**We are what we eat**

What is culture or nationality? In a narrow sense, it is the same birthplace, language and traditions for a group of people. For example, folk costume, fairy tales, songs or food. My situation is complicated by a huge cultural mix: from Kazakhstan, where my German forebears were deported and where I was born, Siberia, where my half-Tatar children were born, Russia, whose language I speak, Mordovia, where my mother comes from, to Germany, where I moved five years ago.

I'm sure there are a lot of mixes like me. That's firstly. Secondly, the last two years have shown that culture today is more about matching moral values, views on politics, medicine, human rights and everything else. Here neither origin, nor language, nor traditions really matter anymore.

On the other hand, I can see that during the pandemic it was as if people were losing their footing. Then the usual rituals like Christmas dinner or pancakes for Maslenitsa became a rare opportunity to return to their familiar comfort. Even if it’s only externally.

So how to find a balance between excessive nationalism and total loss of cultural identity? François Julien, the French philosopher, suggests not looking for distinctions and not setting primitive "us-them" boundaries, but to see culture as a resource: the more I learn about others, the richer I will become. And everything I've collected in a lifetime is also mine.

My two-minute film is something between irony over national stereotypes in general and a stream of cultural associations about myself: Russian nursery rhymes, the only Mordovian words I know from my mother, school rhymes with German verbs, a Tatar song from my mother-in-law, some Soviet poetry quotes, some bits from the opera "Eugene Onegin", the old Kazakh anthem that we learned for our district administration, and much more.