

and classifying reality, and nearly every ritual act is ordered by this notion.

### Reciprocity with the Spirits

For the Hopi, all forms of prayer offering are understood to be prestations requiring reciprocity between the two realms. Prayer offerings in any form are operations of exchange. They are relational but, more important, they make obligatory and compensative requirements of the spirits of the other world. In making prayer offerings to the kachinas, for example, the Hopi "feeds" them. The kachinas are to reciprocate by feeding the Hopis with rains so their crops will grow. The ritual cycle consists, then, in a series of elaborate prayer-prestations between the two worlds. In Hopi belief the peoples of the other world mirror the ritual activities of this world, and there are minor opposite-period observances of all rituals in which reciprocal prayer-prestations are made. As Voth (1912:55) noted: "It is the supposition that the spirits of the departed come and get the food and the prayer-

feathers, or rather the [*hik\*si*] (breath, essence, soul) of those objects. [There is] the custom of not only informing the ancestors and friends in the other world that a ceremony is in progress here, but also of providing the means to have them share its benefits." Because the dead "eat only the odor or the soul of the food . . . they are not heavy. And that is the reason why the clouds into which the dead are transformed are not heavy and can float in the air" (Voth 1905:116). While one end of ritual in this world is to contribute to the well-being of the spirit world, the spirit world is obligated to contribute to the well-being of this world by providing rain, which is essential to the crops and, hence, to the health of the Hopis (and all living things of this world). Rain is the most common request in Hopi prayer; however, the "gift," "blessing," or "benefit" (Third Mesa *ná(:)maṅ\*í*; cf. Voth 1901:146) may take other forms as well. The living and the dead, patterns of subsistence, various rhythms of nature—are all systematically interrelated through an elaborate system of reciprocities. It is this notion that is the most pervasive element in the Hopi world view.