



Beyond Borders: Why the World Continues to Pay Attention to Maja Herman Sekulić

While sections of the Serbian media have often overlooked her achievements, the international literary community has continued to follow the career of Maja Herman Sekulić with sustained interest. For readers and critics far beyond the Balkans, her work has long belonged to a broader cultural conversation that transcends national boundaries.

A poet, novelist, essayist, translator, and scholar, Herman Sekulić occupies a rare position in contemporary Serbian literature. She is among the few living Serbian authors whose work has found readers across Europe, North America, and Asia, with novels translated into five languages and poetry published in twenty-eight. Her official title as a Dame/Knight of the Order of Saint Constantine reflects yet another dimension of the international recognition she has received.

Yet her influence extends well beyond her published books. Holding a Ph.D. from Princeton University, she has taught at several American universities while pursuing a career that bridges literature, philosophy, comparative culture, and translation. Her essays have been included in university curricula, and her translations of major theoretical works have helped introduce influential literary concepts to Serbian readers and scholars.

Her international engagements are equally notable. She serves as Vice President of the Academy of Ethics in India, which has nominated her twice for the Nobel Prize in Literature. She is a member of the World Academy of Art and Science, as well as a senator, ambassador, and member of the International Academy in Rome. Her cultural work has also earned her appointments as a three-time Ambassador of Poetry, Culture, and Goodwill under UNESCO patronage, together with the Nelson Mandela Peace Award.

Recognition has come from many parts of the world. In Italy and India, her literary achievements have been celebrated through numerous distinctions. In South Korea, her work has been translated and she was appointed Lifetime Vice President of the World Literature Association. Mexico has honored her among the leading figures of contemporary world culture. She has also been recognized as a Global Icon of Poetry, the Style Icon of Serbia of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and one of the Fifty Unforgettable Women of Europe.

What distinguishes Herman Sekulić, however, is not simply the breadth of her résumé but the consistency of her intellectual independence. Throughout a career that has unfolded across cultures and continents, she has resisted the temptation to reshape her voice according to prevailing political or ideological expectations. Opportunities to embrace fashionable narratives or capitalize on personal history were available to her, yet she chose instead to remain committed to the autonomy of literature and the integrity of her own artistic vision.

At a time when public discourse increasingly rewards conformity and polarization, Herman Sekulić represents a different tradition—one that places literature above ideology and creative freedom above political convenience. Her career serves as a reminder that genuine cultural influence is rarely determined by the intensity of domestic media attention. Rather, it is measured by the enduring life of a writer's work, its ability to cross languages and cultures, and its capacity to remain relevant across generations.

It is perhaps for this reason that, regardless of changing fashions or local controversies, Maja Herman Sekulić continues to command respect on the international literary stage. Her reputation today rests not on publicity, but on decades of scholarship, artistic achievement, and an unwavering commitment to intellectual and creative freedom.

(The cultural supplement)

Van granica: zasto svet i dalje obraca pažnju na Maju Herman Sekulic

Uprkos čestom ignorisanju u delu domaćih medija, svet i dalje sa velikom pažnjom prati svaki korak Maje Herman Sekulić. Svetska književnost jednostavno ne može da zanemari autorku čiji opus, međunarodni ugled i kulturni doprinos prevazilaze nacionalne okvire. Nosilac je i viteške titule Reda Svetog Konstantina, što dodatno svedoči o međunarodnom ugledu koji uživa.

Maja Herman Sekulić ubraja se među najznačajnije savremene srpske autore, a jedna je od retkih živih književnica iz Srbije koja ima čitalačku publiku od Pariza i Rima do Nju Delhija i Njujorka. Dok mnogi autori ostaju prepoznati prvenstveno u regionalnim okvirima, njen književni rad već decenijama ostvaruje međunarodni odjek.

Ona nije samo književnica, već svojevrsna kulturna institucija. Doktor je filozofije sa Prinstona, predavala je na više američkih univerziteta i autorka je 33 knjige. Njeni romani prevedeni su na pet svetskih jezika, poezija na dvadeset osam, dok se njena esejistika proučava na pojedinim univerzitetskim katedrama. Kao prevodilac kapitalnih dela značajno je doprinela razvoju srpske književne teorije i uvođenju novih pojmova u domaću akademsku misao.

Potpredsednica je Akademije etike u Indiji, koja ju je dva puta nominovala za Nobelovu nagradu za književnost. Članica je Svetske akademije umetnosti i nauke, kao i senator, ambasador i član Internacionalne akademije u Rimu. Nosilac je i titula trostrukog ambasadora poezije, kulture i dobre volje pod pokroviteljstvom UNESCO-a, kao i međunarodne nagrade za mir „Nelson Mandela“. Školovala se i živela u više zemalja sveta, članica je srpskog i američkog PEN-a, Srpskog književnog društva i Udruženja književnika Srbije, koje joj je dodelilo svoja najviša priznanja.

Posebno je cenjena u Italiji i Indiji, gde je dobila brojne književne nagrade, dok je u Koreji prevedena i imenovana za doživotnu potpredsednicu Udruženja svetske književnosti. Iz Meksika su joj stigla priznanja koja je svrstavaju među velikane svetske kulture.

Proglašena je Globalnom ikonom poezije, Ikonom stila Srbije XX i XXI veka i jednom od pedeset nezaboravnih žena Evrope.

Od Evrope do Amerike, Maja Herman Sekulić simbolizuje slobodu stvaranja, traganje za lepotom i doslednost umetničkom integritetu, nezavisno od dnevne politike. Oni koji pokušavaju da njen doprinos svedu na lokalne okvire zanemaruju činjenicu da istinska umetnička vrednost nadilazi trenutne medijske i političke okolnosti. Kako je o njoj zapisao Josif Brodski, pleni lepotom svoje poezije i svog bića.

U vremenu kada se od umetnika i intelektualaca često očekuje da slede unapred zadate obrasce i dominantne narative, Maja Herman Sekulić ostala je dosledna sopstvenom putu. Mogla je da prihvati modele koji su joj bili ponuđeni na Zapadu, uključujući kritiku sopstvene zemlje ili poziciju žrtve, ali to nije učinila. Nije prihvatila ni ponude koje bi od nje zahtevale ideološko svrstavanje, niti je koristila tragičnu sudbinu svog oca kao sredstvo lične promocije. Umesto toga, izabrala je put stvaralačke slobode, ličnog integriteta i odgovornosti prema sopstvenom delu.



Njena karijera pokazuje da trajna književna vrednost ne zavisi od prolazne medijske pažnje, već od snage dela, međunarodnog priznanja i doslednosti sopstvenim principima.

Foto: Nebojsa Babic



Maja Herman Sekulic

Serbia

USA

Official nominee for Nobel literature