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| <i>Title</i> | BUYING JUST LIKE THE ANCIENT GREEKS |
| <i>Author</i> | Bob Soames |
| <i>Foreword by</i> | Sir Anthony Cleaver |
| <i>Publication</i> | May 2011 |
| <i>Price</i> | £12.50 |
| <i>ISBN</i> | 978-0-9551790-9-9 |
| <i>Extent</i> | 160pp |
| <i>Format</i> | 'B' format paperback |
| <i>Rights</i> | World |

Author **BOB SOAMES'** career encompassed many years working in various management roles in the UK Atomic Energy Authority, including heading the UKAEA's procurement operation. Currently a procurement consultant and trainer, Bob is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply. He read Classics at Bristol University and this book combines his ongoing interest in the ancient world with his wide practical knowledge of procurement.

Foreword **SIR ANTHONY CLEAVER**, former chairman of IBM UK and the UKAEA and Past President of the Classical Association, introduces the book via the Foreword.

Description For as long as there has been trade, there have been buyers and sellers. The growth of trade and political influence in the ancient world led to improvements to economic conditions and the prosperous societies that resulted celebrated their success with yet more trade, and through major building programmes. In ancient Greece these factors led to some becoming clients and others vendors for a whole range of goods and services.

The impressive surviving structures of ancient Greece were built by skilled craftsmen and labourers bound under contract in ways surprisingly similar to those we use nowadays. Evidence from building and other contracts shows that those who entered into contract in ancient Greece took account of supply risk, project overruns and cost implications, just as we do today. The Greeks planned, project-managed, insured, contracted-for, controlled and occasionally argued in the courts over major strategic procurement activities. Could we learn from them? How did the ancient Greeks meet their challenges? And how similar were the practical and commercial problems 2,500 years ago to those of today?

Bob Soames' book approaches these questions in a novel way, comparing today's practices with those used two and a half millennia ago. He looks at the key stages of running procurement operations and compares today's best practice with yesterday's solutions. And in one key area – that of confidentiality – he identifies a surprising difference between 'then and now'. Interestingly, the 2011 UK government is beginning to take a radical approach to confidentiality reminiscent of ancient Greek practice.

The Market Written with professional procurement specialists in mind, Soames' book combines sufficient technical detail of today's profession to class this firmly as a business book, albeit an unusual one. But this book is also a reflection on ancient history, and to that extent is also a leisure-reading option! Classicists are well catered for; the book opens up a new dimension in the crowded area of economic history studies and points towards areas that may benefit from further specialist exploration.