**Position Paper**

Methodological nationalism

1. Smith, A. D. (1983) ‘Nationalism and classical social theory’, *British Journal of Sociology* 34 (1): 19-38.
2. Beck, U. (2002) ‘The terrorist threat. World risk society revisited’*, Theory, Culture & Society* 19 (4): 39-55.
3. Chernilo, D. (2006) ‘Social theory’s methodological nationalism: myth and reality’, *European Journal of Social Theory* 9 (1): 5-22.
4. Wimmer, A. and Schiller, N. (2002) ‘Methodological nationalism and beyond: nation-state building, migration and the social sciences’, *Global Networks* 2 (4): 301-34.
5. Chernilo, D. (2011) ‘The critique of methodological nationalism: Theory and History’, *Thesis Eleven* 106 (1): 98-117.

The basic aim of all of the authors was to introduce the methodological nationalism (MN) as a widespread and possibly dangerous phenomenon that has been dominating the social sciences from the inception of modernity. MN is understood as an identification of the modernity with the nation state when the “nation-state is treated as the natural and necessary representation of modern society” (Chernilo 2011:99). The problem which MN brings is mainly analytical reductionism and inability to react to the on-going shift towards more cosmopolitan world.

All authors find an agreement on the potency of this threat for the social sciences, but their approaches to the overcoming of the phenomenon differs. Although some of them have made significant contributions (e.g. Wimmer & G. Schiller 2002 with their division of MN in three categories- ignoring, naturalization and territorial limitation), as Chernilo points out, in effect the debate still goes in circles. As a possible solution, he suggests that the social scientists start distinguishing between theoretical methodological nationalism, or the identification of nation states with the rise of modernity, and the historical methodological nationalism, which refers to the prevalence of nation-bounded explanations throughout the history. As he points out, it is at this place (historical MN) that this phenomenon could be broken. This might be done by re-reading and re-interpreting classical books on social theory which may still embrace a hidden context lost to our nation oriented interpretations.

From all the pieces, Beck has provided the most inflammable critique. He connects that need to overcome MN to the emergence of global risk society. He suggests that global problems could be solved only globally and not only the whole nationalistic paradigm must be overthrown and substituted by cosmopolitanism, but also all the basic concepts (e.g. class, democracy, family, etc.) must be purified from national flavour and re-defined in more transnational framework. However, one may ask if this is not too radical an approach for exploring the world, in which although globalizing rapidly, nation states haven´t completely lost their importance. In a similar sense push their argument also Wimmer & G. Schiller who stress the continuous importance of nationalism in explaining certain phenomena as for e.g. claims of poor and disempowered for the social justice and equality which they frame in nationalist rhetoric