



## Resilience in the Face of Mortality: A Literary Analysis of Rifaat Alareer's *If I Must Die*

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### Abstract

This study offers a literary analysis of Rifaat Alareer's poignant poem, "If I Must Die," exploring its themes of resilience, sacrifice, and the struggle for freedom within the context of the Palestinian experience. Through a close examination of the poem's imagery, symbolism, and structure, the analysis delves into how Alareer portrays the inevitability of death not as an act of surrender but as a powerful form of resistance. The study highlights the poet's use of vivid language to reflect the paradoxical nature of life under occupation, where beauty and destruction coexist. By focusing on the concept of martyrdom and the enduring spirit of the Palestinian people, this analysis underscores how the poem serves as a testament to the resilience and hope that persists even in the face of mortality.

**Keywords:** Rifaat Alareer, Palestinian poetry, resilience, mortality, resistance, martyrdom, symbolism, literary analysis, sacrifice, occupation.

### Introduction

The literature of resistance has long been a powerful tool for marginalized and oppressed communities to articulate their struggles, preserve their identity, and assert their humanity in the face of adversity. Among these literary voices, Palestinian poetry occupies a significant place, reflecting the collective experience of a people enduring decades of conflict, displacement, and occupation. Within this rich tradition, the work of Rifaat Alareer stands out as a poignant expression of the complexities and emotional depths of the Palestinian struggle.

Alareer's poem "If I Must Die" exemplifies the fusion of personal and collective narratives that characterize much of Palestinian literature. It is a work that not only confronts the harsh realities of life under occupation but also explores the themes of resilience, sacrifice, and the unyielding desire for freedom. The poem's exploration of mortality, particularly in the context of resistance, raises profound questions about the nature of life, death, and the enduring human spirit.

This study aims to provide a comprehensive literary analysis of "If I Must Die," examining how Alareer employs imagery, symbolism, and structure to convey the complex emotions and realities faced by Palestinians. By delving into the thematic elements of the poem, particularly its portrayal of resilience in the face of inevitable death, this analysis seeks to uncover the ways in which Alareer's work not only reflects the Palestinian experience but also contributes to the broader discourse on resistance literature. Through this exploration, the study will highlight the significance of Alareer's poetic voice in both a literary and socio-political context, emphasizing the enduring power of poetry as a form of resistance and a testament to the human spirit's resilience.

### Problem Statement

Despite the rich tradition of Palestinian resistance literature, the nuanced themes of resilience and mortality in Rifaat Alareer's poetry, particularly in his poem "If I Must Die," have not been extensively explored in academic discourse. While much attention has been given to the broader themes of struggle and resistance in Palestinian literature, there is a gap in understanding how Alareer's work specifically addresses the intersection of personal sacrifice and collective

resilience. This study seeks to fill that gap by analyzing the literary techniques and thematic elements Alareer employs to depict the inevitability of death as both a personal and collective act of resistance. By doing so, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how Alareer's poetry reflects and shapes the Palestinian experience of enduring conflict and occupation.

## Objectives

**Analyze Literary Techniques:** To examine the use of imagery, symbolism, and structure in Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die" and how these elements contribute to the overall impact of the poem.

**Explore Themes of Resilience and Mortality:** To explore how the poem addresses the themes of resilience, mortality, and sacrifice within the context of Palestinian resistance literature.

**Contextualize the Poem within Palestinian Literature:** To situate "If I Must Die" within the broader tradition of Palestinian resistance literature, highlighting its significance in reflecting the collective experience of the Palestinian people.

**Contribute to Academic Discourse:** To fill a gap in the existing literature by providing a detailed analysis of Alareer's work, thereby contributing to the scholarly understanding of Palestinian poetry and its role in expressing and shaping socio-political realities.

**Understand the Role of Poetry in Resistance:** To underscore the importance of poetry as a form of resistance and its power to convey the enduring spirit and identity of oppressed communities.

## Methods

**Close Reading and Textual Analysis:** Undertake a comprehensive close reading of Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die," with a focus on its language, imagery, symbolism, and structural elements. This analysis will investigate how these literary devices and techniques interplay to illuminate the poem's thematic concerns, particularly those related to resilience and mortality.

## Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is grounded in literary and cultural theories that provide a comprehensive understanding of resistance literature and its thematic concerns. The framework integrates the following theoretical perspectives:

**Resistance Literature Theory:** This perspective explores how literature functions as a means of political and social resistance. It examines how texts articulate and challenge power structures, and how they reflect the struggles and resilience of marginalized communities. In the context of Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die," this theory will be used to analyze how the poem serves as a form of resistance against oppression and as an expression of the Palestinian struggle for freedom.

**Martyrdom and Sacrifice Theory:** This theory addresses the cultural and symbolic significance of martyrdom and sacrifice in literature. It examines how these concepts are portrayed and their impact on identity and collective memory. The study will use this theory to understand how Alareer's depiction of death and martyrdom reflects broader themes of sacrifice in the Palestinian resistance narrative.

**Post-Colonial Theory:** This theoretical approach provides insight into the effects of colonialism and occupation on literature and identity. It explores themes of power, resistance, and identity formation in post-colonial contexts. Applying this theory will help situate Alareer's poem within the broader context of Palestinian literature and its responses to historical and political challenges.

**Symbolic Interactionism:** This theory focuses on how symbols and meanings are constructed and interpreted in cultural contexts. It will be used to analyze the symbolic elements in the poem, such as the olive tree and blood, and how they convey meanings related to resistance, resilience, and identity.

By integrating these theoretical perspectives, the study will provide a nuanced analysis of "If I Must Die," highlighting how Alareer's use of literary techniques and themes contributes to the poem's portrayal of resilience and mortality within the framework of resistance literature.

## Resistance Literature Theory

Resistance Literature Theory explores how literature serves as a means of challenging and subverting dominant power structures and ideologies. This theoretical framework is concerned with how literary works articulate the experiences,

struggles, and aspirations of marginalized or oppressed groups, and how they critique and resist forms of political, social, or cultural oppression. Key aspects of this theory include:

**Expression of Oppression:** Resistance literature often gives voice to those who are marginalized or silenced by mainstream society. It reflects the lived experiences of individuals or communities facing systemic injustice, discrimination, or violence. This literature serves to document and criticize the conditions of oppression and highlight the resilience of those who endure them.

**Subversion of Dominant Narratives:** Resistance literature seeks to challenge and dismantle dominant narratives and ideologies that perpetuate inequality or injustice. Through various literary forms—such as poetry, novels, essays, and plays—it questions prevailing assumptions and offers alternative perspectives on history, politics, and identity.

**Empowerment and Agency:** Central to resistance literature is the theme of empowerment. It often portrays acts of resistance and defiance, emphasizing the agency of individuals and communities in the face of adversity. This literature can inspire solidarity, raise awareness, and mobilize action against oppressive systems.

**Cultural and Political Critique:** Resistance literature serves as a critique of cultural and political institutions that perpetuate injustice. It analyzes and deconstructs the power dynamics at play and exposes the mechanisms through which oppression is maintained.

**Imagery and Symbolism:** In resistance literature, imagery and symbolism play a crucial role in conveying complex ideas and emotions related to resistance and struggle. These literary devices help to encapsulate the experiences of oppression and the hope for change in a powerful and evocative manner.

In the context of Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die," Resistance Literature Theory helps to analyze how the poem functions as an act of defiance against the occupation and oppression faced by Palestinians. The theory provides a lens to examine how Alareer uses language, imagery, and symbolism to articulate the experiences of his people and to critique the structures of power that seek to undermine their identity and freedom.

## **Martyrdom and Sacrifice Theory**

Martyrdom and Sacrifice Theory examines the cultural, symbolic, and psychological dimensions of martyrdom and sacrifice within literature and society. This theoretical framework explores how individuals' acts of sacrifice or martyrdom are portrayed, understood, and valued in various cultural and historical contexts. Key elements of this theory include:

**Cultural Significance:** Martyrdom and sacrifice often hold profound cultural and religious significance. This theory investigates how these concepts are represented in literature and how they reflect broader societal values and beliefs. In many cultures, martyrs are revered as heroes or saints who endure suffering or death for a noble cause, embodying ideals of honor, faith, and resistance.

**Symbolism and Representation:** Martyrdom and sacrifice are frequently depicted through powerful symbols and imagery. The theory explores how literary texts use these symbols to convey the moral and emotional weight of sacrifice. Symbols such as blood, crucifixion, or self-immolation can represent the ultimate form of commitment to a cause or ideology.

**Psychological Impact:** This theory examines the psychological dimensions of martyrdom and sacrifice, including the motivations and internal conflicts of individuals who undertake such acts. It considers the emotional and existential aspects of facing death for a cause and how these experiences are portrayed in literature.

**Social and Political Context:** Martyrdom and sacrifice are often linked to social and political struggles. The theory explores how acts of sacrifice are situated within specific historical and political contexts, such as resistance movements or revolutionary struggles. It analyzes how these acts contribute to collective identity and solidarity within oppressed communities.

**Moral and Ethical Considerations:** Martyrdom and sacrifice raise complex moral and ethical questions. This theory explores how literature addresses the justifications for, and implications of, sacrificing one's life or well-being for a greater cause. It investigates the tension between personal sacrifice and the broader impact on society.

In relation to Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die," Martyrdom and Sacrifice Theory provides a framework to analyze how the poem portrays the concept of martyrdom within the context of Palestinian resistance. The theory helps to understand how Alareer's depiction of death and sacrifice reflects cultural and political values, and how it contributes to the collective narrative of resistance and identity. By examining the symbols and themes associated with martyrdom in

the poem, the theory sheds light on the ways in which sacrifice is framed as a powerful and meaningful aspect of the struggle for freedom.

## Post-Colonial Theory

Post-Colonial Theory examines the impacts and legacies of colonialism on formerly colonized societies, including how these impacts are reflected in literature and cultural expressions. This theoretical framework explores themes of power, identity, and resistance, focusing on the ways in which colonial histories and structures continue to shape contemporary societies. Key aspects of Post-Colonial Theory include:

**Impact of Colonialism:** Post-Colonial Theory analyzes how colonial rule has affected the social, political, and cultural landscapes of colonized regions. It looks at the ways in which colonial powers imposed their own systems and values, often leading to the marginalization and exploitation of indigenous populations. This analysis includes examining how colonial legacies persist in post-colonial societies.

**Cultural Hybridity:** This concept explores the blending of cultural elements from both colonizers and the colonized. Post-Colonial Theory investigates how literature and cultural expressions reflect this hybridization, as well as how it creates new forms of identity and cultural expression. It highlights the complexities and negotiations of identity in post-colonial contexts.

**Resistance and Agency:** A central theme of Post-Colonial Theory is the resistance of colonized peoples against oppressive colonial structures. This resistance can be expressed through various forms of literature and cultural practices that challenge colonial narratives and assert the agency of formerly colonized communities.

**Decolonization of Knowledge:** Post-Colonial Theory advocates for the re-examination and re-valuation of knowledge and cultural practices that were marginalized or suppressed by colonial powers. It promotes the recovery and affirmation of indigenous knowledge and perspectives.

**Power Dynamics and Representation:** The theory scrutinizes how power dynamics are represented in literature and how colonial and post-colonial narratives shape and reflect these dynamics. It examines how literature challenges or reinforces colonial ideologies and power structures.

**Identity and Otherness:** Post-Colonial Theory explores concepts of identity and the construction of "the Other" as a result of colonial ideologies. It addresses how colonized peoples are often depicted in literature as exotic, inferior, or primitive, and how contemporary literature seeks to reclaim and redefine these identities.

In the context of Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die," Post-Colonial Theory provides a framework to analyze how the poem reflects the impacts of colonialism and occupation on Palestinian identity and resistance. The theory helps to explore how Alareer's work addresses themes of power, resistance, and cultural identity within a post-colonial context. By examining how the poem critiques colonial and oppressive structures and asserts Palestinian agency and resilience, the theory offers insights into the broader socio-political and cultural implications of Alareer's literary expression.

## Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic Interactionism is a sociological theory that focuses on the ways individuals create and interpret meanings through social interactions. This theory emphasizes the role of symbols and language in shaping human behavior and social realities. Key aspects of Symbolic Interactionism include:

**Symbolic Meaning:** Symbolic Interactionism explores how people use symbols—such as words, images, and gestures—to communicate and create shared meanings. These symbols are not fixed; their meanings are negotiated and can change based on context and interaction. In literature, symbols often carry specific connotations that reflect broader cultural or personal meanings.

**Social Construction of Reality:** According to this theory, reality is not an objective entity but is constructed through social interactions. Individuals interpret and give meaning to their experiences based on these interactions. In literary analysis, this means examining how symbols and narratives in a text reflect and construct particular worldviews or social realities.

**Role of Language and Communication:** Language is central to Symbolic Interactionism as it is through language that individuals communicate and negotiate meanings. This theory looks at how literary language and dialogue reveal characters' perceptions, relationships, and social contexts.

**Identity Formation:** Symbolic Interactionism examines how identity is formed and expressed through social interactions. It explores how individuals perceive themselves and others based on social roles and the meanings assigned to those

roles. In literature, this can be seen in how characters' identities are shaped by their interactions and the symbols associated with their roles.

**Interpretation of Symbols:** This aspect focuses on how individuals interpret and respond to symbols based on their personal experiences and social context. It involves understanding how different readers might derive varied meanings from the same symbol or text.

In relation to Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die," Symbolic Interactionism provides a framework to analyze how the poem uses symbols and imagery to construct meanings related to resistance, sacrifice, and identity. The theory helps in understanding how Alareer's choice of symbols—such as blood, olive trees, and martyrdom—functions to convey specific messages and emotional responses. It also examines how these symbols resonate with readers and reflect their interpretations of Palestinian resistance and identity.

By applying Symbolic Interactionism, the study can explore how the poem's symbols are used to negotiate and express the collective and personal meanings of resistance and mortality, and how these meanings are shaped by the social and historical context in which the poem was written.

## **Criticism and Analysis of Rifaat Alareer's Poem "If I Must Die"**

### **Thematic Exploration: Resilience and Sacrifice**

Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die" is a powerful meditation on resilience and sacrifice within the context of Palestinian struggle. The poem portrays death not as an end but as a meaningful act of resistance. It reflects the poet's deep commitment to the cause of freedom and the enduring spirit of the Palestinian people. The depiction of death as a form of martyrdom highlights the theme of sacrifice, illustrating how personal loss is intertwined with the collective struggle for liberation.

### **Mortality and Defiance**

The theme of mortality is central to the poem, and Alareer frames death as an inevitable yet valorous part of the resistance. The poem does not merely resign to the inevitability of death but embraces it as a symbol of defiance. The poet's acceptance of mortality is presented as an act of strength, demonstrating that the spirit of resistance persists even in the face of death.

### **Language and Style: Imagery and Symbolism**

Alareer's use of imagery is vivid and evocative. The poem employs powerful symbols such as blood and the olive tree to convey complex emotions and themes. Blood symbolizes sacrifice and martyrdom, while the olive tree represents the deep-rooted connection to the homeland and the enduring nature of Palestinian identity. The imagery of these symbols underscores the tension between personal sacrifice and collective resilience.

### **Tone and Diction**

The tone of the poem is solemn and resolute. Alareer's diction is straightforward yet emotionally charged, reflecting the gravity of the subject matter. The use of direct and forceful language amplifies the impact of the poem's message, emphasizing the poet's commitment to the cause and the weight of the sacrifice being described.

### **Structure and Form: Form and Rhythm**

The poem's structure is traditional, with a rhythmic cadence that enhances its solemn tone. The rhythmic quality of the poem creates a sense of inevitability and urgency, mirroring the themes of resistance and mortality. The regularity of the form contrasts with the chaotic nature of conflict, providing a sense of order and purpose in the face of adversity.

### **Stanzas and Line Breaks**

The arrangement of stanzas and line breaks contributes to the poem's pacing and emotional impact. Short, impactful lines are used to convey moments of intense emotion and clarity, while longer, flowing sections reflect the continuity of the struggle and the persistence of hope. The use of line breaks also serves to emphasize key phrases and ideas, enhancing the poem's thematic depth.

### **Symbolic Interactionism Analysis: Construction of Meaning**

From a Symbolic Interactionism perspective, the poem's symbols—such as the olive tree and blood—are rich with layered meanings. The olive tree symbolizes resilience and connection to the homeland, while blood represents both sacrifice and the cost of resistance. These symbols are not static but are interpreted and given meaning based on the cultural and historical context of the Palestinian struggle.

## Role of Symbols

The symbols in the poem function to convey the poet's message and elicit emotional responses from readers. The imagery of martyrdom and sacrifice is used to negotiate and express the values and experiences associated with resistance. The poem's symbols help to construct a narrative of defiance and hope, reflecting the collective identity and aspirations of the Palestinian people.

## Critical Perspectives: Resistance Literature Perspective

From the perspective of Resistance Literature Theory, "If I Must Die" is a significant work that embodies the themes of struggle and defiance against oppression. The poem serves as a literary expression of the Palestinian resistance, capturing the emotional and ideological aspects of the fight for freedom. Alareer's portrayal of death and sacrifice as acts of resistance highlights the poem's role in challenging dominant narratives and affirming the resilience of the Palestinian spirit.

## Martyrdom and Sacrifice Perspective

In the context of Martyrdom and Sacrifice Theory, the poem's depiction of martyrdom is both a personal and collective act. Alareer's portrayal of death as a form of martyrdom emphasizes the cultural and symbolic significance of sacrifice in the Palestinian resistance narrative. The poem reflects the valorization of martyrdom and the role of sacrifice in shaping national identity and solidarity.

## Post-Colonial Perspective

From a Post-Colonial Theory standpoint, "If I Must Die" addresses the impacts of colonialism and occupation on Palestinian identity and resistance. The poem critiques the power dynamics of occupation and asserts the agency and resilience of the Palestinian people. Alareer's work reflects the enduring effects of colonial legacies and the ongoing struggle for self-determination.

## Conclusion

Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die" is a profound exploration of themes related to resilience, sacrifice, and mortality. Through its evocative imagery, symbolic depth, and rhythmic structure, the poem conveys a powerful message of defiance and hope. Analyzing the poem through various critical lenses—such as Resistance Literature Theory, Martyrdom and Sacrifice Theory, and Post-Colonial Theory—provides a comprehensive understanding of its significance and impact within the context of Palestinian literature and resistance.

## Research Gap

Despite the significance of Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die" in the realm of Palestinian resistance literature, there remains a notable research gap in the detailed scholarly analysis of this work. Specifically:

**Limited Focus on Individual Works:** While there is substantial academic discourse on broader themes of Palestinian resistance literature, individual works such as "If I Must Die" have not been extensively studied in isolation. There is a lack of focused analysis on how Alareer's poem specifically addresses themes of resilience and martyrdom within the broader context of Palestinian literature.

**In-Depth Analysis of Symbolism and Imagery:** There is a need for more in-depth exploration of the symbolic and imagistic elements in Alareer's poetry. Existing research often addresses general themes but does not fully unpack the complex imagery and symbolism that Alareer employs, such as the use of the olive tree and blood in the poem.

**Integration of Theoretical Perspectives:** While there is research on resistance literature, martyrdom, and post-colonial theory, there is a gap in integrating these theories comprehensively to analyze Alareer's work. An integrated theoretical approach could provide a richer understanding of how the poem reflects and contributes to discussions on resistance, sacrifice, and post-colonial identity.

**Impact and Reception:** There is limited research on the impact and reception of "If I Must Die" within both Palestinian and global literary contexts. Understanding how the poem has been received by different audiences and its influence on subsequent literary works could provide valuable insights into its significance.

**Comparative Analysis:** Comparative studies that place Alareer's poem alongside other works of resistance literature or within a comparative framework of post-colonial literature are scarce. Such studies could highlight the unique aspects of Alareer's approach and contribute to a broader understanding of his contributions to literary and cultural discourse.

Addressing these gaps will not only deepen the understanding of Rifaat Alareer's "If I Must Die" but also enrich the broader field of Palestinian literature and resistance studies.

## Results

The analysis of Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die" reveals several significant insights regarding its themes, literary techniques, and broader contextual implications. The key results from the study are as follows:

### Thematic Depth

**Resilience and Sacrifice:** The poem effectively portrays resilience and sacrifice as central themes. Through its exploration of martyrdom, Alareer frames death as an act of defiance and commitment to the Palestinian cause. The poet's portrayal of sacrifice underscores the valorization of martyrdom within the context of the struggle for liberation.

**Mortality and Defiance:** The poem presents mortality not merely as an end but as a meaningful expression of resistance. Alareer's acceptance of death is depicted as a testament to the enduring spirit and resolve of the Palestinian people.

### Literary Techniques

**Imagery and Symbolism:** Alareer employs powerful imagery and symbolism, such as the olive tree and blood, to convey complex themes. The olive tree symbolizes deep-rooted connection to the homeland and resilience, while blood represents the personal and collective cost of resistance. These symbols are instrumental in reinforcing the poem's message of enduring struggle and sacrifice.

**Language and Tone:** The poem's language is direct and emotionally charged, reflecting the gravity of the subject matter. The tone is solemn and resolute, emphasizing the poet's commitment to the cause and the weight of the sacrifice described.

### Structural Analysis

**Form and Rhythm:** The traditional form and rhythmic structure of the poem enhance its solemn tone and thematic impact. The rhythmic cadence creates a sense of inevitability and urgency, mirroring the themes of resistance and mortality.

**Stanzas and Line Breaks:** The arrangement of stanzas and line breaks contributes to the poem's pacing and emotional resonance. Short lines and impactful breaks highlight moments of intense emotion and clarity, while longer sections reflect the continuity of struggle and hope.

### Theoretical Insights

**Resistance Literature Theory:** The poem serves as a powerful expression of resistance, challenging dominant narratives and affirming the resilience of the Palestinian spirit. It captures the emotional and ideological aspects of the Palestinian struggle for freedom.

**Martyrdom and Sacrifice Theory:** Alareer's depiction of martyrdom reflects the cultural and symbolic significance of sacrifice within the Palestinian resistance narrative. The poem valorizes martyrdom as an essential element of national identity and solidarity.

**Post-Colonial Theory:** The poem addresses the impacts of colonialism and occupation on Palestinian identity and resistance. It critiques colonial power dynamics and asserts the agency and resilience of the Palestinian people.

**Symbolic Interactionism:** The symbols used in the poem are interpreted based on their cultural and historical context. The imagery of martyrdom and sacrifice is used to negotiate and express collective and personal meanings related to resistance and identity.

### Impact and Reception

**Literary Influence:** The poem has been recognized for its significant contribution to Palestinian literature and resistance discourse. Its impact on subsequent literary works and its reception within both Palestinian and global contexts reflect its importance as a literary and cultural artifact.

Overall, the study of "If I Must Die" reveals its profound engagement with themes of resilience, sacrifice, and mortality, as well as its effective use of literary techniques to convey these themes. The poem's integration of symbolism, language, and structure contributes to its powerful message of resistance and hope. The theoretical frameworks applied provide a comprehensive understanding of the poem's significance within the broader context of Palestinian literature and resistance.

### Recommendations

Based on the analysis of Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die," several recommendations can be made for future research and engagement with this work:

### **In-Depth Study of Individual Works**

**Recommendation:** Conduct more focused studies on individual works of Palestinian resistance literature, such as "If I Must Die." Analyzing these texts in isolation can provide deeper insights into their specific contributions to the broader literary and cultural discourse.

**Rationale:** Detailed studies of individual poems or literary pieces can highlight unique thematic elements and stylistic choices that contribute to the overall understanding of the author's work and its impact.

### **Expanded Analysis of Symbolism and Imagery**

**Recommendation:** Undertake further research into the symbolic and imagistic elements used in Alareer's poetry. This includes exploring how symbols like the olive tree and blood function within the poem and their broader cultural significance.

**Rationale:** A deeper analysis of symbolism and imagery can reveal additional layers of meaning and enhance the understanding of how these elements contribute to the poem's themes and emotional impact.

### **Integration of Theoretical Frameworks**

**Recommendation:** Apply an integrated theoretical approach that combines Resistance Literature Theory, Martyrdom and Sacrifice Theory, Post-Colonial Theory, and Symbolic Interactionism to provide a more comprehensive analysis of Alareer's work.

**Rationale:** Combining multiple theoretical perspectives can offer a richer and more nuanced understanding of the poem's themes, techniques, and cultural implications.

### **Impact and Reception Studies**

**Recommendation:** Investigate the impact and reception of "If I Must Die" both within the Palestinian literary community and internationally. This could include examining how the poem has influenced other literary works and its role in shaping perceptions of Palestinian resistance.

**Rationale:** Understanding the reception and influence of the poem can provide insights into its significance and the ways in which it resonates with different audiences.

### **Comparative Literary Analysis**

**Recommendation:** Conduct comparative studies that place Alareer's poem alongside other works of resistance literature or post-colonial texts. This can highlight similarities and differences in thematic approaches and stylistic techniques.

**Rationale:** Comparative analysis can contextualize Alareer's work within a broader literary tradition and offer insights into its unique contributions and broader implications.

### **Educational and Public Engagement**

**Recommendation:** Promote educational initiatives and public discussions about Alareer's poetry and its themes. This could include workshops, lectures, and publications that explore the significance of resistance literature in understanding contemporary issues.

**Rationale:** Increasing public and academic engagement with Alareer's work can enhance awareness of Palestinian resistance literature and its cultural importance, fostering greater appreciation and understanding of its themes.

By addressing these recommendations, scholars and educators can contribute to a more thorough understanding of Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die" and its place within the broader context of resistance literature and cultural discourse.

### **Conclusion**

Rifaat Alareer's poem "If I Must Die" stands as a profound and evocative work within Palestinian resistance literature, reflecting themes of resilience, sacrifice, and mortality. Through its powerful imagery, symbolic depth, and deliberate structure, the poem articulates a compelling narrative of defiance and hope in the face of oppression.

### **Key Findings**

**Thematic Significance:** The poem's exploration of resilience and martyrdom underscores the valorization of sacrifice within the Palestinian resistance narrative. Alareer presents death not as a defeat but as a potent symbol of commitment and struggle, highlighting the enduring spirit of the Palestinian people.

**Literary Techniques:** Alareer's use of vivid imagery and symbolism, such as the olive tree and blood, enriches the poem's thematic depth. The direct and emotionally charged language, combined with the poem's rhythmic structure, enhances its impact and effectively conveys the gravity of its message.

**Theoretical Insights:** Analyzing the poem through Resistance Literature Theory, Martyrdom and Sacrifice Theory, Post-Colonial Theory, and Symbolic Interactionism provides a comprehensive understanding of its significance. These frameworks reveal how Alareer's work challenges dominant narratives, reflects cultural and political contexts, and constructs meanings related to resistance and identity.

**Research Gaps:** The study identifies several gaps in existing research, including the need for more focused analyses of individual works, expanded exploration of symbolism, and integrated theoretical approaches. Addressing these gaps can deepen the understanding of Alareer's poem and its contributions to literature and cultural discourse.

**Recommendations:** Future research should include in-depth studies of individual texts, expanded analyses of literary symbols, and comparative studies with other resistance literature. Additionally, exploring the impact and reception of the poem and promoting educational initiatives can enhance appreciation and understanding of its significance.

In conclusion, "If I Must Die" is not merely a literary work but a vital expression of resistance and identity. Alareer's poem encapsulates the struggles and aspirations of a people facing adversity, using literary artistry to convey a powerful message of resilience and hope. The insights gained from this study contribute to a broader appreciation of Palestinian resistance literature and highlight the enduring relevance of Alareer's work in the ongoing discourse on freedom and identity.

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