

# Did the comitatus influence the idea of Epicurean friendship?

Post by "Cassius" of July 11, 2024 at 6:59 AM

Great topic Cleveland Oakie. It's very interesting to look into the meaning of the Latin "posse comitatus." We in the USA don't generally seem to associate the term with anything other than our law which prohibits the use of military troops from getting involved in civil matters, but your example implies there is a lot more going on than that!

I see this also: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Posse\\_comitatus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Posse_comitatus)

## Quote

The **posse comitatus** (from the [Latin](#) for "power of the county"), frequently shortened to **posse**, is in [common law](#) a group of people mobilized by the conservator of peace – typically a [reeve](#), [sheriff](#), chief, or another special/regional designee like an officer of the peace potentially accompanied by or with the direction of a justice or adjudged parajudicial process given the imminence of actual damage – to suppress lawlessness, defend the people, or otherwise protect the place, property, and public welfare.

...

Derived from [Latin](#), *posse comitatūs* ("force of the county/region") is sometimes shortened to simply *posse* from the mid-17th century onward to describe the force itself more than the legal principle.<sup>[3]</sup> While the original meaning refers to a group of citizens assembled by the authorities to deal with an emergency (such as suppressing a riot or pursuing felons and outlawry), the term is also used for any force or band, especially with hostile intent, often also figuratively or humorously.<sup>[4]</sup> In 19th-century usage, *posse comitatus* also acquired the generalized or figurative meaning.<sup>[5]</sup> In classical Latin, *posse* is a contraction of *potesse*, an irregular Latin verb meaning "to be able".<sup>[6][7][8]</sup> The unusual genitive in "-ūs" is a feature of the [fourth declension](#). In its earliest days, the *posse comitatus* was subordinate to the king, country, and local authority.<sup>[9]</sup>

Sound to me like translating it as "county" is probably covering over a deeper meaning that goes in the direction of what Cleveland is finding.