CHAPTER VII

CUSTOMS, FOOD, DRINKS AND OTHER ACTIVITIES
(1) Customs

Rich community: The Asuras are described as rich and prosperous.

There are ample references in the Vedas to bring this fact out. Indra is said to have 'found the treasure brought from the heaven that lay concealed, close hidden in a cave, enclosed in never ending rocks' and to have distributed among the worshipers the mighty treasures of Jarabara who dwelt on mountain. He also slew Vatras and gathered their riches. Namuci's brilliant treasures and ample wealth lured even Savins and Sarasvati and they brought that wealth from his house.

They are said to have each and every thing. They owned the earth first and the Devas had only to much as one seated could espy. In their desirable wealth various things like RK, Siman, Yajus, cows, horses, sheep (AVI), Youm, Brhamana, Rajanya, Vaisya and Sudra are counted. But mostly they are said to have their wealth in cows. In connection with the pains, the epi-

1. RV.II.12.14; Cf.VI.14.3; IX.15.6; etc.
2. RV.I.130.3.
3. RV.I.130.7; Cf.VI.47.22.
4. RV.III.35.11.
5. YV.XX.67.
6. रस्मू प्रसूः स्व मर्या वाप्पाय । JBr.I.107.
7. Ts.VI.2.4.3-4.
8. JBr.I.142.
9. JBr.I.160; TaBr.VIII.4.6; etc.
that 'śavanta', having the wealth in horses, and 'ārvanta', having the wealth in cows, are used. They are described as the most prosperous and illiberal demons among the Asuras. Their richness is referred to at the remark that they are averse to gifts. Again, one of them called Baghu, is praise-worthy because he makes gifts of a thousand coins. But most of the Asuras had their wealth in cows. Vala is 'Gomat' and is identified with the pen of cows 'Vrajo-goh'. He sits firm on the possession of cows 'Gomati' and what is recovered from him by splitting his is also 'Go-mayan vasā' wealth of kine. Cows are his body 'Go-vapus' and he is the guard of the cows. Number of passages are referred to the recovery of cows from the Asuras. Actually these cows were not their own, but of the Devas and the Asuras had stolen them and hidden them in a rocky-cave. Thus, it is clear that they were rich in kines which had been well kept on lofty mountain-caves. And Vala's 'bila' was noted for the holding of

12. RV. VI. 45.33.
13. RV. I.11.5.
14. RV. III.30. 10.
15. RV. VIII.24.30.
16. RV. I.62. 2.
17. RV. I.68.9.
18. RV. I.67.6.
19. RV. I.14.3; III.34. 10; I.68.31 D; 76.6; Ms.IV.14.5; IV.XX.
20. RV. X.108; 8. LVII. 24-36; etc.
21. RV. IX.87.8.
kine. The wealth of cows bestowed upon them milk in such quantity that their wives (of Kuyasa) used to take bath in milk. Rivers of milk flowed past their cities from where their women brought milk. This figurative description proves their possession of enormous wealth. Their cities which are counted variously are said to be made of gold, silver and iron. Thus, they are depicted rich and prosperous.

Occupation: So far as their occupation is concerned, they are said to have good knowledge of crops. The Satapatha Brahmana points out that once upon a time seasons were desirous to have a share in the sacrifice among the gods. They, however, did not approve of this. Then the seasons went to the Asuras. Those Asuras, then, became prosperous in such a manner that the Devas heard of it, for even while the Asuras were still ploughing and sowing, those behind were already engaged in reaping and threshing; indeed even without tilling the plants ripened forthwith for them. They are also said to have good knowledge of herbs and described as a noted physician. Tsuru is said to be the first physician to find a remedy for leprosy. Upajika which was used as an

23. RV. IV. 50. 5.
24. RV. I. D4. 4.
25. AV. L6. D1; Tr. VI. 2. 3. 1; Vs. III. 8. 1; Kap. Katha. XXXVIII. 3; Br. I. 25; Br. III. 4. 4. 3: etc.
27. SBr. I. 6. 1. 1-3.
29. AV. I. 24. 2.
antidote against poison, is called the daughter of the Asuras. They are mentioned as digging remedies into the ground. Commenting on it, Bloomfield says, 'The Asuras, the demons, hide away the remedies by burying them deep in the ground or they bury them for secure keeping, so that they may become available on occasion'. A Pisces is said to have brought a herb from the Himalayas and applied to a Brahma who was wounded by the stroke of an axe.

They are also said to be expert in the techniques and working of iron. They are said to have ports of stone, iron, gold and silver in all these three worlds.

The Taittiriya Brḥmaṇa informs us about their method of hair-cutting. First of all, they get the hair-cut of head, then moustaches and beard, and in the last, the hair of both the sides. While the system of the godly people is described as quite opposite to it. First of all, they get the hair cut of their head, then moustaches and beard and then at last the hair of both the sides. Here the Asuras are described as adopting

30. AV. VI. 80.243.
31. AV. VI. 80.3.
32. Vide JBS Vol. XII; P. 279.
33. AV. 81. 3.3.
34. AV. 81. 24.2.
36. एकोलां वृहुः पारितांकरः पारितांकिन्यो वे यत्वित | AV. 81. 86.1.
37. AV. 81. 86.2.
38. AV. 81. 86.3; 81. 3.7; 15.4; 85.1; 61. 8.
39. Kāp. Kātha. XXXVIII. 3; Br. III. 4.4.3.
40. TBr. 81. 86. 1-2.
Disposal of dead: So far as the disposal of dead body is concerned, the Chandogya Upanishad points out that they adorn the dead body with what they have begged, with clothes and with ornaments, and think that thereby they will win the world of heaven. It is but natural because when they sent their leader Virosana to Pranjapatil to know about ātmā, he could not understand the real meaning of ātmā and declared that mis-understood doctrine among the Asuras saying: "One's bodily self is to be made happy here, One's bodily self is to be served, one who makes one's own self, happy here and one who serves one's own self, one obtains both worlds, this world and the yonder." After adorning the dead bodies they hide them into crematories. A reference to this effect is found in the Sāstras-Brāhmaṇa, where we are told that the people who are of the Āsura nature, the Easterns and other, make their sepulchral sounds so as to be separated from the earth, either on a basin or on some such thing. For the Devas drove the Āsuras out from this world. On the other hand the godly people make their sepulchres so as not to be separated from the earth. The said Brāhmaṇa further points out that the people of the Āsura nature, the Easterns and others, make their burial-places round, for the Devas drove them out from the regions. While the godly people make their burial-places four-concerned.

41. Ch.UP.VIII.8.4.
42. SBr.XII.8.2.1.
43. SBr.XII.8.1.6.
(ii) Language, Religion and Philosophy of life

Language: They are described as unable to pronounce correctly. They are said to have defective and unintelligible speech. A reference to this effect is found in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa where their language is named as ‘Asura’. Here it is pointed out that when the Vāk was gained by the Devas, the Asuras being deprived of speech, suddenly said crying, 'He lavo! he lavo!'

Here according to Śāyaṇa, 'He lavo' stands for 'He arayo', i.e., ho, the spiteful enemies; which they were unable to pronounce correctly. One who speaks such an unintelligible speech is a Klechha. Hence, let no Brāhmaṇa speak barbarous language, since such is the speech of the asuras. One another reference to this effect is found in the Taittirīya Samhitā, where Tvaṣṭā is described as facing crushing defeat owing to mis-accentuating the compound word, 'Indra-śatravardhanva'. According to the Āitareya Brāhmaṇa, mind and speech are disconnected in their speech which is not agreeable to the Devas. The said Brāhmaṇa again points out that if anyone utters speech different from what he thinks, such a speech is liked only by the Asuras, not by the Devas. The Bhāṣa-Devatā says that the Asura, Rakṣas and Piśāca employ the low tone (sandha) while the Devas speak in the

45. TJ.II.6.2.Iff.
46. Br.II.5.
47. Br.II.26.
48. भृगु भ्राता ुकार्ष्यं च बत्त्वत्वसौ बुन्दा । B.D.VIII.115.
shrill (kraśa) tone. The Devas or āryans were unable to understand their language and therefore, they called their language a speech of wicked words, false speech, evil speech, etc. They are called 'blasphemous people' using strange words. The term 'Mr.-dhra-vāc' occurs frequently in the Ṛgveda for their unintelligible speech.

Religion: Religion depends upon some conception of gods and goddesses. The suras are described as having no gods or goddesses. They are given such negative epithets as 'a-karman', rite-less, 'a-veda', lawless, 'a-brahman', prayerless, 'brahna-dvīś', haters of hymns, 'a-deva' godless, or 'a-devayu' indifferent to the gods, 'a-arāhā', faithless, etc. Moreover, they are called as 'deva-mido', the scorners of the gods, or 'deva-piyu', gods-

49. B. D. VII. 114.
50. RV. VII. 104. 2.
51. RV. VII. 104. 8; cf. AV. IV. 17. 3.
52. ṛṣiṇaṣṭu | RV. 1.174. 7.
53. ṛṣiṇaṣṭu | RV. 1.174. 8; XI. 2. 23; XI. 1. 37.
54. RV. 1.174. 2; cf. V. 28. 10; VII. 6. 3; IX. 97. 43.
55. RV. 22. 8.
56. RV. 1.51. 18; 179. 3.
57. RV. 1. 16. 9.
58. RV. 11. 23. 4; III. 30. 17; VII. 1. 54. 2.
59. RV. 11. 19. 7; 22. 4; 26. 3; III. 31. 19; V. 2. 9; VI. 17. 8; 29. 8; etc.
60. RV. VII. 93. 5; VII. 70. 11.
61. RV. VII. 59. 3.
62. RV. 1.82. 2; 11. 23. 8.
63. RV. 11. 19. 17; YV. XXXV. 13; YV. XXXV. 4. 1; AV. XII. 1. 37; Br. XIII. 8. 2. 3.
blaspheming. They were godless because they did not believe in the Vedic gods and because they disliked and scorned the Vedic gods, hence, they are called the haters of gods. However, sometimes their gods are styled as 'anrta', false 'sura', foolish. They are also described as having their own 'strange vows or alien laws 'anya-vrata' which were beyond the understanding and therefore, they are styled as 'apa-vrata', wicked laws.

They are hardly depicted as practicing penance. Somehow, in the Chāndogya-Upaniṣad, we find Viṣṇu, the chief of the Asuras, going to Prajāpati with sacred grass in his hands and practicing the vow of celibacy for thirty two years.

They are also described as performing various sacrifices and trying to get acquisition from them. The Tattviriya Brāhmaṇa points out that by establishing the fire, two Asuras attained the world of heaven and the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa points out that being driven away by the Devas, Maru, the Asura-Rākṣas, wished to fly up to heaven but Agni pressed him down so, he did not fly up to heaven. But mostly they are deprived of the reward. For, their way of performance of sacrifices is said to have totally different

64. RV. VII. 104. 14.
65. RV. VII. 104. 24; 1.87. 2; 14.
66. RV. VIII. 70. 11.
67. प्रेम=RV. I. 51. 9.
68. Ch. U.P. VIII. 7. 2. ff.
69. TBr. I. 1. 2. 4-6.
70. SBr. I. 2. 4. 18.
from that of the Devas as we have already pointed out. They never followed the texts or sātras. They performed such rites as abounding with magic and witchcraft. And thus, by their wrong method of performing the sacrifice, they could not avail the reward of it. Moreover, their sacrifice was not without slaughter. A reference to this effect is found in the Sātpatha-
Brāhmaṇa, where we are told that the Asuras, in the beginning, seized a victim and the Devas, from fear, did not go near it. It further says that the Asuras then made portions of the head, the shoulders, the neck, and the hind-things. Therefore, in the godly sacrifice, it is prohibited to make portions of these. Thus it is evident that they had the knowledge of sacrifices too and sometimes, practised those rites in the same way as the Devas did, but this was never welcomed by the Devas. And to pen a low picture of the Asuras, they are denounced and condemned by the terms 'non-sacrificing', 'hater of hymns', grudging, 'greedy', etc. In this connection, the Kāthaka Jāśhitā also points out that the Asuras are without any sacrifice, without any sacrificial fee and

70a. Supra, pt. 2.45-70

71. Supra, pp. 249-47

72. कूदा पदा को परमांजिले | श्र.III.8.3.29.

73. श्रे.III.8.3.29.

74. कर्मात्मक | RV.1.33.4; 103.6; VIII.70.11; etc.,

75. कृत्यात्मक | RV.11.26.1; VII.6.3; प्राकूर्ति | RV.7.6.3;

76. धर्मात्मक | Ch.16.8.5; कल्पना | RV.1.22.6.

77. धर्मात्मक | RV.7.104.2; X.188.3.

78. धर्मात्मक | RV.11.35.6.

79. धर्मात्मक | RV.11.17.6.

80. धर्मात्मक | RV.XXVIII.12.
having no knowledge of Naksatras. The Chandogya-Upanishad says that one who is not giver, who has no faith, who does not offer sacrifice is a Asura, for this is the doctrine of the Asuras. Not only they are described as non-sacrificer but also as the destroyers of the sacrifices. They seem to be dead against the fire cult as they tried their best to obstruct, pollute and destroy the sacrifice performed by the Devas. They were irreligious and sinful thus, they are styled as 'inhuman', one who does not belong to human society. They, in this sense seem to be the demons of faith and devotion in god, religion or in any kind of meritorious action. They are styled as 'a-dive', devoid of goodness, 'a-mrita', false, 'arayi', grudging, and 'a-shema', worst, etc. Their thought and actions, their speech and intellect—all are mentioned as vicious and harmful. Thus, they are condemned.

Philosophy of life: Their philosophy of life is also described as quite different from those of the Devas. To them, this

79. Ch.UP.VIII.8.5.
80. Vide supra PF.271-74
81. RV.I.51.5; X.87.11; AV.IV.D.4.21; etc.
82. RV.X.22.8; Cf.II.11.10.
83. RV.VII.6.3; Ch.UP. A VIII.8.5.
84. RV.I.117.3.
85. RV.I.87.11.
86. AV.IV.17.5.
87. RV.I.51.5.
88. दुःख:— | RV.I.129.11; V.83.2; etc.; दुःखम्: | RV.IX.79.3; दुःखम्:— | RV.I.174.2; VII.6.3; अस्त्राये — | RV.VII.D.4.8; अस्त्रि — | RV.I.129.8; IX.70.5; etc.
terrestrial world and this life was all in all. They did not
bother about the next life, nay they had faith in the life after
death. So, they considered this life on the earth as the supreme
thing to be enjoyed fully. Such type of concept is called
materialistic concept. A reference to this effect is found in
the Chandogya-Upaniṣad stated above, where we find Virocana,
the chief of the Asuras, preaching among his people the theory
of materialism. Thus, the body, the physical appearance, became
an object of worship among them. Not only they adorned it while
living, but even after death. As they were devoted to their
bodies, they never bothered about others. They were self-
centred and therefore, were devoid of generosity, of faith,
and sacrifice. These three principles of their life were the
constituent parts of their philosophy of life. These are said
to be the doctrines of the Asuras. This philosophy of theirs
made them utterly selfish and evil-doers.

The attainment of four aims—'dharma', 'artha', 'kāma',
'mokṣa'—of life is regarded the highest achievement of life.
But the Asuras followed only one, i.e., kāma. The pursuit of
kāma, i.e., the fulfilment of sexual desire, had been their
highest attainment in life. In connection with the Rākṣasas
the Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa points out that they pursue women and
unite with them. Thus, it is not possible to say whether men
here is the issue of Rākṣas or Devas. In view of Devāsthali
99. Jupra, β 307
90. Ibid.
91. ब्राह्मण, ज्ञान, धर्म: ज्ञानां | Ch. UP. VIII.8.5.
92. SBr. III.2.1.14.
also, women was the great weakness of the Asuras. In support of his view he refers to a story found in the Satapatha-Brahmana, where in the struggle with the Devas, they were lured by a woman. Their attention diverted and they lost sight of the main point. Here the story points out that Vâk, the goddess of speech, was sent by the Devas to the Gandharvas to fetch or recover the soma from them. The result was that the Gandharvas agreed to give away soma to the Devas and retain Vâk for themselves. But later on Vâk was also lured by the Devas, as they knew the weakness of women also. The same story is related in the Ataraya-Brahmana.

The marital custom of the Asuras, Rāksasas and Piśācas mentioned in the later Sanskrit texts like Manusmṛti etc. refers to their weakness for women. Here the Asuras' marital custom is that where a man pays the bride's price, and to carry off a maiden forcibly while fighting down the relatives is termed Rāksasa marriage. Piśācas marital custom is that where one raped maiden finding her alone or in intoxicated state.

(iii) Food and Drinks

The Asuras are described as using all the three things Soma, Sūrā and Root. A reference to this effect is found in the

97. नातिपित्रो दुःखार्य दस्या कथायां कैम अधिक: \ Manu.III.31.

98. यथा फळम नृत्यगती व गोश्लों भयं कुत्स्यन्तु: \ Manu.III.33.
99. दृष्टां वां दुःखार्य वा रूपे वाक्ष्यस्यार्थे इति \ Manu.III.34.
in the Taittirīya Śāhītā, where we are told that Viśvarūpa, the Asura, had three heads, one of which he drank soma, one surā and one of which he ate food. Vṛtra, the chief of the Asuras, also drank soma. The Tāṇḍya-Māhā-Bṛāhmaṇa points out that soma drank by Vṛtra flew on the earth by his nose when he was killed by Indra. soma is also said to have his food but Indra did leave nothing of his food remaining. So far as their timing of food is concerned, the Taittirīya Śāhītā points out that the Asuras take their drink twice a day and the Devas only once. Mornings and evenings were the times of the Asuras' drinking. Midday and midnight those of the Asuras. In contrast to it, the Taittirīya Bṛāhmaṇa says that the Asuras got their food only once in a year. But nothing can be said definitely what did their food contain.

The Rgveda speaks much of the Rākṣasas' and Piśācas' habit of eating raw flesh and drinking blood. The term 'Kravyād' which denotes 'eating raw flesh' occurs frequently for them. In order to satisfy their greed for flesh and blood, they enter the bodies of men, cattles, horses, etc. In the Rgveda, Agni is invoked to tear off the heads of such malignant Rākṣas who smear...
themselves with flesh of cattle, with flesh of horses, and of human bodies, and who steal away the milk of cows. And that is why the Pisäças, Yátudhánas, etc., are termed as 'wolf' in the Vedic literature. In another hymn of the Rgveda, Agni is invoked not to let the Rákšas enter his worshippers. They (Pisäças) are mentioned as flesh eaters of a sick man also. In the Atharva-veda, Agni is invoked to restore the sickman's flesh which the Pisäças have eaten away. They attack men, usually by entering them and to cause injuries, only to quench their desire of flesh and blood. Thus, in the Rgveda, Agni is invoked not to let the Rákšas come among them, and to keep them away and to chase the powerful Rákšasas. They (Pisäças) are also spoken of as blood thirsty. A reference to this effect is found in the Atharvaveda, where Agni Jātavedas is invoked to slay the bloody Pisäca, flesh-devourer, and mind-destroyer. They even drink up the milk of the cows. The Rgveda says that no Yátudhánas ever should taste the cows milk. They are also described as drinking surä with the human's blood instead of a cur.

In brief, flesh and blood is regarded as their desirable food and drinks, and thus, they may be regarded as flesh-
eaters, blood-drinkers and Sūrā-drinkers.

The post Vedic literature never tires of recounting their habit of flesh, blood, wine, women, etc. The Manu-Sānti points out that flesh and wine is the food of the Rākṣasas and Piśācas. The Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa describes them especially as hinderers of sacrifices and eaters of human flesh. And Tulsī Rāmāyaṇa gives a vivid picture of their demoniac nature. It seems that all these activities of theirs were natural in the beginning but owing to the enmity with the Devas, it became their religion at last.

(iv) Other activities

There are described various activities of the Asuras. Mostly they are described stealing away the cows of the Devas and hiding them in a mountain-cave. Therefore, at several places, either various Vedic Devas are invoked to set at liberty, the cows withheld and hidden in a secret place by the Asuras or description is made of the cows liberated by the Devas. Many times waters are also released which are withheld by the Asuras. These two functions: withholding the cows and rain water, are common for all the prominent Asuras mentioned by name.

114. स्वरूपः: विष्णुप्रथम कां नासे द्वराकास्य | Manu. XXI. 95.
115. री. भाद्र. दक्षिण-पश्चिम
116. त्र. भाद्र. तम. बत. 63 ff.
117. AV. VI. 39. 2; L. 67. 6; etc.
118. AV. I. 32. 1.
The main functions of the Asuras in general are to damage the sacrifice and to cause injury to the Devas, as is already stated in the fifth chapter. They also hide those things which are beneficial to the Devas and other human beings. The "Vāravādha" says that the Asuras buried water deep in the earth, apparently that no man should be profited by it. They also buried the pippali, the fruit of the pippala, to be prevented from saving human life; but, however, the Devas uplifted it again.

They are said to bestow all blessing upon the human beings. Even a bad dream is said to have come from the Asuras. They spread darkness by means of their māyā, to cause trouble to the Devas. They were also known as to cause enmity and disunion in the family. A reference to this effect is found in the Ātatsāpatha-Bṛāhmaṇa; where we are told that when the Devas separated into four different parts, the Asura-Rākṣasas came after them and entered them.

The Rākṣas are said to have their own different activities. Usually they are invisible during the daytime and only in the evening or night, they used to roam about on this earth or by assuming the forms of birds fly abroad. Thus, in late times...

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120. Supra, pp. 271-76
121. AV. II.3.3.
122. AV. VI.30.3; AV. X.27.10.
123. AV. X.36.3; Cf. AV. III.8.3.
124. ŚBr. XII.5.5. 1 ff.
125. ŚBr. III.4.2.1-2.
126. AV. VII.10.4.18.
they are called 'Nissala', or 'Rajaniśala', etc. The gloomy night of New-moon (when the moon is invisible) is called a special time of Atriṣṇus, the greedy fiends. But soon they become invisible in the morning, for they cannot bear the sun and are dispersed by the rising sun. Hence, in the east, they have no power. One thing is more worth mentioning here that they roam about not silently but with shouting, dancing, laughing loudly, with the braying of asses, and attacking human dwellings.

Their chief function is said to cause injury to men and mainly to women and children at every step. They enter the mouth of men at the time of food and cause various disease. The Aṣṭāvādī points out that they are generators of insanitary, defect in speech, and Vîṣṇ unsuccessfully in men. The Aṣṭāvādī refers to a Rākṣas of disease who flies by his wings like a bird and penetrates and holds the man. These Rākṣas seem mainly to have been regarded as entering by the mouth, especially in the...

127. Apte, V.5.1 Sanskrit Hindi Kośa, PP.641, 544.
128. AV.II.1; Cf.IV.36.3.
129. नावां न निकल-ना बालाप्रतापानु विच:।
130. AV.VII.6.12; ने पूर्ण:।
131. AV.VI.29.5; ID.
132. AV.VI.111.3.
133. AV.I.16.3; AV.I.D.2; etc.
134. AV.VII.76.4.
process of eating and drinking but also by other entrances.

At the time of delivery, they cause injury to new born child and begetting woman. Assuming the form of a lover, husband, paramour or brother, they approach woman and desire to annihilate their offspring. They also lie in the way in wait for women in the shape of a dog or monkey. Thus, they are dangerous during pregnancy and delivery. In this connection, the Ṛgveda gives an interesting fact. For instance, it is said: 'if one touches a child in your womb or kills a newly born child, the yellow plant with mighty bow shall pierce him even to the heart.'

The Pīśas are also alike the Nīḷalagnas in their activities. They make troubles by entering human dwellings and villages. They seem to have been mainly regarded as responsible for all troubles. They are described as deceiver who have deceived in milk or porridge, in food from grain or plants that need no culture, in food raw, ready, thoroughly cooked or spotty and

137. AV. VII.6.3.
138. AV. VIII.6.3.
139. AV. X.16.2.
140. AV. IV.37.11.
141. AV. VIII.6.
142. AV. VIII.6.18.
143. AV. IV.36.8.
144. AV. IV.36.4.
145. AV. V.29.7; Cf. AV. XII.9.8.
146. AV. V.29.6; AV. XII.9.9.
in a drought of water. Like the Rākṣasas, they are also said to fly in middle air and even glide across the sky.

To conclude, they are mentioned rich and prosperous. They had their big dwelling places to live in. They knew how to fight against the Devas and how to use various weapons in the battle-field. They also had their own Vedas named as Asura-Veda and Piśāca-Veda. But they were different from the Devas in speech, religion and philosophy of life. Their philosophy of life was materialistic rather than spiritual. They were indulging in serving their own body, and attainment of Kāma was only the main object of their life. Their desirable food contained of flesh, blood and wine. They were lustful, arrogant, greedy and performers of sacrifice with flesh and wine. They were luxurious and thought themselves to be brāhmaṇas. Such type of people are called as demons group in the Bhāgavatī Gītā. The said Gītā points out that these demonic people say: The world is without any foundation and all together false and godless. I am the Lord, I am the enjoyer, I am perfect, powerful and happy.

Their main functions were to lay waste the sacrifices of the Devas, hide the beneficial things, spread out the darkness, steal away the cows of the Devas, withholding the rain waters in the cloud, etc.