Conclusion

The influence of Hardy’s early life on his works was very deep and profound. Having born on June 2, 1840 at Upper Bock-Hampton, near Dorchester, he was deeply attached to the rural life of his village. The life of his native place left such a deep impression on his imagination that in his novels he wrote of country people living in nineteenth century Wessex. His characters are country-based agricultural people rooted in the soil. He preferred the calm and quiet atmosphere of rural life because he believed that human life always showed itself in its fundamental elements and basic human passions in such a society. In Hardy’s novels, love is the central issue which always actuates his characters to find happiness in love and ecstasy. But it often leads them to grief. Love affairs and ill-matched marriages are an important source of tragedy and unhappiness. There was plenty of tragedy in the life of the poverty-stricken Wessex folk. These people were made conscious of man’s helplessness in the face of conditioning forces of existence. He showed life in the grip of blind, cruel and destructive Unknown Will.

The conflict between the unsophisticated rustic people and the cultured civilized people of urban world is a favourite theme of Hardy’s novels. In this conflict an important role is played by the characters who create disturbance and upheaval in an otherwise calm and placid rural society. These characters can be called rootless destroyers in the novels of Hardy. Here Hardy’s five novels viz., Far From the Madding
Crowd, Tess of the d' Urbervilles, The Woodlanders, Under the Greenwood Tree and Mayor of Casterbridge have been taken up for the study of these characters.

Hardy’s Far From the Madding Crowd depicts the world of agriculture. All the characters are unsophisticated country-folk and all the events take place in an agricultural county named Weatherbury. Among its characters Sergeant Troy is a rakish person whose attitudes and behaviour prove destructive to the society. He gives a jolt to the old-established bucolic society of the novel. Troy’s lack of integration with local society and his attempts to disrupt the traditional pattern of agricultural life make him an outsider. He is an alien having no regard for values and traditional life style of the native rural community. His destructive activities damage the balance of personal and social relationship. He destroys the harmony of Bathsheba’s barn. He instigates the labourers to drink with him in the same barn: “Friends’, he said’, we’ll send the women-folk home! ‘Tis time they were in bed. Then we cockbirds will have a jolly carouse to ourselves! If any of the man show the white feather let them look elsewhere for a winter's work.”

He wastes money earned from farming in gambling. The description of a half-French parentage, irregular birth and an alienating military career show Troy as an odd man out in an otherwise agricultural and rural milieu. He is also responsible for Fanny’s death and upheaval in the life of Boldwood. He is also a lady-killer. Beautiful women easily yield to the spell of his fatal charming personality.

All the characters in Far From the Madding Crowd are in harmony with rural life but Troy keeps himself at a distance from the farm-work. He is a master in the art of
sword not of plough. He marries Bathsheba and brings out disaster for her social position and prosperity. After marriage he takes an easy release from the army to a life of pleasure and comfort. Earlier, he took part interestingly in helping the hay-making but now he spent his wife’s money in gambling at Budmouth races. Now his impetuous passion and romance seem to be have faded and he chooses to lead a life of irresponsibility enjoying freedom and leisure. He wants to change the very style and atmosphere of the ancient lovely house instantly: "Creation and preservation don't do well together," says he, "and a million of antiquarians can't invent a style. "My mind exactly, I am for making this place more modern that we may be cheerful whilst we can." He is a polished and cultured soldier proved to be an alien among these rustic characters. The scene of the sword-exercise characteristically researched by Hardy, is a deliberate symbol of sexual assault. Troy, definitely had unusual qualities in himself. He is originally conceived as a contrast to Gabriel Oak who is always sincere, constant, dutiful and honest. He is also more remarkable and impressive as a foil to Farmer Boldwood who is profoundly obsessive, passive and slow. Troy is always quick, light and casual. Their marriage takes place not in Weathebury but in the distant city of Bath which is totally contrast to the rural life. The locations associated with Troy-Bath, the barraks, Lulwind Cove, the hollow in the ferns and the circus tent do not match to the bucolic life of Weathebury. Though Tory is a versatile genius being skilled in sword-exercise, fencing, gymnastics and pugilism, yet is incapable to accomodate himself to the ways of simple rural life.
In the novel *Tess of d' Urbervilles* Alec is a rootless destroyer who by his sexual aggressions derives Tess to despair and untold miseries and ultimately to death. Critics regard him as a ready-made stage villain made into the puppet of a plot by Hardy. Like Troy, he is cut off from his society and community. He shows no formative influences and traditional attitudes imbibed from living in a community. Infact the whole family of Alec is alien in the rural community and his own name and that of his family is false. His father (Mr. Simon Stoke laterly deceased) goes to the British Museum and reads the books dealing with extinct and half-extinct, obscured and ruined families longing to the south of England where he proposes to settle. He thinks that ‘d’Urbervilles’ looks and sounds well. So he annexes ‘d’Urbervilles’ to his own name for himself and his successors eternally. Thus Alec does not belong to the native land of Marlott.

Alec comes before us as a killer or snarer of young ladies. He is entangled with several village girls such as Car and others. He himself remarks that he is a damned bad fellow who is born bad. He is a schemist who knits a trap around Tess and at the right moment pulls the rope to catch her. Alec wooes Tess with his sauve talk and conspicuous wealth. His motives are clear from the very beginning to seduce Tess for his own gain. At first, he is friendly using his charms to lure Tess. When she returns to become the keeper of Mrs D’ Urberville’s poultry collection, Alec uses scare tactics to force Tess to plead him for relief. The wild ride to Trantridge in the cart is indicative that he will use any means to convince her of his power as he observes: "let me put one little kiss on those holmberry lips, Tess, or even on that warmed cheek." He is
inexorable and gave her the kiss of mastery. He is seen as the product of materialistic chicken culture, money grabbing, at one remove from cultural agrarian society of Marlott. He speaks in a strange northern accent. Engineman and his threshing machine are symbol of the alien forces. Engineman has only minimum intercourse with the natives in order to fulfil his plans. He lures Tess by sending gifts for her family. Because he believes that money can buy everything. His lust like Angel's lack of it, destroys Tess and uproots her family from the village. He does not believe in God. His conversion proves to be a mere freak of irresponsible man in search of a new sensation. He cannot suppress his passion for Tess calling her a 'temptress'. On the whole of the story, he is at a distance of rural society and his attitude to it is largely destructive.

In the novel ‘Woodlanders’ the life of Little Hintock is disturbed by the urban characters Felice Charmond and Dr. EdredFitzpiers. For Felice Charmond and Dr. EdredFitzpiers fashionable European metropolitan cities like London or Paris would have been proper places. The peaceful and natural life of Little Hintock is shaken violently by the activities of these two personages. Their entry into Little Hintock is an intrusion which corrupts the peaceful agrarian traditional way of life. Byronic cynicism of Dr. Fitzpiers and emotional self-indulgence of Mrs. Charmond bring disaster for simple rural folk who have simple desires, likes and dislikes.

Mrs. Charmond is a restless and rootless eccentric personality. She is a rich widow whose husband much older than her has died leaving her still young. She lives at
Hintock House in self-imposed isolation having no real human relationship with the local people. Her conduct and manners are totally contrast to the life-style of local people. She does not take interest in the village folk. She feels herself isolated and miserably lacks a sense of belongingness. She like Alec believes that money can buy everything. So she sends barber Percomb to buy Marty South’s hair to make a wig for herself. Her tyrannical attitude for the land predatory is reflected in her whimsical desire to pull down houses and trees. Consequently, this decision caused unintended harm to Giles Winterborne. Giles becomes bankrupt after losing his property. Creedle says: "ye’ve lost a hundred load of timber well seasoned: ye’ve lost five hundred ponds in good money; ye’ve lost the stone- windered house that’s big enough to hold a dozen of families; ye’ve lost your share of half-a-down good wagons and their horses;--all most!-through your letting slip she was once yer own!" Moreover now he is thought unworthy to marry a girl who is more cultured and learned than him. She also brings disorder in the life of Grace Melbury by making Fitzpiers her own prey. She is always self-centred. She possesses no knowledge of local surroundings and her emotions and interests are artificial. She is rarely present at Hintock House and whenever she appears she is not liked by the woodlanders.

Fitzpiers has got some local connections but he is an alien to the rural life of Little Hintock. He is an alien in the rural society of Hintock because he does not fulfil the conditions which are necessary for being an integral part of it.
They were present to the lives of Winterborne, Melbury, and Grace, but not to the doctor's. They are old association—an almost exhaustive biographical or historical acquaintance with every object, animate and inanimate, within the observer's horizon. He must know all about those invisible ones of the days gone by, whose feet have traversed the fields which look so grey from his windows; recall whose creaking plough has turned those sods from time to time; whose hands planted the trees that form a crest to the opposite hill; whose horses and hounds have torn through that underwood; what birds affect that particular brake.... The spot may have beauty, grandeur, salubrity, convenience; but if it lacks memories it will ultimately pall upon him who settles there without opportunity of intercourse with his kind.\(^5\)

This lack of knowledge of past and memory accounts for Fitzpiers's rootlessness to a large extent. He is cut off from rural activities and is 'always lost in his own
fantasies. He indulges in promiscuity and sensuality. Dr. Fitzpiers has stooped to make himself useful like any common man: "Here am I", he said, "endeavoring to carry on simultaneously the study of physiology and transcendental philosophy, the material world and the ideal, as so to discover if possible a point of contact between them." Being a snob, he does not like to mix up with the local people: "But we must come to an understanding about our way of living here. If we continue in these rooms there must be no mixing in with your people below. I could stand it, and that's is the truth." He does not share local people's historical acquaintance with local objects. He does not show any intimacy with nature unlike Giles Winterborne. The peasants say he is a "Strange, deep perusing gentleman; and there's good reason for supposing he has sold his soul to the wicked one." On account of his aristocratic descent, he dislikes the normal rustic life. When the rural people come to congratulate him and Grace on their return from honeymoon, his reaction is spiteful. He orders Grace not to mix up with the woodlanders. It shows his snobbishness: "I'm a man of education. I know several languages: the poets and I are familiar friends: I used to read more in metaphysics than anybody within fifty miles; and since I gave that up there's nobody can match me in the whole country of south Wessex as a scientist... Yet I am doomed to live with the tradespeople in a miserable little hole like Hintock." Fitzpiers and Mrs. Charmond both are invaders who do not derive any pleasure from the woods. On the contrary they are terrified and want to run away from them. They disturb the rhythm of rural life in Little Hintock. In this sense, we can also say that Grace Melbury is an alien in social milieu of
Little Hintock on account of her education, sophistication and acquaintance with the outside world. On account of her education she regards herself superior to her native lover Giles Winterborne and likes company of Mrs. Charmond. She is lured by the possibilities of refined and sophisticated life: "There was in Grace's mind sometimes a certain anticipative satisfaction, the satisfaction of feeling that she would be the heroine of an hour; moreover, she was proud, as a cultivated woman, to be the wife of a cultivated man. It was an opportunity denied very frequently to young women in her position..."

She thinks Fitzpiers her suitable match. But her illusion deteriorates after marriage when she comes to know about his affairs with Mrs. Charmond and Suke Damson. She now realizes that her marriage with Fitzpiers has been a frightful mistake. Fitzpiers also repents that his marriage with a girl of lower social status has lowered down his reputation in the eyes of local people. Grace turns away from Fitzpiers and love for her erstwhile native lover Giles Winterborne is revived in her heart. After the death of Mrs. Charmond Grace and Fitzpiers are reconciled yet her life remains bleak. She oscillated between the world of rural simplicity and world of urban sophistication. Infact, the novel is concerned with the invasion of rural world by the alien urban rootless personages.

The question of church music is central to the to the story of Under the Greenwood Tree. It deals with outing of the parish choir by an organist or harmonium player. The story is also a short-sketch of rural life. Neglectful attitude to their profession makes the members of the choir feel unwanted and out of place. The intrusive new
instruments are looked upon with hatred by them. Traditional church musicians’ hatred for new instruments foreshadows what would become conflict between the old and new, the native and the outsider in the later novels of Hardy. Their dismissal by the lonely urban invader Maybold causes feelings of alienation and powerlessness among the church singers. In this novel Fancy on account of her education stands out from the throng of simple villagers. In her person new ways and new tastes invade the pastoral world of the novel and disturb the traditional life-style of church musicians. However, the destruction of social relationship, social order and placid rural atmosphere is not so deep and grim as it is the later tragic novels of Hardy. It is natural also in view of the pastoral mood of the novel. It is the happiest of Hardy's novels.

In *Mayor of Casterbridge* Farfrae is a rootless destroyer causing downfall of Michael Henchard. He does not belong to Casterbridge, but has come from Scotland. He is a man endowed with special traits and new knowledge. Moreover, being romantic and emotional, he sings very beautifully. During his stay at Three Mariners inn, he entertains Coney, MrsCuxsom, SolomanLongways and others through his melodious songs. Because of his charming personality, he succeeds in drawing the attention of simple homely Elizabeth-Jane. He is a man of practical wisdom. He has a good business and commercial head. He is prudent, alert, calculating and shrewd. Because of all these Scottish qualities, He makes an impression on Michael Henchard. He is essentially a businessman who rises rapidly and becomes very popular among local people. On the contrary his popularity brings out demotion in the position of Henchard.
The society of Casterbridge is a society wherein economist and calculators like Farfrae succeeds more than Hencard who is misfit in the milieu of Castebridge society. Henchard is impressed by Farfrae’s knowledge of renovating process of making grown wheat wholesome and he agrees to give him a third share in his business to compel him to stay. He makes him manager of corn branch of his business. Very soon both became inseparable. Henchard tells him secrets of his life. Farfrae begins to be esteemed higher than him. Henchard’s failure and Farfrae’s success in organizing public-amusement chiefly due to vagaries of weather further enhance the latter’s prestige and popularity and lowers down the former’s. Farfrae’s character combines ingredients of musical sensivity, shrewdness and strong liking for romantic attachement. Henchard has great reverence for Farfrae’s ability and sharpness and even consults his private matters with him. After using a technical and methodical handling of business, Farfrae rises as an independent corn-merchant in Casterbridge :Henchard hears a man saying where would be his business without Farfrae : "Where would his (Henchard’s) business be if it were not for this young fellow ?’ Twas verily fortune sent him to Henchard ! His accounts were like a bramblewood when Mr. Farfrae came."11 His ego is badly hurt. He introduced in Casterbridge a new machine for sowing seeds. On the whole, no doubt, Farfrae dominates Henchard. But he is not a dishonest person. However he comes from outside but he is readily accepted and more easily assimilated in the society of Casterbridge. But he can be claimed as a rootless disruptor with his intelligence and skill in the life of Michael Henchard.
There is a plethora of criticism on the various aspects of Hardy’s novels. Significantly enough, this aspect i.e. the role of the rootless destroyers, has been unfortunately ignored. This study, it is hoped, will help the scholars of Hardy to comprehend the organic character of his novels. Hence the need and justification for making a comprehensive study of Hardy’s novels from this point of view.

REFERENCE

2. *Ibid*, p. 279
5. *Ibid*, pp. 116-17
7. *Ibid*, p. 172
10. *Ibid*, p. 162