



## El sari rojo

*Javier Moro*

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## **El sari rojo** Javier Moro

En 1965 Sonia Maino una estudiante italiana de 19 años conoce en Cambridge a un joven indio llamado Rajiv Gan-dhi. Ella es hija de una familia humilde de los alrededores de Turin; el pertenece a la estirpe mas poderosa de la India. Es el principio de una historia de amor que ni siquiera la muerte sera capaz de romper. Por amor la italiana abandona su mundo y su pasado para fundirse con su nuevo pais la India prodigiosa que adora a veinte millones de divinidades que habla ochocientos idiomas y que vota a quinientos partidos politicos. Su valor su honestidad y su entrega acabaran convirtiendola en una diosa a los ojos de una sexta parte de la humanidad. Con autentica magia narrativa Javier Moro relata la gran saga familiar de los Nehru-Gandhi hombres y mujeres atrapados en las garras del poder prisioneros de un destino que no han elegido el mismo que llevara a Sonia a encarnar las esperanzas de mil doscientos millones de personas en el pais del Mahatma Gandhi. Tras el exito arrollador de Pasion india Javier Moro investigador incansable y gran narrador novela ahora la historia veridica de una europea enfrentada a un mundo complicado y peligroso envuelta en las intrigas de una familia tan vilipendiada como admirada y nos traslada a una India fascinante y turbulenta en permanente proceso de cambio. Su novela anterior Pasion india ha cautivado ya a un millon de lectores esta traducida a diecisiete idiomas y pronto sera llevada al cine.

## **El sari rojo Details**

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Author : Javier Moro

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## **From Reader Review El sari rojo for online ebook**

### **Sudhir says**

Not bad at all! If one can look over the dramatised( and slightly amateurish) nature of the commentary, this is a well researched & documented telling of contemporary history- Quite unbiased & objective. Gives an insight into the life of the Family as also a empathetic look to them.

Does good to read the events of the near past in a cohesive narrative!

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### **María Clara says**

Prácticamente me tuvieron que obligar para que me lo leyera y en realidad me terminó gustando más de lo que esperaba!

No es que no me lo quisiera leer pero yo tengo el terrible vicio de aplazar todo, así que por eso tuve que obligarme a leerlo, porque yo se que si no me ponía fecha límite, no me lo leía en los próximos 5 años... Y me lo leí y me encantó!

La verdad el libro no es que empiece de la mejor manera. El principio es tedioso y uno en la tercera pagina ya está al borde de las lagrimas, pero todo se compone cuando conocemos a Indira. Indira Gandhi es la protagonista de esta historia y nadie me va a convencer de lo contrario! En las primeras 3/4 partes del libro Sonia es un personaje totalmente secundario y poco interesante. Pero el final de la historia, por razones obvias, es todo de ella.

Lo que más me impresionó y me interesó fueron los chismes que hay al rededor de la publicación del libro, especialmente en la India. Por lo que entendí, el libro está prohibido en este país y precisamente Sonia fue la primera en declararle la guerra. Yo entiendo que el libro tiene el poder de generar opiniones basadas en cosas que seguramente no pasaron exactamente así; pero los hechos históricos son algo que no se puede alterar y el autor los sigue al pie de la letra. El resto, queda claro para el lector, es una biografía novelada. Por lo cuál es el colmo del descaro que la familia que supuestamente quiere hacer progresar a la India, llegue al extremo de prohibir el libro, violando así la libertad de expresión en este país.

Según mi humilde y neutra opinión, el libro en lugar de "difamar" y "distorsionar" la imagen de Sonia, en realidad la hace mucho más humana y admirable a los ojos del lector. Tanto que a veces cansa tanta santurronería... Pero nadie sabe lo de nadie, ella tendrá sus razones.

En todo caso, sea o no verdad, el libro está muy bien escrito y es bastante interesante para quien quiera aprender un poco de historia y entretenerse al mismo tiempo.

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### **Carmenza Uribe says**

Excelente libro. Como documento histórico es interesante y como novela es apasionante. Si la historia fuera de ficción, sería no creible, pero es una historia verdadera que de alguna manera nos ha llegado a través de

los medios de comunicación, solo que aquí se cuenta con todos los detalles. Se podría decir que es la historia de la India en la segunda mitad del siglo XX: un país increíblemente complejo y lleno de contrastes. Pero sobre todo es la historia de dos mujeres: Indira y Sonia. Dos mujeres valientes y muy humanas; dos mujeres atrapadas en las redes del poder, ambas con cualidades inigualables, pero también con defectos, dudas, y equivocaciones. El libro atrapa desde el principio hasta el fin y tiene momentos verdaderamente intensos, que logran mantener la atención. Personajes cuidadosamente descritos logran quedarse en la memoria. Interesante confrontar con lo que se puede ver en internet: videos de los personajes que ya fallecieron y de los que aún viven, muy especialmente de Sonia y de Maneka, artículos de periódicos y revistas, fotografías. Muy recomendado.

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### **Maghily says**

L'histoire de l'Inde et de la dynastie Nehru-Gandhi est vraiment passionnante. Par contre, ce livre dense est très lent et sa forme de biographie romancée laisse toujours place au doute quant à la véracité de ce qui y est raconté. Il m'a donné envie d'en découvrir davantage mais je ne suis pas mécontente de l'avoir fini !

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### **Delia says**

Sí, empezó siendo una lectura agradable, interesante y enganchante, sin embargo entre más avanzaba la historia más pesado era continuarla.

Me ha resultadodifícil terminarla. La fina línea de biografía novelizada llegó francamente a molestarte. Si bien tengo entendido Javier Moro no contó con la colaboración de la familia ni allegados a Sonia Gandhi para sustentar su historia, el aspecto de la novelización, después de tanto dato histórico tan detallado me chocó mucho y me hizo tedioso el final de la lectura.

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### **Trishna Damodar says**

A compelling read. Gives you an insight into the thoughts, emotions of the greats. A thought provoking read..

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### **Raja Subramanian says**

Why did I even buy this book? It is true that I read any book that I can lay my hands on. I got this book primarily because I read somewhere that Youth Congress fellows burnt copies of the book in some form of protest, and I was curious. As I started reading the book, I realized that the author has put in tremendous efforts to narrate a fascinating tale. A fascinating tale of Sonia Gandhi - a much loved and much reviled person.

The dramatized storytelling keeps the reader hooked. While I have read other books on Sonia Gandhi (and the rest of the family), I would rate this as being among the best. Authors of biographies tend to take one of the three paths. One, approach the character with derision bordering on pure hatred that results in a narrative that leaves a very bad taste. Two, approach the character with awe and groveling attitude, making the reading

nauseating. Three, approach the character from a notional neutral viewpoint, making the storytelling insipid. Jaiver Moro treats the character with the right amount of respect and sensitivity, neither stooping to innuendos nor appearing to be shamelessly fawning.

You can love the Gandhi family or hate it. You have to admit that the story of the family is interesting indeed. I read the book at half my reading speed and enjoyed every bit of it. I would definitely recommend the book for reading, albeit with a warning, "reading biographies is an acquired taste".

After finishing this book, I really wonder what the guys who burnt copies in protest were protesting against! Will someone educate me on that? Now don't come back with the conspiracy theory that the protest was orchestrated to increase sales of the book!

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## **Rohit Ghai says**

As i finished this book, I wondered...why in God's name would the Congress want to ban this??

The title claims this to be a dramatised biography of Sonia Gandhi...but it comes across more like a hagiography. More on that later.

The book starts well. Rajiv Gandhi's assassination opens the first few pages, and we are soon drawn into the life of the Gandhis. After devoting a few pages to the almost "Mills & Boon"-isque romance of Rajiv and Sonia, the author brings in arguably the most interesting character - Indira Gandhi. She captivates the imagination like no other, having led India through some of its most turbulent years. A lot of anecdotes in this section make it an interesting read. Sample this:

(on being informed by B.K.Nehru that President Lyndon B. Johnson had asked him how Indira would like to be addressed)

"Let him call me whatever he wants..." she said, and before her cousin had left the room she added, " You can also tell him that some of my ministers call me 'Sir'. If he likes, he can do that too"

Or this:

"Why doesn't she tell me in person instead of writing me a note?" asked the Italian girl (Sonia Gandhi) on the verge of tears. "Mrs Gandhi finds it hard to express herself," Usha answered, "she's a rather introverted lady. But don't worry about the letters, she also used to communicate like that with her husband and her father."

The book races through the Indira Gandhi years, describing how she handled internal and external pressures, electoral compulsions and an increasingly united opposition. Here again, there are a lot of subtle, yet very engaging excerpts.

On a personal front too, the author manages to give us a detailed insight on the rise of Sanjay Gandhi and India's weakness for her much maligned son. Her closeness to Sonia, and her apprehensions about Menaka (Sanjay's wife), are dramatised well. At this point I could picture this as a well written Indian political soap, impossible to make now, but perhaps someday.

And then it happens.

Somewhere around the Emergency, the author takes a marked turn...from being an interesting observer to becoming a staunch supporter. From then on, anyone named Gandhi is a saint and the rest are the vultures waiting to tear India to shreds. From Menaka (described as loud, scheming and viscous) to Morarji Desai (Orthodox conservative urine-drinking Hindu), no one is spared. It's about here that Sonia begins to acquire a sort of divine grace, and the whole family is shown to be the best thing that ever happened, and could happen to India.

The author manages to sugar coat Indira's worst years (Emergency, Operation Blue Star) and the subsequent riots of 1984 are quickly swept under the carpet. At this point, the book begins to sound like one long eulogy to the sacrifices of the Gandhi family, their trials and tribulations and their "sense of duty" to protect the country from "Hindu extremists like the RSS and the BJP". The author reserves nearly all of his venom for the Hindus, and soon goes from labelling RSS as extremist Hindus to all Hindus as extremists and vile. Sample this:

"Every minute that goes by, the slogan of the Hindus, "India shines", seems even more ridiculous, as if the voters had uncovered the falseness of that over-confident propaganda, which left aside most of the people, those that are not to be seen in the cities, but who now take their revenge from the burning plains and the remote villages."

AND

"With her historic gesture, Sonia Gandhi has reminded Hindus that the real strength of their nation lies in its tolerance, in its traditional openness towards others, in its belief that all religions form part of a search common to all of humanity to find the meaning of life."

These are just some excerpts, the latter half of the book is one big "Sonia and India vs. the Hindus" story. The current Prime Minister Narendra Modi, finds a place of prominence as "her bitterest rival". In 2002?? Modi was the chief minister of Gujarat then! The 2002 riots are described in detail, and a wholly one-sided version. At multiple instances, the author openly suggests that Sonia Gandhi, who by now has acquired a halo and two wings, is the ONLY person who can save India from "those Hindus". I guess he forgot that 80% of the Congress Party is Hindu too!

By the way, Rahul Gandhi also finds mention here, as the son who always wanted his mom to stay away from politics, and this:

"And to cap this day of triumph, the news comes that Rahul has been elected as MP for the constituency of Amethi, a worthy heir of his father."

I wonder if the author feels the same way today:))

The last one hundred pages of the book are pure sycophancy, and unbearable really.

There are books that are fiction. There are books that are fact. And then, there are books like this that are a mixture of both. The issue is that it is difficult to know if this is fact with a dose of fiction, or fiction with a dose of fact. The former is acceptable. The latter is dangerous. When a lot of fiction and opinion is peppered with actual facts and life incidents, there lies the problem of taking what's presented as fact in totality. As would happen to many reading this book.

The Red Sari could have brought out the turbulent legacy of the Gandhis, complete with their grossest mistakes. Instead, the author ends up SPINNING A YARN.

PS: The two stars are ONLY because I loved the Indira bit.

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### **Myle\_une says**

If you're not Indian and are interested in India's recent history (post-independence) and politics, then this book is a good introduction and a less boring way to do it than a history book would be. However, it is incredibly long and I felt uncomfortable with the many feelings given to the protagonists (Sonia Gandhi in particular) as well as the family scenes since they have mostly been purely imagined by the writer. The storyline is a lot based on these emotions, so in the end, it feels rather artificial and a little too much pathos. Worth a read if you're aware of and ready to go through those narrative excentricities.

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### **Felicity Gibson says**

The Red Sari,  
By Javier Moro,

Read September 12th 2014

This is the fictionalised biography of Sonia Gandhi, the leader of the Congress Political Party in India today. Mrs. Gandhi is suing the author, Javier Moro, for defamation in writing this book; it is banned in India. I happen to work in India and it is of particular interest to me. I admit the story and the details are fiction, however the core element of the book is real. Sonia Maino was a simple Italian teenager when she went to Cambridge to study English. There she met Rajiv Gandhi. She married Rajiv, came to India and lived in the extended family of Indira Gandhi (Prime Minister) and had two children. I thought this was an impressive book, a story of destiny and how Sonia Gandhi and her husband changed India. I enjoyed the glimpse into the world of the Gandhi family and the history lessons of India. I particularly read with great interest the references to Mr Modi, who is the present Prime Minister. I would recommend this book to readers of historical fiction as it is very well researched and cited. I award this book 5 stars.

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### **?????? says**

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## **Yaneth Torres says**

Maravilhoso!

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=MfyQ-Ld...>

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## **Amit Tyagi says**

First things first, it is very difficult for me to understand, as to why did the Congress party object to this book. But now that they did, we the readers should probably thank them than anything else. I picked this book up with great expectations, to atleast tell me some hitherto unknown facet about the life of the protagonist, but sadly the book is a huge disappointment. I must confess that I am not really very familiar with the concept of 'fictional biography', but if it is a genre which over simplifies historical events to the extent of providing an alternate narrative which is overly kind to the so called 'first family', I dont think it is something I can appreciate well.

The book portrays the 'First Family' as some sort of benevolent royals who always had the best interests of the nation in their hearts but ended up taking wrong steps owing to political machinations of those around them. Whatever your political leaning, this book will insult your intelligence!

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## **Denise says**

4.0 out of 5 stars -- Engrossing and well documented epic of the Nehru-Gandhi Dynasty

Although a novel, this story of the Nehru-Gandhi family and their dominance of India's fledgling democratic nation as leaders of the Congress Party, is told from the point of view of Sonia Gandhi as she witnesses tumultuous events in history from the vantage point of marrying into the political powerhouse and being the daughter-in-law of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. In an almost continuous "reign" with only a few misses, Mahatma Gandhi's ideology lives on through the decades as his friend Nehru and Nehru's daughter, Indira, her sons Sangay and Rajiv, and ultimately her daughter-in law passionately steer India into the 21st century and beyond. With the goal of independence through non-violence, the family firmly believes in the three pillars of India -- "democracy, secularism and the rule of law." They must contend with all manner of challenges to their philosophy as religious nationalism and communism threaten to divide the nation and lead to unending civil war.

Since India is a nation of many cultures, languages and religions, it proves a daunting task of the family to unite the country and achieve common goals for the good of all the people. Unrest and corrupt government practices threaten the stability of the fragile new nation and the Gandhi family struggles to remain true to the original values of "integrity, tolerance, contempt for money, and the cult of service to others." Of particular interest are the poorest people.

The transformation of Sonia Maino Gandhi from shy Italian schoolgirl to powerful Indian politician is filled with sacrifice and deep personal pain as she faced the fanatically motivated assassinations of her mother-in-



law and her husband. Resisting entry into public life and deeply private, Sonia must make a decision that puts her own dreams aside to choose what is best for the nation. In a country with more differences than similarities, Sonia -- as did Indira and then Rajiv -- must try to find solutions to problems faced by those who seek power to maintain the status quo and to circumvent the democratic process or others who encourage rebellion. Blood is shed in the name of religion as the Hindu and Moslem citizens persecute each other. It's a time of huge political upheaval and strife and the actions taken by Indira, Rajiv and others take Sonia to a position she never wanted. Sonia witnesses the toll of political life on those she loves, but is reminded again and again that she did not choose her life, it chose her.

I enjoyed this fascinating glimpse into the world of the Gandhi family and the history lessons of India. The author writes an extremely graphic picture of India, its inhabitants, and the land itself. I'd recommend it to anyone who loves historical fiction as this was very well researched and cited though the author was unable to talk with any member of the family. I'll definitely investigate some of the additional works included in the bibliography.

Thank you to NetGalley and Open Road Integrated Media for the e-book ARC to review.

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### **Herminia Moncayo Agüera says**

Este libro, me ha hecho conocer un poco más, de ese país tan fascinante como es la india

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