



# Society Women and Enlightened Charity in Spain

The Junta de Damas de Honor y Mérito, 1787–1823

Edited by CATHERINE M. JAFFE and ELISA MARTÍN-VALDEPEÑAS YAGÜE

In original essays drawn from a myriad of archival materials, *Society Women and Enlightened Charity in Spain* reveals how the members of the Junta de Damas de Honor y Mérito, founded in 1787 to administer charities and schools for impoverished women and children, claimed a role in the public sphere through their self-representation as civic mothers and created an enlightened legacy for modern feminism in Spain.

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"These essays provide a compelling portrait of the exemplary and transgressive persistence of the members of the Junta de Damas, who exercised 'civic motherhood' beyond the sanctioned spaces of the Catholic Church and their domestic lives, and whose contributions—both to Enlightenment projects in eighteenth-century Spain and to our understanding of early feminism—have often been overlooked."—**Karen Stolley**, author of *Domesticating Empire: Enlightenment in Spanish America*

"*Society Women and Enlightened Charity in Spain* focuses on the members of Madrid's Junta de Damas (part of the Madrid Royal Economic Society) and their pathbreaking work undertaken to improve the lives of poor women and children. For the first time in English, readers will discover the practical effects of Spanish women working together to forge a more equitable and just society."—**David T. Gies**, editor of *Dieciocho: Hispanic Enlightenment*



APRIL 2022

352 pages, 6 x 9, 17 halftones, 1 line drawing, 1 map  
978-0-8071-7680-1

Hardcover \$55.00s, ebook available

European History / Women's Studies

New Hispanisms: Cultural and Literary Studies

Anne J. Cruz, Series Editor

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