CHAPTER IV
Socio-Cultural Character Types
Indian society as mentioned in the preceding chapter consists of different classes, but the individuals of all the classes also belong to the character type. Every person of this world has certain characteristics, which are known to us through his actions, deeds, behaviour and approach towards other people of the society. People residing in the society have to face situations, which come across them. Some people accept them willingly whereas others, who go against them, have to bear the consequences for doing so, as they become the victim of it and their end is unaccepting. Society demands something from its people and therefore people have to work according to its demands.

As this work deals with only the women characters, we find in all the novels by Mr. Singh that all the women characters are living their life according to their own will or fall victim when they have to leave their own willingness. Khushwant Singh treats his women characters with uniformity, where they behave according to the types to which they belong. Though the portrayal of women characters we find that Mr. Singh has deep knowledge of women psychology. Though Mr. Singh is a Sikh and knows all the rituals and traditions of Sikhism but in his autobiography we find that he know about other religious groups also.
Accordingly there are following possible character types:

The women characters belonging to the religious type come from different classes of society. The religious instinct is found in most of the Indian women. All the four novels are written in entirely Indian context. All of them are based on Indian themes. Most of the women characters are Indian. As it is known that in India the percentage of women who are religious is far more than men. Except Sikhism Mr. Singh has knowledge of other religions is evident from his women characters who are religious and belong to other religion like Sabhrai in _I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale_ is a Sikh woman who is very religious who conducts prayer meeting on every first day of the month in which it was compulsory for every member of the family to attend it. When her son was in jail, she prayed for him for the whole night in the Golden Temple despite the chill weather.

Another religious woman character of this novel is Shunno who belongs to lower class of society but is religious and assists her mistress Sabhrai in arranging and cleaning the prayer room for ‘Pooja’ and makes ‘Pershad’ for the meeting. She also believes in the religious way of curing diseases, rather than in the medicines. Here Mr. Singh’s idea of presenting this nature of Shunno is not appropriate. Shunno’s blind faith on Peer Sahib is unjustified, as Peer Sahib has no knowledge of any ailments and is an illiterate, without any knowledge or learning’s to call himself a devoted Godman. He gives people something to keep or
wear through which he convinces them that their diseases could be cured. But taking undue advantage of this blind faith Peer Sahib also seduces Shunno, this is totally unjustified for any Godman, or person who is a medium between the Eternal Being and the common folks.

The seduction of Shunno by Peer Sahib is an excellent example of Singh’s use of irony. Mr. Singh effectively exposes this naked and bitter fact of human society and the lust for physical passion in this episode of illicit relations between Shunno and Peer Sahib. But this does not please God as Mr. V. A. Sahana remarks, “In movements of infatuation and physical passion, neither religion nor God commands reverence, and unholy alliances are contracted and formed in the temple of the omnipresent and omniscient God”.65

Another character type of is moral cast such characters have the sense and power to act according to the situations but they are morally equipped with balanced thoughts and ideas. They set a limit for themselves and they do not cross that limit and through this they become loyal to their conscience.

In Train to Pakistan Sundari, the wife of Mansa Ram bears moral character. She was married to him at an early age and only four days had passed when while returning to her husbands place their bus was surrounded by armed men. She had a veil across her face, as it was

customary to keep their faces under veil. She did not know how her husband looked; Mansa Ram was made fully naked in front of her. Mansa Ram has not seen his wife because they did not have a chance to speak with each other due to the presence of all her relatives. The mob let the Muslims go, Sikhs were killed then and there, those who were clean shaved were asked to strip down. If they were not circumcised there penises were cut of. Mansa Ram’s penis was also cut off by them and Sundari was gang raped. This episode shows that though she had a moral, she did not even remove her veil when she was there in the bus with Mansa Ram, as she believed that the veil is lifted by the husband. She had a moral but due to the hatred of Muslims for Hindus, she was caught in the turmoil.

Another character who bears the instinct is Beena of I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale, who is the daughter of Buta Singh, a senior Magistrate, she goes to watch a movie with her friend Sita and her brother Madan, to which she protest as if her mother will come to know she would scold her and when Madan placed his hand on her chair and near her elbow first she protests but second time she starts of thinking what Sita will say to it? Beena is a character with moral but as Mr. Singh has introduced sex in almost all the women characters, sex becomes a must or a specific aspect of their life.

Some women characters behave as the true Indian women behave. Ram Dulari is one of them, she is much devoted towards her
family and husband and is having or carrying the morals of a true Hindu married woman, "She touched my feet every morning and wore vermilion powder in the partings of her hair." She used to cook her food in separate utensils as she thought her husband Musaddi Lal as an unclean 'Maleecha'. She also refuses to get back to her parents when her husband forces her by saying that she would only go on a bier.

Women characters belonging to different class of society bear moral instinct; Jahanara Begum belonged to royal class but is found with moral instinct as is clear by her behaviour and attitude. Jahanara Begum was the eldest daughter of Mumtaj Mahal. She stumbles and let the flame of the candle catch fire to her Muslim garments and due to which she killed herself. We also find that Jahnara Begum's personal traits are not very much illustrated by the author. Hence on going through the only description we are able to place Jahanara Begum with moral characteristics.

Other two women characters in the novel Delhi Saleema and Alice as well belong to lower middle class bear a good moral character and behave in a way as expected by the society from them. Saleema being the wife of the famous poet Meer Taqi Meer, fulfils her moral duty as a good wife as expected, despite the fact that the poet always turned to other women because of her physical appearance. Quite aware of the fact, she still carries out behaviour as a totally devoted wife.

\[66\] Khushwant Singh, Delhi, Viking publication, 1989, p. 52
Mr. Singh has portrayed women characters that bear good social values; in the sense they are found to be very active socially, which mean that they are very social in the society with friends, relatives, neighbours etc. Like Sita of I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale was good at her studies and was always ready to help her friends, like Beena, sister of Sher Singh. Another women character was Begum Zeenat Mahal in the novel Delhi; who was very social with the wives of the British officers of that time residing in Delhi. We find that she helped Alice Aldwell and her family when they come to Delhi by providing essential commodities to her family.

Most of the women characters of the novels of Khushwant Singh are found to be professional but to make them more impressive to the readers Mr. Singh has introduced and sprinkled sex in their lives. These women characters are engaged in different professions to earn their livelihood right from Dhanoo, the Jamadarni (Sweeper) at Mr. Mohan Kumar’s house to Susanthika who is a diplomat with the Sri Lankan Embassy, posted at Delhi. We find that all women characters belong to different classes of the society, who are either forced to take up profession due to their personal family problems or who have willingly taken their profession. But one thing we find that all characters are quite satisfied with their professional lives.

Some women character depicted in his novels by Mr. Singh would be termed as women who were sexually very active and they
regarded sex as a great equalizer to bridge the gap between physical attraction and physical needs. Though in all women characters we find that the author has mixed some punches of sex, put in another characters like Champak of *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* and Begum Sahiba of *Delhi* are two such characters who regarded sex as the most integral part of their personal lives and who would go to any extent to get it. Champak as depicted by Mr. Singh is an exhibitionist who loves to show off her body as a sensual and willful object to Mundoo the boy servant employed in their house to satisfy herself.

The following table explains all the women characters depicted by Mr. Singh in all his novels belonging or showing different characteristics according to their behaviour.
Table No. 2.: *Character types*

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<tr>
<th>Novels</th>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Moral</th>
<th>Social</th>
<th>Sexual</th>
<th>Professional</th>
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<td>Sundari</td>
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<td>Sita</td>
<td>Nooran</td>
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<td>Delhi</td>
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<td>Sonu</td>
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<td>Jessica Browne</td>
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<td>A Bai from Bombay</td>
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Percentage of different women characters belonging to different categories:

i. Religious  - 6.06% (2 characters)

ii. Moral  - 27.27% (9 characters)

iii. Social  - 9.09% (3 characters)

iv. Sexual  - 15.15% (3 characters)

v. Professional  - 42.42% (14 characters)

Total numbers of women characters are 33.
Percentage of women characters belonging to different character types

- Religious: 5.00%
- Moral: 45.00%
- Social: 15.00%
- Sexual: 10.00%
- Professional: 25.00%
Khushwant Singh’s mind and personality have been moulded by western education and culture as he himself says, “I am the product of both East and the West”67. As Mr. Singh is a Sikh therefore Punjabi literature forms the basis of his writings. Balwant Gargi say, “Violence and sex are the most important characteristics of modern Punjabi literature. In Punjabi creative writing under a thickly crusted moral and ethical cover smolders are robust and vigorous preoccupation with sex.”68 Even Amrita Pritam, one of the most distinguished poets of Modern Punjabi literature, whose writings are marked by romantic idealism, uninhibitedly deals with the themes of extra-marital love, violent infatuation, intense physical passion and sexual violence. Punjabi creative writing has influenced Mr. Singh as a writer of fiction where morally over conscious custodians of social conduct have seriously objected and upholders of moral rigor are found to be engaged in a furious witch-hunt of authors even a possible, remote, implied reference to sex. Literature is a historical reality, which can no longer be considered in isolation from its social implications, cultural and moral values and racial ethos. But in Khuswant Singh’s work. We find a lot of involvement of sex in the lives of characters, which is thought to be the outcome of the impact of Punjabi literature on his mind.

Since this chapter deals with character types of women, here I have tried to classify the women characters of all the novels into

67 Khushwant Singh’s, India, Bombay, 1970, p. 212
68 Balwant Gargi, Violence & Sex in Punjabi literature, The Times of India, Mar 09, 1969, p. 3
various character types according to the most dominant characteristics of human behaviour, which reflects the most in her actions and instincts. Yet, I would like to clarify that although the women characters are divided depending upon their most dominant characteristics, yet they also show traits of all characteristics depicted in the table. Sexual characteristics are one such characteristic, which has been used to describe all women characters by Mr. Singh. It seems that almost all the women characters are in desperate need of sex in their life which maybe or may not be considered as a reality. In his recent novel The Company of Women, the protagonist Mr. Mohan Kumar, who is in true sense Khushwant Singh as he himself says,"........it was about the sexual fantasies of an octogenarian that is myself"\textsuperscript{69}, meets various women characters who react positively to his advertisement of paid companion. As depicted by the author about women characters being attracted or willing to accept Mohan Kumar's offer may be or may not be true only for one quality i.e. sexual; attraction, but could have been attracted by his social charms, status in the society, lifestyle etc. Mr. Singh himself was not confident enough that his novel would be published as it was about the sexual fanaticises of an octogenarian who is in real senses Mr. Singh himself. In this novel Mr. Singh has penned down his own experiences in second person under the name of Mohan Kumar. Through this we find the daring nature of Mr. Singh who has very

\textsuperscript{69} Khushwant Singh, \textit{Truth, love & a little malice: An autobiography}. Viking Publication, p. 415
honesty described about sex with different women in his life. He has depicted his personal experiences in a novel from and therefore has introduced characters. He also received ‘The Honest Man of the Year’ award by Sulabh International. He himself says that there are people full of several desires, but there is less to bring it publicly, it is Mr. Singh who daringly brings out his reality in front of his readers. Thus this novel is thought to be an autobiography in fictional form.

Most of the characters are categorised in different character types but they are a blend of different instincts. According to the highlighted characteristic, known through their attitude and tendency they are been kept in one category only. Sex is the basic characteristics of Mr. Singh’s novel, every work of literature is thought to have some ‘Masala’ in it, to be a popular treatise, as the readers are made to appreciate it through these ‘Masalas’. Therefore to become popular and appreciated writer, Mr. Singh has injected much sex in the life of women characters of his novels.

**Religious character types**

Mr. Singh is a Sikh by religion but he had the charm to know about different religions, which he fulfilled by reading various religious books. He himself brings out the notice, that he is better informed on religion, as he says,“........because I am better informed on literature,
religion, nature and science than my peers." Religion forms the substratum of first two novels. The author does not wear moral blinkers with which to view all the characters, but he does establish a shell of values is the human integrity and the ability of the characters to measure up to the situation in which they are trapped. Therefore by their attitudes and tendencies towards these situations helped me to classify them into various character types of which this is the first type is religious character type.

Following characters bear the characteristics of this character type:

i. Sabhrai

Organised religion – Sikhism is interwoven in the plot of nightingale and it plays an important role in the personality of Sabhrai. The author tells us that Sabhrai feels God has a special concern in the well being of her family. "She has infinite faith in the Guru and was sure of his special interest in her husband and children." This leads to observe all the outward symbols and rituals of her religion. For her rituals are not mere ostentations, but they are the result of deep faith which provide her with strength and moral force, through which she sustains the courage during the periods of crisis in her family life. The

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70 Atma Ram, An Interview with Khushwant Singh. The Quest, p.1, a bi-annual journal of Indian writing in Eng, Vol 17, NOSL, 82, Oct '93
first ritual we find in her family is the first of the month ceremony and others are distribution of ‘Prashed’ and regular reading of the ‘Granth Sahib’.

Whenever she thought or saw that their family or its members were facing some crisis, she would always look upon the ‘Granth Sahib’ to cure the entire crisis and bless the family and its members. She would read the ‘Granth Sahib’ again and again to find consolation in the Holy Scriptures. When she fears of Beena’s safety at Simla and is dogged by a sense of insecurity, she opens the Holy Book at random and takes the message which the open book conveys on faith and acts on it. At another incidence when her son Sher Singh was in jail, she went to the Golden Temple and prayed there for the whole night in order to get moral strength, to be able to face the harshness of the decision, which was already forming in the mind, the decision of asking Sher Singh to face death rather than betray the friends. A most significant fact about her life and death is that, before her death she was not able to participate in the month prayer ceremony because she was bedridden. It seems as if, when she lost touch with the symbols of religion, she also lost her life. It was only the religion, which blended her family into one whole.

ii.  
Shunno

She is a fat middle-aged Hindu woman, a domestic servant in Buta Singh’s house, she helps Sabhrai in preparation of the first day
ceremony. She has deep faith in religion, which can be also termed as blind faith. People of rustic life in today's age believe much in religion and religious curing of diseases, and treatment in a different way to shock the audience who has a blind faith in Godman who after all are men. He writes:

"The two lay on the hard brick floor of the straight courtyard till the early hours of the morning with only the slumbering sparrows and the winking oil lamps on the Hazrat Sahib's tomb to witness the going on. Not a word of affection or explanation passed between them."\(^{72}\)

Through this incidence Singh shows the weakness of the holy man, the fakir and the sexual therapy, which cures Shunno's strange ailments.

Shunno and Peer belong to lower class status of the hierarchical Indian society, but their repressed selves and urges are universal, and, their responses to the experience of "Tearing of the padding of respectability" are similar. Man, whether he wears rich terelene (synthetic) dresses or is barely covered by tattered clothes, is basically the same- a naked human animal. This attempt to depict and expose the "Tearing off the padding of respectability" is a significant aspect of the realist in Mr. Singh and his quest for physical reality, in all its honour and elemental passion.

\(^{72}\) Ibid, p. 141
Moral character types

All the four novels written by Mr. Singh are based in Indian context. But as stated earlier that Mr. Singh is the product of both East and West therefore some incidence in the novels seems that they have been written for the western readers only, as they lead down the moral and social values of Indian culture. Every person of this world bears some moral values but due to certain reasons he has to subside them. Indian society is not so advanced even in twenty first century and therefore it is clear that it was not an advanced one in twentieth century in which these novels were written. Women characters of all novels by Mr. Singh hold some moral values but only some of them are able to hold them or act accordingly to moral values all through their lives. There are even some women characters that did not divert from the path of morality even in the uneven circumstances. Ram Dulari of Delhi is the wife of Mussadi Lal who hold the path of morality, as her husband was converted to Islam and she was a staunch believer of her faith i.e. Hinduism. Therefore she used separate utensils to cook her food, as in those days untouchability was more prevalent in all sections of society. It was the social values that were so prominent in her life, which is clear through her behaviour.

Women characters belonging to this character type-

i. Sundari

She is a character in the novel Train to Pakistan, she is the daughter of the orderly of Hukum Chand, the Magistrate, and was
married to Mansa Ram. The most tragic event of her life was when she was going with Mansa Ram to his home, and in the midway they were caught by a mob of hundreds of people who surrounded them as it was the time of partition, therefore the Muslims were slaughtering the Hindus and the Sikhs and vice-versa, as the novel says, "Sikhs were first hacked to death. The clean-shaven were stripped. Those that were not circumcised not just the foreskin, the whole thing was cut-off."\(^7\)

After her marriage with Mansa Ram only four days were passed and she had not even seen the face of her husband as their relatives had not left them alone for as minute. She had some moral values, which forced her not to lift her veil when the tragic incidence were going on. But she was not able to hold on these moral values as those cunning men made her to look at Mansa Ram completely naked when they held him by the arms and the legs and one man cut off his penis and gave it to her. This might have been a painful and shameful movement for her. The cunningness of these men did not reach to climax by this but after it they gang raped her.

At the last of this incidence the author chronically mentioned, "That should have brought her a lot of good luck."\(^7\)

ii. **Beena**

Another women characters in the novel *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* by Mr. Singh was the daughter of Buta Singh, a senior

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\(^7\) Ibid, p. 203
Magistrate employed in her majesty's services. She had some moral values as she always respected her parents, she was very obedient to her parents by most to her father at times she lost her temper, as when her mother enquired of her, why she goes to Sita's house regularly she replied in a harsh tone to her mother that it was not a big issue as it was known to everyone that she went to study with Sita.

The author does not mention the age of Beena but as she was a student of higher class and through her actions and intentions we come to know that she might be a teenager. At this age children are more attracted towards sex the same is what happened with her. We see that she was tempted by Madan for a while. Circumstances for her studying together with Sita almost involuntarily let her to visit a movie theater in the inevitable company of Madan. She found that as soon as it become dark in the theater “Madan put his hands on the arm of Beena’s chair. This time she knew it was not an accident. She would hardly believe but anyone, let alone Madan would want to make a pass at a plain and simple girl like her. It was unbelievably flattering. But he was married and it was obviously wrong Beena had no doubt about Madan’s intentions as his fingers closed round her elbow”.75

After a time she was astonished to find that Madan’s hand “brushed against her breast.”76 Here she would have reacted negatively

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75 Khushwant Singh, I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale, Times Book International, Delhi 59, p. 37
76 It find a close parallel between Madan’s action and Singh’s experience, in Khushwant Singh, When Our Hearts Were Young and Gay, Times of India, Bombay, Nov '75 68, p.8
to Madan's advances but she did not do it as she was at the age where people are more attracted to such acts and opposite sex. Therefore she demoralised some of the values, but such incidence alone cannot demoralise her nature and due to other moral values she belong to this character type.

iii. *Ram Dulari*

She is other character bearing the characteristics of this character type. She is a woman character of the novel *Delhi*. She was the wife of a Muslim Mussadi Lal who changed his religion and accepted Islam, but she did not accept it and kept separate utensils to cook her food, she had a deep faith in religion and when Mussadi Lal took her to see the mosque she started crying at the sight where Hindu statue were destroyed. She had deep moral values, which were woven in her blood and body. These moral values were responsible for not accepting her husband and his religion. When her husband asked her to go to her parents, she replied that she would leave his house only on a bier.

iv. *Georgine*

A character of this type of the novel *Delhi*. She was the niece of Mrs. Carlyle who was the wife of Mr. Carlyle, employed with the American Embassy in Delhi. She came to Delhi to spend the summer vacation where the author was appointed as a guide by her uncle. She was a modern girl her clothes could very well speak of her taste and
culture. We find that a lot is not described by the author about her, but whatever Mr. Singh tells about her is that she is a true American, as always in a hurry, thinking of herself as a very smart. Also she is not all mannered in her way of speech but this fact could be overlooked as she is only a student and very young and people in this phase of life tend to be a bit harsh. But the most important aspect of her character is that she holds good moral values, because she never forgot to thank Mr. Singh, her guide for accompanying her to show all the monuments and markets. When Mr. Singh presents her with a miniature Taj Mahal, she gives him a peck on his nose and says, “And that’s for you being so nice to a horrid girl.”

v. Jahanara Begum

She another character of Delhi, belonging to this character type. She was the daughter of Mumtaz in whose memory her husband Shahjahan built Taj Mahal a beautiful monument. Not much is mentioned about her but the author says that she died as she allowed her garments to catch fire, “.........One evening Jahanara Begum, while carrying a candle to her bed chamber, stumbled and let the flame touch her Muslim garments. She suffered grievous burns, two maidservants who took her in their embrace to smother the fire were burned to death”. This incidence shows us that she had some moral values,

77 Khushwant Singh, Delhi, Viking Publication 1989, p.112
78 Ibid, p.149
which did not allow to carry on the tragic circumstances which might have come to her and she accepted death and valued it more than humiliation.

vi. Saleema

Another character of Delhi, belonging to this character type. She is the wife of the famous poet Meer Taqi Meer, who was chosen by Begum Sahiba to be the wife of Meer. Begum Sahiba made much advances, to which Meer reacts positively, for his positive attitude the one main reason was that his wife Saleema was not so physically appealing as Begum Sahiba was. Saleema being fully aware of Meer's illicit affair with Begum Sahiba did not ever accused or confronted Meer for this, yet she carried on her moral duties as a faithful wife, as expected from her. These character traits of her shows that she bore very strong moral values.

vii. Naseema

A woman character bearing the traits of this particular character type is found in the novel Delhi. She is the maidservant in the service of Begum Sahiba, wife of Nawab Rais. Her mistress is found to be a woman who commits adultery, as her husband is very old compared to her age. Her mistress confides with Naseema every secret of illicit affairs with her. And we see that Naseema never tries to take undue advantage of these secrets. This shows that although Naseema is also
part of her mistress wrongdoings, by helping her yet she kept these secrets and never revealed them to another person. She bore some good moral values as concerned to her master and mistress. Though she is only a trusted maidservant, yet she has these good moral values, which is not commonly associated with maidservants or servants of any class.

viii. Alice Aldwell

Another woman character found in Mr. Singh’s Delhi bearing the characteristics of this very character type is Alice Aldwell. Daughter of English parents who had made Calcutta their second home that they nearly forgot where they really belonged. She was married to Mr. Alexander Aldwell, who was employed with the Majesty’s Post and Telegraph services. Although between her husband and Alice there was a big age difference of about 30 years, yet they were happy and parents of two lovely daughters. After Mr. Aldwell’s retirement, they did not have enough money to return to England. And we see that Alice seeing her husband’s helplessness and their economic condition, agreed to have sex with one Mr. Atkins who assured her that he could get Mr. Aldwell a good job in the country. Mrs. Aldwell we see, had to go through a lot of turbulent times where she was raped by people whom she trusted, yet she never lost her faith or hope for the sake of her daughters. She was thankful to each and every person who helped her in bad times or good times. She portrays an image of generosity. Hence she holds qualities of good moral character.
ix. **Sonu**

Another character belonging to this character type of the novel. She is the wife of Mr. Kumar, belonging to a rich family and as a spinster had moral values, which made her devoted towards her family and also caring. She should have changed her priorities but she did not do it. She gave birth to two children and even then her husband was her last priority. Firstly, she did not like her father-in-law and his living with them, for it her husband built a new house in which there was more space and thought that every thing will become all right, but he was wrong. Secondly when after their marriage they went for honeymoon to Shivalik Hills she forced him not to have sex with her, but after a lot of patient when Mr. Kumar provoked she became pregnant and this made a lot of fuss, her parents and even Sonu insisted to stay at her father Mr. Rai's house. This shows us how demoral nature is of Sonu.

After a period of twelve years they were separated. She did not like her father-in-law to play with her children's she says, "Pitaji, you are spoiling him, he gets too excited when you are around and refuses to go to bed."79 This shows that the children loved their grandfather but she did not like to make them familiar with him. After some time they both realised that their marriage will not last longer but were concerned what people would say.

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As she was most concerned with her parents and children she let her marriage die and these qualities of her, which she brings to light after her marriage, portrays her demoral character. Therefore, she had a moral character before marriage but as her priorities remain the same, this character took its negative form after marriage.

Social character type

Mr. Singh’s four published novel are considered to be social. They perfectly describe the time and period in which they were written and the society, also the characters resembles the people of that time. Mr. Singh’s first and third novels i.e. Train to Pakistan and Delhi simultaneously are thought to be socio-historical. They bring out the real situation of the time. Train to Pakistan has an almost conventional structure since it grows out of a chronological sequence of time. Yet the structure is not purely traditional as it includes the intangible current of values and also an evolving form. But realism today is not confined to the nineteenth century form of Emile Zola or Flanbert or Dickens and Thackeray, but has transuded its frontiers by moving toward what E. M. Forster calls “prophetic fiction”80 as seen in the work of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. This novel is surely part of the march of the novel toward realism, but it goes beyond it in the areas of values, as according to the prevalent social characteristics the author has portrayed behave as

actual like Jugga he is real but he kills himself in order to save the life of his Girlfriend, this bring how a person like him will behave actually in such circumstances.

I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale is a socio-political novel. “It is primarily a drama of two families, but it goes far beyond the boundaries of family life in portraying phases and changes in social and their motivation”\footnote{V. A. Sahana, Khushawant Singh, Twayne Publishers, Inc. New York, 1972, p. 111}, says Mr. V. A. Sahana. Sita the daughter of Wazir Chand and was very social as she always tried to help Beena her friend in her studies and this quality of her made her a social character. She was quite intelligent, she would have refused to help Beena but she does not do it, this shows her social values, which she carried out with full determination.

Delhi is a socio-historical novel, which brings out the life of historical characters and their social life; here some of the characters are different from historical characters but are related to them in one-way or the other. Begum Zeenat Mahal is a social character that tried to help other people, one of them was Alexander Aldwell who comes to Delhi and she helps him and also his family, these characteristics of her nature she is considered as social character. This novel relates history to the society but much is included other that could not be considered reality to make it much acceptable and read by the readers.
The Company of Women is also a social novel, as it brings about the life style of a highly rich or elite character i.e. Mohan Kumar, but the author has introduced such women characters who act positively to the demands of Mr. Kumar that they loose all the moral and social values. Every women character seems that she was dying to have sex and it is not real, as the society has certain norms, which are to be followed by the people, but the norms of the society, which is unheard of in real and practical life. Therefore this novel over steps the limits of realism.

**Woman characters belonging to this character type**

i. **Sita**

A woman character bearing the traits of this character type is of the novel I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale. She is the daughter of Wazir Chand a Magistrate; she is good in studies and also tries to help her friend Beena, who was not good at studies. Beena said, “Because Sita is very good at her studies and can help me.”\(^2\) This shows that Sita had social values as she always tries to help others. This special characteristics in her nature, predicts her social nature, therefore she belongs to this character type.

ii. **Joyce Taylor**

Character of the novel I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale who has the traits of this character type. She is the wife of Deputy Commissioner,

John Taylor, as they were Britishers, even then they had faith and liked the Indians. She was a Britisher and despite her husband holding a high post, then also her husband agrees to help Buta Singh and his family. She also visited his home, regardless of dignity, status and religion. When Sher Singh, son of Buta Singh and Sabhrai, an accused of the Murder was sent to jail and Sabhrai was not in the city, but when her husband asked her to come back, she comes and Mrs. Taylor goes to the station to receive her, this shows her social values. She even prayed to God to give Sabhrai strength to fight and hope in the dark, depressing hour. Taylor tried desperately to make the arrangements for Sher’s release from the jail and they succeeded in it. The Guru’s word found new efficiency in the Christmas spirit generated by Mrs. Taylor, and the order of Sher Singh’s release from jail was a generous Christmas gift of the Taylor’s to Buta Singh family. Joyce Taylor played an important part in the humanistic chain of events, which suggests that she is the European counterpart of Sabhrai, as V.A. Sahana also says, "........Sabhrai and Mrs. Taylor reveal parallelism in tendencies". 83

Thus these characteristics of the nature, behaviour and tendencies of Mrs. Taylor make her a person with deep social values. Hence is a character type of this social class.

83 V.A. Sahana, Khushwant Singh: Twayne Publishers Inc.: New York, 1972, p. 121
iii. **Begum Zeenat Mahal**

She is another character belonging to this character type of the novel *Delhi*. She was the favorite wife of the old king Bahadur Shah. She helped the family of Alexander Aldwell when they came to Delhi in the spring of 1856. She sent a brocade piece to Aldwell’s at the christening ceremony of their third child, a girl. After some time she sent them a tray load of watermelons and mangoes from her estate. For all these social activities, there was a reason behind it, as she wanted her son Jawan Bakht to be the next king of Delhi.

“Everyone knew that she had been knocking at the doors of the Sahibs wanting them to proclaim Jawan Bakht as the next king of Delhi”.\(^\text{84}\) This shows her social values and is considered to belong to this character type.

**Sexual character type**

Sex operates both as positive and negative force in the novels of Mr. Singh, capable of bringing out the best in Man, as in the case of Jugga and Hukum Chand in *Train to Pakistan*, and also capable of producing the most degenerate behaviour, as in the case of Champak and Madan. In *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* the author has come in far heavy criticism because the novels are “Liberally spiced with sex”.\(^\text{85}\)

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\(^\text{84}\) Khushwant Singh: *Delhi*, Viking Publication 1989, p. 244, 245

In *Train to Pakistan*, in Jugga-Nooran relationship, sex is present as a strong amoral force, elemental and passionate. His liaison with Nooran, though represented directly only once, in entire novel,\(^{86}\) actually forms the backbone of the novel. Elna J. Kalinnikova says, "......The bandit Juggat Singh, who tortures his Muslim mistress, is suddenly converted into a noble knight who is ready to sacrifice his life for the sake of her safety.\(^{87}\) We don’t find anywhere that he torture Nooran unless one takes his overbearing sexual behaviour with her as brutality, but this brutality itself converted him into a noble person. This shows that sex is the backbone of the novel and Nooran is considered as sexual character type.

In *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale*, the sexual element is connected with the darker side of life and the author's attitude towards sex is bitter. Madan and Champak are also breaking the norms of the society, their relationship depends on secrecy and double-dealing. Khushwant Singh has explored Champak's personality more sympathetically, and has tried to show that her obsession with sex is due to the oppressive joint family atmosphere she lives in, to her husbands inadequacy and to her own over active imagination. Sex and the characters attitude towards sex, forms an important base in the characterisation of some of the prominent individuals in novels by

Mr. Singh. Sex is never viewed moralistically. More often than not it is shown to be a sheer physical necessity, as in the case of Shunno and Peer Sahib. In Champak–Madan episode, sex is combined with deceit and betrayal. Champak is prominent character belonging to this character type.

Delhi novel also brings out the behaviour and attitudes of characters towards sex. Mr. Singh himself say in the note from the author in Delhi, that he has injected seminal fluid, that means he has introduced sex in life of the characters of this novel.

Begum Sahiba, wife of Nawab Rais makes love with the poet Meer Taqi Meer, who is the tutor of her children. She finds an ugly looking wife for him; so that he can make love with her and fulfills the demand of the Begum. This illicit love between Begum Sahiba and Meer Taqi Meer is of the type, which cannot be considered as moral, it is amoral as after Meer Taqi Meer attraction looses, she appoints other tutor for the children and makes love with him. These characteristics in Begum Sahiba nature force her to belong to the sexual character type.

Mr. Singh’s last novel The Company of Women is deeply enriched with sex. Almost every women character though belonging to other character type is forced to accept sex in their life in order to satisfy one or other need. It seems that they all were dying to have sex. Mr. Mohan comes across many women in his life and all reacted
positively to his demands of having sex with him, where as in reality it may not happen. There may be some women in this world who have to accept this sort of involvement due to certain needs and circumstances, but all agrees to it is not possible therefore here Mr. Singh has degraded the status and social values of women. Jesica Brown is an American, student at Princeton she was the one who firstly excited Mr. Kumar to have sex. She seduces Mr. Kumar and is found making love to others at Princeton.

Women characters in the novels by Khushwant Singh who belong to sexual character type are –

i. Nooran

A woman character portrayed by Mr. Singh in Train to Pakistan belongs to a small place called Mano Majra which forms the backbone of this particular novel. Nooran is a Muslim by religion and is the daughter of a poor weaver of Mano Majra. She is of immense beauty as described in the novel, “They would look well with those large gazelle eyes and little mango breasts”.\(^{88}\) She is in love with Juggut Singh, an outlaw who is confined to his village as a punishment and who could not leave his house after dark. Yet we find that Juggat Singh, despite of restrictions imposed on him, breaks these rules and goes to meet Nooran every time, because Noorans beauty and love instigates him to do this.

\(^{88}\) Khushwant Singh, Train to Pakistan, Ravi Dayal Publisher New Delhi, 1988. p. 15
Although Nooran is still not married but this does not hold her to establish a physical relationship with Juggat Singh although she acts as through she hates everything, but her giving in at the end confirms that she too is very much lustful for these physical relations. She is also scared that on finding about her love her father would kill her, yet she goes out in the middle of the night to meet Juggut Singh. This shows that Nooran is very much interested in sex and whenever she is free she could not think but it, as it is said, “forbidden fruits always tastes the best”. Viewing these qualities and characteristics traits of Nooran, she is placed in this particular character type.

ii. **Champak**

One of the women characters in the novel *I Shall Not Hear the Nightingale* Champak is the wife of Sher Singh, son of senior magistrate of the district, Buta Singh. Champak is portrayed as a modern women of that time, the reason behind this is that the author when wrote this novel just returned from abroad and hence the influence of the west still hung on his mind, because no women could behave or act as Champak, at the time the novel is supposed to tell. Further the reason behind Champak being shown as physically hungry and sexually abnormal wife is that, most of the time Sher Singh was out of the house and thus the desires of a young women married recently could not be fulfilled as it should have been. Also because of her insufficient sexual life, Champak is an
excessive exhibitionist. On New Year day when her mother-in-law concentrates all her mind on religious prayers. Champak takes off all her clothes and stands in front of her full-length dressing table to admire the contours of her body. Champak is also involved in a lengthy flirtation with Madan in Simla. Her actions are described as, “Champak’s body twisted. She moaned as if in a nightmare and snuggled closer to her husband. She caught his hand and took it lower down her body. Sher Singh knew there was no way out”. 89

iii. *Begum Sahiba*

The author in novel *Delhi* describes another woman character that is placed in this particular characters type. She is the wife of Nawab Rias. At the time of her wedding with Nawab Rias Begum Sahiba was a young girl of only sixteen years whereas the Nawab was approaching fifty-five years of his age. The fact that because there was a vast age difference between Nawab and Begum Sahiba, her sexual desire was left unattended and unfulfilled, this she tried to fulfill by seducing other men. One of them was post Meer Taqi Meer. It was Begum Sahiba after laying her eyes on Meer at a ‘Mefil’, invited him to her place to praise him and appoint him as a tutor for her children. She seduced Meer by marrying him to a girl of her distant poor relative; one sheer look at her wife and Meer was forced to commit adultery with his wife. In Meer’s own words Begum Sahiba is described as, “She was short, stocky

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woman of about thirty years of age. She was fair round faced with raven black long hair. The only other things I noticed about her were taut bosom and big round buttocks which almost burst out of her tight fitting pajamas.”90 The fact that the author portrayed Begum Sahiba as a sex maniac is inappropriate, as their was a justified reason for her doing so, her husband who could not fulfill her desires yet married her because of her beauty. Hence Begum Sahiba is placed in this particular character type.

iv. **Kamala Gupta**

Another women character described by the author in *Delhi* is the wife of Brigadier Gupta who was posted at a non-family station. She is the mother of three children who were studying in a boarding school at Missouri. She wanted to meet the author regarding a book she was going to write on ‘Delhi’. She explains herself that, “I have nothing much to do, can’t stand army wives. So I thought I’d write a book or something. Your program on T.V. gave me an idea”.91 She insists that the author tell her about ‘Delhi’ by, “You show me what I have not seen, I’ll show you what you have not seen.”92 She in her conversations makes no secret of her being unhappy with life she is leading. When the author accompanies her to her apartment she tell him, “You know very little about me. Not even how attractive I can be. You’ve not even tried to

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92 Ibid, p.139
find out."\(^{93}\) This conversation of Kamla with the author clearly indicates that she was fully fed up of her lonely life because of her husband's postings and she just needed something just to stir her up. Hence she finds solace at the author's company. This aspect of Kamala again explains that no person is born, as person who commits adultery. The circumstances that are out of control of one's hand force a person to take the path of adultery, same is with Kamala Gupta, hence she is placed in this particular character type.

\textit{v. Jessica Browne}

One of the woman character portrayed by Mr. Singh in \textit{In The Company of Women}. She is a student at Princeton along with Madan Kumar. An extrovert and a happy go-about girl among her friends. She is an African-American, who was born in America. She was sophomore a year senior to Mohan Kumar and the best woman tennis player in the University. She met Mr. Kumar at the tennis court; Mr. Kumar describes her, "What the figure the girl had! Tall, slender, and chocolate brown. A big bosom, narrow hips, protruding buttocks and long athletic legs."\(^{94}\)

The author has describes her with best physical appearance or in other words as a sexy girl. She bears a social character as she became

\(^{93}\) Ibid, p. 143.

familiar with other people or students at the University, but it was only to fulfill her passionate desire of having sex. This brings out the present traits and trends of the society of America. In America, making new friends of opposite sex is considered an act of modernism amongst youngsters; therefore she was not an exception to it. She was the very first woman in the life of Mr. Kumar, who instigated him to enter into a sexual relationship for the very first time in his life.

Professional character type

Khushwant Singh is the writer of metropolis, as R.S. Singh says, "Khushwant Singh deals with the changing pattern of the life of the metropolis."95 Therefore the characters of novels are also with the characteristics of modern people residing in metropolitan cities. The women characters of this novel belong to various classes of society but they seem to have the characteristics of the women of urban areas or metropolitan cities. Mr. Singh spent his childhood days in the village with his grandmother, but later he went to Delhi to his parents, and afterwards he went abroad for future studies, therefore he was and is very familiar with the life style of people of these areas. Hence he has portrayed women characters, full of values of the women of advanced cities and countries.

95 R.S. Singh, Contemporarily Indian Fiction in English, Creative Books, New Delhi, p. 26
In Asian Urban areas we see, both men and women earn for their living, it’s a common factor here. Therefore some of the women characters are not professional. Major characters are professional but hold a lower grade profession. Out of fourteen characters four are prostitutes. His last novel, The Company of Woman has major number of women characters who are professional. They all belong to different class of society. Dhanoo is a sweeper therefore holds a profession of lower grade; she is sexually involved with her master Mohan Kumar. Whereas Sarojini Bhardwaj is a teacher by professional, she is the professor of English in Government college at Rewari (Haryana) and belongs to the lower middle class of society. Another character Yasmeen Wanchoo is an aspiring politician and belongs to rich class of society. Mary Joseph and Molly Gomes are nurses by profession and belongs to lower middle class of society and bears a profession which is considered as one of the better profession, as it is also a type of social work.

These characters shows that some of them are from upper section of society and hold a profession of higher grade whereas some are from lower section of society and bear/hold profession of lower grade.

Women characters depicted in Mr. Singh’s novel bearing the characteristics of professional character type are as below:

i. **Haseena**

A woman character depicted by Mr. Singh’s resident of Mano Majra. A small town close to the border of India and Pakistan. She
accompanies an old woman and two musicians to entertain the magistrate and deputy commissioner of the district, who is visiting Mano Majra on tour. We find that the old lady, who is accompanied with Haseena, is a professional in entertaining the Sahibs visiting Mano Majra. She is professional in all respects. Haseena although a novice, not much is described of Haseena but it is very first time that Haseena is going to entertain some Sahib. She sings and entertains Hukum Chand and takes whatever Hukum Chand offers her, after everyone leaves she has sex with Hukum Chand. But after some time Hukum Chand feels guilty when somehow he compares Haseena with his daughter who is about the same age group. He leaves Haseena after few days. On viewing the attitude of Haseena with which she treats professionally Hukum Chand, she is placed in this character type because she bears the characteristics of a true professional.

ii. **Lady Jane Hoity Toity**

A woman character depicted in the novel *Delhi* by Mr. Singh is a cousin of the Queen and the world famous archaeologist, who is the guest of the President of India during her visit to India to study the historical aspects of India. The author is requested to accompany Lady Jane Hoity Toity on her tour of monuments of Delhi by Secretary, Ministry of Education. She is a very straight-faced lady once when the author praises her she says, “Liar! I like compliments not flattery.”⁹⁶
Socio-Cultural character types

She has the courage to confront the village folks when they try to make fun of her. She wears a golden bracelet on her hand, which bears the names of her ex-boyfriends embossed on gold coins attached with the bracelets. Lady Jane Hoity Toity attitude and behaviour is of a professional well versed with dealing and maintaining relationship on a truly professional basis. Based on the description by the author about lady Jane Hoity Toity we are able to place her in this character because of characteristics of this character type that she possesses.

iii. Fraulein Irma Weskermann

Another woman character portrayed in the novel of Mr. Singh's Delhi is a stenographer in the West German Embassy at Delhi. The author had met her at a consular reception and discovered that she was very anxious to know Indians. She developed a kind of harshness as a defense mechanism towards sex as she was not very sexy in appearance, as described by the author. The author experienced that she was not a virgin when the made love to her as he says, “I entered her without any emotion. She was not virgin; she was damp but not very exited.”97 When Bhagmati confronts the author and Fraulein after the sex session, Fraulein leaves Mr. Singh’s apartment saying, “Nice to have you known, Mr. Singh Good Bye and have a nice time.”98 The way that Fraulein deals with the author and any persons in all situations and the fact that

97 Ibid, p. 45
98 Ibid, p. 45
she is on an overseas posting with the German Embassy portrays the characteristics of a person who bears a truly professional character type.

iv. **Hirabai**

Another woman character, who portrays the characteristics of this particular character type in the novel *Delhi* by Mr. Singh is Hirabai. She is a woman who possesses a voice that could easily make a person forget that he/she is hearing a woman sing or an angel sing. She was of immense beauty. The mere fact that Hirabai was a slave girl in the service of governor of Burhanpur Nawab Saif Khan, uncle of Aurangzeb overlaps all beauty of Hirabai. Yet Aurangzeb fell in love with Hirabai at first sight. He proposes Saif Khan to exchange all women in his ‘Haram’ with Hirabai, to which Nawab Saif Khan agrees. For months Hirabai made Aurangzeb to forget all worldly matters concerning his kingdom and his subjects. As Aurangzeb describes himself, “From her hand we even took a cup of wine which had hitherto been an abomination to us.”<sup>99</sup> This quality of Hirabai to mesmerize any human being portrays that being a slave her only religion was to serve her master/mistress. She bore qualities of a true professionalism; her only religion was to serve. This very fact places her in this character type.

v. **Noorbai**

Another woman character described in the novel *Delhi* by Mr. Singh was a courtesan daughter who was only married to king to

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid, p. 148
satisfy their sexual appetite. She was a resident of Delhi and loved Delhi more than her life. We see that when Nasir Khan invaded Hindustan and when he was enjoying his stay at Delhi, Noorbai was summoned for serving Nadir Shah, the Emperor of Iran. Noorbai till then was only a young girl still a virgin. She gave Nadir Shah the most beautiful experience in his fifty years of hard life. She was basically a prostitute, whose only profession was to satisfy the Kings/emperors sexual appetite. And she was very well reared to keep up to her profession for which she was very handsomely rewarded. She was a trusted employee in the service of Emperor Nadir Shah. Once when he told Noorbai, that he intended to include her in his ‘Haram’, she replies quickly, “If your majesty stays in Delhi, your slave will serve you till her last breath, but if your majesty takes me away from Delhi, she will take poison and kill herself.”

We find that Noorbai fulfilled all her aspects associated with her profession with a professional way and was faithful and ever serving to Nadir Shah till the last days of stay in Hindustan and Delhi. These characteristics traits places Noorbai in this particular character type.

vi. Anwarbai

Another character described in the novel Delhi by Mr. Singh. The author describes her as a prostitute first and then through some feeling instigated in her about her love for her motherland, she takes up arms against the English who are ready to invade Delhi city. When she was

\[100\] Ibid, p. 180
prostitute she was doing a very flourishing business in Delhi city. As a skill of professional who is master in his field she earns a good amount of money form this trade. During the time when General Bakht Khan took up arms against the English, she gave up her profession and became a 'Jihadin' and joined Bahkt Khan's women fleet. We find that on capture she is tortured by the English, but she not once shows a feeling that she is scared of them and is ready to lay down her life for her noble cause. We find that Anwarbai wears good amount of golden ornaments on her body, which tells of her flourishing trade. Although she is a Jihadin, we find that the soldiers let her go and join her comrades in arms, instead of killing her. The way she had handled when she was captured and the way this illiterate prostitute handles the English Officers, tells her of her very unique characteristics of her character, is professionalism. This very reason places her in this particular character type.

vii. Bhagmati

One of the most described character by Mr. Singh in the novel Delhi. Though the most important fact of Bhagmati is an enunch (Hijda) and these people could not be placed in any gender. Yet the author has used the feminine gender whenever and everywhere he has given the description of Bhagmati, and it forces us to treat Bhagmati as a woman character. We see that according to Bhagmati's description, she is in the trade of prostitution in Delhi, the author's relation with
Bhagmati goes back to a very long time. Bhagmati act as a cushion between authors active and busy sexual life. Whenever there is a vacuum to be filled between two relationships Bhagmati is the best partner author likes to choose. Bhagmati also knows that the author needs her and she lets him know this every time he visits her flat. This particular reason makes Bhagmati take full advantage of her existence in Mr. Singh’s life in terms of monetary gains to enhance her economic gains. Bhagmati plays an important role in the life of Mr. Khushwant Singh as depicted by himself. The behaviour of Bhagmati towards the author is truly professional. And hence she is placed in this particular character type.

Women characters placed under this character type bearing the characteristics of professional character in the novel The Company of Woman by Mr. Singh are:

viii. Dhanno

Woman character depicted by Mr. Singh in the novel The Company of Woman. She is a maidservant employed at Mr. Mohan Kumar’s house. After Mohan Kumar’s wife gave birth to their first issue she would not allow Mohan Kumar to come near her and the fact that although during her pregnancy Sonu was at her parents home, and Mr. Mohan Kumar feels frustrated in terms of his sexual appetite. He lays his eyes on his maidservant Dhanno. Her physical appearance
appealed most to Mr. Kumar. Planning very carefully Mohan Kumar takes her to bed. In return Mohan Kumar rewards her with money after every session. In return Dhanno becomes the mistress that is behind the scene, who satisfies Mr. Mohan Kumar’s libido whenever Mohan Kumar needed her. And Dhanno being a sweeper at Mohan Kumar’s house never anyone suspects a hint about her and Mohan Kumar’s affair. She carries out her duties expected from her truly in professional manner, which she is used to. Hence Dhanno places herself in this character type.

ix. Sarojini Bhardwaj

Another woman character who is a part of Mohan Kumar’s life temporarily as described by Mr. Singh. She is a professor teaching in government college at Rewari (Haryana). She responds to Mohan Kumar’s advertisement of a paid compensation. Although Sarojini Bhardwaj is a mother of a boy who is studying in a school. She agrees to give company to Mohan Kumar in return of Rs. 10,000/- per month in order to give her son a good education and better life. On one occasion when Mohan Kumar exclaims that she proved to be a Griahalakshmi she replies that, “I may have brought you some lolly but can hardly be described as a housewife— that’s what Griahalakshmi you know.”

What these lines convey is that although they both liked each other, yet this was very much a professional relationship and understanding.

Sarojini never let out of her mind. These reasons that Sarojini is a professional with her field place her in this particular character type.

x. **Yasmeen Wanchoo**

Another woman character portrayed in Khushwant Singh’s *The Company of Women* is a student at Princeton with Mohan Kumar. She is also a student of religion and philosophy. She is a Muslim and lets the world knows it. She is on a student grant at Princeton from Azad Kashmir and is a wife of Minister in the Azad Kashmir government. She is very much enjoying her stay at Princeton and even commits adultery with Mohan Kumar as a sweet memory of Princeton. After completing her studies at Princeton she would return to her native place and would be entering into active politics. The mere fact that she is very much focused on her profession explains her strong characteristics traits of this particular character type. She was a very staunch follower of her religion and followed it very strictly. The way that she deals with everyone eagerly explains that she has rightly selected her profession.

xi. **Mary Joseph**

Another woman character described by Mr. Singh in *The Company of Women*. She is a dark plump woman in her thirties whose services as a day care nurse were taken when Sonu, Mohan Kumar’s wife gave birth to their son, Ranjit. Mary is a Roman Catholic from Tamilnadu. She was forced to take the profession because of her
drunkard husband, who spent all his earnings drinking all day. In the end there was very little money to let Mary feed her children and herself. So she took up this profession and moved to Delhi in order to take care of her husband and children and to save little, which she could save from her profession. Because of the drift between Sonu and Mohan Kumar due to lack of sexual relationship. Mohan Kumar was forced to look after different sources to quench his thirst and fulfill his sexual appetite. Mary Joseph seemed to be the perfect replacement of his wife; she was not very attractive but possessed right dimensions to make Mohan Kumar to take her to bed. And the fact that she was staying with the Kumar’s twenty four hours a day, made this relationship grow. Although a devoted catholic, her religion forbids her to indulge into extra marital affair, but to fulfill her personal appetite of sex, because she was away from her husband tempted her to sway from her path. Although doing this never ever reflected in her profession. After dispensing the services of Mary due to suspicion of Sonu, Mohan pressed on her services to fulfill her desires one or twice for which he payed her handsomely. Although these features of her character are only personal, yet we find Mary to be a skilled nurse and good at her profession, this very reason places her in this very character type.

xii. Molly Gomes

One of the many woman characters portrayed by Mr. Singh in The Company of Women. Molly Gomes is a trained nurse specialising
in Physiotherapy. She hails from Goa. Though she is a catholic but she feels no hang-ups of religion. She was once married to a foreigner, but it didn’t last very long. She is another person who responded to Mohan Kumar’s advertisement of paid companion. After Sarojini’s departure Mohan Kumar again found refuge in Dhanoo, but Dhanoo also could not satisfy his lust so he went through the letters that he received from different women and settled to call Molly, she readily agreed to join him after some days. Molly is casual in her behaviour and is not very much concerned about the policies of the society; she wants to live it to the fullest as though each day is the last day of life. This nature of Molly makes her a person with jovial nature with full of smiles. She enjoys her stay with Mohan Kumar and gives the utmost pleasure money could buy to Mohan Kumar. But we must never forget that Molly agreed to give break to Mohan Kumar because she wanted to break from her monotonic life and needed some excitement. This aspect and the truth that Molly is in active profession giving massages to the tourists visiting Goa places her in this character type.

xiii. Susanthika Goonatilleke

One of the woman characters who is described by Mr. Singh in The Company of Women is the second secretary with the Srilankan High Commission posted in Delhi. She met Mohan Kumar at a party organised by the embassy, she is interested in Kumar’s descriptions of
Haridwar and asks him to guide her to get to Haridwar. During these sessions both Susanthika and Mohan Kumar are drawn towards each other and develop a relationship that is not at all justified or approved by the society in which they were living. But their relationship grew as Mohan Kumar’s relationship with Molly was over and he was on a lookout for a new companion. Susanthika fell right into his hands as a ripe apple. Both took full advantage of this time and opportunity and never once were caught or anybody pointed a finger at them. Susanthika coordinated all planning for these meetings. For three years this blissful affair continued, till Susanthika’s posting to New York, their courtship came to an abrupt end, but yet Susanthika called Mohan Kumar few times, that too came to an end after Susanthika’s marriage. This relationship of Susanthika with Mohan Kumar was although her personal life, but in her professional capacity she was quite efficient and this shows from her character traits which places her in this particular character type.

xiv. *A Bai from Bombay*

One of the last woman characters portrayed in Mr. Singh’s *The Company of Women*. She is a person with no name; hence the author has described her as only ‘A Bai in Bombay’. She is a married lady with children who enters into the profession of prostitution because her husband could not earn much, that was necessary to run her
household. Mohan Kumar hires her during his visit to Bombay on business trip. Although by that time Kumar had lost interest in sex which frustrated him very much. Just to test his skills as an expert lover forces him to hire a prostitute in Bombay. We see that Mohan Kumar uses her services twice during his stay and pays her a good tip after listening to her story. She in turn makes Kumar realise that he still has enough energy left to satisfy his libido. This particular woman character is the most important of all woman characters because from her Mohan Kumar contracts aids due to lack of precaution, which ultimately takes tool over his life.

Through Table No. 2 and Graph No. 2 we come to know about the percentage and the character type, which has largest number of women characters. Mr. Singh’s characteristics of women characters show that his major woman characters are professional. Next is moral bearing woman characters whose percentage is 27.27% and then sexual followed by social and religious.

Thus Mr. Singh treated women as is clearly seen after the categorisation they are really in this phase of history. Women today are holding posts as men do and are now no more considered to bear children alone. Mr. Singh has portrayed a number of women characters who hold a post which make them outstanding and independent. His recent novel The Company of Women has largest number of woman characters.
Though Mr. Singh had faith in religion, but his women show that he had not allowed them to be religious, though religion forms the substratum of the first two novels, but there are only two women characters bearing characters of religious character type.