

likened to a dying deer and accorded particular chants; offering of maize seeds are likewise made" (Schultes and Hofmann 1979: 139). With the same justification which enables Lévy-Bruhl to conclude that this example demonstrates the "prelogical mentality" of "the" primitives, one could argue that the participation of wine in blood or flesh in bread during a mass reveals the "prelogical" constitution of our mentality.

While Lévy-Bruhl struggled hard to comprehend the alien and incompletely reported fragments of a foreign culture, this same effort is lacking in those psychiatry books which quoted his description of the Huichol to demonstrate the complete incomprehensibility of "prelogical" thought (Storch [1922] 1965: 20;<sup>1</sup> Kretschmer 1939: 86). The description of "primitive" thought is here used to explain schizophrenic thought disorder, which in the best evolutionary tradition was understood as a regression to a more primitive stage of mentality. Bleuler revealed the racist core of these analogies when he stated in 1911 that the "autistic wishful thinking" is not only a typical symptom of schizophrenia and may occur in all of us during negligence, but characterizes "the negro": "The negro cannot not understand why his responsibility for an act of thievery can easily be detected when today he denies it with all certainty, while he confessed to have committed it yesterday and while his guilt is altogether beyond doubt" (Bleuler 1911: 305).<sup>2</sup> In support of Bleuler it may be argued that the behavior of "the negro" indeed seems to be relatively incomprehensible when it is taken into account that at the same time the German colonial administration did their best to discover the most humane way to whip the "negro" offenders in the colonies. With a deep commitment to humanitarianism physicians and state officials tried to decide whether to use a rope or a whip. As both methods had their shortcomings, namely either the potential to cause sudden death or long-term inability to work, physicians could positively apply their medical knowledge to vote for the whip (Timm 1985: 137–139). However, as Bleuler does not tell us from which sources

he derived his profound knowledge of "the negro," this excursion remains a speculation which may serve the single purpose to remind us of the colonial reality which is hidden behind all the squabble about "the negro." What the comparison of "negroes" and "schizophrenics" enacts is a "primitization" and "infantilization" of the schizophrenic and a "pathologization" of the Africans (Heinz 1987: 361). The incomprehensibility which Lévy-Bruhl attributed to "primitive thought" is rediscovered by Jaspers in delusions; however, it now marks the central criterion of this disorder of thought content (Jaspers 1920: 183). Thus schizophrenics and blacks were supposed to share two qualities that increase the gap between "them" and "us" – their mode of thought is "prelogical" and "incomprehensible." It may thus be less of a surprise to learn that the children of the black French soldiers who occupied the Rhineland after World War I were already registered as a "hygiene" problem by local authorities in the late 1920s and shared the fate of schizophrenics during fascism – compulsory sterilization (Fremgu 1984: 144).

These consequences of an alienating and devaluating description of the so-called "primitives" and schizophrenics have definitely not been intended by Lévy-Bruhl. Neither can be hypothesized that Evans-Pritchard was able to foresee these developments when he published his work on the Azande in 1937. Nevertheless, Evans-Pritchard's insistence on the coherence and logic of magical rituals achieves its special importance when it is contrasted to the fascist discourse about "worthless" races and individuals (Haug 1986: 56), that would soon result in compulsory sterilization, the mass murder of psychiatric patients, and finally the Holocaust (Meyer-Lindenberg 1990: 1).

### Evans-Pritchard's Transformation of the European Discourse and Perception of "Primitive" Mentality

If the hypothesis is correct that Evans-Pritchard's book about the Azande was intended as a kind of "empirical falsification" of Lévy-Bruhl's theses, we should be able to find examples and statements which directly refer to Lévy-Bruhl's theses. That this is indeed so is clearly indicated when Evans-Pritchard's statements on causality, mystical qualities, and the comprehensibility of "primitive thought" are reviewed.

Lévy-Bruhl had postulated that "primitive men" are not interested in the physical consequences of an action. For instance, they would believe that

1 Storch later criticized his own theories and noted that they were too deeply rooted in the "biologism of the time" (Storch 1965: 33–41).

2 The English translation by Joseph Zinkin does not adequately transmit Bleuler's original notion. Zinkin mitigates Bleuler's comment by transforming "the negro" into any "primitive" and the "detection" (and impending punishment) of his act of thievery into a mere "comment" upon this behavior (Bleuler 1950: 374).