

## Politicians of Principle

Rosario López  
Department of Philosophy  
University of Málaga

The massive digitisation of parliamentary debates in several European countries has opened possibilities for exploring conceptualisations of “politicians” empirically, both through long-term distant reading and micro-level contextualising close reading. The big data and easy availability of parliamentary debates can be used as a point of departure for the analysis but need to be complemented with other sources of political history, not merely with the canon of political philosophy. This paper will focus on the self-understandings of European parliamentarians as politicians since the eighteenth century and on the explicit or implicit visions of politics included in such self-understandings. I examine how a number of professional politicians and intellectuals described themselves and/or other fellow politicians by elaborating on the perceived tension, or lack of tension, between principles and practices in politics.