

author forces him into acts of discrimination and judgment. Thus he writes extremely well on Edmund Wilson, a critic whom he greatly admires but who is very unlike him; on Colette and Hemingway, where a sharp sense of limitation accompanies a major claim; on Miller, Salinger and Nabokov, where fascination and enjoyment accompany an unfavourable judgment.

It is tempting to conclude by saying that *Continuities* shows that Kermode's best essays are those which exist at furthest remove from his highly distinctive interests in historiography and apocalypse. But this temptation should be resisted. It is the existence of these interests which have given Kermode's work its shape

and coherence, and has allowed him to develop a standpoint and originality which has given us fresh insights into the nature of literary criticism itself. He has thrown open a gate in the pasture where for rather too long critics have been safely grazing, and though the long perspectives he has revealed may be disliked or doubted, they cannot be ignored. He is becoming one of those few critics whose work considered as a whole has a value independent of the detailed judgments which go to make it up, and this is largely because he eminently satisfies his own prescription that the good critic, whatever else he requires, must have 'a mind with useful and interesting contents'.

I. C. S. GREGOR

HOUSE OF BONDAGE, by Ernest Cole. *Allen Lane, 1968. 63s.*

In spite of being the only book of its kind, Ernest Cole's *House of Bondage* is a magnificent piece of work—a lens-witness account of the South Africa that Africans know. Its excellent photographs speak for themselves: the naked herds of mine workers, whose task is to enrich South Africa without sharing its wealth; the familiar sight of the police swoop for passes; Jane Mogale scraping the pots for the crusts of the previous night's porridge; the familiar spotted lips on p. 134; the dignity of old Mrs Mopeli in rags at her banishment camp.

'Petty apartheid' signs take the form which is most familiar to victims of apartheid. Nothing petty about them. They are the inevitable symbols of a gruesome reality. The 'Whites Only' sign at the Post Office is there to give weight and meaning to laws like Bantu Education and Job Reservations, which ensure the inferiority at school and work of the African.

In *House of Bondage* one can see all the results of apartheid in the form of squalor, delinquency, violence and frustration, but in South Africa these are used as arguments for apartheid. The rationale is simple—starve a people, and destroy their security, then they will turn to crime, a fact which can then be used to justify treating them as criminals.

On education Cole seems to give undue praise to African education before Bantu Education; the fact that the system which Bantu Education replaced was full of iniquity should help to explain the cynicism of some

Africans towards attempts to fight Bantu Education.

It may surprise a non-South African to find that the chapter on religion is one of the longer chapters in the book. On this point Cole is closer to the realities of African township life than are many previous books on South Africa.

The chapter on Hospital Care makes nonsense of South Africa's role in heart transplants. For a country in which a quarter of black children die before their first birthday, heart transplants are a callous luxury.

In some ways this book is very disappointing. One looks in vain for pictures or even brief mention of the political leaders. The only pictures of political leaders are those of Mrs Lilian Ngoyi and the late Albert Luthuli in the small chapter on the African middle-class (to regard Chief Luthuli as middle-class is highly irrelevant, as the ANC of which he was a leader is very much a grass roots organization; and in any case it is utterly ridiculous to regard Mrs Ngoyi even in African terms as middle-class). Names like Fischer, Arenstein, Carneson, Helen Joseph, etc., don't appear at all. Of course these would complicate Cole's simple picture of an apartheid causing suffering only to the Blacks, and played upon by 'white liberals'. It is with the same kind of simpleness that Cole rejects non-racialism. Nevertheless, for the material it presents and for the quality of the photographs, this is a superb book.

STEPHEN GAWE