

**Is the use of violence justifiable in the context of revolutions, and if so, to what extent and towards whom?**

Violence to the fullest extent can always be justified, within context. When it comes to revolutions and violence, violence is not only justifiable, but also necessary in certain circumstances. The justification for violence during revolutions varies case to case, but it is and always should be ethically accepted when a higher power, like a government, controls in total the average citizen's life, makes laws that set up systematic inequality towards and oppression of certain groups and minorities, and most importantly strips citizens of their freedoms and rights.

The definition of violence from Merriam-Webster is "the use of physical force to harm someone, to damage property, etc." This makes it important to distinguish between different types of violence, in order to describe the extent and context in which they can be used. The first type of violence is a less dangerous form of violence, which does not involve killing but instead initiates violence towards "the system" through actions against inanimate objects or principles. An example of this is the Boston Tea Party, in which physical force was taken against the economic entity of tea, not people, with the goal being to harm the economic system of Great Britain and send a message. While the actions were still violent, they did not injure or kill any human beings. This is the type of violence that is allowable to all extents in revolutions, and should be the first violent actions revolutionaries take when peaceful methods fail. The second type of violence is violence towards people, such as violent protests, assassinations, and war. The only extent to which this violence should be used is when less dangerous forms of violence, such as mentioned above, fail. This form of violence, that jeopardizes lives, should only be used as a last resort, when all other methods fail. All plans for fomenting violence should aim to minimize the effect it can and most likely will have on innocents, this applies to both forms of violence.

When it comes to who violence is justifiable upon during revolutions, the most obvious response is the oppressors, the ones who are restricting human rights and who are making the conscious decision to do so. But those are not the only people who violence is justifiable towards, it can also be justified towards people who watch such atrocities and decide to ignore them, or people who have the ability to stop the unjust treatment that resulted in the revolution, yet did nothing about it. These parties are just as accountable for the oppression that resulted in the necessity for the revolution as the people who are actually implementing the oppression. While different degrees of violence may be admissible towards the different parties, that does not change the fact that violence towards all of these groups is justifiable in the right context.