

SHERZODJON CHORIEV, DAIGA STRAUPENIECE

Ethnocultural Characteristics of the Baltic Nations in Turkestan (1867–1924)¹

Keywords: ethnoculture, Baltic nations, Turkestan general-governorship, religion, marital status, regional distribution, the National Archive of Uzbekistan, data in the Russian Empire's census on Latvians, Lithuanians, Estonians.

Introduction

The Turkestan region has long been known as Turan, Transoksaniya, Movaraunnahr. In 1924, due to the national-territorial delimitation policy pursued by the Soviet government in the Turkestan ASSR, the republics of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan were formed. After these political processes, the region began to be called Central Asia by political scientists. Not only Turks but also many other tribes have lived in Turkestan since ancient times as nomads and settlers. During the reign of Amir Temur, during the Central Asian khanates, many other nationalities lived in these areas as traders and other professionals.

After the occupation by the Russian Empire, the Turkestan region was formed in 1865, and in 1867 became a Turkestan general-governorship. Initially, during the occupation, representatives of the European peoples massively came to Turkestan as the military of the Russian Empire. From this period, the mass migration of the Baltic peoples to Central Asia began.

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At the same time, in Turkestan, there were more than 20 ethnic groups (Саипова 2016, 40), but today in Uzbekistan, there are more than 140 ethnic groups, and the Baltic peoples are a minority.

There are serious reasons for Uzbekistan to pay attention to this issue. Firstly, the policy of tolerance of the Republic of Uzbekistan, and secondly, economic, cultural, and diplomatic developments between the Republic of Uzbekistan and the Baltic countries are entering new stages.

The Baltic people have their own ancient ethnocultural history and play a significant role in the socio-political life of Turkestan. In the Turkestan general-governorship, Turkestan ASSR², and Uzbekistan, many representatives of the Baltic nations have worked in art, science, education, technology and contributed to the development of the republic.

Research methodology

Nowadays, a lot of research work has been done on this topic. It is known that in historical studies of the Soviet period, special attention was paid to the history of the formation of Soviet power on the basis of primary archival materials. In particular, Aleksey Matveev (*Алексей Матвеев*), Khamid Inoyatov (*Хамид Иноятлов*), Faizula Narkhodzhaev (*Файзулла Нарходжаев*) in their studies on the history of the formation of Soviet power partially affected the political significance of the Baltic peoples in these political processes. The books on the history of Uzbekistan created in the Soviet era focus on information on their political activities. In her studies, Lyudmila Zhukova (*Людмила Жукова*) paid special attention to the religious problems of the Baltic peoples in Turkestan (Матвеев 1977; and others).

After the regaining of independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan, as a result of the government's policy of tolerance in the multinational republic, a lot of research has been conducted on this topic in the field of history. The collection "Ethnic Atlas of Uzbekistan", published in 2002 under the leadership of Alisher Ilkhomov (*Адишер Илхомов*), provides information on the history of migration of Latvians, Lithuanians, and Estonians to Uzbekistan and the history of their diaspora. In 2004, Olga Lisitskaya (*Ольга Лисицкая*) focused on the religious issues of the Baltic nations, and Rahbarkhon Murtazaeva (*Рахбархон Муртазаева*) and Kamola Saipova (*Камола Саипова*) focused on statistics on the diaspora and their social role in Uzbekistan (Лисицкая 2007). In his monograph, Ravshan Khomitov (*Равшан Хомитов*) tried to take a comprehensive approach to the history of cooperation

² Since 1918 the Turkestan general-governorship was renamed Turkestan ASSR.

between Uzbekistan and the Baltic States. Sherzodjon Choriev (*Шерзоджон Чориев*) in his article detailed the history of the Baltic diaspora in Uzbekistan (Choriev 2019).

Many foreign studies have been conducted on the subject, including research by Anna Gornukhova (*Анна Горнухова*) and Inna Polovnikova (*Инна Половникова*) whose articles and monographs deserve special mention (Горнухова 2004, 46; and others).

There are also primary sources on this subject, such as archival materials, periodicals, and general census materials (1897).

Nowadays, more than 1,8 million historical documents are stored in the National Archives of Uzbekistan, for example, in the funds of the Turkestan general-governorship I-1, I-17, I-19, I-336, I-450, I-461, a lot of historical information on this issue can be found.

Turkestantskie Vedomosti and other periodicals, as well as census documents, contain statistical data on the life of the Baltic peoples. The method of statistical analysis was used to analyse the sources mentioned above. The method of comparative analysis was widely used for analysing secondary sources.

A general statistical analysis of the population is important when conducting studies on the history of ethnoculture, and therefore, data on the total number of the Baltic peoples were clarified. At the next stage, data on their religious relations and literacy were analysed, and information on family relationships was studied. However, the study mainly used the archival materials stored in the National Archives of Uzbekistan and scientific work carried out in Uzbekistan. Archival materials on the subject can also be found in the National Archives of other Central Asian countries, Russia, and the Baltic States. However, detailed identification and scientific circulation of these archival materials require historical and archival experts and scientific research.

A brief history of the migration of the Baltic peoples to Turkestan general-governorship

A lot of research has been done on the history of migration of the Baltic peoples. In the study, the migration processes of the Baltic nations throughout Russia are studied in four stages: 1) from 1860, to the Crimean and Samara regions, partially to the Central Asian region; 2) from 1870, the territories of the Caucasus, Stavropol, Kuban, the central regions of Russia, Siberia and Central Asia; 3) the territories of the Caucasus, the Black Sea region, the territories of Siberia, Tver and Central Asia from 1884 to 1886; 4) from 1900 to 1917 to Siberia, Tomsk, Tobolsk and Turkestan (Хомитов

2015, 96). As mentioned above, representatives of the Baltic peoples first appeared in Central Asia as a part of the Russian troops in the mid-1860s. Most of the migrant population lived in Turkestan, partly in the Russian settlements of Bukhara and Khorezm, in the territories surrounding the Russian Empire. The main goal of the Russian settlements in these areas was to support the Russian military in armed conflicts with the local population, only in 1903–1913, 116 Russian settlements were created in Turkestan (Половникова 1997, 27–28). Not only people of Russian origin lived in the Russian settlements but also other European ethnic groups, including Latvians, Lithuanians, and Estonians. According to the census of 1897, the Baltic peoples of the country were the lowest in the Turkestan population (Turkestan, Bukhara, Khorezm) and consisted of 287 (168 men, 119 women) (Горнухова 2004, 46).

The representatives of the Latvian nationality for the first time appeared in Central Asia as a part of the Russian troops in the mid-1860s. Later, a small number of Latvians – skilled workers, officials, teachers, doctors, and servants – settled in Turkestan. Most of them were engaged in craft and trade and belonged to the petty-bourgeois stratum. Central Asia has become a haven for many Latvian revolutionaries who went underground. WWI marked a new stage in the resettlement of Latvians in the region. By the end of 1915, no less than 1,5 thousand refugees came from all historical and cultural regions of Latvia (the governorates of Courland, Lifland, and cultural region of Latgale that belonged to the Vitebsk governorate of Russian Empire), later about 600 people of them re-evacuated. The Latvian Society was created on this basis. In the 1920s, the Polish-Latvian National Bureau under the Council of National Minorities was established to regulate the lives of Turkestan's multi-ethnic population.

In the late 1860s, there were also Lithuanians in the Russian army in Turkestan. A little later, Lithuanian-born civilians with Russian citizenship began to arrive there. At the beginning of the 20th century, the Lithuanians made up a significant share in the petty-bourgeois stratum of Tashkent, Samarkand, and the Fergana Valley cities. Among those who came from the Russian Empire's western national regions, there were about 1,000–1,200 Lithuanians in Turkestan. Since 1902, the main curator of Catholics of the Central Asian region, Lithuanian priest Justin Pranaitis was appointed (1861–1917). Thanks to his energy and leader talent, in the capital of the Turkestan general-governorship, a priest's house is being built in Tashkent, temporarily replacing the prayer house, and a beautiful Roman Catholic church, temples in Samarkand and Skobelev. From the moment of the arrival of the father Pranaitis, the mass in the Tashkent Catholic Church and other

Lithuanian concentration centers during his official business trips were conducted in Lithuanian, in addition to Russian and Polish. Some Lithuanians were Lutherans and attended the evangelical Lutheran churches. In 1905, there were 10 Lithuanians in the Tashkent Lutheran parish. Their number significantly increased during WWI at the expense of prisoners of war and refugees. Most Lithuanians headed to Tashkent, the Syrdarya, and Samarkand regions. In December 1915, the priest Pranaitis prepared a shelter for refugees from Lithuania. In the „Polish Church”, more than 60 people were employed in the dormitory. Many of them were able to return home in the spring of 1916. In February 1917, Pranaitis died. The next curator was father Bronislav Ruthenis from Lithuania. In the province, he was engaged in religious activities for over twenty years.

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, on the lands of present-day Uzbekistan, Estonian peasants settled in small quantities. Near Tashkent, in the lower part of the Kugart valley, there were several Estonian families. The list of persons of the Lutheran religion (1886), who lived in the Russian part of Tashkent, included the tradesman from the Estland gubernia Otto Redlin. In the Andijan district of Fergana region, there were three farms, and about 30 inhabitants from them were engaged in farming and animal breeding, and quite successfully. In comparison with the peasant migrants of Slavic nationalities, the Estonian peasants lived many times more prosperously, using the cheap labor of both the indigenous and Russian population. Estonians took an active part in the activities of the community of the Baltic immigrants, zealously observed all religious rituals and traditions of their people. In 1905, in the Evangelical parish, 100 Estonians were registered. Some Estonians professed Orthodoxy. After the re-evacuation of WWI refugees, there were about 200 Estonians left in Central Asia. According to data sheets of the evangelical Lutheran societies, in the 1920s, Estonians lived in Tashkent, Samarkand, Fergana, and Kokand. In the late 1930s, a small number arrived again in Central Asia – the Estonians evicted from the border regions of the USSR and Finland (ЭАУЗ 2002, 254–255).

**General census materials of 1897 as a source
on the history of the ethnocultural life of the Baltic nations
in the Turkestan governor-generalship**

The Baltic people first appeared in Central Asia as a part of the Russian troops in the mid-1860s. Most of the migrant population lived in Turkestan, partly in Bukhara and Khorezm's Russian settlements in the territories surrounding the Russian Empire. The main goal of the Russian settlements in these areas was to support the Russian military in the armed conflicts with

the local population. Only in 1903–1913, 116 Russian settlements were created in Turkestan. People of Russian origin lived there and also other European ethnic groups, including Latvians, Lithuanians, and Estonians (Choriev 2019, 19–25).

1. Regional distribution

The National Archives of Uzbekistan keep records of the 1897 census of the Russian Empire, which can be used to clarify the ethnocultural history of the Baltic peoples of Turkestan. In the census of 1897, the Baltic peoples are recorded as Kurlanders, Liflanders, and Estlanders.

The following table shows the statistical data of the population of Kurland, Lifland, and Estland provinces living in Turkestan (Table 1).

Table 1

Regional distribution of the Baltic nations in Turkestan
(HAY₃ 1897)

Name of Nation	Syrdarya oblast		Samarkand oblast		Fergana oblast		Semirechinskiy oblast		Transcaspian oblast		Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	
Kurland	30	17	16	7	12	12	11	5	-	-	110
Lifland	25	30	24	18	9	9	20	12	-	-	147
Estlands	12	13	7	3	2	1	3	2	-	-	43
Total	67	60	47	28	28	22	34	19	-	-	300

According to the census, 44 Baltic citizens were registered in the Syrdarya region, including 11 in Tashkent and 3 in Avliyatauezd. Also, the Baltic nations were registered in the Kazalinsk, Perovsky, and Shymkent uyezds of the Syrdarya oblast. In the Fergana region, they mainly lived in the uyezds of Margilan, Andijan, Kokand; in New Margilan 7 Latvians were registered. The majority of the Baltic nationalities living in Samarkand province lived in Samarkand city, and the rest of them were registered in Kattakurgan uezd.

2. Religion

The census also provides important information on the religious beliefs of the Baltic peoples living in Turkestan. The Baltic nations belonged to Christian Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Lutheran churches. However, according to the census, one can see reformists who adhered to ancient Christian traditions and even those who converted to Islam among the Baltic people (Table 2 and 3).

Table 2

Religious attitudes of the Baltic nations in Turkestan
(HAY₃ 1897)

	Orthodoxy		Religious literacy		Roman Catholic		Religious literacy	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Syrdarya oblast	1	-	1	-	16	3	15	2
Samarkand oblast	2	3	1	2	8	3	6	3
Fergana oblast	1	1	1	1	3	2	2	2
Semirechya oblast	2	-	1	-	2	-	2	-
Transcaspian oblast	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 3

Religious attitudes of the Baltic nations in Turkestan
(HAY₃ 1897)

	Lutheran		Religious literacy		Reformists		Converted to Islam	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Syrdarya oblast	10	1	10	1	2	-	-	1
Samarkand oblast	7	4	7	4	-	-	-	-
Fergana oblast	5	-	3	-	-	-	-	-
Semirechya oblast	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	1
Transcaspian oblast	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

On the census, the Baltic peoples were recorded as Lithuanians-Latvians. Among the Lithuanian-Latvian nationalities in Turkestan, one man in Tashkent and three men and one woman in the Prezhevsk uezd of Semirechye were registered as Muslims.

The documents also contain information on each person's religious literacy, which shows that the Baltic peoples of the Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Lutheran faiths have high religious literacy.

3. Marital status

The census statistics also provide information about the marital status of the Baltic peoples living in Turkestan (Table 4).

Table 4

Marital status of the Baltic nations in Turkestan
(HAYз 1897)

Name of the province	Single		Married		Divorced	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Syrdarya oblast	17	2	11	2	-	-
Samarkand oblast	17	7	4	2	-	-
Fergana oblast	7	3	2	-	-	-
Semirechya oblast	6	1	3	1	-	-
Transcaspian oblast	-	-	-	-	-	-

The table shows that, among the Baltic people, more men were single than married; however, it can be seen that the number of single females was higher. There were no divorces among the Baltic peoples' families, which leads to the conclusion that they strictly followed their family traditions.

4. Professional and economic life

The documents also contain information on occupations and economic activities of the Baltic peoples in Turkestan (Table 5).

According to the census materials, the Baltic peoples in Tashkent worked in the military, medical, sanitary, public sectors, and the Samarkand region in the regional and judicial administrations, private entrepreneurship, and post, telegraph, and construction.

In the Ferghana region, they mainly worked in the military, scientific, literary, and art fields. In the area of Semirechye, they worked in tailoring, forestry, livestock, mining, and trade.

The National Archives of Uzbekistan do not keep records of the Caspian region census, but there is a report collection entitled "Commentary on the Caspian Region" (1899). According to the collection, in the region in 1899, there were Russian, German, French, Polish, Greek nationalities living in Mangyshlak, Krasnavodsk, Ashgabat, Tajan, Merv (they were uezds of the Trans-Caspian oblast). The Latvian-Lithuanians are not explicitly recorded; however, there are 22 other nationalities registered.

Table 5

The professional and economic life of the Baltic nations in Turkestan
(HAY₃ 1897)

Profession	Syrdarya oblast		Samarkand oblast		Fergana oblast		Semirechya oblast		Transcaspian oblast	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Administration and court			7	1					-	-
Public and estate service	3								-	-
Military establishment	8				3	2			-	-
Medical and sanitary actions	10	3	3						-	-
Mine	2						1	1	-	-
Agriculture	2	3							-	-
Making clothes	1	1					4		-	-
Railways	1								-	-
Trade intermediation	1								-	-
Private servants									-	-
Livestock							1		-	-
Wood processing							1		-	-
Trade without any precise definition							1		-	-
Science, Literature, and Arts					2				-	-
Private providers			1	7					-	-
Capital and real estate income of parents and relatives			1						-	-
Housing construction			2						-	-
Post and Telegraph			2						-	-
Loan and weighted commercial establishment			1						-	-
Fishing and hunting							1		-	-

In general, the census documents show that in 1897 in Turkestan, there were 300 Kurlanders, Liflanders, and Estonians. They lived mainly in Tashkent, Kazalinsk, Perovsk, Shymkent districts of Syrdarya region, and in Margilan, Andijan, Kokand, New Margilan cities of Fergana region, as well as in Samarkand and Kattakurgan regions.

The Baltic peoples of the country practiced Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Lutheran religions, and men and women had a high level of religious literacy, but in Tashkent and the Prezhevalsk district of the Ettisuv oblast some of them have been converted to Islam.

They entered into marriages with representatives of other European nationalities and were Russified but strictly adhered to their family traditions.

The Baltic peoples have been active in Turkestan in the military, medical, sanitary, public, administrative, and judicial spheres, private enterprise, post, telegraph and construction, science, literature and art, clothing, forestry, animal husbandry, mining, and trade.

The Baltic nations in Turkestan ASSR (1918–1924)

After the events of the October Revolution of 1917, a new method of colonialism was created in Turkestan as a result of the establishment of Bolshevik rule. On April 30, 1918, the Charter of the Soviet Federal Republic of Turkestan was adopted. In accordance with this charter, the territory of Turkestan was declared the Turkestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic as part of the Russian Soviet Federative Republic (Жураев, Нуруллин, Камолов 2000, 74).

The rapprochement and merging of nations during the years of Soviet power meant in practice the absorption of smaller nationalities by Russians, a means of forcible Russification and the elimination of national cultures. Representatives of more than 20 nations and nationalities lived in the republic (Саипова 2016, 39–40).

With the multinational composition of the Turkestan Republic population and with a significant difference in the economy, life, culture, and language of different nationalities, the National Bureau of Turkkomnats (Turkestan People's Commissariat of National Minorities) TASSR was organized. This organization was to observe the correct implementation of the national policy of the Soviet government. It was also intended to protect the interests of national minorities living in the Turkestan Republic territory.

The following departments functioned in the Council of the National Minority: Ukrainians, European Jews, Armenians, Germans, Iran-Azerbaijanis, Native Jews, Tatars, Bashkir, Tajiks.

Under these departments, there were 9 Central National Bureaux, and the Latvian National Bureau was organized under the European Jewish Branch (НАУз R-34, case 2230, 2–3). According to archival documents, the Department of European Jews had 1 preschool, 2 schools, 2 workers' cultural houses, 3 libraries, the number of students and members was 35,000.

There was only one workers' cultural house under the Latvian National Bureau's auspices, and the rest of the work was done in collaboration with the European Jewish Department. The number of members of the Latvian National Bureau was 2000.

Mr. Aronson was the head of the European Jewish department, and Mr. Auzin was the head of the Latvian National Bureau (HAYЗ R-36, case 99, 125-126).

At that time, the Sovnatsmen (Council of National Minorities) had to look for and train school workers of national minorities who could teach classes in their native language.

In order to train teachers and cultural workers, educational departments and Tatar-Bashkir, local-Jewish, and Ukrainian teacher courses were organised.

Until 1922 the following schools and cultural and educational institutions were on state supply: European-Jewish Central Bureau (population up to 35,000, 2 schools, a preschool, 2 workers' (cultural) houses, 3 libraries), Latvian Central Bureau (population up to 2000, a workers' cultural house; will be merged with the Jewish workers' house), Polish Central Bureau (population: 10,000, 3 schools, a boarding, 3 libraries) (HAYЗ R-34, case 2230, 2-5).

According to the report of the National Affairs Council of the Commissariat of Education, which is stored in the archives, in 1923 in Turkestan, there were 8 clubs and 7 workers' cultural houses, one of which was the Latvian workers' cultural house (HAYЗ R-34, case 2527, 4).

The Latvian workers' cultural house was founded in 1921, and some documents relating to its activities have been preserved in the archive. In accordance with the decision of the Department of Nationalities of March 7, 1921, permission was written to spell the name of the Latvian workers' cultural house in Russian, and in Latvian as "Latwiesu Stradnieku".

Otto Volzit was nominated by Auzin on November 21, 1921, as the head of the enlightenment department established in the Latvian section of the Central Bureau of National Affairs.

The minutes of the constituent assembly of the Latvian Workers House, held on May 7, 1921, are stored in the fund of the Commissariat of Education, and the document has been translated from Latvian into Russian. It should be noted that the archival document emphasises that the protocol was translated from the Latvian language. In the document, Otto Volzit said that the old building of the Latvian Socialist Party was given by Fritz Cirul to the Latvian workers' cultural house. The document noted that the building was equipped with furniture; an annual estimate of 4,415,000 rubles for the workers' house was made, and the decision was made to receive an advance of 50,000 rubles for May. It was decided to order a sign for the roof of the building in Latvian with the words "Latwiesu Stradnieku", and on the basis of these inscriptions, a seal and stamp of the workers' cultural house was ordered.

According to documents, in 1921, 2,000 Latvians lived in Turkestan. However, only the Latvian section functioned, and no conditions were created for Latvian cultural life. On April 25, 1921, the head of the department of the Latvian nation submitted a statement that the Latvian Club of Nations should be created and should have a library, a reading room, a place for a theatre and a choir. At the same time, a search was done for a building for the club, and the newspaper "Izvestia" published an appeal to the choir singers and representatives of the Latvian ethnic group to participate in the drama club. The documents noted that, with the opening of the building for the club, it was planned to hold a concert rally for the Latvians, and it would be possible to identify the Latvians. At that time, out of 2,000 Latvians in Turkestan, about 500 lived in Tashkent (HAYЗ R-34, case 1300, s3). Furthermore, in 1922 Department of Minor Nationalities under the Committee in national cases allowed to establish the Latvian section. However, a little later, on July 14, 1922, the Turkestan Central Executive Committee's decree № 102 about the Latvian section stopped its actions.

In all corners of the Turkestan ASSR, where compact masses of the ethnic minorities lived, children's centers, kindergartens, schools with the mother tongue of these nationalities, workers' houses where cultural-educational work was conducted were opened. But kindergartens and schools for the Baltic nationalities were not organised.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is possible to say that the representatives of the Baltic nations initially massively came to Turkestan as military men, but later they were seen in the fields of agriculture, medicine, education, and technology. In the period after 1917, most of them held positions in government in the Turkestan ASSR. In Turkestan, they communicated in their languages only among themselves, and in other cases, they spoke Russian. They paid particular attention to their national, religious traditions, and in some cases, assimilated more into Russians and other European nationalities. Their political activity shows that many of them also became victims of the Soviet government's repressive policies.

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We believe that this article's information will play an important role in further strengthening the economic, cultural, and diplomatic ties between Uzbekistan and all the countries of Central Asia and the Baltic countries.

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Baltijas tautu etnokultūras raksturojums Turkestānā (1867–1924)

Atslēgvārdi: etnokultūra, Baltijas tautas, Turkestānas vispārējā pārvaldība, reliģija, ģimenes stāvoklis, reģionālais sadalījums, Uzbekistānas Nacionālais arhīvs, Krievijas impērijas tautskaites dati par latviešiem, lietuviešiem, igauņiem.

Kopsavilkums

Turkeštānas reģions pēc Krievijas impērijas okupācijas tika izveidots 1865. gadā, tajā dzīvojuši ne tikai turki, bet arī daudzas citas tautības. Sākotnēji dažādu Eiropas tautu pārstāvji ieradās Turkeštānā kā Krievijas impērijas militāristi. 19. gadsimta 60. gadu vidū arī Baltijas tautu pārstāvji pirmo reizi Vidusāzijā nonāca Krievijas karaspēka sastāvā. Tā pamazām aizsākās arī Baltijas tautu migrācija uz Vidusāziju. 1897. gada tautskaites dati liecina, ka Turkeštānas iedzīvotāju reģistrā baltiešu skaits bija neliels. Tur reģistrēti 287 Baltijas iedzīvotāji: 168 vīrieši un 119 sievietes (Горныхова 2004, 46).

Vēlāk Turkeštānā no Baltijas valstu teritorijām ieradās un apmetās uz dzīvi kvalificēti strādnieki, ierēdņi, skolotāji, ārsti un kalpi. Līdz 1915. gada beigām Turkeštānā bija ap 1,5 tūkstošiem bēgļu no visiem Latvijas kultūrvēsturiskajiem reģioniem. Te ieradās arī apmēram 1000–1200 lietuviešu izcelsmes civiliedzīvotāji ar Krievijas pilsonību. 20. gadsimta sākumā lietuvieši veidoja ievērojamu daļu Taškentas, Samarkandas un Fergānas ielejas pilsētu sīko buržuāzijas slāni. 19. un 20. gadsimta mijā te nelielā skaitā ieradās arī igauņi. Pēc Pirmā pasaules kara Vidusāzijā bija reģistrēti apmēram 200 igauņi.

Lielākā daļa migrantu dzīvoja Turkeštānas teritorijā, arī Buhāras un Horezmas apmetnēs, kas iekļāvās Krievijas impērijā. Galvenais krievu apmetņu mērķis šajos apgabalos bija atbalstīt Krievijas armiju cīņā pret vietējiem iedzīvotājiem ar bruņotiem konfliktiem. Laika posmā no 1903. gada līdz 1913. gadam Turkeštānā tika izveidotas 116 krievu apmetnes. Krievu apmetnēs dzīvoja ne tikai krievu izcelsmes iedzīvotāji, bet arī citas Eiropas etniskās grupas, tostarp latvieši, lietuvieši un igauņi (Choriev 2019, 19–25).

Uzbekistānas Nacionālajā arhīvā, kur tiek glabāti Krievijas impērijas 1897. gada tautskaites dati, var noskaidrot Turkeštānas baltu tautu etnokultūras vēsturi. Tautas skaitīšanas dati sniedz informāciju par Turkeštānā dzīvojošo baltu tautu reliģisko piederību. Galvenokārt reģistrēti pareizticīgie, katoļi un luterāņi, tomēr reģistrēti arī reformatori un islāmticīgie. Tautas skaitīšanas statistika sniedz arī svarīgu informāciju par Turkeštānā dzīvojošo baltu tautu ģimenes stāvokli, kā arī nodarbošanos un saimniecisko darbību. Latvieši, lietuvieši, igauņi Taškentā strādāja militārajā, medicīnas, sanitārajā un sabiedriskajā sektorā, Samarkandas reģionā – tiesu pārvaldē, privātajā uzņēmējdarbībā, pastā, telegrāfā un celtniecībā, bet citos reģionos – militārajā jomā, literatūras un mākslas zinātnē, mežsaimniecībā, lopkopībā, rūpniecībā un tirdzniecībā.

Pēc 1917. gada oktobra revolūcijas notikumiem Turkeštānā, kur dzīvoja vairāk nekā 20 tautu un tautību pārstāvji, tika īstenota rusifikācija un nacionālo kultūru izskaušana. Latvijas Nacionālajam birojam, kas darbojās Eiropas ebreju departamenta paspārnē, bija tikai viens kultūras nams, tas dibināts 1921. gadā. Saskaņā ar dokumentiem Turkeštānā 1921. gadā dzīvoja 2000 latviešu, no kuriem 500 – Taškentā. Lai arī citām etniskām minoritātēm, kas dzīvoja Turkeštānā, tika atvērti bērnudārzi, skolas un kultūras nami dzimtajā valodā, baltiešiem bērnudārzi un skolas speciāli netika atvērtas.

Var teikt: ja Baltijas tautu pārstāvji Turkeštānā 19. gadsimta 60. gados ieradās kā militārpersonas, tad vēlāk, t. i., 19. un 20. gadsimta mijā, viņi jau bija devuši savu ieguldījumu lauksaimniecības, medicīnas, izglītības un tehnoloģiju jomu attīstībā. Pēc 1917. gada lielākā daļa no viņiem ieņēma valdības amatus. Tas nozīmē, ka Baltijas iedzīvotājiem ir bijusi nozīmīga loma Turkeštānas sociāli politiskajā dzīvē.