DESCRIPTION:

Autobiographical letter by Aleksandra Ia. Efimenko (1848-1918), historian and ethnographer. The letter, written from Khar'kov in 1903, is addressed to an unidentified woman requesting biographical information. The letter (20p.) discusses her childhood, father, and limited formal education; her years teaching school and studying on her own; her husband, and the beginnings of her historical-ethnographical research; and her later life and studies. Appended to the text of the letter is a list of her publications which is apparently in another hand. 

For biographical sketch see verso.
Aleksandra Efimenko, née Stavrovskaia (1848-1918), was born in Arkhangelsk Province, the daughter of a district police officer (stanovoi pristav) in Kol'skii district. She had little formal schooling, and started teaching school in the town of Kholmogory at age 16. While in Kholmogory she tried to complete her education on her own, and also began to study the ethnography and customary law of the region. She there married Petr S. Efimenko (1835-1908), a political exile, who also became an ethnographer. They later moved to Voronezh, Samara, Chernigov, and Khar'kov.

Her first major book was Issledovaniia narodnoi zhizni (1884); subsequent ones were Iuzhnaia Rus': Ocherki, issledovaniia i zametki (1905), Istoriia ukraïnskogo naroda (1906), and Uchebnik russkoi istorii (1909). As some of the titles indicate, her interests turned to the Ukraine. She taught in the Bestuzheiv women's higher education program in St. Petersburg in 1907-18, and was killed in December 1918.

Biographical Sources:
Entries in all 3 editions of Bol'shaya Sovet: Entsiklopediya
Entry in Brokgaus & Efron's Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar'