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- 1 In 1999, twenty years before this publication, a bulla in a perfect state of preservation was found in a Byzantine-period pit at Tel Qedesh. The fact that it was almost completely intact in all its parts, in combination with the relatively recent publication of cuneiform documents from private collections, has permitted the Authors to attribute the original stamp seal to the Persian period, to reconstruct the possible original sealing's use context (a papyrus sealing) and to advance a hypothesis on the identity of the seal's owner.
- 2 The entire figurative panel of the original stamp seal, engraved using drilling and linear incisions, shows a composition of two rampant horned animals flanking a central element interpreted as a sunflower-like tree and a horizontal crescent moon over the

group of these three elements. The lower part of the seal should have been an exergue below the groundline not visible in the sealing. The Authors hypothesize that the original stamp was a conoid type, with rounded top and a convex oval base, dating to the Persian period. For the sealing itself, petrology suggests that the bulla was a local artefact and that the impression was made at Qedesh or nearby. A very detailed description of the reconstructed six-step process for securing the papyrus is accompanied by a very instructive graphic apparatus.

- 3 The composition and the single elements engraved in the figurative panel seem to find, according to the Authors, a strict comparison only in two Neo-Babylonian and one Achaemenid seals from old collections of unknown provenance. A further comparison can be found in the impressions of the Murashu archive from Nippur, which gives a comparison just for the single elements and not their composition. The epigraphic and iconographic evidence from Nippur, however, permits an association between these iconographic motives and some individuals belonging to the Tyrian community in Nippur. The Authors conclude that the stamp seal on the papyrus of Tel Qedesh must have been produced in a workshop or by a single engraver in Nippur working for the Tyrian community. The seal was then brought to Qedesh by one member of that community who, back from Babylonia, used the seal for some administrative/commercial activities conducted in region under the Tyre's control and documented by the archaeological context of Tel Qedesh dating to the very end of the 6th century BCE.
- 4 An appendix with new drawings of some of the Murashu archive impressions is given at the end of the contribution.

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