At the intersection of religion, law, and the state lies the opportunity to explore the impact of the state on the legal order. This talk will shed light on such an impact through an examination of authoritative legal works from the 16th–19th centuries CE, highlighting the understudied late Muslim jurists (al-muta’akhkhirūn) in the early modern period. I demonstrate how these late jurists develop their own identities, opinions, and consensus in relation to earlier opinions. This talk will also challenge the status quo of thinking about state power and legal authority in Islamic Studies by showing how late Muslim jurists assign probative value and authority to Ottoman state orders and edicts. This is reflected in the state’s ability to settle juristic disputes, to order specific opinions to be adopted in fatāwā (advisory legal opinions), and to establish its orders as authoritative and final reference points. The incorporation of state orders within authoritative legal commentaries, treatises, and fatāwā collections is made possible by what I identify as a turn in legal culture that embraced the indispensable nature of the state in the law-making process.

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