Select two ancient civilisations (ie.from before 500AD) and discuss the role of urban space, spatial sequence and the role of religion, commerce and culture in the development of their city planning and accompanying architectural forms.

Although both Ancient Greek and Ancient Rome explore the development of their city planning and accompanying architectural forms through the physical role of spatial sequence associated with the role of urban space both also investigate the roles of religion, commerce and culture presented in their urban planning with architectural forms. The grid-planned city highlights the role of spatial sequence connected with the urban space through its arrangement in both Ancient Greece and Rome. In spite of the above, the role of religion plays a significant role in revealing the establishment of both Ancient Greek’s and Rome’s city planning with unique architecture forms. Similarly, the portrayal of commerce contributes to the establishment of city planning with architectural forms in both Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome. Furthermore, the art and entertainment embedded within the role of culture are also featured in the development of city planning with architectural forms in Ancient Greek and Rome.

The grid-planned city exhibits the role of spatial sequence that correlates with the urban space in both Ancient Greece and Rome. According to Aristotle, he credits Hippodamus (498-408 BCE) with developing “the art of planning cities” and “the first [non-statesman] who made inquiries about the best form of government.” Aristotle also summarizes Hippodamus’s plans for the ideal city-state: ten-thousand governing citizens divided into artisans, farmers, and soldiers. Land divided into three parts: public, private, and sacred. In the example of Athenian port city of Piraeus (5th century BCE), Hippodamus laid out an urban plan based on straight streets intersecting at right angles to form city strip blocks in rectangular form, known as the Hippodamian Plan. His grid layout was characterised by order and regularity that clarified a rational social order. By using grid method, Hippodamus also organised the urban space of Miletus through arranging the buildings and streets around 450 BC such that the winds from the mountains and the sea close to Miletus could flow optimal through the city and provide a cooling during the hot summer. Furthermore, the long tradition of gridded cities can also be seen in Ancient Rome. An early Roman grid was witnessed in Cosa, Italy founded in 273 BCE, whereby it was used to control the coastline north of Rome. Cosa’s grid layout was an ingenious compromise between the rigorous topography of a defensive hilltop site and the advantages of an orthogonal street plan, whereby the forum laid in the open space bottom right. The strip blocks conform to the Greek model. In 100AD, the Roman grid at its most perfect with square blocks and rectilinear enclosure was shown in Timgad (Algeria). Just below the central crossroads constructed by two major axes, named Cardo maximus (North/South) and Decumanus Maximus (East/West), the forum and the amphitheatre were depicted. Outside the city walls is necropolis and pomerium was found whereby section of land immediately outside the city walls that could not be built upon of the city from the surrounding territory.

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Despite the organised, physical use of grid implemented on their city planning, both Ancient Greek and Ancient Rome also discovered the roles of religion, commerce and culture embedded within the development of their city planning with architectural forms. The role of religion plays a significant role in portraying the establishment of both Ancient Greek’s and Rome’s accompanying architectural forms in their city planning. In Acropolis, Athens of Greece, in 479BCE, the location of important landmarks of temples were placed in the centre of the city. Parthenon of Athens (448-432BCE) was an expression of Classical Greek temple architecture that used a Doric order structure – the sturdiest, which represented the Greek culture of maturity based on the proportions of men. The capitals of Parthenon consisted of echinus (cushion-shaped capital) and abacus (square-planned block) and an entablature which included triglyphs (vertical elements of Doric frieze that comprises three verticals and two sunk vertical channels and two half channels at edges derived from the timber construction) and metopes (the square spaces between triglyphs for sculpted decoration). The columns of Parthenon did not have a base. Parthenon with a peripteral arrangement has a single line of columns arranged all around the exterior the of the temple building. Besides that, in Ancient Rome, from the Early Republican Period, the forum saw the construction of key temples. One of the most prominent early temples was the temple of Saturn, situated in the north west corner of the Roman Forum of Rome, 498BCE. The temple was dedicated to Saturn, the god of agriculture, and housed the state treasury. It was of the Ionic order with six columns on the façade, which was derived from the Greek tradition. It was integral element of civic space and how, where and why it was built was a direct reflection of the socio-political climate of the time. Its ground plan and podium from 42 BCE was retained.

The contribution of commerce is also demonstrated in both Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome’s city planning and their accompanying forms. Greek city planners also came to prefer the stoa as a device for framing the agora (public market place) of Athens. Stoa was a covered walkway or colonnade that was usually designed for public use. Stoa of Attalus (150BC) in Agora of Athens, was a linear building with one or more rows of columns. It was used for shops, meetings and exhibitions. In its interior space, it incorporated with the Ionic order for interior colonnades, characterised by capitals with volutes (coiled ends of an element inserted below the abacus). The Ionic Order was notable for its graceful and feminie proportions, which produced a slender and elegant profile than the Doric Order. Additionally, in Ancient Rome’s city planning, commercial areas (ie.markets and shops) were also around the forum. Basilica of Maxentius, Rome, in 313AD, served as a meeting house, commercial area of public market places and an administrative building, located in the Forum. It used lower level barrel vaults to buttress the above cross vaults (also known as groin vaults) over the central nave through using concrete. Barrel vaults are semicircular vaults over rectangular spaces and groin vaults are vaults formed by two intersecting barrel vaults.

The role of culture also has a significant impact on both Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome’s city planning and their accompanying forms. The Greek culture of entertainment was delineated in the theatre at the Sanctuary of Asclepius at Epidaurus (350-300BCE). It was a large, open-air structure used for dramatic performance. It took advantage of hillsides and naturally sloping terrain and, in general, utilized the panoramic landscape as the backdrop to the stage itself. This Greek theatre is composed of the seating area (theatron), a circular space for the chorus to perform (orchestra), and the stage (skene). Tiered seats in the theatron provided space for spectators. The Ancient Greek art of culture was shown in terracotta painted plaques from the Temple of Apollo at Thermon (c. 625 B.C.E.), suggesting architectural decoration in Iron Age Greece. Once ornamenting the surface of this Doric temple (most likely as metopes), the extant panels have preserved various imagery. In addition, the ancient Roman culture of entertainment was also shown in building amphitheatres – elliptical, enclosed spaces such as the Colosseum (70-72 AD) – used for gladiatorial combats or battles between men and animals. One of the Ancient Rome’s cultures was conveyed through art of monumental statue. Column of Trajan, Rome (113 C.E), depicted the triumphal civilisation under leadership of Emperor Trajan in honour of his victory over Dacia during 101-02CE and 105-06 CE. The column itself is made from fine-grained Luna marble and stands to a height of 38.4 meters atop a tall pedestal. The helical sculptural frieze measured 190 metres in length and wrapped around the column 23 times. All of the Roman edifices were depicted are solid, regular, and well designed—in stark contrast to the humble buildings of the Dacian world, indicating roman propaganda at work.

Both Ancient Greek and Ancient Rome to investigate the development of their city planning and accompanying architectural forms through the association between urban space and spatial sequence, yet both also encapsulated the roles of religion, commerce and culture in their urban planning with architectural forms. The role of spatial sequence linked with urban space in the form of arrangement is accentuated through the establishment of grid-planned city in Ancient Greek and Ancient Rome. Despite the above factor, with architectural forms, the role of religion also plays a major role in establishing the city planning. Moreover, the role of commerce helps to portray the city planning of both Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome with unique architectural forms. Likewise, the art and entertainment displayed in the role of culture emphasises the development of city planning with architectural forms in Ancient Greek and Ancient Rome.