In my lecture, I should like to revisit the history of the debate on methodological nationalism and offer some reflections on the different forms in which its critique has been undertaken. The key issue to be faced by anyone interested in the question of methodological nationalism is whether the nation-state can be regarded as the natural or even necessary form of society in modernity; methodological nationalism’s most succinct definition is that of an equation between the nation-state and society in modernity. More precisely, then, any critique of methodological nationalism shall at least provide an historical argument on the rise and main features of nation-state, on the one hand, and resolve theoretical issues related to whether the social sciences possess the analytical tools with which to study the nation-state adequately, on the other. I shall pursue these questions in some detail by offering a narrative of the three successive waves in which the debate on, and the critiques of, methodological nationalism have taken place over the past few decades. A first wave of discussion can be identified in the late 1960s and early 1970s, which was also the time when the actual term ‘methodological nationalism’ was coined. This original wave emerged as a critique of Parsonian sociology and focused on a certain ‘internalist developmentalism’ that was allegedly built into Parsons’ conception of social system. A second wave of critiques of methodological nationalism can clearly be identified at the end of the last century and is inextricably connected with the rise of mainstream social theory’s ‘globalisation orthodoxy’. Its leitmotif is of course the thesis of a radical epochal change within (or even beyond) modernity that was ushered in by the definitive decline of the nation-state. Finally, a more recent wave of scholarly critiques of methodological nationalism builds upon the results, but also seeks to overcome the shortcomings, of the previous two waves. Its main concern lies in how are we to account for the always-problematic position of the nation-state in modernity without, in the same move, reintroducing methodological nationalism from the back door. The problems associated to methodological nationalism and its critique are unlikely to go away. In these times of crisis, we hardly need a reminder that understanding the nation-state’s role and position in the contemporary world remains a key challenge for contemporary social theory.