

One of the important criteria for the efficacy of a constitution is its impact on the actions of those holding constitutionally defined public functions. Ideally, a person holding the position of prime minister or head of state, not only wishes to act in accordance with the provisions of the constitution, but also wishes to contribute to the development of the ideas and principles expressed therein. However, it would be imprudent to assume that reality will conform to the ideal thus outlined. Persons exercising constitutional functions may be characterized by different moral qualities and may pursue goals that are not necessarily constitutional. For this reason, constitutions contain institutional measures to guarantee the regulatory effectiveness of the constitution (one of the most important being the existence of a constitutional court). Are ethical attitudes therefore irrelevant in contemporary constitutionalism? Despite the institutional attempts to guarantee the efficacy of the constitution, the **question about the ethical attitudes of those who perform constitutional functions is gaining importance, since even the very best institutional set-up is based on human action.** For this reason, our research looks into **what personal qualities are implied in a contemporary democratic constitution.** What attitudes influence the proper performance of constitutional functions? Or, more precisely, **what constitutional virtues allow the idea of a constitutional state to flourish?**

According to Aristotle, virtue is “a settled disposition by means of which a man becomes good and by means of which he will duly fulfil his functions”. Virtue ethics is directed at the acting person and the goals he is to pursue. Constitutional virtues are virtues of a special kind, since they are **moral dispositions of persons fulfilling constitutionally defined public roles, which are expressed directly or indirectly in constitutional texts.** In this context, it is important to emphasize that such persons will pursue not only the general goals set out in the constitution, but also particular political goals. It is therefore necessary to consider whether it would be possible to achieve a state of equilibrium between these two types of activity, i.e. a state of equilibrium in which **persons in public office would be able to demonstrate constitutional virtues and at the same time undertake effective political activity.** The inability to achieve such a balance may lead to systemic dysfunctions consisting in the disappearance of constitutional virtues and a political practice that does not fully correspond to the constitution. In order to answer the question about the content of the requirements stemming from constitutional virtues, we will reconstruct the virtues contained in classical philosophical and legal texts relevant for contemporary constitutionalism. Moreover, in line with the achievements of contemporary virtue ethics, we will develop a theoretical scheme of virtues of the constitutional field, which will allow us to construct appropriate **profiles of virtues related to specific constitutional functions** (e.g. that of head of state or a deputy). The results of theoretical research will be tested in historical reconstruction and interpretation of the norms of selected constitutions in order to answer the questions of **what virtues democratic constitutions require and whether they define coherent and feasible requirements for people performing constitutional functions.**

When answering the question of why aretological constitutional research is important, it should be noted that effectiveness implies possibility, and one of the aims of our research is to verify whether, already at the theoretical and textual level, it is possible to achieve a state of balance between the requirements of constitutional virtues and strictly political motives and goals. Currently, questions of constitutional crisis or threats facing constitutional democracy are often raised, with economic (inequality), political (populism), or technological (new media) issues being cited as causes. Our research goes back to a more general issue, but one that does not lose its relevance, as it concerns **the ethical profiles of constitutional realizers in different contexts.** For this reason, **the content of constitutional virtues, as well as the possibility of acting in accordance with them in different contexts, and the identification of threats to their realization,** need to be thoroughly investigated. Previous research has attempted to analyse and interpret civic virtues and virtues associated with the exercise of legal professions, as well as to ask what purpose legislation serves and how to influence the moral dispositions of the addressees of legal norms. Constitutional aretology would complement virtue ethics with a new dimension and offer constitutional law a specific interpretation of constitutional texts. Constitutional aretology research relates the classical notion of virtue to the attitudes that ensure the efficacy of the constitution and allows for a novel formulation of an answer to the question: **what personal conditions must be met for the constitution to have an effect on reality, and what both stands in the way of this and may influence constitutional dysfunctions and crises?**