
¹A cistern was 10 GAR square, 10 GAR deep.

²⁻³I emptied out(?) its water; with its water how much field did I irrigate to a depth of 1 šu-si?

⁴Put (aside) 10 and 10 which formed the square.

⁵Put (aside) 10, the depth of the cistern.

^{6-6a}And put (aside) 0; 0, 10, the depth of the water which irrigated the field.

⁷⁻⁸Take the reciprocal of 0; 0, 10, the depth of the water which [irri]gated the field, and (the resulting) 6, 0 [mul]tiplied by 10, the depth of the cistern, (and the result is) 1, 0, 0.

⁹1, 0, 0 ke[ep] in your head.

¹⁰[Square (?)] 10, which formed the square, [and (the result is)] 1, 40.

¹¹⁻¹²Multiply 1, 40 by 1, 0, 0, which you are ke[eping] in your head. I irrigated 1, 40, 0, 0 (SAR) field.

Commentary

The text assumes a cistern (túl) in the shape of a cube, such that its length l , width b , and depth h are 10 GAR each. The problem which is posed requires the calculation of the area A of a field irrigated to a depth h_A of 1 šu-si by the water contained in the cistern. After the transformation of $h_A = 1$ šu-si to 0; 0, 10 GAR, which is necessary because h is expressed in units of GAR, is made, the actual computation is carried out according to the formula

$$\frac{h}{h_A} \cdot l \cdot b = A.$$

The transformation of the final answer 1, 40, 0, 0 (SAR) to the standard 3 šár 2 bur'u is not made in the text.

The situation described in the text is strongly idealized in that the water is required to be spread to a uniform depth of one finger's breadth over a field which is approximately $3\frac{1}{2}$ kilometers square.