



AXON: Greek Historical Inscriptions. A Database for Research and Teaching (Ca' Foscari University of Venice)

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Fig. 1. Our website main page

<http://virgo.unive.it/veniceepigraphy/axon/public>



Fig. 2. Axon 1, 2017.

Our journal in digital format

The AXON Project

AXON is a database of Greek historical inscriptions, conceived within the Greek Epigraphy Laboratory (Director, Prof. Claudia Antonetti), with the financial support of the University Ca' Foscari of Venice. Since October 2014 the members of the AXON Project have been developing a database which includes a great variety of Greek inscriptions of different chronology, typology, and territory of origin. The most recent advances of traditional epigraphy as well as the scientific acquisitions in the Digital Humanities have been taken into account. The selection of texts has been made according to a broader notion of 'historical' inscription, including not only significant military, political, and institutional texts, but also those inscriptions which are essential for the social and cultural understanding of the Greek world. AXON includes texts from the birth of the Greek *polis* in the Archaic Age to 31 BC, a chronological frame traditionally related to Greek History (though a future extension of this chronological limit is not excluded). The epigraphic entries have been prearranged in order to allow a wide and well-structured description of each document, that is published along with critical apparatus as well as a 'genetic' lemma, Italian translation and commentary. At the same time, a common and coherent lexicon has been produced, which will permit an easier indexing of significant words and will make future searches much quicker. The database, that is now in Italian, will be translated into English in the near future.

Internal & external interoperability of AXON database

Each entry is related – whenever it seems appropriate – to other entries in the AXON database. A hyperlink connects the entry with other digital editions of the same text (if available), or with other useful websites, possibly containing images.

A simple website interface for the input of data

Since the contributors to the project (i.e. the authors of the entries) are experts from different Italian and European universities (and not all of them are familiar with the Digital Humanities), and given the great number of entries planned in the near future, the necessity for a simple and easily understandable interface for the input of data was an essential issue to the project from the very beginning. Guidelines to EpiDoc have been taken into account in order to produce a clear structure for the input of data. Our aim is to establish a growing community of experts, students, and enthusiasts to increase the number of contributors through lists of inscriptions which have not yet been assigned. At the same time, it will be possible to submit other texts which are not included in the lists. To achieve these aims, the project follows an EpiDoc-friendly structure and is compatible with Europeana EAGLE Project, especially in the use of a common terminology.

Searchability

The website is designed to allow for many search options. Beyond the

“full text” search and another based on the number, title and author of the entry (fig. 3), three other search-possibilities will also be available:

1. browse all the entries according to the inscriptions' typology, chronology, and area of origin;
2. access the entries through an interactive map;
3. perform an advanced search based on different categories (fig. 4):
 - a. bibliography
 - b. keywords
 - c. object's description and preservation
 - d. chronology
 - e. text (single words or phrases, typology, dialect, alphabet, letter-form, etc.).

Teaching

The AXON Project, as an example of a digital edition of inscriptions with a high degree of clarity for contributors and users, is a useful tool for teaching Greek epigraphy as well as ancient history. Many contributors are university lecturers / professors of Greek Epigraphy, and the scientific committee includes high school teachers and instructors in classical languages, making AXON especially well-suited for educational purposes and for use by students: for engaging them, for example, in the composition of entries. The interoperability of the AXON website and the cross-references to other Digital Humanities projects are essential elements in the development of this discipline.

Significance for the academic community

Each entry is created by an expert contributor and is subject to double-blind peer review, thus assuring an important contribution to the scholarly community. At the same time, the hyperlinks to other websites and digital editions will make it easier for the user to check immediately all similar projects. Finally, the indexing allows for the easy discovery and use of specific information, and will be of fundamental importance for gather together groups of documents according to particular research needs.

In conclusion, the AXON Project aims at a collaboration of expert scholars from different fields: epigraphy, ancient history, dialectology, archaeology, digital humanities. It can produce valuable results in the domain of the digital editing of inscriptions and, more generally, contribute to the advancement of classical studies, opening them up to a broader audience through the world-wide web.

The AXON e-journal

To promote and guarantee the dissemination of each individual entry (with its own DOI), the AXON database has recently become a biannual journal, published by Edizioni Ca' Foscari and provided with an ISSN (fig. 2). The first volume of the journal has been published in June 2017 and is now available in open access on <http://edizionicafoscari.unive.it/it/edizioni/riviste/axon/>. The next issue will appear in December 2017.

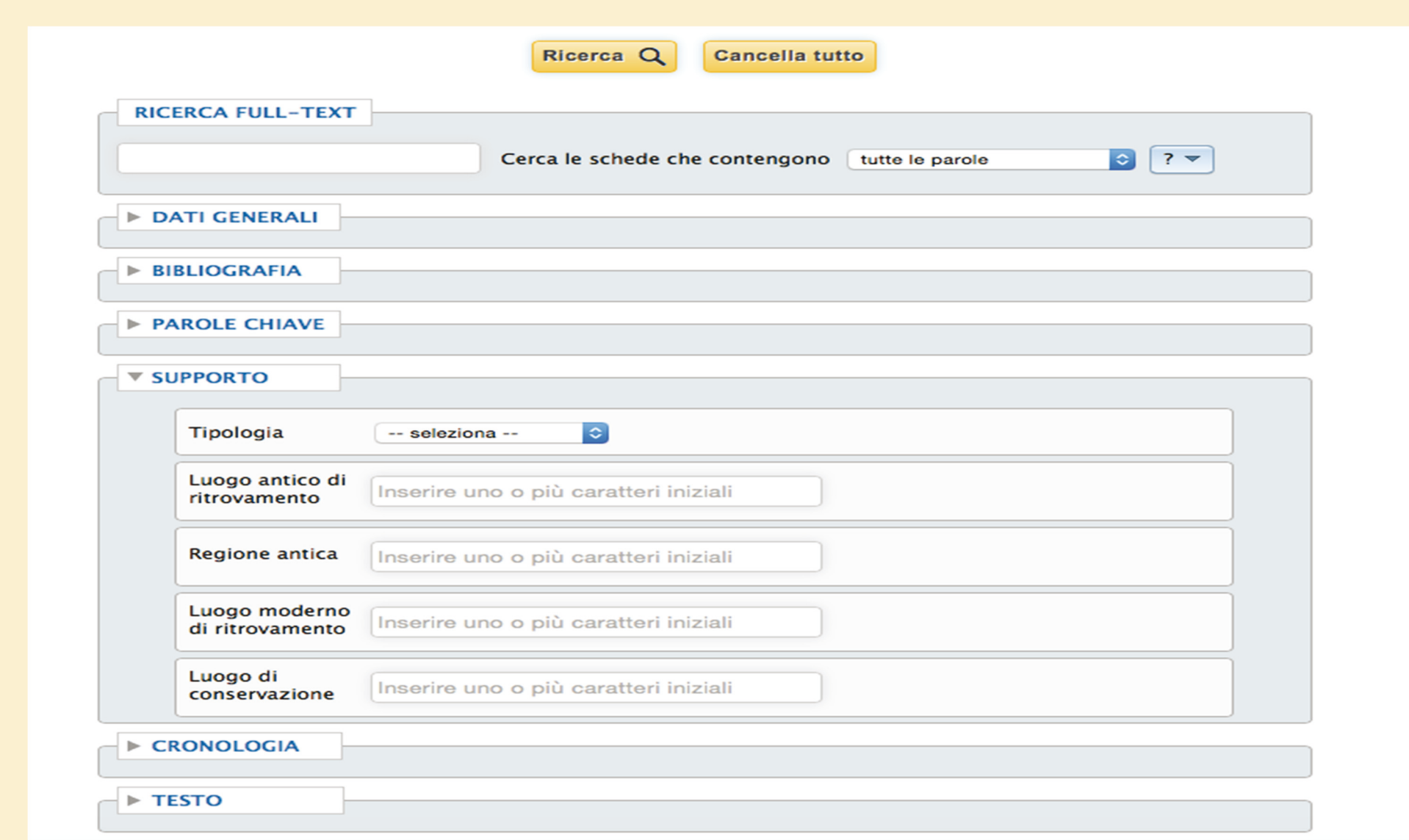


Fig. 3. The AXON Database (1)

Different searching categories

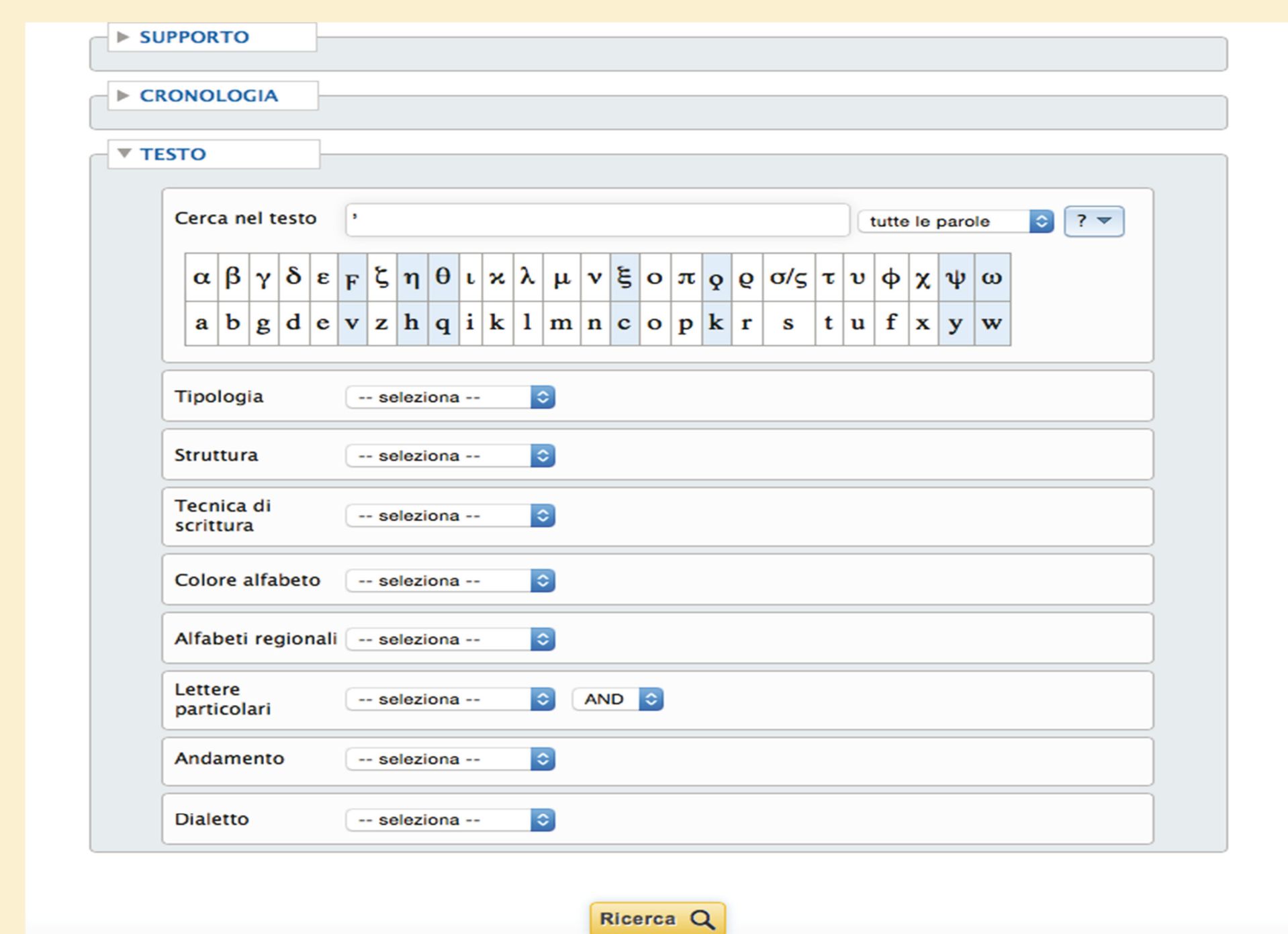


Fig. 4. The AXON Database (2)

Advanced text search

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