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The town planning of the Harappan Civilization upholds the fact that the civic establishments of the city were highly developed. How do you see planing measures of the Indus Valley Civilization in context of this statement?

INDUS VALLEY CIVILIZATION- A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

The Indus valley civilization or Harappan civilization dates back to 3300 BC and lasted till 1750 BC. The largest settlements of the civilization is located in Mohenjo daro, Sindh. It was comprised of 3 settlements namely at Harappa, Lothal and Mohenjo daro. It is by today standards a uniquely planned civilization as these settlements had uniform construction techniques, grid-iron layouts, efficient drainage and sanitation systems, raised settlements to avoid ingress of flood water and so on. This civilization was considered the most technologically advanced one as it rivalled those on Egypt and mesopotamia. The civilization focused on centers and nodes, A big city/town connected to nodal villages.

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PLANNING MEASURES TAKEN BY THE INDUS CIVILIZATION INHABITANTS

Division of the City - Citadel and Lower City

The ruins uncovered at Mohenjodaro unveil that the city was divided into 2 parts

a) Citadel,
b) Lowercity

The citadel housed the important buildings of the town such as the granary, administrative building, stupa, assembly hall and accomadation of the city's rulers, and the Great Bath. The citadel was surrounded by walls.

The Lower city housed the rest of the city. The city was neatly placed in a grid-iron pattern with wide arterial roads cutting from North to South and East to West.

Division of the important elements allowed them to be placed atop the city improving city outlook and, protection, and administrative control.

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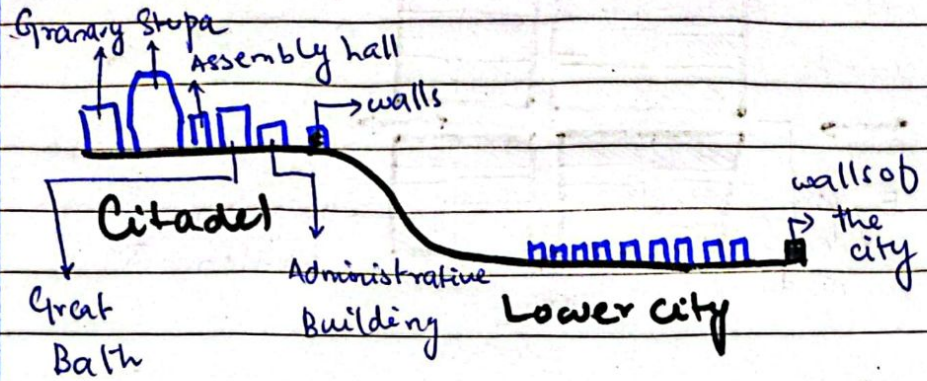

Cross Section/Diagramatic View
Mohenjo-Daro

Grid Iron Layout of the City

The grid-iron layout was revolutionary at the time. It was the first known civilization to incorporate such planning features in its cities designed. The grid iron layout allowed for efficient utilization of space within the city walls. Moreover, the uniformity and maintainance of the structures could also be achieved. It prevented haphazard and irregular development within the city. Wide streets allowed for easy through fare and ventilation. The city was neatly divided into a chessboard and this added to aesthetic appeal too.

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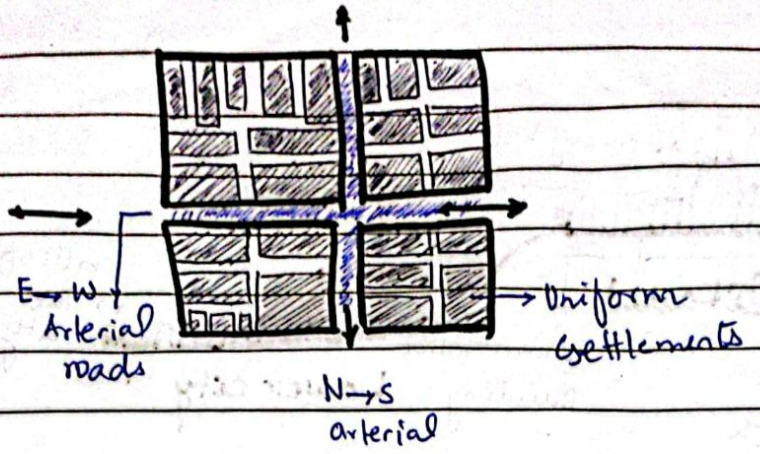

↑ Plan view of the Grid ↑
Iron pattren.

Arterials Lined with Drains

As from the above diagram, we arterial roads were cutting the city from North to South and East to west. These arterials were lineed with drains and dadditional soakpge pits. to cope with drainage needs in case of rains and at other times.

Similarly the arterial roads were wide and were approximately 40 feet in length. These wide arterials allowed for efficient throughfare and trans portation to and from the granary. These wide roads proved to be a major factor of the city's success. Efficient city administration could be ensured through these pathsways.

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Centralised Sanitation System

The ruins uncovered at Mohenjo daro revealed another key aspect of planning. The city had a centralised drainage system. Houses had private washrooms that were connected to the main sewer lines using drains.

This was a first in the region and in the entire world. It helped keep the city clean and allowed the city to remain disease free. Drainage was channelled away from the houses to drains to which they were disposed of in the Indus.

Raised Settlements to avoid ingress of flood water

Mohenjo-daro was located in the midst of a flood plain. The city planners of the constructed the settlement on raised foundations. This allowed the houses to avoid the flood water, whenever it flooded.

Again, the vision of the administrators is to be commended. Today, these techniques are applied using advanced data computation and analysis. They planners did all of this in an era with no electricity or computers.

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Uniform Construction of Settlements

It would be astounding to know, that the construction methodology across the Indus Valley civilization was highly uniform and standardized.

This helped the Harappans in many ways. At the lower city level, it eliminated the disparities between neighbours as all the people had houses built to the same specification. Secondly, it provided ease of maintainance, as the size of brick was similar across the settlement so, maintaining these properties was hassle free. Lastly, economies of scale plays into there favour. The cost to produce and manufacture these bricks and houses would be less due to the uniformity across the settlement.

Water Filteration Mechanism at Lothal

This civilization was ahead of its time As Lothal's resident had been provided a mechanism to filter water and make it fit/useable for consumption. The city of Lothal had an intricate system of water filteration and drainage. Cisterns made of brick and coupled with aerations chambers lined with charcoal were used

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to filter water.

This system was decades or even centuries ahead of its time. The people knew their requirements and planned their city accordingly. water filteration and drainage allowed the city to maintain hygiene of its citizen and prevent diseases.

Conclusion

The cities of the Harappan civilization followed the principle of "human function follow physical platform" and vice versa. They planned it according to their citizens and ease of administration. Today, the world acknowlegdes how far ahead they were in planning.