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*In memoriam Oswald Loretz*



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# Redemption at Ugarit

*KTU 3.4 in Light of Akkadian Legal Traditions at Ugarit*

*Dylan Johnson, New York*

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## I. Introduction

“But God will ransom my soul from the power of Sheol; indeed he will take me” (Ps 49:15 NRSV). In this quote, the psalmist praises Yahweh as Israel’s great redeemer from the underworld. His figurative description is further enriched through the evocation of legal language: “he will ransom” (יפדה); “from the power – literally hand” (מיד); “and he will take me” (יקחני);<sup>1</sup> are all well-attested idioms in cuneiform and alphabetic legal documents from the ancient Near East. While legal language in poetic material is an intriguing course of study, this paper focuses on such terminology in its primary generic context. I shall focus on one particular text, *KTU 3.4* (a legal text documenting the debt of a man named 'Agidenu), as my main reference point before launching into a broader analysis of redemption within various ancient Near Eastern legal corpora.

It is crucial to view legal texts as evidentiary documents designed to reinforce legal claims rather than summaries of the full chain of events that preceded their composition. The aim of this paper is to situate *KTU 3.4* within, what Sha-

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<sup>1</sup> Burkhard Kienast, “Rechtsurkunden in ugaritischer Sprache,” in *UF 11* (1979) 438. Kienast defines the legal range of *lqh* to include “(gewaltsam) (weg)nehmen” or more simply “wegnehmen (von Eigentum).” See also Ignacio Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit: A Study of Ancient Near Eastern Diplomatics* (AOAT 335; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2006), 221.

lom Holtz labels, the broader “stage of litigation,”<sup>2</sup> in which such a document would emerge. This requires an analysis of the institution of redemption at Ugarit more generally, which would benefit from comparisons not only with the Akkadian legal documentation from Ugarit, but from contemporary Syrian sites such as Emar. A close comparison of various legal formulas utilized in *KTU* 3.4 to Akkadian analogues elucidates the position within the legal sequence that *KTU* 3.4 fits. It is my contention that this sequence should be reconstructed as follows: (i) ’Agidenu’s default on a debt owed to the “Beirutians;” (ii) the seizure of ’Agidenu and his family for debt surety by the Beirutians; (iii) ’Ewrikili’s redemption as ’Agidenu’s guarantor; and (iv) ’Agidenu’s new debt subsequently owed to ’Ewrikili. I shall reconstruct each scenario based on textual parallels from Ugarit, Emar, and – at a few points – biblical texts.

## II. The Content of *KTU* 3.4 and its Place in the Ugaritic Legal Corpus

The tablet *KTU* 3.4 (*RS* 16.191 + 16.272) is one of only sixty-five legal texts written in the local Ugaritic language, and one of only four Ugaritic legal texts found in the central palace archive bearing the royal seal.<sup>3</sup> The vast majority of juridical texts from Ugarit (176 royal deeds and 65 private documents)<sup>4</sup> were

<sup>2</sup> Shalom E. Holtz, *Neo-Babylonian Court Procedure* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 17–19. Holtz, working with Neo-Babylonian materials, accesses the various stages of litigation through what he calls the “tablet trail.” He makes a clear distinction between those texts that describe a procedure or stage of the litigation from those texts that do not describe court activities, but were part of the adjudicatory process (*i. e.* evidentiary documents).

<sup>3</sup> Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 55. See Manfred Dietrich / Oswald Loretz / Joaquin Sanmartín, *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani, und anderen Orten* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; AOAT 360/1; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2013), 230. Dietrich and Loretz identify the seal as the “ring-seal of Niqmaddu (II’).” However the appearance of ’Ewrikili in *RS* 16.134 (discussed below), a tablet that dates to the reign of Amittamru, shows that the later king Amittamru would use Niqmaddu II’s signet ring as a kind of “dynastic seal.” See Sylvie Lackenbacher, “Les textes judiciaires d’Ugarit,” in *Rendre la justice en Mésopotamie: Archives judiciaires du Proche Orient ancien (III<sup>e</sup>–I<sup>er</sup> millénaires avant J.-C.)* (Saint-Denis: Presses Universitaires de Vincennes, 2000), 165. Lackenbacher notes that the purpose of the dynastic seal was to project the legal authority of the document not only under the reigning monarch, but all of his subsequent heirs.

<sup>4</sup> Wilfred van Soldt, “The Akkadian Legal Texts from Ugarit,” in *Trois millénaires de formules juridiques sémitiques* (eds. S. Démare-Lafont / A. Lemaire; Actes de la Table Ronde EPHE 28–29; Hautes Etudes Orientales; Paris: Droz, 2006), 85. Van Soldt notes that there are at least 175 royal deeds from the palace archives and 65 private legal documents from various domestic archives in Akkadian at Ugarit. That is compared to the meager 27 legal texts written in the Ugaritic vernacular; see Dennis Pardee, “Les textes juridiques en langue ougaritique,” in *Trois millénaires de formules juridiques sémitiques*



written in the so-called *lingua franca* of the Late Bronze Age – Akkadian. Particularly striking is that out of the 176 legal texts deemed “royal deeds” only six – including *KTU* 3.4 – are written in Ugaritic.<sup>5</sup> This text details the “redemption/release” (*pdy*) of the Ugaritian ’Agidenu and his family from a group of Beirutians (*b’rtym*) by one ’Ewrikili – a man seemingly unrelated to the ’Agidenu family. Previous treatments of this tablet have ranged from rather cursory classifications,<sup>6</sup> to more thorough analyses of its content.<sup>7</sup> Below I offer my own translation of the tablet accompanied by any necessary commentary to my readings.

### KTU 3.4 (RS 16.191 + 16.272)

1	<i>l . ym hnd</i>	“From this day (forward)
2	<i>ıwrkl . pdy</i> <sup>8</sup>	’Ewrikili has redeemed:
3	<i>ıgdn . bn . nwgn</i>	’Agidenu, son of <i>nwgn</i> ;
4	<i>wynhm . ıhh</i> <sup>9</sup>	Yanhamu, his (’Agidenu’s) brother;

eds. S. Démare-Lafont / A. Lemaire (Actes de la Table Ronde EPHE 28–29; Hautes Études Orientales. Paris: Droz, 2006), 126.

<sup>5</sup> Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 53.

<sup>6</sup> Manfred Dietrich / Oswald Loretz, “Dokumente aus Alalach und Ugarit,” (vol.1/3 of *Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments*; ed. Otto Kaiser; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1982), 213. Also see Wilfred van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit: Dating and Grammar* (Neukirchen: Vluyn, 1991), 79. Also Márquez Rowe, “The Legal Texts from Ugarit,” in *Handbook of Ugaritic Studies* (eds. Wilfred G. E. Watson / Nicholas Wyatt; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 413, 415. Also see Pardee, “Les textes juridiques,” in *Trois millénaires de formules juridiques sémitiques* (eds. S. Démare-Lafont / A. Lemaire; Actes de la Table Ronde EPHE 28–29; Hautes Etudes Orientales; Paris: Droz, 2006), 131. Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 61, 332.

<sup>7</sup> Kienast, “Rechtsurkunden in ugaritische Sprache,” 432, 448–50. The most thorough treatment of *KTU* 3.4 was published by R. Yaron, “A Document of Redemption from Ugarit,” *VT* 10 (1960) 83–90.

<sup>8</sup> Based on the spelling, the verb could be a G or a D perfect. If we choose to base our reconstruction on Akkadian usage, a D-stem is more preferable. See CAD P, 6a–7a. Although, one should not that the Akkadian D-stem verb *padû* only appears in one clear legal context; SAA 10, 89: *ana puddê ša [x x x x] LUGAL uznu lû šakin* “Indeed attention should be paid to redeem the [x x x x] of the king.” The Akkadian usage of the verb *padû* is discussed in more detail below. Conversely, if we try to reconstruct this verb based on the West Semitic material the verb *pdh* appears only in the C and G-stems. Moreover, we find the G-stem (*pdt* = G 1 com. sg. perfect?) in the epigraphic material from the Aramaic papyri of Elephantine/Hermopolis; see Herm ii 5.

<sup>9</sup> All kinship terms refer back to ’Agidenu, which is interesting considering his brothers, who must have been part of ’Agidenu’s extended household and somehow under his authority, are held by the Beirutians as well.

5	<i>w . b<sup>1</sup>ln a<sup>1</sup>hh</i>	Ba <sup>1</sup> lānu, his brother;
6	<i>w . h<sup>1</sup>tt<sup>1</sup>n b<sup>1</sup>nh</i>	Ḥattuṭānu, his son;
7	<i>w . btšy . b<sup>1</sup>th</i>	<i>btšy</i> , his daughter;
8	<i>w . i<sup>1</sup>štr<sup>1</sup>my</i>	ʾIštar-ummīya <sup>10</sup> ...
9	<i>bt . a<sup>1</sup>bdmlk a<sup>1</sup>[th]</i>	... daughter of ʾAbdu-Malki, his wife;
10	<i>w . snt&lt;b<sup>1</sup>&gt;</i>	and <i>snt</i> ,
11	<i>bt . u<sup>1</sup>grt<sup>11</sup></i>	a daughter of ʾUgarit.
12	<i>w . p<sup>1</sup>dy . h[m]</i>	And ʾEwrikili ransomed them (for)
13	<i>i<sup>1</sup>wrkl . m<sup>1</sup>it</i>	one hundred (shekels)
14	<i>ksp . by[d]<sup>12</sup></i>	of silver, from the authority
15	<i>b<sup>1</sup>irtym</i>	of the Beirutians.
16	<i>[w . u<sup>1</sup>]nt<sup>13</sup> inn<sup>13</sup></i>	And they have no ʾunuttu-obligations
17	<i>hm<sup>1</sup> c<sup>1</sup>d t<sup>1</sup>ttbn</i>	until they will have returned
18	<i>ksp . i<sup>1</sup>wrkl</i>	the silver of ʾEwrikili
19	<i>w<sup>1</sup>tb<sup>14</sup> . l<sup>1</sup>un<sup>1</sup>thm</i>	then they may return to their ʾunuttu-obligations”

Before I launch into an analysis of the above-mentioned stages of litigation, a brief explanation of redemption is in order. The legal mechanism of redemption was a widespread and well-attested phenomenon in Mesopotamian, Ugaritic,

<sup>10</sup> This reconstruction assumes the name of ʾAgidenu’s wife was a Mesopotamian one, explaining the use of the /š/ rather than /t/ in the theophoric element, as well as the absence of the aleph in the word for “mother” (Akk. *ummu*; Ug. *um*).

<sup>11</sup> The category of “daughter/son of GN” is typical in Akkadian texts to refer to the city of origin or habitation of given individual; see CAD M/1, 315a–b. However, considering all members of ʾAgidenu’s family were Ugaritians, it is more probable that the designation of this woman *Snt* as a *bt ugrt*, refers to some other quality. It is notable that the only other individual not directly identified through ʾAgidenu is his wife, Ištar-ummīya, who is identified by her patronym. Thus, this *Snt* – merely identified as a “citizen” of Ugarit – does seem to be of a somewhat lower standing than Ištar-ummīya. Previous scholars have labeled *Snt* a freed female slave; see Yaron, “A Document of Redemption,” 85. Considering the lack of any identifying description of *Snt*’s relationship to ʾAgidenu, Yaron’s assertion makes sense – she was likely a dependent of the household, but not one related by blood. See also L. M. Mutingh, “The Social and Legal Status of a Free Woman at Ugarit,” *JNES* 26 (1967) 102–103. Mutingh, while discussing *KTU* 3.4, points to a pair of texts (*UT* 2045,7; *UT* 2080) where the designation *bt/bn* describes enslaved people.

<sup>12</sup> Almost all treatments of this text have taken the preposition *b-* as meaning “from.” Based on the perspective of the text (ʾAgidenu and his family are already under the authority of ʾEwrikili), this must be the meaning. See Dennis Pardee, “The Preposition in Ugaritic,” *UF* 7 (1975) 365.

<sup>13</sup> The construction is the existential particle *in* + an enclitic *-n*.

<sup>14</sup> I take this as a G 3 masc. pl. perfect of *twb*.

and biblical judicial traditions – to name but a few. While it varied from one legal tradition to the next, it ideally reserved an individual's right to repurchase property (though the price varied widely) that they had sold or lost to defaulting debt.<sup>15</sup> Redemption sought to protect individuals forced to sell heritable property under market value in times of distress. In order to subterfuge this phenomenon, real estate deeds make frequent mention of the “full purchase-price” having been paid, thereby eliminating duress as a viable claim for redemption. Moreover, legal formulas such as the perpetuity clause (*ana dāri dūri / 'd 'lm*) or penalty clause (*šumma urram šēram . . .*) sought to discourage claims by disgruntled parties who had sold land or property.<sup>16</sup> In cases of failure to repay debt, an individual along with his or her family could be seized as surety for repayment of the debt (occasionally including antichretic use) or the repayment itself (meaning a permanent transfer of ownership).

### III. 'Agidenu “In the Hands” of the Beirutians

'Agidenu's default and his seizure by the Beirutians – the first and second scenarios mentioned above – are the most difficult to address. The events that brought 'Agidenu and his family under the legal authority of the Beirutians involve a few plausible options: (i) they were sold into slavery, (ii) they were captured and ransomed, or (iii) the patriarch 'Agidenu defaulted on a debt and resultantly he and his household were taken as surety for its repayment. I shall address each scenario in light of legal traditions from both Ugarit and other legal corpora as they deal with slavery and redemption. The sale of family members into slavery and their subsequent redemption is known from a casuistic law of the Covenant Code (Ex 21 : 7–8):

“If a man sells his daughter as a female-slave (לַאִמָּה), she shall not go out as the male-slaves (הַעֲבָדִים) do. If she is wicked in the eyes of her master, who has appointed her for himself, then he shall cause her to be redeemed (הַפְדָּה) he has no right to sell her to a foreign people (if he does) he has

<sup>15</sup> A useful overview of the legal mechanisms protecting creditors against redemption is discussed in Raymond Westbrook and Richard Jasnow, *Security for Debt in Ancient Near Eastern Law* (CHANE 9; Leiden: Brill, 2001). See also Raymond Westbrook, *Property and the Family in Biblical Law* (JSOTSup 113; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991). The biblical material is not consistent regarding redemption laws; occasionally a strict time limit after the initial sale was stipulated for redemption to be legitimate (Lev 25 : 25–34). The emphasis on paying the “full purchase price” (Heb. כֶּסֶף מִלֵּא as in Gen 23 : 9; 1 Chr 21 : 24 or Ug. Akk. *ina šīmti gamirti* as in RS 16.174), along with other specific stipulations sought to safeguard purchasers of property from the “right to redemption,” implying it was rather difficult to accomplish this act successfully.

<sup>16</sup> Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 248–253.

dealt treacherously with her.”

While the biblical authors expressly forbade the selling of a woman into the authority of foreign peoples, the situation in Ugarit seems slightly different.<sup>17</sup> Of course, the biblical example involves a father’s sale of his daughter – not himself and his entire family – into slavery; therefore the parallel is limited to the use of *pdy/h* as a means of redemption from sale into bondage. While sale into slavery was a very real threat to marginal members of society – most often women – a far more common form of bondage was debt servitude. A text from Emar (*Emar* 16) describes such a situation with a man named Bazila, son of Abdu-ili, who was an indebted servant of the household of one Sîn-abu.<sup>18</sup> The text is a testament detailing the legal obligations of Bazila to Sîn-abu’s household after the latter’s death, but opens with a description of the circumstances involving Bazila’s coming into slavery: “Bazila, son of Abdu-ili, is my man of 41 shekels of my(?) silver. Now he has repaid 20 shekels of silver out of that silver of mine (that I lent him) and I have given him Abī-qirī as a wife for him ...”<sup>19</sup> Thus, an individual could become a bonded servant as a result of an outstanding debt.<sup>20</sup> Yet, with this text in mind, the amount of one hundred shekels of silver could hardly be viewed as sufficient compensation for ʾAgidenu and six members of his extended household.<sup>21</sup> Thus, an explanation for the penurious amount paid for the redemption of seven individuals must be sought elsewhere.

<sup>17</sup> For example see the Ugaritic Akkadian text *RS* 17.130 (Jean Nougayrol, *Le palais royal d’ugarit: Textes accadiens des archives sud* (vol. IV; MRS IX; Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1955), 103 (= *PRU* IV)). This text regulates the trade between Ugarit and Ura. It stipulates that the King of Ugarit is to hand over a defaulting debtor from Ugarit into the authority of the merchants of Ura.

<sup>18</sup> Daniel Arnaud, *Recherches au pays d’Aštata* (Emar VI/3; Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1985), 24–26.

<sup>19</sup> *Emar* 16,2–4. The text, which is quite difficult, reads: <sup>1</sup>*Bazila mār Abdu-ili amīlūtīya ša 41 šiqil kaspī inanna 20 šiqil kaspā ištu libbi kaspī šāšu uḥtalliq u Abī-qirī ana aššas-su attadin.*

<sup>20</sup> For a slightly different reading see Joseph Tropper / Juan-Pablo Vita, “Texte aus Emar,” pages 146–162 in *Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments: Neue Folge* (vol. 1; Texte zum Rechts- und Wirtschaftsleben; Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlaghaus, 2004), 149–150. Tropper and Vita label *Emar* 16 a document of self-sale among the “*amēlūtu*-Verträge,” which describes Bazila’s (Maši-ila) partial repayment of his debt in exchange for a wife. Whether Bazila sold himself into slavery for the forty sheqels of silver or he defaulted on such a loan cannot be clearly discerned from the text – although I lean towards the latter scenario in light of other evidence.

<sup>21</sup> These include: ʾAgidenu, his son Yanḥamu, his brother Baʿlānu, his son Ḥattuṭānu, his daughter *btšy*, his wife ʾIštar-ummīya, a woman named *SNT* who is called a “daughter of Ugarit” (*bt ūgrt*).

The second option for 'Agidenu's family falling into the hands of the Beirutians is their capture and ransom. Ignacio Márquez Rowe assumes this to be situation of *KTU* 3.4, which he claims "records the redemption by a certain Iwrikili of a family of five members plus two other people that *had been enslaved abroad* [my emphasis], namely by Beirutians;"<sup>22</sup> but is there sufficient evidence for this assumption? Moreover, the question then arises: what was 'Ewrikili's relationship to 'Agidenu and his family that he would ransom them? 'Ewrikili appears in another legal document (*RS* 16.134), where he is the recipient of a seized home, fields, and is exempted from *pilku* service by King Amittamru.<sup>23</sup> 'Ewrikili's lack of patronym inhibits the identification of any familial relationships, but he is clearly a significant power-broker in Ugarit, meaning his involvement in the matter of *KTU* 3.4 was most likely out of economic interests. Furthermore, the fact that *KTU* 3.4 was produced locally, in the local Ugaritic language, and sealed by the King of Ugarit, makes it extremely probable that these Beirutians were located within the city of Ugarit itself. Thus, any notion of 'Agidenu's capture and imprisonment abroad is quite unlikely. Nevertheless, the main concern of *KTU* 3.4 is the fate of 'Agidenu and his new obligations to 'Ewrikili, thus Márquez Rowe's assumption is not impossible, but lacking in explanatory force.

The final scenario I previously mentioned was 'Agidenu and his family's seizure as the result of his defaulting on an outstanding debt. While the legal tradition of redemption served to protect the impoverished and downtrodden, a wide array of judicial mechanisms had gradually developed in various Near Eastern cultures since the Ur III Period to protect and legally empower creditors to ensure the recovery of their investments.<sup>24</sup> A clear biblical example of this situation is the case of the widow in the Elijah/Elisha cycle (2 Kgs 4:1), who feared the seizure of her children into slavery on account of her dead husband's outstanding debt. We have one clear reference in *RS* 15.Y<sup>25</sup> to the king's seizure

<sup>22</sup> Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 242.

<sup>23</sup> In this text 'Ewrikili is written 'EN-ki-li, where the Sumerogram EN "lord" is the Hurrian approximation. See van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 37. Also see F. Gröndahl, *Die Personnamen der Texte aus Ugarit* (StP 1; Rome: Päpstliches Bibelinstitut, 1967), 205, 225, 234.

<sup>24</sup> Raymond Westbrook / Richard Jasnow, *Security for Debt in Ancient Near Eastern Law*. By the MA period or the Late Bronze Age in Syria, a complex system of surety and pledge systems were in place to ensure a creditor could recover his money. Creditors could seize pledged property and make antichretic use of fields to recover their investments, and in extreme circumstances sell off seized property.

<sup>25</sup> Jean Nougayrol, *Le palais royal d'ugarit: Texts accadiens et hourrites des archives est, ouest et centrales* (vol. III; MRS VI; Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1955), 78 (= *PRU* III).

(*našū*) of real estate (*bītu u eqlātu*) belonging to Bin-ḥattiyama, a defaulting debtor (<sup>LÚ</sup>*nayyālu*).<sup>26</sup> He proceeds to give (*nadānu*) the real estate to a man named Tuppiyanu, whom the king clears from future (redemption?) claims (*zāki* <sup>LÚ</sup>*Tuppiyānu zāki mārūšu*). An Akkadian legal text from nearby Emar (*RE* 58) attests to a man pledging his household and wife as surety for a debt: “Benti, son of Itur-Dagan, has set into surety (*ana qātāti ... šakānu*) his house(hold) and his wife for (the debt) of 20 shekels of silver (*Benti mār Itūr-Dagān É-šu ù DAM-šu ana qātāti ša 20 GÍN KUG.BABBAR ... iltakan.*) This text makes clear that not only were individuals used as debt pledges or sureties in Late Bronze Age Syria, but entire households could be as well.

Within the Akkadian legal corpus of Ugarit, the operative verb for redemption is *paṭāru*.<sup>27</sup> Among these texts, the object of redemption is often real estate,<sup>28</sup> although we find few examples of the redemption of individuals.<sup>29</sup> The latter texts are the most illuminating sources of information for *KTU* 3.4. One

<sup>26</sup> See CAD N/1, 152b–153a. The CAD notes closely parallel MA and NA usage of this term in the context of a royal seizure of property. For instance: A.ŠĀ ... *ša PN LÚ na-a-li RN ana PN<sub>2</sub> ittadin* (KAV 212, 15). Nougayrol rightly identified the <sup>LÚ</sup>*nayyālu* as a “*défaillant*”; see Nougayrol, *PRU* III, 29. See also Kienast, “Rechtsurkunden,” 441. Kienast comes to a similar identification of this category: “ehemaliger Lehnsmann.” The King stripping a defaulting debtor of his household and field also appears in *RS* 16.141: “Niqmaddu, son of Ammiṭtamru, king of Ugarit, has raised up the household, field, and everything owned by Binīya-amḥāna, the defaulting debtor, and has given it to Yari-*immi ...*” (*Niqmaddu mār Ammištamri šar Ugarit ittaši bīšū eqlīšu gabba mimmišu ša Binīya-amḥāna* <sup>LÚ</sup>*nayyāli u iddiššu ana iari-*immi**).

<sup>27</sup> Pardee, “The Preposition in Ugaritic,” 365. Pardee notes that the entire Akkadian verb-preposition construction *paṭāru ištu qāti PN* is approximated in Ugaritic by the construction *pdy byd PN*. See also van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 452. Interestingly, both the root *pdh* and *pṭr* seem to be utilized in Official Aramaic legal documents from Elephantine to describe redemption – although *pṭr* seems to be heavily preferred; see J. Hoftijzer / K. Jongeling, *Dictionary of the North West Semitic Inscriptions: M–T* (2<sup>nd</sup> vol.; Leiden: Brill, 1955), 908.

<sup>28</sup> *RS* 15.123 + 16.152, *RS* 16.334, *RS* 17.108, *RS* 15.Y.

<sup>29</sup> Texts describing the redemption of people or describing the stipulations for the future redemption of a person include: *RS* 15.92, *RS* 17.28, *RS* 18.21. Akkadian does have a cognate verb to *pdy* that means “to redeem/ransom” in the D-stem; see CAD P, 6a–7a. In the G-stem the verb *padû* typically describes the relenting of the cosmic powers of the gods in literary and lexical texts (Erra IIIa 25; Atrahasis 60 iii 17; Erimḥuš Bogh A 18f.). The only clear legal usage of *padû* in Akkadian appears in the aforementioned text SAA 10 89 (see note 8 above). However, the adjective *lā padû* “merciless/unsparing” reflects that the practice of redemption was a merciful act – quite clear in the usage known from biblical tradition. Conversely, the verb *paṭāru* appears in a wide variety of legal texts from many disparate archives such as OA Kārum Kaneš, OB Babylon, OB Mari, and LBA Emar; see CAD P, 293b–294a.

Akkadian text, *RS 17.108*, is closely analogous to the situation in *KTU 3.4*: “the king of the land of Ugarit has redeemed him from the authority of PN” (*šar māt ’Ugarit ištu lēt PN ana 1 mēat 20 šiqil kaspi PN iptataršu*).<sup>30</sup> Thus, rather than an important functionary within the royal orbit – such as ’Ewrikili – the king himself is said to have redeemed this individual. A nearly identical scenario to *RS 17.108* is found in a text from neighboring Emar (*Emar 221*), the important difference – aligning it more closely with *RS 3.4* – is that it is a member of an elite family of diviners (<sup>LÜ</sup>*bārū*) that pays for the redemption:

“Ba’lu-Malik, son of the diviner, has redeemed Abdu-[x x x x] from the authority of Ballaṭī and Pāliḫu for 30 shekels of silver. If at a future time his [Abdu-x x x x’s] master comes up [to file a claim], let him pay the equivalent amount of silver for his redemption price” (*’Ba’lu-mālik mār bārī Abdu-[x-x] ištu līt <sup>1</sup>Ballaṭī u <sup>1</sup>Pāliḫu ana 30 šiqilu kasp[a] iptatar šumma urram [š]ēram bēlūšu [i]llū kaspā mithariš [ana i]pṭarīšu liddin-ma*).

The nominal form *ipteru* is found in Ugaritic Akkadian legal texts as well (*RS 15.11, 15*), where it explicitly refers to the money paid for the release of an individual.<sup>31</sup> The noun *ipteru* is a well-attested legal term spread broadly in our extant corpora, including but not limited to: OA Kārum Kaneš, OB Mari, LBA Amarna letters, and MA legal texts.<sup>32</sup> Crucial for this study however, the Akkadian legal texts from Ugarit adopted a unique term largely analogous to *ipteru*, but this term, *tapdētu*, was derived from the local Ugaritic root for redemption (*pdy*).

Biblical tradition broadens our understanding of the meaning of *pdy*; it understood the root to describe both redemption from some kind of bondage (see Ex 21:7–8 above), as well as exchange of one material for another (cf. Ex 13:13–15; Ex 34:20; Lev 27:26–29; Num 18:15–17).<sup>33</sup> Interestingly, this bifurcated meaning of “ransom” and “exchange” appears in the Ugaritic corpus as

<sup>30</sup> Nougayrol, *PRU IV*, 165. The term *lītu* “power, control” is entirely interchangeable with *qātu* “hand, authority” in the Akkadian legal texts from Ugarit. See *RS 17.28*: Nougayrol, *PRU IV*, 110. We read: “The king of the land of Ugarit has redeemed him from the hand/authority of PN” (*šar māt ’Ugarit ištu qāt PN iptataršu*).

<sup>31</sup> We read in *RS 15.11* (Nougayrol, *PRU III*, 19): “he swore that he would indeed give the redemption price for your slaves to me” (*ittami adi lā iddin-ma ardīka kasap ipṭerī-šunu ana yāši*).

<sup>32</sup> See CAD I, 171b–173a.

<sup>33</sup> It is interesting to note that all occurrences of *pdh* with the meaning “to replace” occur in Pentateuchal texts associated with ritual regulation. However, within Deuteronomy – and the rest of the Hebrew Bible for that matter – *pdh* is only used in the sense of “redeeming/ransoming” from bondage/danger.

well. Three documents (*RS* 16.246, *RS* 16.131, and *RS* 16.343),<sup>34</sup> which were traditionally identified as “échange avec soulte,”<sup>35</sup> make reference to a legal term called *tapdētu*. John Huehnergard identified this as the syllabic spelling of a Ugaritic word, derived from the root *pdy*.<sup>36</sup> The texts describe scenarios where: PN<sub>1</sub> takes (*našû*)<sup>37</sup> his property (occasionally along with money) and gives it to PN<sub>2</sub>. This serves as a *tapdētu*-(re)payment for another piece of PN<sub>1</sub>'s property held by PN<sub>2</sub> (a field in all three cases). Previous scholars have sought to read *tapdētu* as referring to the repurchase of land held as a pledge.<sup>38</sup> This assertion is supported by *RS* 16.131, a text Nougayrol labels one of his “Actes multiples homogènes.”<sup>39</sup> This text is significant for our purposes because it explicitly connects a debt pledge/surety (*erub*) of fields and the legal mechanism of redemption:

“Secondly: The fields of (the woman) Bin-ḥattiyāma<sup>40</sup> (that are) in the Raḥbāna fields are/were pledged as surety to Išmī-šarru. The fields of Kišena (that are) in the fields of Kulkullu – the *tapdētu* of the fields of Bin-ḥattiyāma<sup>41</sup> – were pledged to Yatarmu son of Ḥalīyāna. (Now), the

<sup>34</sup> Sylvie Lackenbacher, *Textes akkadiens d’Ugarit: textes provenant des vingt-cinq premières campagnes* (Paris: Cerf, 2002), nn.882, 1162.

<sup>35</sup> Nougayrol, *PRU* III, 95, 129, 139.

<sup>36</sup> John Huehnergard, *Ugaritic Vocabulary in Syllabic Transcription* (HSS 32; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 166.

<sup>37</sup> The *našû* ... *nadānu* formula is well known from Ugaritic land conveyances. While the word *našû* only appears in *RS* 16.343, the abbreviated form of the formula only employing the verb *nadānu* carries identical legal meaning. For a discussion of the *našû* ... *nadānu* formula, see Kienast, “Rechtsurkunden,” 439–40. A thorough treatment can be found in Daniel Oden, “Grapes from a Distant Vineyard: Power over Land in Ancient Syrian Legal Documents and Its Characterization in 1 Kings 21:1–16”; Ph.D. diss., Department of Hebrew and Judaic Studies, New York University, 2012.

<sup>38</sup> Márquez Rowe, *Royal Deeds*, 220.

<sup>39</sup> Nougayrol, *PRU* III, 25. This category of *Sammeltafel* describes two or more legal stipulations (separated by the adverb *šanīta*) that are related to each other in some way. In contrast, Nougayrol created a category called “*Acts multiples hétérogènes*,” which are tablets containing two unrelated legal concerns. What connects the two legal circumstances of this document is the figure Išmī-šarru, who receives a parcel of land in each case.

<sup>40</sup> Based on the female gender determinative, this is presumably a different Bin-ḥattiyāma than the one we encountered in *RS* 15.Y. However, the element “bin” in the name does seem odd for a female name and considering this, I am somewhat suspect of Nougayrol’s transcription.

<sup>41</sup> Nougayrol translates this difficult section: “et les terres de Kišena, (sises) dans le territoire de Kulkullu – contrepartie d’échange des terres de Dame Bin-ḥatiyama – étaient



fields of Bin-ḥattīyāma in the Raḥbāna field are held (in antichresis?)<sup>42</sup> for Iṣmī-šarru and his sons forever. The fields of Kišena (that are) in the fields of Kulkullu are held (in antichresis?) by Yatarmu and his sons forever.”<sup>43</sup>

The frequent use of obscure legal jargon in this text makes its interpretation difficult. Fortunately, the preceding legal situation in *RS 16.131* makes clear Iṣmī-šarru’s less-than-magnanimous motivation for loaning his money:

“From this day forward, in the presence of Amittamru, son of Niqmepa, king of Ugarit: Šadē-yanu, son of Mulluzu, has given 4 *ikū* of field among the Ša’u fields for two hundred and seventy (shekels) of silver to Iṣmī-šarru; the fields are held (in antichresis), in the light of day, by Iṣmī-šarru.”<sup>44</sup>

Compared to the latter section of *RS 16.131*, which reveals a later stage in the legal process of Iṣmī-šarru’s lending operation, we can see Šadē-yanu has surrendered his land in order to obtain a two-hundred and seventy shekel loan. Until repaid, Iṣmī-šarru may earn a profit from the antichretic use of Šadē-yanu’s land. If Šadē-yanu defaults on his debt – perhaps what Iṣmī-šarru was counting on – his fate would be similar Bin-ḥattīyāma. The fields of Kišena, which were originally intended as a *tapdētu*-payment to recover the pledged fields of Bin-ḥattīyāma, had somehow become pledged to another creditor, and were thus disqualified as adequate means to recover the originally pledged fields of Bin-ḥattīyāma. Therefore, despite the interpretive difficulties of *RS 16.131*, this text firmly connects the Ugaritic mechanism of redemption (*pdy*) with a failure to repay outstanding debt.

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gages pour Yatarmu, fils de Ḥaliyanu” (Nougayrol, *PRU* III, 139). The use of the term *tapdētu* seems to be largely analogous to the noun *naptaru*; see *RS 15.123 + 16.152* (Nougayrol, *PRU* III, 89.) Márquez Rowe identifies *naptaru* as a biform of *ipteru*, both of which he translates as “ransom money”; see Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 242.

<sup>42</sup> There is disagreement over whether this stative verb (*šamid/t*) should derive from *šmd* or *šmt*; see van Soldt, *Studies in the Akkadian of Ugarit*, 244.

<sup>43</sup> *RS 16.131,15–27*: *šanīta*: *eqlāt* <sup>F</sup>*Bin-ḥattīyāma ina eqlāti Raḥbāna erub ana* <sup>1</sup>*Iṣmī-šarri u eqlāt* <sup>1</sup>*Kišena ina eqlāti Kulkulli tapdētu eqlāti* <sup>F</sup>*Bin-ḥattīyāma erub ana* <sup>1</sup>*Yatārmi mār Ḥalīyāna eqlāt* <sup>F</sup>*Bin-ḥattīyāma ina eqlāti Raḥbāna šamid ana* <sup>1</sup>*Iṣmī-šarri u ana mārīšu adi dārīti u eqlāt* <sup>1</sup>*Kišena ina eqlāti Kulkulli šamid ana Yatārmi u ana mārīšu adi dārīti.*

<sup>44</sup> *RS 16.131,1–10*: *ištu ūmi annīm ana pāni* <sup>1</sup>*Amištamra mār Niqmepa šar Ugarit* <sup>1</sup>*Šadē-yanu mār Mulluzi ittadin 4 ikī eqlāti ina eqlāti šá’i ina 2 mēat 70 kaspi ana* <sup>1</sup>*Iṣmī-šarru eqlātu šamid ina* <sup>d</sup>*Šapši ūmi ana* <sup>1</sup>*Iṣmī-šarru.*

The legal scenarios encountered by the widow in 2 Kgs 4:1; Benti, son of Itur-Dagan, in *RE* 58; Abdu-[x x x x] in *Emar* 228; and Bin-ḥattiyāma, Kišena, and Šadê-yanu in *RS* 16.131 provide a reasonably analogous template to for the events leading up to 'Agidenu and his family's seizure by the Beirutians. Although I have already briefly touched on this issue, I now turn to explore 'Ewrikili's legal role and the motivation for his involvement in the events described in *KTU* 3.4.

#### IV. 'Ewrikili as Guarantor

The institution of guarantorship is well-attested within the Ugaritic legal corpus.<sup>45</sup> Among the Akkadian texts from Ugarit, there are two idioms that describe this institution: *qātāti ... šabātu*<sup>46</sup> and some form of the verb *erēbu*.<sup>47</sup> Both are attested among other Syrian legal corpora describing guarantorship, while only the latter is preserved within biblical tradition (עֲרַב).<sup>48</sup> The phrase *qātāti ... šabātu* appears in only one Akkadian legal text from Ugarit (*RS* 15.81), but concisely explains the obligations of a guarantor:

“Kilīyānu, son of Agīyānu, and Karyānu, son of Tešamānu (an inhabitant of Qamanuzi), have become guarantors (lit. “seized the hands”) of Burqānu along with his children. If at a future time Burqānu flees to another land, then they (Kilīyānu and Karyānu) will repay five-hundred (shekels)

<sup>45</sup> Among the Akkadian texts, we can include: *RS* 15.81, *RS* 16.287, *RS* 16.131. Among the alphabetic tablets we may include: *KTU* 3.8, *KTU* 3.3, *KTU* 4.347, and perhaps *KTU* 3.7.

<sup>46</sup> The only definitive example of this construction is found in *RS* 15.81 (Nougayrol, *PRU* III, 37.) For a discussion of this construction see Meir Malul, *Studies in Mesopotamian Legal Symbolism* (AOAT 221; Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 1988), 220.

<sup>47</sup> *RS* 16.287,7. The term appears in a D-stem nominal form in this text: *urrubānu*. This root also describes goods/people pledged as surety (see *RS* 16.131 above). The pledge of goods/people and the use of a guarantor were two mechanisms viewed to achieve the same result – repayment of an outstanding debt – and thus it is unsurprising that similar terminology describes both. The use of this root can be traced back to OA Kārum Kaneš where *erubbātum* described goods pledged as surety; see Klaas Veenhof, “The Old Assyrian Period,” in *Security for Debt in Ancient Near Eastern Law* (CHANE 9; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 122. Veenhof notes that at Kārum Kaneš – just as at Ugarit – scribes employed a second term to describe a person who had agreed to serve as a guarantor: *ša qātāti*.

<sup>48</sup> The use of עֲרַב in the context of surety can be found in Pr 20:16 – where the reader is advised against standing surety for a foreigner (most likely because they were liable to flee, leaving the guarantor responsible for their outstanding debt). See also Gen 43:9; 44:32; 2 Kgs 18:23; Ez 9:2; Neh 5:3; Job 17:3; Ps 106:35; 119:132; Pr 6:1; 11:15; 14:10; 17:18.

of silver to the king.”<sup>49</sup>

Meir Malul has argued that the term *qātu* refers to the legal authority guarantorship carries; therefore for one to “seize/take the hands” is to assume this legal authority.<sup>50</sup> From *RS 15.81*, it is clear that the main concern for the guarantors was not freeing their clients from slavery – as we seem to find in *KTU 3.4* – but to ensure the creditors receive their money. Clearly the guarantor would want to avoid the monetary penalty and bring the debtor before his creditors. While illuminating, the legal situations found in *RS 15.81* and *KTU 3.4* were clearly different. We do not have the previous stage of litigation that established the agreement between <sup>ʾ</sup>Ewrikili and <sup>ʾ</sup>Agidenu, which may have looked something like *RS 15.81*, so the exact nature of <sup>ʾ</sup>Ewrikili’s guarantorship is inaccessible and we can only speculate on <sup>ʾ</sup>Ewrikili’s motivations. Furthermore, if one accepts my hypothesis that <sup>ʾ</sup>Ewrikili was a guarantor, then it is not entirely clear if <sup>ʾ</sup>Agidenu – like Benti son of Itūr-Dagān in *RE 58* – actually pledged his household, or if by holding <sup>ʾ</sup>Agidenu the Beirutians merely sought to elicit <sup>ʾ</sup>Ewrikili’s payment of his debt.

Among the legal texts written in Ugaritic, *KTU*<sup>3</sup> 3.21 (formerly *KTU*<sup>2</sup> 4.386) stands out in its form as an administrative list documenting persons serving as sureties for their personnel.<sup>51</sup> Like *RS 16.287* and *RS 16.131*, the root *ʾrb* indicates the individual who has pledged themselves as guarantor for another – the specific construction in *KTU 3.21* is *ʾrb + b + PN*. Closely analogous to *KTU 3.21* is *KTU 3.3*, a document the scribe explicitly identifies as a “letter of guarantorship” (*spr ʾrbnm*) and uses the identical construction to describe the process of guarantorship: *ʾrb + b + PN*. Another text that makes use of the root *ʾrb* that Dietrich and Loretz identify as a “*Bürgschaftstext*”<sup>52</sup> is *KTU 3.7*.<sup>53</sup> However, the classification of this text was made largely on the basis of a strict identification of *ʾrb* as “to serve as guarantor,” which is difficult to understand in the context of the first line: *Mršy* (perhaps the Egyptians?) who have become guarantor for

<sup>49</sup> *RS 15.81,1–8*: <sup>1</sup>*Kiliyānu mār* <sup>1</sup>*Agīyāna u* <sup>1</sup>*Karyānu mār* <sup>1</sup>*Tešamāna amīl* <sup>URU</sup>*Qamanuzi qātāti iššabat ša* <sup>1</sup>*Burqānu qadu mārīšu šumma urram šēram* <sup>1</sup>*Burqānu ana māti šanīti innabiṭ 5 mēat kaspā umallūnim ina qāti šarri.*

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 224.

<sup>51</sup> See Kevin McGeough / Mark S. Smith, *Ugaritic Economic Tablets: Text, Translation and Notes* (ANES 32; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 236–7.

<sup>52</sup> M. Dietrich / O. Loretz / J. Sanmartín, *Die Keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; AOAT 360/1; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2013), 232. Dietrich, Loretz, and Sanmartín may have drawn on Kienast’s classification of the text; see Kienast, “Rechtsurkunden,” 432.

<sup>53</sup> Pardee, “Les textes juridiques,” 134. Pardee – like Dietrich, Loretz, Sanmartín, and Kienast – describes this as a document concerning guarantorship, identifying *Mršy* as “qui s’est porté garant de le service-*ʾunuttu*.”

the *ʾunuttu* (*mṛṣy d ʿrb b ʾunt*). Márquez Rowe aptly identified the analogous Akkadian construction “to enter into (*p*)*ilku*-service” (*ana (p)ilku erēbu*),<sup>54</sup> as the meaning of this construction – completely unrelated to guarantorship.<sup>55</sup> I shall discuss this text in more detail as it pertains to *ʾunuttu*-service below; suffice it to say here that Márquez Rowe’s hypothesis is quite appealing and resolves any difficulty in the reading of *KTU* 3.7. Thus, the above-mentioned texts attest to the importance of guarantorship within the economy of Ugarit. While it is not conclusive evidence for the situation in *KTU* 3.4, by situating the relationship between ʾEwrikili and ʾAgidenu within the context of this legal institution, we move one step closer to the judicatory stage in which our tablet may have appeared.

## V. ʾAgidenu’s New Debt

Although ʾAgidenu and his family had been released from the authority of the Beirutians – whatever that entailed – they were by no means free.<sup>56</sup> Kienast, noting parallels between *KTU* 3.4 and legal texts from Alalah VII (OB period), argued that at the conclusion of the Ugaritic text “[d]amit ist implicite eine anti-chretische Dienstpflicht gegeben.”<sup>57</sup> ʾAgidenu’s continued bondage is clear from the conclusion of *KTU* 3.4 (lines 16–19): “And they have no *ʾunuttu*-obligations (*wunt inn hm*) until they will have returned the silver of ʾEwrikili (*d ttbn ksp iwrkl*) then they may return to their *ʾunuttu*-obligations (*wtb lunt hm*).” The interpretive crux of ʾAgidenu’s continued bondage lies in the particular meaning of his and his family’s *ʾunuttu*-obligations.

R. Yaron argued for two distinct – though related – meanings of the word *ʾunuttu*: the first referred to ʾAgidenu’s “share” or “part” that described the tax he owed (the king), while the second referred to a “section” or “segment” of land owned by ʾAgidenu.<sup>58</sup> While *ʾunuttu* or (*p*)*ilku*-obligations are most fre-

<sup>54</sup> See AHW, 235. Also CAD I, 75b. Despite Márquez Rowe’s confident assertion, Akkadian texts most frequently used the verb *alāku* to describe “initiating *ilku*-service” and only one attestation for *erēbu* in the Š-stem is listed in CAD.

<sup>55</sup> Ignacio Márquez Rowe, “KTU 3.7 Reconsidered: On the *ilku*-Service in Ugarit,” *AuOr* 11 (1993) 250–252. See also Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 269. Márquez Rowe makes a crucial point that the *ʾunuttu* obligation of these Egyptians seems to be “professional or office obligations,” in no way connected to land. The relevance of this information to *KTU* 3.4 is discussed below.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 242.

<sup>57</sup> Kienast, “Rechtsurkunden,” 448–449. In fact, Kienast labels *KTU* 3.4 “Freikauf mit Dienstantichreses.”

<sup>58</sup> Yaron, “A Document of Redemption,” 89. Yaron wants to connect the meaning of *ʾunuttu* semantically with the biblical conception of אֲדָמָה – landed heritable property.

quently attested as tax stipulations appended to royal land grants, which undoubtedly motivated Yaron's assertion, the concepts are distinct. A recently published text from the house of Urtēnu, *RS 94.265*, makes Yaron's assertion that the 'unuttu refers to the land itself untenable: "and PN (the recipient) is to carry no 'unuttu-service whatsoever on these fields, but will carry the 'unuttu-service of his house" (*w PN b šdm hnmt ûnt mhkm l ybl ûntm bth ybl*).<sup>59</sup> Thus, the 'unuttu-obligation was associated with discrete pieces of personal property, but did not represent the property itself. Moreover, we find numerous professional categories – not connected to land or agriculture – that possessed their own 'unuttu or (*p*)ilku-obligations.<sup>60</sup> Thus, while I would agree with Yaron that *KTU 3.4* implies 'Agidenu and his family's continued bondage, I see no clear evidence from the text itself that this was necessarily a physical restraint – though I would not outright reject the notion. Instead, the text does evince the legal restraint of 'Agidenu and his family and by parsing out the legal terminology of this concluding section, we can reconstruct the next adjudicatory stage of 'Agidenu and his family's circumstances.

The concluding lines of *KTU 3.4* stipulate the fate of 'Agidenu in the immediate future, but we have no means of determining if any of the stipulations were carried out. Despite this uncertainty, we should assume the legal force of *KTU 3.4* was binding and carried forward after the moment of its composition – after all, it was impressed with the royal seal and stored in the palace archive. While one can rightfully assume that the storage of *KTU 3.4* within the palace archive was solely due to the royal seal that gave it authority, it is equally fair to assume that 'Agidenu's temporary exemption from 'unuttu-service would have been of some interest to the royal bureaucracy. This assertion is strengthened when we examine the language used by the scribe of *KTU 3.4* to describe 'Agidenu's circumstance: "they have no 'unuttu-service" (*wûnt inn hm*). This is identical to the typical royal service exemption clause found in the Akkadian royal land grants – (*p*)ilku/a yānu ina eqli annī.<sup>61</sup> Similarly, two Ugaritic land grants (*KTU*

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The reason is that Yaron found the legal circumstance in Lev 25:39–41 analogous to the closing lines of *KTU 3.4*.

<sup>59</sup> Pierre Bordreuil / Dennis Pardee, *Manuel d'ougaritique* (1<sup>st</sup> vol.; Paris: Geuthner, 2004), N<sup>o</sup> 39. See also Márquez Rowe, *The Royal Deeds of Ugarit*, 237.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 235. Márquez Rowe provides a clear list of (*p*)ilku/'unuttu-obligations designated to specific vocations, such as: 'āširu-officials (*RS 15.137*, *RS 16.242*), leatherworkers (*RS 16.142*, *RS 15.Y*), "lancers" (*RS 15.Y*), the sons of the queen (*RS 16.138*, *RS 16.204*), the *maryānnū* (*RS 19.98*), guards (*RS 15.123+*), commanders of the prince of Ibirānu (*RS 16.348*), and the commanders of the *sākinu* (*RS 16.139*).

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 236. Márquez Rowe notes that this Akkadian formula is by far the most common form among the royal deeds to exempt an individual from some kind of royal obligation (*RS 15.136*, *RS 15.143+*, *RS 15.155*, *RS 16.154*, *RS 16.241+*, *RS 16.243*).

3.2 and *KTU* 3.5) contain this construction (*w ʾunt in bh*), where property is exempted from ʾunuttu-obligation. In the royal land grants, exemption from corvée-service was a reward, while in *KTU* 3.4 it is merely replaced by ʾAgidenu and his family's new debt (the one-hundred shekels of silver) to ʾEwrikili (*ʿd ttbn ksp ʾwrkl wtb lūnthm*). Thus, the question is: what exactly was the ʾunuttu to which ʾAgidenu and his family would return? Márquez Rowe notes, “[i]t is difficult to decide from these formulas and deeds whether the (*p*)ilku services due to the king rested on the conveyed landed property or personally on the tenants, or (more probably) on both.”<sup>62</sup> Based on the evidence Márquez Rowe marshaled in his study, I would agree with the latter option. Whether ʾAgidenu and his family would return to their ʾunuttu-service on a plot of land, a house, or associated with ʾAgidenu's profession – whatever that was – cannot be determined from this text. It does seem that the repayment of the debt owed to ʾEwrikili, as a guarantor, would allow ʾAgidenu and his family to return to the life of a typical Ugaritian family, replete with the usual tax obligations owed to the king.

## VI. Conclusions

I have reconstructed a detailed sequence of adjudicatory events leading up to and following the circumstances described in *KTU* 3.4. For some reason, ʾAgidenu and his entire household along with him became indebted to a group of Beirutians, who likely resided in the city of Ugarit. In order to ensure a return on their investment, these Beirutians may have stipulated the pledge of ʾAgidenu and his household, established ʾEwrikili as guarantor to recover payment, or some combination of both. Whether established before or after ʾAgidenu's seizure by the Beirutians, ʾEwrikili – an important figure in the economy of Ugarit – redeemed the beleaguered family – albeit with some strict stipulations of his own. ʾAgidenu and his family were now out of the hands of the Beirutians, but owed a substantial debt of one-hundred silver shekels to ʾEwrikili, a debt they were expected to repay before they could return to their lives as typical Ugaritians that included their ʾunuttu-tax/obligation owed to the palace. This reconstruction has shown that legal texts such as *KTU* 3.4 were composed not to explain the underlying narrative of events of a given legal circumstance, but to serve as evidentiary artifacts to reinforce previous agreements or claims. The only reason we know about the plight of ʾAgidenu and his family is due to ʾEwrikili's concern about the return of his one-hundred shekel investment as a guarantor. However, by exploring the large corpora of legal texts from Ugarit, Emar, and even biblical materials, I have situated *KTU* 3.4 in a plausible stage of litigation involving debt surety and redemption.

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 237.

The events that brought 'Agidenu and his family under the control of the Beirutians are best explained by the well-attested phenomenon of the seizure of defaulting debtors (and occasionally their families). Perhaps 'Agidenu had pledged his household – as we saw in the Emar document *RE 58* – or perhaps the Beirutians simply seized the family to force 'Ewrikili to pay the redemption price – likely the outstanding debt of 'Agidenu. While it is unlikely that the Beirutians would have actually kidnapped 'Agidenu's family (as Yaron suggested), their role as creditors may have been no less predatory in light of the business scruples of Išmī-šarru in *RS 16.131*. 'Ewrikili's redemption of the family, contra Yahweh's presentation in Psalm 49, was not a selflessly motivated compassionate act – despite the understanding of *padû/pdy* in non-legal literary contexts. As *RS 16.134* attests, 'Ewrikili was an important figure within the economy of Ugarit and had some kind of meaningful relationship with the palace. It is probably the result of 'Ewrikili's position and relationship to the palace that *KTU 3.4* was composed, stamped with the royal seal, and stored in the central palace archive – to be found millennia later by the French excavators.

*KTU 3.4* offers a unique glimpse of social and legal life at Ugarit. This text reveals one way everyday Ugaritians may have encountered and interacted with the royal bureaucracy. While the events described in *KTU 3.4* likely represent an exceptional – perhaps traumatic – episode in the lives of 'Agidenu and his family, legal texts such as this provide the most direct access to the people, families, and institutions that made up Ugaritic society. Of course, any text must be viewed as a product of the elite stratum of any ancient society – literacy was a highly restricted skill in the ancient Near East. Nevertheless, if we wish to reconstruct a “social history” (using the term to refer to the broader social matrix of Ugarit beyond the palace and not to the Marxist social historiography of the mid-twentieth century), then administrative/economic and legal texts are some of our best sources of data.