

# Diagnoses in Assyrian and Babylonian Medicine: Ancient Sources, Translations, and Modern Medical Analyses

Jo Ann Scurlock

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To date, the pathbreaking medical contributions of the early Mesopotamians have been only vaguely understood. Due to the combined problems of an extinct language, gaps in the archeological record, the complexities of pharmacy and medicine, and the dispersion of ancient tablets throughout the museums of the world, it has been nearly impossible to get a clear and comprehensive view of what medicine was really like in ancient Mesopotamia.\_x000B\_The collaboration of medical expert Burton R. Andersen and cuneiformist JoAnn Scurlock makes it finally possible to survey this collected corpus and discern magic from experimental medicine in Ashur, Babylon, and Nineveh. Diagnoses in Assyrian and Babylonian Medicine is the first systematic study of all the available texts, which together reveal a level of medical knowledge not matched again until the nineteenth century A.D. Over the course of a millennium, these nations were able to develop tests, prepare drugs, and encourage public sanitation. Their careful observation and recording of data resulted in a description of symptoms so precise as to enable modern identification of numerous diseases and afflictions.\_x000B\_



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