Overview

This chapter looks at other composers who have made a significant contribution to Karnatic music. Some of these composers existed in an era prior to the Trinity; some were contemporaries or disciples of the Trinity while others succeeded them in the following eras. The life and work of various composers is presented in approximate chronological order in each section below.

Predecessors of the Trinity

Jayadeva

Jayadeva (circa 1200 AD), was a Sanskrit poet who was born and lived in what is now Orissa. Jayadeva was a great Krishna bhakta. He is best known for his composition, the epic poem ‘Gita Govinda’, which depicts the divine love of Lord Krishna and his consort Radha, and is considered an important text in the Bhakti movement of Hinduism. The ‘Gita Govinda’ is a sringara mahakavya in twelve sargas and is written in high-flown Sanskrit. It consists of twenty four songs with song containing eight charanas and hence the name ‘Ashtapadi’. The Ashtapadi hymns are the earliest examples of regular composition - each song being set in a specific raga and tala.

The ‘Gita Govinda’ may have provided inspiration for the development of the classical opera and dance drama. The ‘Sivastandi’ of Chandrasekhara Saraswati and the ‘Ramashtapadi’ of Rama Kavi, the ‘Gita sundaram’ and the ‘Skandashtapadi’ may be mentioned in this connection. Some people even surmise that Tyagaraja modelled his ‘Nouka Charitram’ on the ‘Gita Govinda’.

The ‘Gita Govinda’ was composed at a time when the division of Indian music into the two systems (Hindusthani and Karnatic) had not
taken place. The ‘Sangita Ratnakara’ written by Sarangadeva in the thirteenth century is known to refer to the ragas of Jayadeva’s compositions as ‘Prakprasadha’ ragas; i.e. those that were once in vogue and became obsolete afterwards.

The Ashtapadis of Jayadeva are dvidhatu prabandhas, consisting of the two sections, udgraha and dhruva. The composer signed the songs with his own name. They are forms of sacred music and while they are also sung in concerts, it is not in the ragas and talas in which they were originally composed. Thus, though Jayadeva’s compositions are still popular today, he cannot be termed a vaggeyakara in the same sense as the Trinity – the tunes of his compositions today, are different from those in his day and have not lasted through the ages.

Annamacharya

Annamacharya (1408 AD – 1503 AD) was born in the Tallapakka family of Telugu poets. It is said that Annamayya had a vision of Lord Venkateswara when he was sixteen years old and subsequently spent the rest of his life composing kirtanas and padams on Him, which totalled 32,000. Of these only 12,000-14,000 are available now engraved on copper plates, which were hidden for centuries in a niche of Sri Venkateswara temple at Tirumala.

Although he propitiated other deities like Rama, Krishna, Narasimha and Vitthala, Annamacharya viewed them as forms of Venkateswara, the Ultimate Reality. Annamacharya’s compositions were in Telugu, Sanskrit, and a few other languages. He is also said to have composed twelve Satakas (sets of hundred verses), Ramayana in the form of Dwipada, ‘Sankirtana Lakshanam’ (Characteristics of sankirtanas), ‘Sringara Manjari’ and ‘Venkatachala Mahatmamyam’. Annamacharya was the first vaggeyakara of Telugu Literature.
Traditionally his songs are classified into Adhyatma (spiritual) and Sringara (romantic) sankirtanas. His Adhyatma kirtana compositions are based on the VishishtAdvaita school of thought. Annamacharya was educated in this system of Ramanuja by Sri Sathagopa Yateendra of the Ahobila Mutt. In his Adhyatma kirtanas, he espouses subjects such as morality, dharma and righteousness. His Sringara kirtanas worship Lord Venkateswara by describing his amorous and romantic adventures, a tradition now known as Madhura Bhakti. Most of these songs describe the adventures of Lord Venkateswara and Alamel Manga, while others describe the Bhakti of Krishna's devotees.

Annamacharya is the earliest known South Indian composer to have composed kirtanas. Each song comprises a Pallavi, occasional Anupallavi, and usually three metrically and musically identical four-line Charanas. His compositions are considered to have dominated and influenced the structure of Carnatic music compositions.

However, very little is known about Annamacharya’s music and musical thoughts. Even though his poetry was preserved, and the copper plates mention the raga for each song, what musical form and tala he assigned to his songs is not known. His kirtanas resemble Dasarapadagalu in structural pattern and very likely in musical pattern too.

While the fact that Annamacharya knew all musical modes and forms of his times is obvious from his works, it appears that he conceived his padas primarily as devotional poetry; music was mainly an aid to render them effectively. Therefore while singing Annamacharya's compositions, importance has to be given to the meaning since sahitya takes precedence over the music. The ragas
used in his songs are about a hundred. A good number of them like Abali, Amarasindhu, Kondamalahari, and Sourashtragujjari, etc. have become either rare or extinct now. Even the commonly used ones today like Sankarabharanam, Mukhari, Kambhoji, Devagandhari and Sri have probably undergone subtle changes since his time.

It is unknown whether Annamacharya set the music for all his compositions and even if he did, the music for many of these does not appear to have survived through the ages. The tunes to which his songs are sung today have been set by contemporary musicians. It is also doubtful whether the total number of his compositions includes small couplets, as well or whether all of them are songs with pallavi, anupallavi and charanas. Annamacharya’s songs are in the vernacular Telugu of his period which has undergone a radical change after his time. Thus, his songs cannot be understood by everyone and as his preoccupation was mainly to sing praises of God and not to create any outstanding pieces in order to experiment with ragas; his songs have not had the same level of lasting impact as the compositions of the Trinity. Hence, it is generally accepted that if in any respect he can be compared to the Trinity, it is solely for the quality of his compositions.

Purandara Dasa

Purandara Dasa (1494 AD -1564 AD) was born to Krishanappa Naik in Pandarapura in Karnataka. He had an immense influence on Karnatic music and Kannada literature. Though initially a moneylender and known to be a miser, he had a life changing experience that caused him to give up all his riches and pursue a spiritual life. He became a disciple of Vyasa Raya who titled him "Purandara Vittala," which became his signature. He is said to have composed 475,000 songs in both Kannada and Sanskrit. In addition to these, other compositions
attributed to him are ‘Gajendramoksham’, ‘Draupadi Vastrabhabaranam’, ‘Sudama Charite’ and ‘Baratatvasara’. About a thousand of his compositions have been handed down through the generations and some of these are actively sung till today. However, the original tunes for many of these compositions have been lost to us today.

It is said that Purandara Dasa was responsible for the isolation and identification of eighty-four Ragas (Kalyani, Varali, Todi, Bhairavi, Saveri, etc.) and for the adoption of the practice of the division of the different ragas into Satvic, Rajasic, and Tamasic. Purandara Dasa also had great influence on Hindusthani music and his disciple Swami Haridas was Tansen’s guru. Purandara Dasa is credited with creating the building blocks for students of Karnatic music by formalizing the early music lessons - Sarali varisai, Jantai varisai, Geetams, etc and also choosing Mayamalavagowla as the raga to be used for these. The famous geetham ‘Sri Gananatha’ (Malahari) is also attributed to him.

Purandara Dasa’s compositions range over the following musical types: Kritis, Kirtanas, Padas, Lavanis, Kandapadya, Ugabhoga (also Umabhoga), Bodabudika and so forth. He has also used Misragati, Ratimala and other rare musical models. His many compositions stand witness to his managing with perfect ease and grace, the slow (Vilambita), the medium (Madhyama) and quick (Durita) movements. His compositions known as Suladi (perhaps a contraction of sulabhahadi), which is sung to a graded and sliding succession of different Talas (Time-measures) exemplify Talamalika (a garland of Talas) on the analogy of Ragamalika (a garland of tunes). Purandara Dasa’s kritis, in simple Kannada, use colloquial language and are often set to folk ragas, thus being understood and remembered by the common
man. Some popular compositions of his are ‘Saranu Siddhi Vinayaka’ (Arabbi), ‘Gajavadana beduve’ (kriti - Hamsadhwani), ‘Aana lekara’ (Geetham, Suddha Saveri), ‘Ee pariya Sobagara’ (Saranga), ‘Kallu sakkre kollino’ (Kalyani).

As a devotee cum composer, Purandara Dasa had a very strong influence on Tyagaraja, who praises him in ‘Prahalada Bhakti Vijayam’. For being a vaggeyakara, a lakshanakara, and the founder of musical pedagogy and given the enormous influence that he had on Karnatic music, musicologists call Purandara Dasa the ‘Sangeeta Pitamaha’ (grandfather) of Karnatic music. His achievements and status as a founding father of modern day Karnatic music make it more appropriate to view him as an outstanding ancestor or precursor of great composers to come rather than include him in any grouping. Furthermore, considering that the times in which he lived and composed were so different from the Trinity, it would be quite inappropriate to compare them through the same lens. Hence, his position in the musical firmament of composers remains justifiably a class apart.

Bhadrachala Ramadas

Bhadrachala Ramadas (1620 AD - 1680 AD) was born in Northern Andhra Pradesh and was originally named Gopanna. He was an ardent devotee of Lord Rama and a composer of Karnatic music. He served as a revenue collector for Sultan Tana Shah.

He is renowned for having renovated and reconstructed the temple at Bhadrachalam, using initially funds raised for the purpose and thereafter revenue collections raised without the permission of the Sultan. For this, he was imprisoned for several years and underwent significant suffering. It is believed that Lord Rama and Lakshmana
appeared to the Sultan in disguise paying the entire dues and obtaining a receipt to release Gopanna. Realizing what had occurred, Gopanna was inconsolable at not having seen the Lord. The Sultan repenting of his actions returned the entire money to the temple starting a tradition of giving gifts to the temple for Sri Rama Navami.

Sri Ramadas was a gifted music composer and has given us songs in about thirty four rakti ragas on Rama, Krishna and Sita and songs of a didactic nature. He was the first to use a mellifluous mixture of Sanskrit and Telugu and to compose entire songs on particular themes. The supreme devotion of Sri Ramadas poured forth in the form of various compositions – kritis and divyanamas numbering about 300. About 60 of these are available today. He composed in the kirtana form (the precursor to the Kriti form) and his songs contain multiple Charanas. They can be temporally categorized as compositions prior to his incarceration, during his incarceration and after his release. His most passionate compositions from the time of his incarceration alternately entreat the Lord Rama to ease his suffering, admonish him for being indifferent to the misery of his devotee and finally, end with an apology in complete surrender to the will of the Lord. Most of his compositions are in Telugu barring a few in Sanskrit. Sri Ramadas’s various compositions reflect his varying moods of Bhakti. Many of Sri Ramadas’s compositions are sung in Carnatic music recitals till today. Some popular songs of his are ‘Ennaganu’ (Pantuvarali), ‘Nanu brovamani’ in Kalyani, ‘Paluke bangaramayena’ (Anandabhairavi), ‘Emayya Rama’ (Kambhoji). It is believed that Tyagaraja was so taken with the latter Kambhoji kriti that he composed ‘Bagayanayya’ in Chandrajyoti on similar lines.
It is apparent that Sri Ramadasa had an influence on Sri Tyagaraja from some of his compositions. Tyagaraja salutes Ramadas at the very outset in his ‘Prahalada bhaktivijayam’, praising Sri Ramadas as the supreme devotee of Lord Rama. In two of his pieces, Tyagaraja has made a special reference to Ramadas, his sufferings and the blessings of Rama that he eventually received. In the Kirtana ‘Kshirasagara shayana’ in Devagandhari, Tyagaraja says that he had heard of how Rama liberated Ramadas from the prison:

**dhirudu ramadaasuni bandhanamu**

**tirchinadi vinnanura**

In ‘Emidova’ (Saranga) Tyagaraja says “Had I been Ramadas, Sita would have come forward to speak to you on my behalf.” The ideas and expressions in Ramadas's songs are echoed by Tyagaraja in several songs.

Though Sri Ramadas composed many excellent compositions which are still popular today and also was an inspiration to later composers like Tyagaraja, many scholars opine that he did not have as great or lasting an impact on Karnatic music – either in terms of coverage of or innovation in musical forms, ragas or other aspects of Karnatic Music, as did the composers of the Trinity.

**Margadarshi Seshayyangar**

Sesha Iyengar who lived in the early 18th century is the only composer who was called a 'Margadarshi' even by his own contemporaries. Sesha Iyengar was a Sanskrit scholar who excelled in music and was a devotee of Lord Ranganatha. The great scholars of those days praised his Sanskrit style and called him 'Margadarshi' since
his works were a pathfinder for future composers. There is no single record source of all his compositions, primarily Sanskrit kritis on Lord Ranganatha. The mudra (signature) ‘Kosala’ was used by Sesha Iyengar in all his compositions.

In all, about forty Kritis of Sesha Iyengar can be traced and they are set in 22-23 ragas of Karnatic music. There is no mention of any tala structure for many of these compositions. All the ragas employed are time-honoured Rakti Ragas. Karnataka Saranga is a rare raga and even ragas like Brindavana Saranga, Ghanta and Dvijavanti may be described as uncommon ones. His compositions are noted for their fine raga bhava as well as mellifluous sahitya. Some of his songs are even now sung during the Ekanta seva, every night in the temple in Srirangam. One of his well-known songs is ‘Sri rukminisa mam palaya’ (Atana)

At the commencement of Swati Tirunal’s treatise in Malayalam, known as ‘muhana prasanantya prasa vyavasta’ dealing with the principles of proper usage of shabdalankara, muhana, prasa, antyaprasa in musical compositions in Sanskrit, the composer states that he gathered the material for this work from the compositions of Sesha Ramanjuam and Sesha Iyengar. He also followed the compositions of Sesha Iyengar as a model for some aspects, leading some people to believe that a few compositions of Sesha Iyengar have crept into publications of the works of Swati Tirunal. It is also widely believed that Tyagaraja studied the work of Margadarshi Sesha Iyengar, a master composer who had laid the foundations of Karnatic music.

However, despite his influence on subsequent composers, the relatively smaller body of work as well as lack of sufficient information
about some aspects of his compositions e.g. tala structures, preclude any detailed comparison or grouping with other composers.

**Oothukadu Venkata Subbaiyya**

Venkata Subbaiyya who was also known as Oothukadu Venkata Kavi (1700 AD – 1765 AD) lived and composed in the village of Oothukadu, near Kumbakonam in Tamil Nadu. He is well known for adopting Lord Krishna himself as his manasika guru.

Oothukadu is famous for the deity Kalinga-nartana, the child Krishna dancing on the fierce head of a gigantic black serpent. Venkata Kavi expressed his infinite devotion and dedication to this deity, through his great musical compositions ranging from simple Tamil to lofty Sanskrit.

He was a versatile composer who used hundreds of ragas, many for the first time. He composed in major ragas like Todi, Sankarabharanam, Kalyani, Kambhoji, Bhairavi and rakti ragas like Sahana, Anandabhairavi, Suruti, Madhyamavati, Arabhi, Atana etc. as well as in comparatively rare ragas such as Umabharanam, Hamsanadam, Malavi, Jayantasri, Kannadagowla, Abhogi, Malayamarutam, Manjari, Saraswati, Navarasakannada. He has also composed in ragas like Kannadamaruvam, Hamsageervani, Lalitagandharvam and Deeparam, which do not seem to have been handled by any other major composers. He composed in some rare talas that few others ventured into (e.g. ‘Neelalohitaramani’ (Balahamsa) in Khanda Dhruva, ‘Sadanandamayi’ (Hindolam) in Khanda Matya) and handled several compositional forms such as kriti, thillana, shloka, kavadi chindu, javali etc. His vocabulary in Sanskrit was extensive and comparable to other great Sanskrit composers. His
compositions have examples of both dvitiyakshara prasa and antya prasa.

Venkata Kavi may have been one of the early composers to use faster passages (madhyamakalam). Several of his pieces also feature sangatis and he used the change of gait (gati bhedams) within pieces too (e.g. ‘Swagatham Krishna’ in Mohanam).

The average length of most of Oothukkadu Venkata Kavi’s pieces is much longer than any other composer in Karnatic music. Venkata Kavi has created a few songs with pallavi, anupallavi and multiple charanas in madhyamakalam that can be rendered as swaras and sahityas similar to the Pancharatnas of Tyagaraja. Seven of these are well known as Saptaratna. The set of nine songs he dedicated to Goddess Kamakshi of Kanchipuram, called the ‘Kamakshi Navavaranam’, is considered a masterpiece and is believed to be the first ever set of navavarana kritis. Venkata Kavi distinguished himself as a composer with a fondness for dance – composing entire pieces suited to dance and incorporating jatis in many of his compositions (e.g. ‘Vaiyam alandu’ – Nandanamakriya, ‘Ananda nartana ganapathim’ – Nattai).

Venkata Kavi had also introduced innovations that were popularised later by Trinity composers. For instance Kritis like ‘Tyagaraja paramesha’ (Chakravakam) and ‘Vande Valmik kokilam’ (Atana) have only pallavi and a combo-section that some analysts refer to as samashti charanam, which was later well established by Muthuswamy Dikshitar. In some Kritis, Venkata Kavi has also started the kriti at 1½ units after the tala start, which is the ‘half of the little finger’ eduppu that was brought into vogue by Tyagaraja several
decades later. His kriti ‘Senapate namostute’ (Gowla) commences after 6/32 units. Venkata Kavi also had the same fascination with madhyamakala as Dikshitar would later have. His kritis ‘Parvai onre podume’ (Suruti), ‘Enna punniyam’ (Ritigowla) and ‘Aagaama Rajagopala’ (Kedaram), have multiple speed passages and there are even some like ‘Ananda nartana Ganapatim’ (Nattai) that are set wholly in madhyamakalam. Kritis like ‘Chindittavar nenjil iruppadu’ (Nattai) and ‘Pranavakaram’ (Arabhi) have more passages in madhyamakalam than in normal speed.

Another innovation of Venkata Kavi’s was lyrical variations or sahitya sangatis. In the Abhogi kriti ‘Mahashaya hridaya’, he has composed 3 variations of the madhyamakala sahitya where the initial part stays the same but the second half varies as shown below

(i) Madhukara champaka vana vihara mana-mohana Madhusoodana navabhooshana
(ii) Madhukara champaka vana vihara nava pallava padakara madana gambheera
(iii) Madhukara champaka vana vihara go-vardhana dhara bhujaga nartana charana

Venkata Kavi has also used decorative angas like the swaraksharam in his kritis. A unique instance is in the kriti ‘Gajamukhaanujam’ (Kedaram), where the charanam ‘Aaraadhita sujana samaagama’ sung in the second variation has the notes SM.GM for the word ‘samaagama’. The first variation is PS, NS which is nothing but SM, GM transposed from the note P, or in other words, a swarakshara coupled with sruti-bhedam. He has not used raga mudras much though he has mentioned other raga names in his songs.
Venkata Kavi has used complex talas like Khanda Dhruva (‘Neela lohita rami’ in Balahamsa). He has also experimented with kalai change in his kriti ‘Sadanandamayi’ (Hindolam), which is the sixth avarana kriti in his Kamakshi navavaranam. In this kriti with a complex tala – Khanda Matya, he has composed the first two sections in two kalais (eight units per beat) and switched to one kalai (four units/beat) in the final section. Venkata Kavi has also used yati patterns in his compositions, some examples of which are

1. **Srotovaha yati:** In the kriti ‘Mummada vezha’(Nattai):
   The second section has the srotovaha yati pattern shown:
   
   Tattuvam
   paratattuvam
   paraaparatatiuvam
   paramparaaparasattuvam

2. **Gopuchcha yati:** The kriti ‘Jatadhara Shankara’(Todi) has gopuchha yati in the first charanam as shown below:
   
   Madamayadaarukaa
   Vananunimano
   haranipuna
   mahadhana

   Other examples of Venkata Kavi’s compositions include ‘Padmini vallabha’ (Dhanyasi), ‘Neelalohita rami’ (Balahamsa), ‘Yoga yogeshwari’ (Anandabhairavi) ‘Mundi varum isha’ (Bhairavi), ‘Ennadan inbam kandayo’ (Devagandhari), ‘Koti janmaani’ (Ritigowla), ‘Sarasijabhava jaaye’ (Kalyani). He also composed some thillanas of
which four or five are available today and highlight his versatility e.g. his Sindhubhairavi thillana resembles a Hindusthani *tarana* while the Suruti thillana is in typical Karnatic style. His ‘*Kalinga Nartana Nataangam*’ is an extensive masterpiece that would test many accomplished musicians.

Only a few of his vast compositions are available today, since he was reclusive by nature and neither accepted disciples or sang in public. It is said that he often sang only at night so that none but the Lord should hear his compositions. He also never used any mudra to identify his compositions. It is perhaps on account of this inaccessibility, that his virtuosity and innovation did not have a more far reaching impact on Karnatic music. In comparison, the Trinity composers had disciples who popularised their music amongst lay persons and also recorded and preserved their music for posterity as well as in some cases, attempted to carry on the compositional style learnt from their gurus. Venkata Kavi’s compositions in contrast have been restricted to and preserved largely through various generations of his family and their disciples. Needamangalam Krishnamurthy Bhagavatar did his utmost to project the few hundred songs of Venkata Kavi that have survived in recent times. It is only thanks to these efforts and others that his compositions have become more popular recently and are appreciated and sung actively in concerts today. However, the fact remains that his compositions are sung predominantly in Tamil Nadu and by native Tamil speakers and their popularity amongst musicians and rasikas in other states is quite low. Apart from this, the very fact that he preceded the Trinity by a century renders him less suitable for comparing and grouping along with them.
**Tiruvarur Ramaswamy Dikshitari**

Thiruvarur Ramaswamy Dikshitar (1735 AD - 1817 AD), was an eminent musician and composer. Ramaswamy Dikshitar learnt music from Veerabhadrayya, an eminent musician who enjoyed royal patronage. Believing that no music could be perfect unless it was based on a firm foundation of theory, he studied music theory under the guidance of Venkata Vaidyanatha Dikshitar, a well known vainika of the times.

As he flourished as a concert artist, he also earned fame as a versatile composer. He has to his credit a large number of tana varnas, pada varnas, darus, ragamalikas and kirtanas. The ragamalika in 108 ragas and talas (Ashtottara Satha Raga Tala Malika) is considered his magnum opus. Raga Hamsadhwani is the creation of Ramaswamy Dikshitar. He has also composed the only swarakshara varnam ‘Sari ga ni dani’ in the raga Todi. Perhaps his compositions would have received far greater recognition and popularity had his son Muthuswamy Dikshitar (one of the group to be later known as the Trinity) not eclipsed him.

**Pallavi Gopala Iyer**

Born in the 18th Century (1750 AD – 1820 AD), he served as asthana vidwan at the Tanjore Court during the reigns of Raja Serfoji and Raja Amarasimha. His guru was Pachimiriyam Adiyappiah who was conferred the title Margadarshi. Adiyappiah’s other illustrious disciple was Syama Shastri, one of the Trinity.

Gopala Iyer has composed many varnams and kritis. He used the mudra “Venkata”. The varnams of Adiappaya and Pallavi Gopala Iyer are deemed the highest tests for a vainika to pass. The classic
Kalyani varnam ‘Vanajakshi’ in Ata tala, was one of his compositions. This composition has been a staple concert starter for many great artists.

His varnams are the earliest examples of the modern form of the varnam consisting of just the pallavi, followed by anupallavi and muktayi swaras and ending with the ettugada\(^1\) pallavi/refrain with 3 to 5 ettugada swaras with up to a maximum of 3 tala cycles in the last ettugada swara sequence, which is devoid of the anubandha\(^2\) portion.

Pallavi Gopala Iyer was one of the earliest to adopt the “sampurna varika” style where, every note is invested with kampita gamaka, totally avoiding flat notes. Gopala Iyer purposefully applied it on the then “auttara ragas”, namely Todi and Kalyani. The transformation of Todi and Kalyani, which were earlier treated as auttara/turuska/northern/videshi ragas, is a remarkable example of the dynamics of the Karnatic music system in the run-up to the period of the Trinity.

His kriti in Natakurinji ‘Nidu murthini’ is often cited as one of the earliest compositions in Natakurinji. This composition along with the Kambhoji varnam ‘Inta chalamu’ and the Kalyani varnam ‘Vanajakshi’ are upheld as the authority and example of raga lakshana for those ragas. However, despite these contributions, his compositions have not gained as much popularity as those of the Trinity.

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\(^1\) Second half of a varnam equivalent to a charanam

\(^2\) Sahitya sung after all the ettugada chittaswaras have been rendered – somewhat like an appendix to the varnam
Contemporaries of the Trinity
Gopalakrishna Bharati

Gopalakrishna Bharati (1811 AD – 1896 AD) was born near Nagapattinam in Tamil Nadu and grew up to be a prolific Tamil poet and composer. His father Ramaswami Bharati was a musician. Gopalakrishna learnt Advaita and Yoga Sastra from a guru in Mayavaram. He also learnt Hindusthani music from Ramadas, a renowned musician with expertise in Hindusthani music who was living in Thiruvidaimarudhar.

Gopalakrishna Bharati’s favourite deity was Lord Nataraja of Chidambaram, in whose praise he has created many of his compositions. His kritis were very popular and were sung actively during his lifetime. Many musicians would approach him, express their vision for a new kirtana and Bharati would obligingly compose a song to suit. He used the mudra ‘Gopalakrishna’ in his compositions. His compositions number more than one thousand - with opera songs alone accounting for about four hundred.

Gopalakrishna Bharati proved to be a versatile composer also composing several pieces in a very different genre – songs that could be sung in a marriage, such as songs for 'nalangu', 'oonjal', 'laali', 'kummi' etc in Tamil. He further composed the famous ‘Nandanar Charitram’, a Kathakaalakshepam. ‘Nandanar Charitram’ was based on the story of a paraiyar (dalit or 'untouchable'), Nandanar known also as Tirunalaippovar Naynanar who desired to pray to Lord Shiva at Chidambaram and ultimately became one with the deity. In addition to well-known rakti ragas of Karnatic music, he has composed songs in rare ragas like Dvijavanti, Manji and Sengalan. He has written excellent verses in Tamil to link up the songs and, apart from kirtanas, he has
given us specimens of musical forms like Dandakam Chindu, Nondichindu, Kanni, Kummi, Anandakalippu, etc., as well as Marathi forms like Katka, Savai and Lavani. Some famous songs of his are ‘Varugalamo’ (Manji), ‘Eppo varuvaro’ (Jonpuri), ‘Kanaka sabhapati’ (Dhanyasi), ‘Adum Chidambaramo’ (Behag).

As a contemporary of the Trinity, one of the most significant events of Gopalakrishna Bharati’s life was his meeting with Tyagaraja. Bharati traveled to Thiruvaiyaru to meet Tyagaraja having heard of his greatness. Following a conversation with Tyagaraja during his meeting, he was inspired to compose a kirtana on Lord Nataraja ‘Sabhapathikku’ set to raga Abhogi in a day. After his return to Mayavaram, there was an increase in his composing frequency.

Bharati had a few students under his tutelage, notable among them being Chidambaram Ponnusamy Dikshithar, Chidambaram Sri Rajarathna Dikshitar, Mayavaram Ramasamy Iyer, Natesa Iyer and Subramanya Iyer. The eminent singer, D.K. Pattamal was attracted by his compositions to sing many Tamil songs and popularized many of his Tamil compositions. Despite the large volume of compositions and his compositional excellence, his influence does not seem to have spread much beyond Tamil Nadu. This may perhaps be due to the reason that his compositions were largely in Tamil. He also does not appear to have experimented widely with the range of musical forms, decorative angas, talas and other musical aspects as the Trinity. At any rate, even though he is not placed on the same pedestal as the Trinity, he occupies a hallowed place amongst Tamil composers. His songs from the opera ‘Nandanar Charitram’ are popular amongst musicians and dancers and leave an indelible mark upon the mind of the listener.
Post-Trinity composers
Veena Kuppayyar

Veena Kuppayyar, born in Tiruvottiyur into a musical family, was a well known vainika, a disciple of Sri Tyagaraja and a composer of merit. Kuppayyar had his initial training from his father Sambamoorti Sastri, a famous vocalist and veena player. Later he became a disciple of Tyagaraja and learnt composing from him. He was also a Sanskrit and Telugu scholar. While he also learnt violin, it was for his proficiency in playing the veena that Kuppayyar came to be well known. Veena Kuppayyar composed in Telugu, both kritis and varnams. His varnams like ‘Sami ninne kori’ (Sankarabharanam, Adi), ‘Maguva’ (Narayanagowla, Ata) and ‘Nenarunchi’ (Dhanyasi, Ata) are very famous. His mudra was Gopaladaasa, in honour of his family deity. Some of his other kritis include ‘Vinayaka ninu vina’ (Hamsadhwani) and ‘Koniyadina napai’ (Kambhoji).

Kuppayyar trained many disciples in his gurukulam, carrying forward the Tyagaraja shishya parampara, helping to spread his kritis and music.

Swati Tirunal (1813 AD - 1846 AD)

Maharaja Swati Tirunal was born into the Travancore Royal family. By the age of sixteen, he took over the administration of the state and also started on the path to becoming an accomplished composer. He was a vocalist and a vainika. While his compositions are predominantly in Sanskrit, he has also used other languages such as Manipravalam (Malayalam and Sanskrit), Telugu, Hindi, Malayalam and Canarese. Swati Tirunal was not only a composer, but a musicologist with a deep knowledge of the science of music and Bharata Sastra.
Swati Tirunal centered many of his compositions on the name of the presiding deity Sri Padmanabha and the festivals of the temple in Trivandrum. He composed different forms of music such as, Varnams, (Tana varnams and Pada varnams), Swarajatis, Kritis, Padams, Thillanas, Javalis, Ragamalikas, Dhrupads, Tappas and Khayals. He composed a large number of varnams in a variety of talas. ‘Chalamela’, in Sankarabharana-Ata-tala, ‘Sami Ninne’ in Yadukula Kamboji, ‘Sarasijanabha’ in Kambhoji, ‘Danisamagendra’ in Todi, ‘Sumasayaka’ in Kapi and ‘Savamarusha’ in Khamas are some of his popular varnams. A special feature of his varnams is the introduction of Swarakshara. He probably composed 65 padams. ‘Valaputala Vasama’ in Atana in Telugu, ‘Alarsaraparitapamu’ in Suruti in Manipravalam, ‘Kan-danodu Chennu’ in Nilambari in Malayalam, ‘Somopamavadne’ in Yadukula Kambhoji in Sanskrit are some of the better known padams.

Further, he is also said to have composed about four hundred kritis in a number of ragas, primary among them being Sankarabharanam, Kambhoji, Todi, Bhairavi and Kalyani. He also composed pieces in Saranganata, Malahari, Lalithapanchamam, Dwijavanti, Gopika Vasantam, Ghanta and other rare and rakti ragas. He also composed a large number of kritis in Madhyama kala and Vilamba kala. Like some other composers, Swati Tirunal had a love of Bharata Natyam, which is reflected in some of his kritis. He was adept at composing ragamalikas, ‘Tannagendra sayana’, and ‘Kamalajasya’ describing the ten avatars of Vishnu being well known. In these two ragamalikas, the Makuta swara prayoga is introduced at the end, wherein the ragas are strung in the reverse order ending with the raga with which the piece starts.
In all, he possibly composed more than five hundred pieces of music in addition to literary works like ‘Bhakti Manjari’ and ‘Tadmanabha Satakam’ written on the model of ‘Sri Narayaneeyam’ of Melpattur Narayana Bhattathiri. This was done besides performing creditably his duties as a ruler, for while music was his passion, he had to pursue it amidst his duties as a ruler. His achievements are all the more remarkable for the short span of thirty three years that he lived. However, since he was a ruler and had many musicians and composers at his court as well, many musicologists believe that the authorship of some of his compositions is debatable – it is not certain how many were actually composed by him and whether some compositions were created by musicians at his court in his name. It is undeniable that Swati Tirunal covered a wide range of languages, musical forms, ragas, talas and content in his kritis. While his compositions have gained significant popularity amongst musicians, he does not appear to have had a similar inspirational effect on composers of succeeding generations as did the Trinity. The Trinity had several students and between their own travels and those of their students, they were, whether intentionally or unintentionally, able to garner significant popularity for their kritis. They also had more exposure to places and circumstances to inspire variety in their compositions. At any rate, whatever be the reasons, whether justified or unjustified, the fact remains that Swati Tirunal has not been universally accepted to be on par with the Trinity, although there is a school of thought which has certainly attempted to propagate this idea.

Mysore Sadashiva Rao

Mysore Sadashiva Rao (1800 AD – 1870 AD) was one of the most important composers of Karnatic music and followers of the musical traditions of Tyagaraja. He was a prominent vocalist in the
court of the king of Mysore, India. He is credited with developing the 'Mysore style' of Karnatic music.

He had his musical training under Valajapet Venkataramana Bhagavatar, a pupil of Tyagaraja. In the "Thyagabrahmopanishat", a work of Ramaswami Bhagavathar, son of Krishnaswami Bhagavathar (eldest son of Venkataramana Bhagavathar,) it is mentioned that on the occasion of Tyagaraja's ceremonial entry into the town of Walajapet, Sadashiva Rao composed the song 'Tyagaraja Swami Vedralina' in Todi specially for the occasion, sang it in the immediate presence of the great saint and earned his benediction.

It appears that he was brought to the Mysore court by one of his patrons and settled in Mysore, coming to be known as Mysore Sadashiva Rao.

Sadasiva Rao composed mostly in Telugu and also in Sanskrit. He used the mudra 'Sadasiva' in different forms such as: "Sadashiva nuta, Kavi Sadashiva Nuta, Bhudhavaraya Kavi Sadashiva Nuta, Sadasivarthihara, Sadashiva Bhagyadheya, Sadashiva Bhayahara". He is said to have composed many kritis, especially in Madhyamakala (medium tempo), besides varnams and tillanas. He is credited with introducing beautiful swara sahityas in his kritis. The chittaswara for several of his keertanas and their accompanying sahitya, stand out for their raga bhava and imagination.

He is said to have composed hundreds of keertanas, but so far, 52 of them have been collected. The available songs include the famous pada varna ‘EMaguva’ in Raga Dhanyasi, a swarajati and tillana. The compositions are in popular as well as in the apurva ragas.
There are two in the Raga Balahamsa, and one each in the ragas Abhogi, Kamalamanohari, Gambhiranatta, Purnashadja, Punnagathodi, and Chandrachooda.

He went on a pilgrimage of south India and composed kritis at all the temples he visited. When he attended a procession taking Lord Kodanda Ramaswamy, Rao sang ‘seetaa lakshmana sameta shri kodanda raama swaami nannu rakshimpavemi’ in Raga Kambhoji to describe the grand procession. He composed two songs on Lord Parthasarathi of Triplicane (Madras): ‘shri parthasarathi’ in Raga Bhairavi (svara sahitya of this kriti contains the sthalamudra Tiruvallikkeni nagarisa) and ‘Vachsmagocharundani’ in Raga Athana. He sang in praise of Lord Ekambranatha of Kanchi in ‘samrajya dayakesha’, and Goddess Kamakshi in the songs ‘o! rajarajeshwari,’ ‘kanugoni dhanyudanaithini’ and ‘kamakoti pithasthithe.’ In Srirangam, the procession of Lord Paravasudeva inspired him to sing the kriti ‘paramadbhutamainina niseva’. He also composed ‘shri subrahmanya’ in honour of Lord Velayudhaswami of Palani and ‘shri lakshmiramana’ in honour of the deity at Bhavani. Some of his other compositions are: ‘devadideva’ (Raga Mayamalavagaula), ‘gangadhara tripuraharana’ (Raga Purvikalyani), ‘paramabhuta maina’ (Raga Khamas), ‘Vachamagocharundani’ (Raga Atana), and ‘Saketanagaranatha’ (Raga Harikambhoji). His kriti ‘Narasimhududayi nohenu’ in Raga Kamalamanohari is a powerful picturisation of the Narasimha Avatar.

Mysore Sadashiva Rao was also a great teacher. His disciples like Veena Sheshanna and Veena Subbanna later became legendary musicians. Undoubtedly he has made great contributions to Karnatic music and is justly respected. However, being a student in the lineage of Tyagaraja, his suitability to be clubbed along with his illustrious guru
is somewhat less. He also does not enjoy the level of popularity which was achieved by the Trinity.

**Kothavasal Venkatarama Iyer**

Kothavasal Venkatrama Iyer was born sometime in the early 19th century in Kothavasal in Tanjore district in Tamil Nadu. Venkatarama Iyer had his initial training under his father and was sent over to Veena Kuppayyar for further training. He then launched his career as a musician and music composer also attracting disciples; Patnam Subramanya Iyer and Tirukkodikaval Krishna Iyer being among them. His mudra was ‘Venkatesa’.

Venkatarama Iyer knew Tamil, Sanskrit and Telugu and was much sought after as a concert performer. Today, surprisingly, he is less well known as a composer though his beautiful compositions are very popular.

Of his compositions, the best known are the Saveri (‘Sarasuda’), Hamsadhwan (‘Jalajaksha’) varnams, and the Navaragamalika varnam (‘Valachi vacchi’). In the Navaragamalika varnam, Venkatarama Iyer composed two rounds (avartams) of rhythmic syllables (solkattus) and one round of Chitta swara, and a fourth round of Solkattu and Chitta Swara, all in the raga Kambhoji intended to be sung immediately after the Sri raga swaras and leading on to the Pallavi in Kedaram raga. This part of the composition may be called an Anubandham. He also composed other varnams - ‘Era na pai’ in Todi, ‘Swami ninne’ in Nata, ‘Talu maru’ in Devamanohari and ‘Ninne kor’ in Gowla, all in Adi tala.

Some of his compositions are considered to have most fully depicted the beauty and nuances of the raga they are set in. For
instance the Hamsadhwani varnam, ‘Jalajaksha’ is considered the most artistically conceived of any possible depiction of this unique raga and the Saveri varnam, ‘Sarasuda’ is deemed to be the epitome of raga delineation. However, though Kothavasal Venkatarama Iyer has enriched Karnatic music greatly with his compositions, the volume and range of his work as well as its impact on succeeding generations has not been as far-reaching as that of the Trinity.

Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan (1844 AD – 1893AD)

Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan, is widely considered to be among the most brilliant performers and composers of the post-Trinity period. He received his initial training from his father Duraisami Iyer who was a musician and continued his training with well known musicians of his time including Anai Ayya brothers and Manambuchavadi Venkatasubbayyar, one of Tyagaraja’s disciples. He was well known for his excellent talent as a performer particularly his raga alapana. He was a composer and a Harikatha performer. Together with his elder brother, Ramaswami Sivan, he formed the earliest known performing duo in the history of Karnatic music. He was conferred the title “Maha” at the age of twelve. He had all the makings of a great composer being a scholar in Sanskrit and Tamil and also well versed in the science of music and in the mysteries of anahata nada.

Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan composed mainly in Telugu and Tamil and adopted the signature Guhadasa for his compositions. His thillana ‘Gaurinayaka’ in Kanada raga, Simhanandana tala, is the only thillana in this tala. The whole composition has two avartas, the first dedicated to singing the praises of Lord Nataraja and the second has beautiful jatis. His varnam, ‘Pankajakshipai’ in Kambhoji raga and Adi tala is considered a brilliant piece with the use of Swaraksharas as well as the
phrases in Sama yati and Mridanga yati in the latter half of the varnam. His kriti ‘Pahimam sri rajarajeshwari’ (Janaranjani) has a beautiful chittaswara passage. His Tamil songs ‘Muttukumarayyane’ (Sankarabharanam) and ‘Malmaruganai’ (Bilahari) are well known. His masterpiece, composed in just seven days, was the 72 Melaragamalika, the longest single composition ranking along with Ramaswami Dikshitar’s masterpiece, the 108 Ragatalamalika. He sometimes teamed up with his brother such as for 'Periya purana Kirtanas', the biographies of the sixty three Saivite saints in song and verse. Many of his compositions are still sung in concerts today. Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan’s contributions to Karnatic music are undoubtedly praiseworthy and outstanding, putting him on par with some of the great composers in this system of music; however, he has not attained the heights of popularity and acceptance that the Trinity achieved, to be put on the same pedestal with them.

**Patnam Subramanya Iyer (1845 AD - 1902 AD)**

Patnam Subramanya Iyer was a leading musician and a brilliant composer. He was a pupil of Manambuchavadi Venkatassubbayyar, one of Tyagaraja’s illustrious disciples. He spent all his time in the study and practice of music and in composing. He was responsible for the spread of musical knowledge amongst the people during his time.

Patnam Subramanya Iyer was reputed for his pure rendering of the kritis of Tyagaraja, true to the original form in which they were conceived. His favourite compositions were ‘Nadopasana’ in Begada, ‘Rarini’ in Suddha Saveri and ‘Vidamuseyave’ in Kharaharapriya. He was considered an excellent exponent of tana and pallavi and took a deep interest in the tala system.
Patnam Subramanya Iyer had a remarkably original way of handling ragas. His rendering of Begada was unique, which earned for him the title Begada Subramanya Iyer. Poornachandrika, Kharaharapriya, Kannada Gowla and Suddha Saveri were some favourite ragas, which he sang frequently in concerts. He had made a thorough study of Tyagaraja’s compositions and understood his style truly. This enabled him to compose faithfully in the very mould of Tyagaraja. But for the occurrence of the ankita ‘Venkatesa’ in his compositions, one can mistake them for those of Tyagaraja himself. He has to his credit a number of thillanas in different ragas. The then Maharaja of Mysore on hearing his thillana in Jhenjhutti raga ‘Tirana tana dhim ta Tirana’ presented him with a pair of bracelets.

In the tradition of Tyagaraja, Patnam Subramanya Iyer has composed many kritis in Telugu and Sanskrit. It is believed that he composed about hundred pieces including varnams, kritis and thillanas set to Adi, Rupakam, Chapu and Jhampa talas. He has also composed javalis for instance, ‘Mariyada teliyakane’ (Surati, Rupakam). Besides popular ragas, he also composed in rarer ragas like Sindhumandari, Chakravakam, Kannada, Poornachandrika, Udayaravichandrika, Phalamanjari and Bhajravam. The well-known kriti ‘Raghuvamsasudha’ with its captivating chittaswara in Kathanakuthuhalam can be said to define the raga. He had many illustrious students such as Mysore Vasudevachar, Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar and Tiger Varadachariar who went on to become famous composers and vocalists. Many of his compositions are sung and performed actively in concerts even today. However, despite his enduring musical legacy, it is generally agreed that Patnam Subramanya Iyer cannot really be included in the same group as the Trinity, as he was very firmly an adherent of the Tyagaraja school. His contributions while being of a very high order and
invaluable to Karnatic music, nevertheless have not attained the wide spread popularity as those of the Trinity.

**Kotiswara Iyer**

Kotiswara Iyer (1870 AD – 1936 AD), was a composer of Karnatic music. Kotiswara Iyer was born into a music family. His grandfather was the famous poet and composer Kavikunjara Bharati, a contemporary of the trinity. Kotiswara Iyer was initially trained by his grandfather who taught him Sanskrit, Tamil and music. He later studied music under Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar and Patnam Subramania Iyer. From his resources, he also published his grandfather's works such as ‘Kanda Purana Keertanam’, ‘Alagar Kuravanji’, ‘Perinba Keertanam’ etc.

Kotiswara Iyer penned over two hundred compositions. He composed mainly in Tamil and used the mudra Kavi Kunjara Dasan in tribute to his grandfather. His songs were highly poetical with a natural flow and excellent raga bhava for example, ‘Amponn ammaye’ in Sriragam. His kritis were mainly in praise of Lord Muruga. Along with Papanasam Sivan, he is considered one of the greatest contributors to Tamil compositions in recent times.

His major work was in composing a kriti in each of the 72 melakarta ragas. He published them in his book “Kandha Gaanamritham”. He was one of the first vaggeyakaras to do this. The songs are highly poetic and are adorned with swarakshara sandhis, beautiful sangatis (musical phrases), raga bhava and depth. He himself has written the meanings, Pada Urai, of the songs. He also composed the Tamil Pancharatnams and varnams in Tamil in the ragas Saveri, Danyasi, Bilahari, etc. For his mastery in Todi raga, he was called 'Todi Koti'.
He has used many varieties of Talas in various eduppus. His compositions like ‘Esan Kanakasabesan’ (Raga Begada) had beautiful structuring suited to laya patterns. His kriti in Raga Kambodhi – ‘Ayyane’ - has a very distinct eduppu and exhibited his scholarship. He had the highest regard for Muthuswamy Dikshitar and Tyagaraja and has composed songs on both of them. He sang in praise of Tyagaraja in his ‘Ininamakkoru kavalaiyumillai’ – meaning, ‘henceforth we have no need for any worry.’ He composed the song ‘Swami Deekshita’ (Raga Devamanohari) on Muthuswamy Dikshitar. He followed the Sampoorna mela paddhati of Ramamatya, which Tyagaraja followed. Like Tyagaraja kritis, his songs also had many sangatis. But like Muthuswamy Dikshitar his songs also had raga and vaggeyakara mudras. Thus he was influenced by both of them. Koteeswara Iyer however did not compose even a single song with Samashti Charanam, although Muthuswamy Dikshitar has to his credit many such songs. Nevertheless, the musical approach and pattern of Koteeswara Iyer’s songs is believed to be the same as that of Muthuswamy Dikshitar.

He is well known for his Vivaadi raaga kritis like ‘mohanakara’ (Raga Neethimathi), ‘ma madhura sarasa’ (Raga Ganamurthi) and ‘Singara Kumari’ (Raga Varunapriya). Famous vocalist S.Rajam sang a lot of Koteeswara Iyer’s kritis and popularized them. The song ‘Ulamariyadha’ (Raga Sriranjani) is said to have been found written on a paper which he had kept beneath his pillow at the time of his demise and is said to be his last composition.

Kotiswara Iyer has contributed greatly to the musical wealth of Karnatic music, especially to Tamil music. However, possibly due to the fact that he composed primarily in tamil, he has been unable to garner widespread popularity as the Trinity did and hence cannot be placed on the same pedestal as them.
Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar

Poochi Srinivasa Iyengar (1860 AD -1919 AD) was an outstanding performer and significant composer in the musical tradition of Tyagaraja. He was one of the earliest pupils of Patnam Subramanya Iyer. He also had training in raga alapana and pallavi from Maha Vaidyanatha Aiyar and this is believed to have had some influence on his compositions and performance style. He sang mainly in madhyamakala rich with brigas. He was a great devotee of Tyagaraja and one of his kritis ‘Sadguru Swamiki’ in Raga Ritigowla is dedicated to him.

A versatile composer, he is said to have composed about 100 pieces including tana varnams, a pada varnam, kritis, javalis, kavadi chindus, tillanas as well as a ragamalika. He used the mudras Raamanaadapura and Srinivasa.

His popular varnams are in the Raga Mohanam and Raga Kannada and the lesser known varnams are in the Raga Varali (with sollkattu) and Raga Narayani. The ragas used in his popular kritis include Todi, Navarasakannada, Devamanohari, Purvikalyani, Useni, Ritigowla, Anandabhairavi etc. His compositions in the ragas Harikamboji, Karaharapriya, Natabhairavi, Kiravani, Swararanjini and Megharanjini have become rare.

His tillanas are popular and are in ragas suchs as Todi, Poornachandrika, Kanada and Edukulakamboji. He has also composed two tillanas set to rare talas, one in Kapi set to Lakshmisa tala and the other in Pantuvarali set to Raghavardhani tala. His famous javalis are in the ragas Kamas, Kapi, Surati and Behag.
His prominent pupils included Ariyakkudi Ramanuja Iyengar, Kandanur Srinivasa Iyengar, Salem Doraiswami Iyengar, Karaikudi Rajamani Iyengar and Kuttalam Srinivasa Iyer. However, despite the fact that he has composed several kritis, varnams etc, he never really rose to great prominence to the extent that the Trinity did. In addition, given the fact that he himself is from the student line of Tyagaraja, it would be inappropriate to bracket him with his great guru.

Garbapurivasas

Garbapurivasas (1860 AD – 1967 AD) refers collectively to a quartette of composers who composed together in Kannada. The two key composers in the group were Pedda Devudu Venkatasubbiah, a violinist, Chinna Devudu Krishniah, also a violinist and composer. The other two members were Karur Chinnaswamiah, also a violinist and Dakshinamurti Sastri. The first three were brothers and the fourth, a cousin. They were trained in the musical tradition of Tyagaraja by Nemam Subramania Iyer, a direct disciple of Tyagaraja.

Karur Chinna Devudu composed several songs like 'Neramanchakura' (Raga Sankarabharanam). He initially played violin duets with his elder brother, Pedda Devudu and later with his younger brother, Chinnaswamiah.

Chinna Devudu composed note-swaras also like Muthuswamy Dikshitar. 'Sami Ninne' (Raga Sri set to Adi tala) varnam is one of his well known compositions. Their compositions are all in the tradition of Tyagaraja. Prof. P. Sambamurthi Ayyar says that Dakshinamurti Sastri wrote the sahitya for the songs which was then set to music by DevuDayya and that the two are called Garbhapuri composers after their signature 'Garbhapuri'.
Other compositions of theirs include ‘koniyaDi tarama’ in Raga Vakulabarana, ‘brova samayamithe ramayya’ in Raga Gowrimanohari, ‘yadukula tilaka’ in Raga Cakravaakam, ‘Amba ninnu neranammiti’ Ragamalika, ‘Emi neramu’ in Raga Garudadhwani, and ‘Rara rama’ in Raga Bangala. Some of the javalis they composed are: ‘Entanininnu’ in Raga Bihag, ‘Ewatetalune’ in Raga Surutti, ‘Kopamitike’ in Raga Bihag and ‘Ninnu nammina’ in Raga Karaharapriya.

His craftsmanship as a composer benefited from his skill both as a vocalist and instrumentalist. His kriti ‘Paramenchakura’, the varnam in Raga Sri and the kriti ‘Emani’ pogadudu’ are replete with melodic patterns. Musical phrases in the sama-yati pattern in the varnam in Raga Sri are noteworthy.

Karur Chinnaswamiah was honoured with ‘Sangita Kalanidhi’ title in 1950. Musiri Subramanya Ayyar, K.S.Papa Venkatramiah, G.N.Balasubramaniam and Varahoor Muthuswamy Ayyar were his disciples.

Tachchur Singaracharlu was the elder of the Singaracharlu brothers. He was a great composer and also contributed significantly to the field of musicology. He had a number of books on music to his credit and published many masterpieces for the first time. He and his brother were the first to print in notation the pancharatna kirtanas of Tyagaraja and the three svara jatis of Syama Sastri. The varnam ‘Ninnukori’ in Raga Vasantha was his composition. Some of their other numerous publications constituted a series of text books in Karnatic music. Singaracharlu is believed to have helped popularise the Sampurna melà Paddhathi with Kanakangi - Ratnangi nomenclature.
Pattabhiramiah was a significant composer whose songs bear the Talavam mudra. His javalis are dedicated to the local deity of his hometown and are known for their *madhura bhakti*.

It is known that he composed as many as thirty nine javalis. The ragas featured in the javalis include Atana (3), Behag (2), Pilu (l), Phara (l), Khamas (2), Kedaram (3), Todi (2), and Purvikalyani (3). The talas used are: Adi, Chapu, Desadi, Ekam, Madhyadi, Misra laghu, Rupakam and Tisra laghu. Some of the javalis he composed are ‘Paripovalera’ (Raga Bilahari), ‘Enta takkulu nerchinavate’ (Raga Bhairavi), ‘Mohamella delisenu gadara’ (Raga Mohanam), ‘Chalu lera’ (Raga Begada) and ‘Cheliya nenetlu’ (Raga Nilambari). Patattabiramiah also composed a keertana in Tamil: ‘Vandarulvai’ (Raga Hindustani Behag).

He is known to have composed atleast four javalis in English. The composition ‘What has become of thy promise?’ seems to be a translation of the piece ‘Nee naata lemayanura’ in Raga Purvikalyani.

**Tirupati Narayanaswamy**

Tirupati Narayanaswamy was a vocalist, vainika, violinist and Harikatha performer. He was a composer of class, with simple, beautiful compositions that evoke the essence of the raga in a few choice phrases. He composed kritis and javalis mostly in Telugu and used the mudra Tirupatipura and also Tirupati Venkatesha.

Some of his popular compositions are ‘Sarievvare’ (Raga Sahana), javali ‘Vagaladi’ (Raga Behag), ‘Ikanaina na’ (Raga Pushpalatika), ‘Parakelasarawasti’ (Raga Natakurinji).
Tanjore Quartet

In the nineteenth century the dance in the temples and the royal courts was sculpted into a stage art by the four Tamil brothers, Ponnayya (1804 AD - 1864 AD), Chinniah (1802 AD - 1856 AD), Sivanandam (1808 AD - 1863 AD) and Vadivelu (1810 AD - 1845 AD), well known as the Tanjore Quartet. They were groomed in music by Muthuswamy Dikshitar, one of the illustrious Trinity. Ponnaiah Pillai also trained under the famous dance guru Pandanainallur Meenakshisundaram Pillai, who was also his uncle. After studying the practice of dance in the temples and the royal courts, the brothers codified and systematized the dance and designed the Margam (solo repertoire), standardized the body technique (Adavu) and built a syllabus for the dance.

Vadivelu also learnt to play the violin and introduced it in Karnatic music. He also introduced the concept of Mohiniaattam under the patronage of Swati Tirunal. Vadivelu is also singled out as one of the very few to whom Tyagaraja extended his friendship and intimacy and it is believed that Vadivelu Nattuvanar was Tyagaraja's violinist for a time at Tiruvaiyar. Vadivelu is also believed to have collaborated with Swati Tirunal in the compositions of varnams and other dance items.

Chinniah became the court vidwan in Mysore and his varnams and kritis carry the name of his patron Krishanaraja Wodeyar. Ponnayya was a devotee of Lord Shiva and his varnams and dance compositions are in praise of Lord Brihadiswara. He also mentions his patrons – Sarabhoji, Pratapasimha and Amarasimha maharajas.

Sivananadadam was in the court of Sivaji II and composed Tamil padams, javalis, tana and chauka varnams.
Ponnayya Pillai made his mark as a composer and a musicologist and was at the forefront of establishing Karnatic music as a University discipline. He was a music professor in the Music College started by Raja Sir Annamalai Chettiyar in Chidambaram, and he taught vocal music and mridangam. He also composed many swarajatis, varnams, kirtanas, and thillanas and taught them to his students. Of the many compositions of the Tanjore Quartet, the maximum available have been authored by Ponnayya. He had composed beautiful jatiswarams in ragas such as Kalyani, Chakaravakam, Vasanta, Poorvikalyani (set to the rare sankirna nadai Adi talam) as well as a ragamalika jatiswaram (in Misra Chapu talam). As befitted a disciple of Muthuswamy Dikshitar, Ponnayya Pillai had also acquired the expertise of swaraksharam that can be seen in many of his compositions. He composed many varnams in Sankarabharanam and one among them has exemplary swaras centred round the panchamam. He also composed many defining ragamalikas and often included the name of the raga in his compositions. Some of his famous compositions are ‘Maya ateeta’ (Mayamalavagowla), ‘Ranganathude’ (Sourashtram), ‘Ambaya ninne’ (Atana), ‘Mahadeva manohari’ (Deva Manohari). He was conferred the title of "Sangeeta Kalanidhi" by the Music Academy in 1932 and wrote a book on musicology called "Isai Iyal."

The Tanjore Quartet composed a number of alarippus, kauthuvams, varnams, javalis, thillanas, sabdams, and padams as well as a number of Tana varnams and Kritis. Some of these are ‘Amba Souramba’ (Arabhi) and ‘Amba Neelamba’ (Neelambari), ‘Satileni’ (Poorvikalyani), ‘Elaradayane kamini’ (Bhairavi, Adi). Famous swarajatis include ‘Emandayaalara’ (Hussaini, Rupakam) and ‘Kana aavalaanen’ (Kamboji, Rupakam). The quartet also composed a set of nine songs called Navaratna mala in tribute to their teacher.
The Tanjore quartet had a significant influence on Bharatanatyam and on Karnatic music - both in the form of introducing the violin into Karnatic music and in terms of their compositions. As composers they, especially Ponnayya Pillai, followed the style of their guru Muthuswamy Dikshitar and as they belonged to the Dikshitar school, their compositional excellence also traces its roots back to the Trinity and cannot be viewed separately.

**Mysore Vasudevachar**

Vasudevachar was born in the late 19th century and learnt music initially from Vina Padmanabhayya and later from Patnam Subramanya Iyer. He was known for his mastery of the nuances of the raga, tana, neraval, and pallavi portrayal. He was equally comfortable singing Hindusthani Ragas.

While he was a brilliant performer, he is mostly remembered as a composer having created about two hundred songs. Two volumes of his kirtanas entitled ‘Vasudeva Kirtana manjari’ and a volume ‘Navaratna Ragamalika’ have been published. Some of his compositions are: (a) a group of 24 kritis, all in Sanskrit on the 24 names of the Lord, Keshava, Narayana, etc. (b) ragamalikas on the Musical Trinity, (c) the music he set for the Ramayana ballet designed at Kalakshetra, Adyar. His use of Sanskrit slokas in ragamalika, expounding the meaning and mood through appropriate ragabhava, was his specialty.

He handled about hundred ragas, all of them popular ones, except for a piece in Megha Ranjani. As a composer, he is credited with bringing out his original tunes in traditional ragas like Bhairavi, Sankarabharanam and Todi. His notable compositions include
‘Palukavademira’ in Devamanohari, ‘Brochevarevaruva’, which established Khamas as a Bhashanga Raga in Karnatic music. He has also composed kritis with chittaswaras, one of them being ‘Pranatatrharam’ in the raga Chenchurutti and set to Khanda Triputa tala. He is called "Abhinava Tyagaraja" for the mellifluous nature of his compositions.

**Muthaiah Bhagavathar**

Muthaiah Bhagavathar was born in 1877 and at the age of six, on the death of his parents, he went to live with his uncle Mahamahopadhyaya M. Lakshmana Suri at Harikesananallur. As he was growing up, he became influenced by the music of Patnam Subramanya Iyer and Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer and became a student of Vidwan Sambasiva Iyer (a disciple of Pallavi Doraiwamy Iyengar, who belonged to the shishya parampara of Tyagaraja) at Tiruvaiyaru. After completing his studies, Bhavathar returned to Harikesanalallur and devoted himself to the practice of music, becoming a proficient concert performer. Later he also became interested in Harikatha and given his deep knowledge of Tamil and Sanskrit as well as proficiency in music, he became very well known as a Harikatha performer. He started composing initially to support his Harikatha performances and kalakshepams. He wrote his own ‘Nirupanas’ for his Harikathas and as a next step, composed kirtanas suitable to the Kalakshepams. Some early kirtanas of this type were ‘Kalilo-Aarismaranamu’ in Kapi, and ‘Vallinayaka Nivegathi’ in Shanmukhapriya. Subsequently he began composing stand alone kritis as well and also composed several varnams, ragamalikas, darus and thillanas.

In 1927, he performed before Maharaja Krishna Rajendra Wodeyar of Mysore who conferred the title of ‘Gayaka Shikhamani’ on
him. At the maharaja’s suggestion, Bhagavathar composed Ashtothara shata kirtanas in praise of Chamundeswari as well as another set of Ashtothara kirtanas on Siva. Muthaiah Bhagavathar was very well versed with Carnatic music theory as well and was one of the founding fathers of the Music Academy at Madras. He was awarded the title of Sangita Kalanidhi in 1930. He also visited Travancore at the behest of the Maharani Sethu Parvathi bai and was responsible for re-popularizing the kritis of Maharaja Swati Tirunal. He also wrote a treatise called ‘Sangita Kalpadrumam’ for which he was awarded a doctorate by the Travancore Samsthanam in 1943. Some shishyas of his who distinguished themselves in the field of classical music were Madurai Mani Iyer and Budalur Krishnamurthi Sastrigal.

Muthiaiah Bhagavathar's compositions are as remarkable for their quality, as well as for their number and variety. He composed in Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and Kannada. He composed ten tana varnams, five in Adi tala and five in Ata tala. He also composed a pada varnam ‘Pankaja lochani ra’ in Anandabhairavi as well as four darus, ten thillanas and five ragamalikas. One well known daru varnam of his is ‘Maate malayadhwaja pandya sanjate’ (Khamas, Adi). Around four hundred kritis of his are available to us today. He has composed Kritis on the one hundred and eight names of Lord Siva and Goddess Chamundeshwari. He composed kritis in praise of all the deities of the Hindu pantheon and though many of these are in popular ragas, there are quite a few in rare ragas such as Suddha Seemantini, Navarasa Kannada, Saraswati, Hamsanadam, Padi, Madhva Manohari, Dwijavanti, Amritavarshini and the like. He has also brought to life ragas like Hamsanandi for which lakshanas were available in books but there were no lakshyas in the form of popular compositions. The raga
Hamsanandi has become popular through Bhagavathar’s kirtanas ‘Nidumahima’ and ‘Sachanara rama vani’. Similarly, Mohana Kalyani is another raga which has become similarly famous through the kirtanas ‘Bhuvaneshwariya’ and ‘Siddhi Vinayakam’. Other ragas that Bhagavathar popularized include Gauda Malhar (‘Sarasa Mukhi’) and Valaji (‘Jalandhara’). Bhagavathar also made seminal contributions in the form of creating new ragas – in this he was aided by his genius for harmony and melody, spotting the harmonic sancharas given any combination of swaras and evolving a distinctive melodic pattern out of them. Some such kirtanas and ragas are ‘Vijayambike’ in the raga Vijayanagari, ‘Saravana Bhava’ in the raga, Pasupatipriya, ‘Samayamide’ in the raga Budha Manohari. The number of new ragas invented by Bhagavathar exceeded twenty.

Bhagavathar was a devoted follower of Tyagaraja’s style and considered him as his role model. He elaborated his kritis with many sangatis to delineate the raga fully, for example ‘Nipadame Gati’ (Bhairavi), ‘Bahala Devi’ (Todi), ‘Sahaja Guna’ (Sankarabharanam). He liked using Madhayamakala and in his sahitya, the emphasis was more in the musical qualities of the words than on literary excellence. In his later years, he was heavily influenced by the music of Muthuswamy Dikshitar and this is reflected in his later compositions, which are more mellow and rich in gamakas. To conclude, among the post Trinity composers, Muthaiah Bhagavathar compositions are outstanding for their quality and originality. However, as he was a devoted disciple of the Tyagaraja style and was influenced by Dikshitar as well, it would not be appropriate to include him in the same grouping as these composers.
Papanasam Sivan

Papanasam Sivan was born in the year 1890 in Polagam, a village in Nagapattinam taluk in Tanjore district as the second son of Ramamritha Aiyar and Yogambal. He was named Ramiah and as a child, he showed a keen interest in music, when he moved with his family to Trivandrum, where his uncle Ramayana Sastri was attached to the Padmanabhaswami temple. In Trivandrum, he studied at the Maharaja’s Sanskrit College and took his degree in Vyakarna in 1910. After his mother's death when he was twenty, Sivan became a wandering mendicant.

For nearly twelve years, Sivan went from place to place singing devotional songs and accepting food offered by the people. It was during this period that he came to be known as Papanasam Sivan; Sivan - because he was an ardent devotee of Siva, smeared with Vibhuti, and Papanasam - because he often performed at Papanasam where his brother lived.

Sivan was greatly influenced by the composer Neelakanta Sivan during his stay at Trivandrum. The latter often sang his compositions along with others by Gopalakrishna Bharati, Vedanayakam Pillai and Ramalinga swami. Some songs that he popularised were ‘Enraikku Siva Kripai varumo’ (Mukhari), ‘Navasiddhi petralum’ (Karaharapriya). Sivan learnt music and acquired swara and laya knowledge from Noorani Mahadeva Bhagavathar. He also continued the bhajana tradition of Nilakanta Sivan. It was also around this time while singing songs of these great composers that Sivan was inspired to start composing.
On one occasion, Sivan had the opportunity to listen to a concert by Konerirajapuram Vaidyanatha Iyer. He was so impressed that he requested Vaidyanatha Iyer to take him on as his disciple. He then learnt music from Vaidyanatha Iyer for seven years and slowly imbibed his teacher’s style of singing raga alapana, kriti, neraval and swara prastara. However, he was more interested in bhajans and threw himself heart and soul into composing them. He led the bhajan parties following the deity in many festivals at temples in South India. He was at Kumbakonam during Makam, at Nagapattinam during Adi Puram, at Tiruvaiyaru during Sapthastana, Tiruvarur Vrishabha Vahanam of Lord Tyagaraja and Mylapore in the month of Margazhi during the festival at Kapali temple. Sivan performed his first concert at Tiruvaiyaru during the Tyagaraja festival in 1918 and was widely appreciated.

Papanasam Sivan composed around five hundred kritis and over eight hundred songs for films. This achievement has also earned him the sobriquet of ‘Tamil Tyagayya. Both his music and compositions reflect the influence of Maha Vaidyanatha Iyer.

He used the mudra ‘Ramadasan’In his compositions, some of which are ‘Abhayambikaaramani’ (Sankarabharanam), ‘Enna tavam sheydane Yashoda’ (Kapi), ‘Kaa vaa vaa’ (Varali), ‘Kali teerumo’ (Todi), ‘Kanindarul purindaal’ (Kalyani) and ‘Karpagame’ (Madhyamavati). He began composing songs for Tamil films with the film ‘Sita Kalyanam’.

Let us consider some of his songs in more detail to illustrate his virtuosity. In his famous composition ‘Enna thavam’ (Kapi), he talks about the greatness of the divine infant Krishna and the good fortune of mother Yashoda who fed, cradled and punished Krishna. On the other hand great sages could obtain darshan of the Lord, only through deep
penance and hence even all the Gods, including Brahma and Indira envied Yashoda, her good fortune. This composition is noteworthy for its musical and literary beauty, with the essence of Kapi raga being brought out beautifully throughout the song. The sahitya aptly illustrates the affection of a mother towards her child and gives ample scope for abhinaya. Hence this is also a very popular choice for dancers, who present it in the form of a padam.

Another composition that is quite different in tone is 'Nanoru Vilayattu Bommaya' in Navarasa Kannada. Here the composer is asking the universal mother, "Oh Mother of the universe! Am I a toy for you to play with? I have suffered enough in this world. Are you not moved by my pitiable condition? I am exhausted, I can play no more. I have surrendered completely at your feet." The depth of pathos and anguish expressed in this composition is very moving.

Papanasam Sivan has enriched the field of dance by his dance compositions.

‘Idathupaadam Thookki’ (Khamas), ‘Anandanadamidum’ (Kedaragaula), ‘Nadarajanun Tiru’ (Vasantha), etc are ideal dance compositions. The brisk Madhyamakala sahitya and solkattus enable the dancer to perform Adavus. The selection of ragas like Khamas, Kedaragaula and Vasantha are highly suitable for dance.

His magnum opus is a ragamalika on "Sri Rama Charitram" in Adi tala in twenty three ragas. Other ragamalikas composed by him are ‘Karpagavalli’, ‘Kosalai Pudalvāna’, ‘Maalaisutruvan’, ‘Marajanaka’ and ‘Madhusudhana’. Though he composed a few songs in Sanskrit, Tamil was the main language for his compositions. Kritis like ‘Kartikeya’ (Todi), ‘Kapali’ (Mohanam), ‘Kanakkan Kodi’ (Kambhoji) and ‘Ka va va’ (Varali) reflect the simplicity and elegance of his Tamil and are evergreen favourites with the audience.
Like Saint Tyagaraja’s kritis, each and every one of Sivan’s compositions is suffused with Bhakti. The predominant feature of all his songs is the raga element and the fine blending of sangita and sahitya. The raga roopa trait in his works is unparalleled in contemporary compositions. The underlying feature of Papanasam Sivan’s compositions is nishkama bhakti, just like those of Tyagaraja’s compositions. Composing musical compositions is a three-pronged process - writing, tuning and singing. But Papanasam Sivan was adept in all the three and possessed all the factors that make an ideal vaggeyakara.

Papanasam Sivan was the author of several books, including a Sanskrit lexicon called ‘Vadamozhi Chorkadal’. His first volume of kritis, containing a hundred compositions was published in 1962, followed by a second volume in 1965 and a third one some years later. Sivan composed not only kritis but also varnams, padams and ragamalikas. His pada varnams in Mayamalavagowla and Pantuvarali are widely acclaimed. He has also composed in rakti ragas, besides kritis in ragas like Maand, Hamsanadam, Nagaswarali, Behag and Sivaranjini (the swara of Mohana with Sadharana Gandhara). He was adept at bringing out the different facets of a raga in different compositions and this is illustrated by his kritis in Todi, which number over ten.

He was honoured with the title of ‘Isai Perarignar’ by the Tamil Sangam and received the President's award in 1962. He was also known as the Tamil Tyagayya.

**Summary**

The periods before, during and after the Trinity have witnessed the emergence of several great composers, each of whom have contributed in no mean measure to the corpus of Kalpita music which we have with us today. However, for different reasons, it has become
clear that no particular composer came close to being included in the
group of the Trinity, with universal acceptance. While preceding
composers like Bhadrachala Ramadas and Purandara Dasa have
served as a guiding light to even members of the Trinity like Tyagaraja,
they have fallen short in the matrix for comparison on other counts such
as language, themes and gods, ragas handled and so on. Although this
does not in any way diminish their greatness as a composer, it
nevertheless precludes them from being clubbed into this group. Most
of the prominent successors of the Trinity have some linkage to them,
most commonly by virtue of being a direct or indirect line of students
and have been greatly influenced by their music. It would hence be
inappropriate to include them into the group of the Trinity.

The Trinity is without doubt a class apart. Their influence has
been not only directly in the realm of compositions, but also indirectly
through the influence that they had on their peers and successors and
still further upon the generations of rasikas around the world. They
have at once raised the bar of Karnatic music composition and brought
this genre of music closer to the common man. Their grouping as such
is unquestionably appropriate. Having said this, it is also pertinent to
underscore the fact at the cost of repetition that one of the factors which
render them most suitable for grouping is their existence during the
same time period. This, combined with the other factors discussed in
other chapters justifies this grouping.

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