda bilmediğim hiçbir bilgiye rastlamadım. Bu sebeple mukayesede Donner'ın kitabının fontlarının iyi görünmemesi daha etkin bir rol oynadım. İki merak etmediğim kitap karşılaşınca, en azından okuması gözlerimi daha az bozacak olanını tercih etmem doğal olmalı.

Muhammad and the Believers - Frank Donner

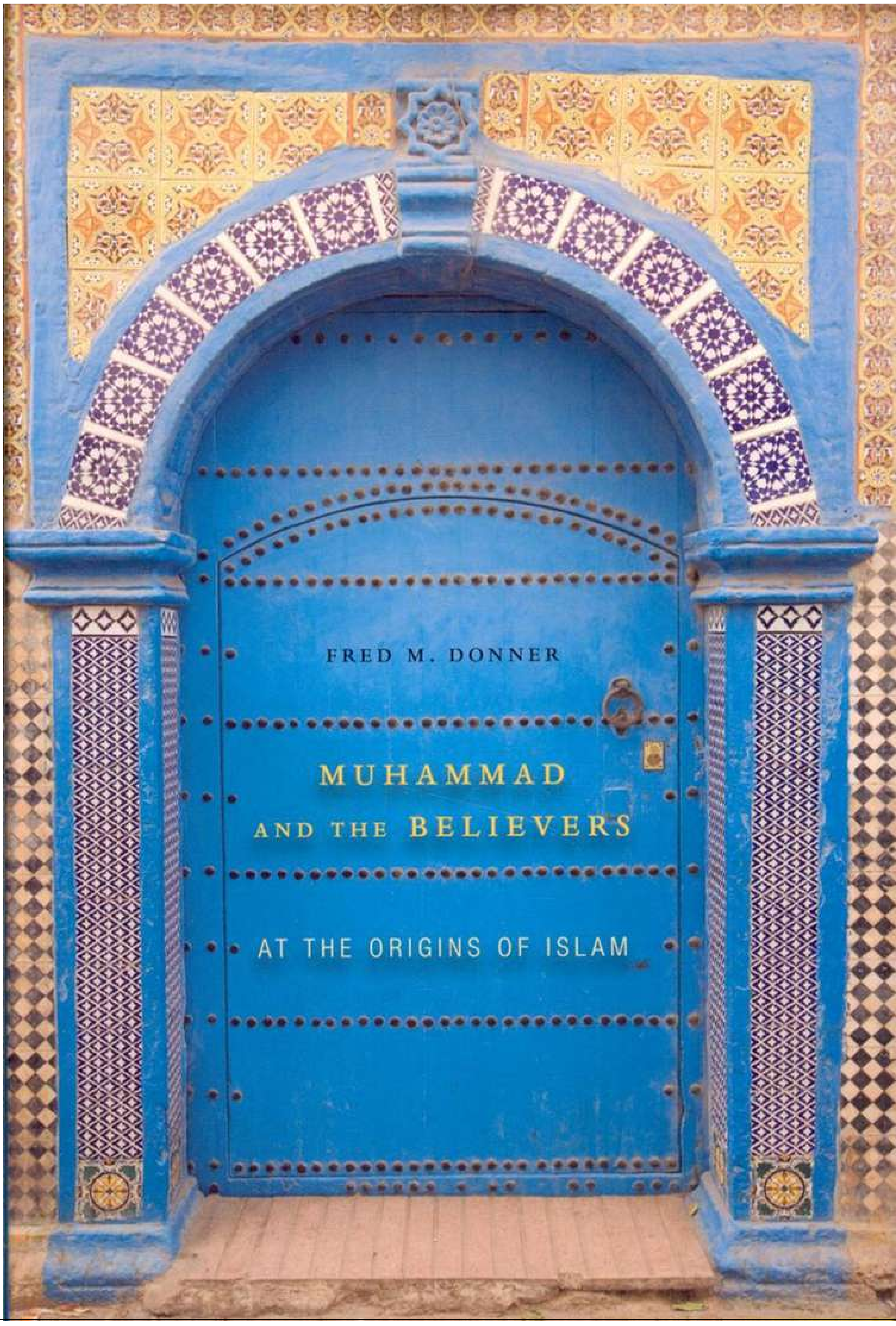

Figure 1: Muhammad and the Believers

Donner'ın kitabından *ayıp olmasın diye* tek bir alıntı yaptım. Bu alıntı kitabın en azından *Tom Holland* gibi *İslam Mekke'de doğmadı, Kabe de orada değildi* iddiası yerine makul bir anlatımı olduğunu gösteriyor. *Kabe hep Mekke'deydi* diyen kitap görünce bile sevinir hale geldik.

> Mecca, on the other hand, was not an oasis town and had very little agricultural potential. The well of Zamzam did provide sufficient freshwater for drinking and for small garden plots, but the town's location in stony hills did not permit extensive cultivation, and in Muhammad's day some of its staple foodstuffs were imported from elsewhere in Arabia or from Syria. Mecca owed its prominence not to cultivation but to religious cult and commerce: It was a typical Arabian haram in which violence and bloodshed were forbidden. At the center of the town was the shrine called the Ka'ba-a large, cubi- cal building with a sacred black stone affixed in one corner-that was the sanctuary to the pagan god Hubal. The custodians of this shrine belonged to the tribe of Quraysh, whose different clans made up most of the population of Mecca and shared the various cult responsibilities, such as providing water and food to the pilgrims, preparing and selling special pilgrimage garb, and supervising par- ticular rituals. People from other tribes, particularly pastoral nomads who lived near Mecca, also joined its cult, sometimes bringing their own idols into the shrine for safekeeping.

Small Giants - Bo Burlingham

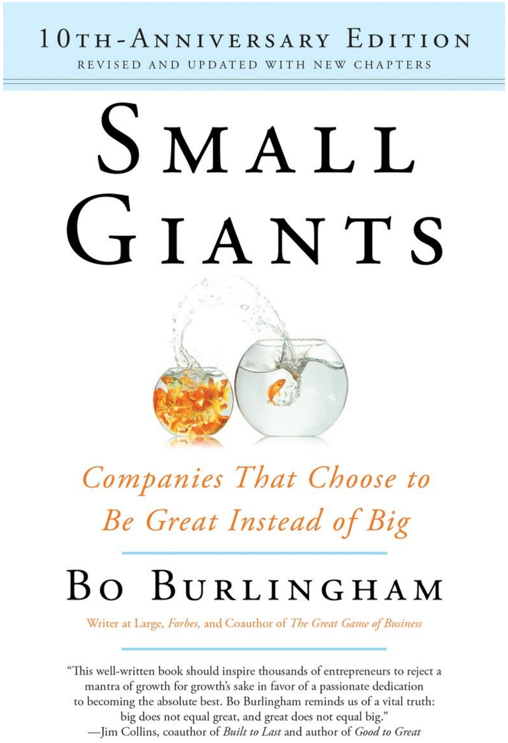

Figure 2: Small Giants

Chapter 1: Free to Choose

If you want to have the choice, you have to fight for it. All successful businesses face enormous pressures to grow, and they come from everywhere—customers, employees, investors, suppliers, competitors—you name it. As we shall see, those forces will make the choice for you if you let them, in which case you will lose the opportunity to chart your own course

Chapter 2: Who's in Charge Here?

It's far more difficult than most people realize to keep ownership and control inside a privately owned business as it grows, but unless you do you will wind up with a company driven not by your own aspirations but rather by the need to meet growth targets set by outsiders. Even if you succeed in retaining control, moreover, you still have to deal with a variety of forces pushing you to grow whether you want to or not

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Most of the CEOs in our sample shared Erickson's conviction that you couldn't have outside shareholders if you wanted to build a small giant, and even Danny Meyer agreed that his investors didn't belong unless they bought completely into his particular vision and way of doing business. The reason was simple enough. These companies were searching for something indefinable and immeasurable, something that went beyond the standard definitions of success in business, something that could easily be lost unless it was protected against the homogenizing influences brought to bear on every company

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It goes without saying that a great company needs to have great people working for it, but you can't attract them, let alone hold on to them, unless they have room to grow. That is, in fact, why many owners wind up putting their companies on a path of aggressive growth, even if they themselves might prefer to rein it in

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It's the market pressure to grow that is the most problematic for any company to deal with. For openers, there's the psychological factor. The pressure is there, after all, because people like your product or service and want a chance to buy more of it. The pressure is thus a powerful indicator of your success. It's a compliment to your business acumen. It's the fulfillment of the dreams you had when you started the company. How can you say no? In fact, many people can't say no—especially, I've found, entrepreneurs who happen to be men. Even if he knows in his heart of hearts that his company and his people aren't ready to handle the growth, even if he realizes that the growth may transform the company in ways he can't foresee and may not like, he still can't bring himself to turn business away. Once you start down that path, however, it becomes extremely difficult to go back. By the time you realize that the company is too big, that you're out of your depth, that your work is simply not up to the standards you've set for yourself, you've made a lot of hard-to-break commitments—to employees, to customers, and to suppliers

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Yet the more business Butler Inc. turned away, the more its reputation grew. Although Butler avoided publicity—he granted a single newspaper interview in twenty-five years, and that one only because the long-haired reporter reminded him of his commune days—the company became legendary in its community for its charitable works and its extraordinary workplace. Meanwhile, more customers than ever were knocking on the company's doors, and Butler couldn't refuse all of them. The company kept growing in spite of itself and in spite of a recession that was brutal on commercial development. Customers saved the few jobs they had for Butler. In 2001, sales hit $125 million. The following year, they rose 40 percent to $175 million. "That was too much," Butler said. "It was a strain on the infrastructure. People were working too hard. Everybody was too stressed out." So, in 2003, he cut back, dropping sales to $155 million; only to have them jump the next year to $205 million, which was too much again. In 2005, he cut back once more, to $195 million. "We really do strive to stay small," he said.