

**BOOK REVIEW**  
**MONICA ARIANA SIM'S ALLEGORIC APPROACH TO ECONOMICS**

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**Reviewed work:**

Economics: An Allegorical Journey

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The back cover of the volume offers a concise yet insightful overview of the author, Monica Ariana Sim, whose professional background clarifies the pedagogical orientation of the book. A lecturer at the Faculty of Economic Sciences of the University of Oradea, with studies in Letters, European Economic Relations, and a PhD in Philology, Sim brings together her expertise in language, communication, and economics to craft a work that is both informative and engaging. Her stated intention is to guide readers through the complexities of economic concepts by means of allegorical storytelling, allowing abstract notions to be internalized more intuitively. This multidisciplinary foundation, combined with her long-standing interest in Business English and communication practices, shapes the book's accessible narrative style and its focus on clarity, creativity, and conceptual relevance. The result is a volume that reflects the author's commitment to making economics not only understandable, but also appealing and meaningful to a broad audience.

Thus, Monica Ariana Sim's volume *Economics: An Allegorical Journey* presents a highly accessible and engaging didactic journey into the world of economics and

related business fields. Designed as a collection of allegorical narratives, the book guides readers – particularly young learners, students in introductory economics, or non-specialists – through fundamental concepts of economics, management, marketing, accounting, trade, tourism, and business organization. Through a series of interconnected stories, each centered on a young protagonist confronted with an economic dilemma, the author succeeds in transforming abstract theoretical notions into vivid, imaginative, and memorable scenarios. We can note that the main characters, whose names appear in the titles of chapters, are actually family members. The heroes' portrayals are subtly inspired by real-life figures.

The structure of the book is simple, clear, and well balanced. Following a short acknowledgement section and an illustrative table of contents, the volume unfolds through twelve allegorical tales, each dedicated to a specific economic domain: international business, management, marketing, accounting, finance, tourism, trade, business organizations, and more. These short stories range from six to ten pages, and each functions as a standalone explanatory narrative while also contributing to a coherent conceptual path. The volume concludes with a glossary that succinctly defines key terms, reinforcing the educational purpose of the book.

The opening story, "Christian and the Fascinating Tale of Economics," sets the tone by introducing economic branches as personified characters – the six daughters of Oeconomicus. Globara, Managos, Marketa, Tourista, Finara, and Accountia each embody a vital component of the economic system. Monica Sim's allegorical approach highlights the interdependence of these domains, subtly conveying the idea that economic prosperity is the result of coordinated contribution rather than hierarchical precedence. The didactic message is explicit: no single sector guarantees economic balance; instead, synergy among all fields ensures sustainable development.

"The prosperity of Ekonos depends on the blend of your talents and dedication." (p.15)

This sentence encapsulates one of the book's fundamental messages: economic systems thrive through cooperation among diverse branches. Rather than isolating economic sectors, the author emphasizes interdependence — a theme repeated in later stories on management, marketing, accounting, and trade. The quote can serve as a key example of how allegory reinforces real economic principles.

The subsequent tale, "The Story of Andreas and His Quest for Success in International Business," offers a narrative exploration of cultural awareness, regulatory frameworks, innovation, and ethics in global trade. The protagonist encounters real-world challenges such as negotiation across cultural contexts, interpreting trade agreements, or understanding technological transformations in logistics. The story's allegorical world becomes a simplified yet faithful reflection of contemporary international business environments, illustrating how intercultural competence, adaptability, and ethical awareness contribute to professional success.

"It wasn't about transactions, but about forming connections rooted in understanding, admiration, and a shared love for the diverse fabric of human existence." (p.21)

This excerpt expresses the ethical and intercultural dimension of international

business. It offers an excellent illustration of the book's intention to humanize economic relations and highlight cultural awareness, empathy, and communication as essential components of the global economy. It is a powerful line showing the moral underpinnings of commerce.

Language learning is addressed in two interconnected stories, "The Story of Sofi and The Language Garden" and its sequel "The Story of Sofi and Business English in Search for Prosperity." Through the character Sofi and her symbolic journey, the author depicts vocabulary acquisition, grammar structuring, and communicative practice as spatial explorations within a linguistic landscape. The sequel expands this journey into the realm of Business English, showing the relevance of communication competencies – negotiation, presentation, correspondence – for economic activities. These chapters demonstrate the author's pedagogical sensitivity in linking linguistic proficiency with economic and professional advancement.

"Communication is the spine of business." (p.39)

Short, memorable, and pedagogically impactful, this quote distills the rationale behind Business English and professional communication. It offers a clear example of how the allegorical structure uses concise maxims to reinforce essential business competencies. The metaphor of the "spine" signals structure, support, and centrality — perfectly suited to business communication.

Marketing is explored allegorically in "Rareş and the Kingdom of Prosperity. A Story of Marketing," where the protagonist learns about product design, pricing, promotion, and placement through a fantasy-like competition. Sim emphasizes the strategic nature of marketing decisions and the need to understand consumer perception, a principle reinforced through the metaphor of "glowing cookies" whose features and pricing appeal to festival-goers. The structure of the tale aligns with marketing's traditional four Ps, helping readers internalize the concepts intuitively.

"Victor's Journey into The Land of Wealth – The Tale of the Golden Thread" offers perhaps the most complex allegory, engaging with monetary circulation, value, resource distribution, and the dangers of hoarding. The Golden Thread, symbolizing currency, is presented as a fragile yet vital connective element in society. Through Victor's trials and confrontation with Avarus, readers understand how liquidity, transparency, and trust sustain economic stability, whereas accumulation without circulation destabilizes markets and communities. The story functions as an accessible metaphor of inflationary pressure, scarcity, and the social dimension of money.

"Alexandra and The Trading Tradition – The Barter System" shows how, in the city of Metropolis, Alexandra's curiosity about pre-monetary exchange leads her to test the value of goods and services directly, learning to assess worth through effort, materials, and originality. As the book crisply states,

"Value transcends currency; it involves recognizing and valuing goods and services." (p.60).

This quotation captures the conceptual heart of the barter story. By shifting the focus away from money toward intrinsic worth, effort, craftsmanship, and community, the author illustrates a foundational economic lesson in an accessible

way. It is one of the clearest pedagogical statements in the text. This succinct maxim sums up the moral of the chapter: economic value is not only a question of money but also of social recognition, craftsmanship and reciprocal trust — an approach that renders the barter episode both pedagogically clear and ethically resonant.

Accounting becomes the center of the narrative in “Vlad and the Fascinating World of Numbers – Accounting,” where everyday financial literacy – balancing income and expenses, budgeting, savings – is introduced through children’s activities. The account of Vlad’s growth from curious observer to community advisor illustrates the practical relevance of accounting for personal development, family financial planning, and communal well-being.

Management principles are addressed in “Vlăduț and the Great Jungle Expedition – A Management Exercise,” a story that foregrounds planning, role allocation, teamwork, decision-making, and leadership through an adventurous quest. The allegory mirrors the key functions of management: organizing, coordinating, leading, and controlling. The tale exemplifies how strategic thinking and collective responsibility enable successful outcomes.

Tourism, business organizations, and trade are also represented through distinct narratives that maintain the same allegorical and pedagogical framework. In “Ariana’s Journey in the Land of Tourism,” the protagonist explores different tourism sectors – heritage, adventure, hospitality – guided by symbolic guardians.

“Delia and the Kingdom of Trade: An Allegory of Business Organizations” introduces business structures such as sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations, and cooperatives, illustrating advantages, limitations, and operational dynamics in a comprehensible manner.

The volume concludes with a substantial “Glossary” section, arranged alphabetically and enriched with etymological explanations that clarify both character names and the symbolic locations encountered throughout the allegories. Far from being a simple list of definitions, this glossary reinforces the pedagogical aims of the book by linking each fictional element to its linguistic and conceptual origins. For instance, characters such as *Accountia*, *Avarus*, *Adventura* or *Tourista* are traced back to Latin or Greek roots, offering readers an intuitive connection between narrative roles and the economic or managerial principles they personify. Likewise, places such as *Agora*, *Ekonos*, *Peregrinia*, *Metropolis* or *The Golden Forest* are explained through their historical and linguistic backgrounds, grounding the imaginative world in recognizable economic and cultural terminology. This final section thus acts as an interpretive key to the allegories, supporting readers in consolidating their understanding of the concepts woven throughout the stories.

One of the distinctive strengths of the volume lies in its coherent narrative voice and its consistent pedagogical strategy. Monica Sim relies on symbolism, anthropomorphism, and fantasy to translate theoretical content into experiential learning. The stories are written in accessible language, without technical jargon,

yet they remain faithful to the conceptual essence of economics and business studies. Each narrative incorporates elements of moral education – collaboration, curiosity, responsibility, respect, and ethical behavior – making the book suitable for younger learners and early university students alike.

From a critical perspective, the allegorical approach, while engaging, may occasionally simplify complex processes, offering idealized solutions to economic dilemmas. However, this simplification is inherent to the genre and serves its didactic purpose. The book does not aim to replace analytical textbooks, but rather to introduce concepts in a creative, memorable, and affectively appealing manner. The stories may also inspire interdisciplinary use, bridging economics with literature, creative writing, and pedagogy.

A particularly noteworthy element of the volume is the set of outstanding illustrations created by Delia Tirla, whose artistic contribution enhances the book's allegorical depth. The drawings are not merely decorative; they function as visual anchors that support the conceptual understanding of each story. Whether depicting characters such as Oeconomicus and his symbolic daughters, the enchanted marketplaces, or the diverse landscapes of Peregrinia, the illustrations clarify abstract economic notions through vivid imagery. Their expressive style and careful attention to detail make the narratives more accessible, especially for younger readers or visual learners, while simultaneously enriching the aesthetic quality of the book. By aligning each drawing closely with the thematic focus of the corresponding chapter, the illustrator succeeds in reinforcing the pedagogical purpose of the volume and transforming economic concepts into memorable visual experiences.

In conclusion, *An Allegoric Approach to Economics* stands out as an imaginative and effective educational resource. Monica Ariana Sim skillfully combines narrative creativity with conceptual clarity, offering readers a fresh perspective on economic literacy. The volume is highly valuable for teachers seeking alternative didactic tools, students approaching economics for the first time, and readers interested in understanding fundamental economic principles through engaging storytelling. The book succeeds in demonstrating that economics, often perceived as abstract or technical, can be understood, appreciated, and even enjoyed through the power of narrative imagination.