George Lamming a major exponent of West Indian novel is rightly called a Caribbean pathfinder, and has made significant contribution to the literary tradition of novel writing. He conducts a journey in his works exploring landscapes literary and geographical to understand one's self and for growth of individual and group consciousness. Lamming's keen interest in history at an early age inspired him to trace the Caribbean history and national culture in his works. Lamming said in an interview.

"...I was very interested then and have remained interested in history. I developed a great interest in history through H.G. Well's Outline of History ....I must have read the Outline of History between the age of fifteen and eighteen three or fourtimes. I was grateful to that book and to its corresponding book which was a history of the growth of life, called The Science of Life".
The primary tasks of West Indian novelists and poets have been to analyse the colonial history and to make an objective assessment of the impact of imperial rule on the human psyche. Early protest-poetry dealt with conflicts in West Indian Society physical as well as cultural between the coloniser and the colonised. It sought to clarify and define the West Indian experience in the given situation and in the context of Caribbean history. And the West Indian novelist attempted to relate the colonial experience to the present through analysis and search for identity. Lamming's concern with the nature of real freedom in *Of Age and Innocence* and *Season of Adventure* is but an attempt to come to terms with the colonial status and to transcend the institutions and systems imposed on them. For him, true freedom is dependent on the quality of protest and rebellion which are in turn related to the people's sense of history and their link with the rural organic world of the Peasant. For Naipaul, true freedom, the link with landscape and the sense of community, as envisaged by Lamming, seemed an impossibility. The very misconception of colonial adventure, and its terrible impact on the people, he felt, created wrong notions about colonialism and true freedom. In both *A House for Mr. Biswas* and *The Mimic Men*, V.S. Naipaul's characters struggled against these barriers to achieve either limited and fragile personal niches in the general chaos or a more cathartic and personal understanding of their situation.
The deep concern of the writer with the colonial experiences and the severely damaged psyche of creoles is reflected in the anti-colonial theme of the Prospero – Caliban relationship. It is interesting to note the revolutionary change in the attitude to and the way it has challenged the usual historical assumptions about the colonised as an object rather than a subject of history. A great deal of Walcott's concern in The Castaway is, for instance, directed towards subverting and challenging these very assumptions about the people and their history. His skilful manipulation of symbolism and language especially in the 'Crusoe poems, offered other dimensions of colonial relations that disputed the dominant myth of Crusoe as the heroic European Settler, as torch bearer of colonial society. His explorations transcended the usual images of master/slave/ servant and highlighted the ways in which the colonial sometimes manipulated the relations to his advantage and achieved often a unique personal development in the process. In these poems the colonised had become not just the converted cannibal moulded to the colonisers faith. He became the very human in 'Friday' whose personal and separate development perceived contradictions and failures in the new faith itself. This rounded view of Friday as human, self-aware and perceptive, not only endowed him with a subjectivity and an identity but also revealed a level of sublety in his relationship with Crusoe.
Lamming undertook similar exploration in *The Pleasures of Exile*, *Water with Berries* and *Natives of My Person* projecting the colonial 'Caliban' as possessing a unique insight into the colonisers' consciousness and motivation. His reading of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, in *The Pleasures of Exile* is in a major sense a metaphorical view of West Indian Colonisation and the psychology of colonial relations. It is also in the final analysis, an attempt to create a future from the past, a way of pushing colonial relations beyond that legacy of domination and subordination which history ordinarily imposes. For Lamming, this future has invoked a transformation of the past relations and which is possible only when the past, endowed with different meanings, generated new souls for new beginnings: "The mystery of the colonial is this: where he remains alive, his instinct, always and forever creative; must choose a way to change the meaning and perspective of this ancient tyranny."

The entire range of Lamming's work springs from this perspective and his novels concern themselves with analysis and explorations on both personal and public levels. The dramatic tension in the novel is always presented as a struggle to escape from the cage of personal (and public) history, and as a struggle to choose a way of changing the meaning and perspective of 'ancient tyranny.' *In Water with Berries* intensely dramatises the colonial relations, where the colonial finally survives the predicament and succeeds in choosing his
way and acting. Like a crab among rocks, Lamming's Teeton emerges slowly from the furnace of the coloniser's (the Dowaggers) grave to answer the political call of 'the Gathering' representing his messianic future. The experience is altogether a spiritual and highly symbolic one, and the catharsis merges into an apocalyptic vision of revolution and promise. In most of Lamming's anti-colonial novels the burden of re-orientation and change is normally the burden of the colonised. But choice and change involving a future which also includes a dialogue and an understanding with the coloniser, and the changed relationship between the coloniser and the colonised, between Prospero and Caliban, becomes Lamming's' major concern in Natives of My Person. The personal drama is necessitated by 'Calibans' assertion of freedom, by his new vision of himself as 'Possibility of spirit which might fertilize and extend the resources of any human vision.' To accept this vision of Caliban in a new relationship, Prospero has to evaluate his own place in a changed world and examine those values. Natives of My Person becomes dramatic re-evaluation and Lamming's attempt at transcending the history book' Story of Colonisation.

Interestingly, the themes of anti-imperialism and nationalism have continued to engage the minds of West Indian Writers since the explosion of these very themes in the 1950's and 60's. Each generation seems to be engaged by particular dimensions of the fundamental ideas. Wayne Brown's On the
Coast, of the 70s might, for instance, appear to be treading the old ground of Walcott and Brathwaite in the 60's. But, the poet's bitter attack on the continuing colonial syndrome of dependence and self-rejection is poised between anger and bitterness which gives a special emphasis. On the other hand, Dabydeen's slave song, published in the 80's, explores the colonial experience through the imaginative reconstruction of the private world of slave and indentured labourer; an inner world of anger, pain, frustration, brutality and fantasy; and an imaginative fusion of the present and the past which as Lamming argued, neither history nor 'anthropology' could evoke.

These variations of the anti-imperialist and nationalist themes indicate the extent of which, from the very beginning, the act of writing in the West Indies has been part of the new national consciousness and self-awareness. The very proliferation of these themes and the continual re-appraisals reveal the colonial experience as the single most important determinant in the making of national character of West Indian People.

Lamming's fiction has been a journey of exploration into the self through historicity, and an important argument for the necessity of art and imagination in shaping the new vision of human freedom and Caribbean unity.