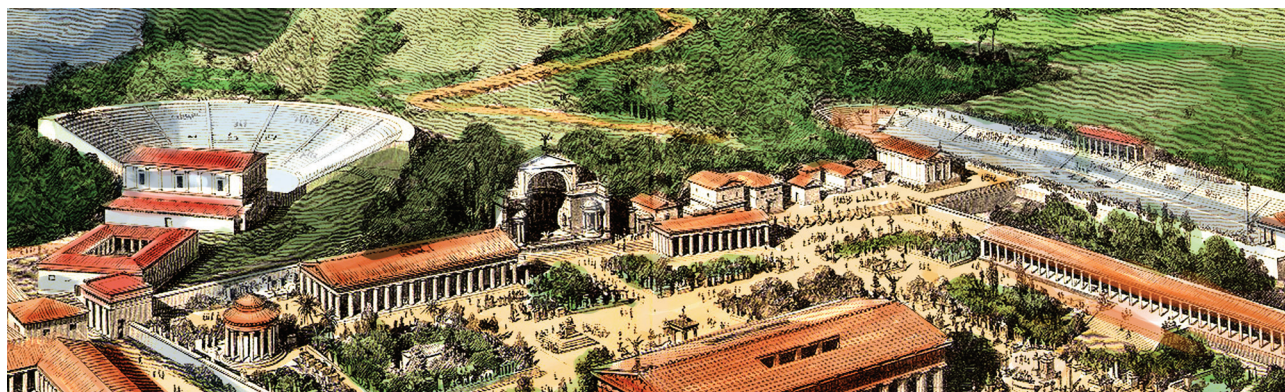


# UNIT

## 5

# The Classical World



## Learning Objectives

- To gain knowledge of the classical civilisation of Greece
- To know Athenian democracy and the age of Pericles
- To understand how a small town (Rome) emerged as a republic and later became an empire
- To learn the contribution of Rome to world civilization
- To acquire knowledge of classical China and its achievements
- To trace the origin of Christianity and its spread in Eastern Roman Empire



## Introduction

When America, Australia and Africa remained outside the mainstream of world history, civilisation blossomed in scattered areas of the land mass of Europe and Asia, known as Eurasia. Some of them soon reached the classical stage. When the classical era was at its height, a chain of empires from Rome to Persia to Peshawar, began to emerge. The expansion of major civilisation eliminated the geographical gap and paved the way for inter-regional trade contacts and cultural exchange. This led to the transmission of ideas, technology and art. The diffusion of the great religions of the world, beginning with Buddhism and later continuing with Christianity and Islam, can be understood in this context.

Classical World comprises ancient Greece and Rome. Classical Age refers to the inter-locking civilisation of ancient Greece and ancient Rome, known as Graeco-Roman World.

## 5.1 Greece: The Hellenic World

Until 8<sup>th</sup> century BC (BCE) Greece was not different from the rest of the world. People were illiterate, craft specialization was primitive, and life was difficult. With the exception of Sparta, agriculture was limited by the mountainous terrain. However, the Greeks succeeded in founding colonies along the coast that helped them earn revenue