

SCHOLASTIC SC 7710

# ASHANTI

## Folk Tales From Ghana

from The Hat-Shaking Dance and Other Tales from the Gold Coast  
by Harold Courlander, Harcourt, Brace & Co.

narrated by  
**Harold Courlander**

PZ  
8.1  
C86  
A84  
1959  
c.1

MUSIC LP

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ASHANTI

*Folk Tales From Ghana*

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Descriptive notes are inside pocket

ALL STORIES ARE ANANSI'S  
How Anansi Got Them  
ANANSI, THE OLDEST OF ANIMALS  
How Anansi Proved It  
NYAME'S WELL  
Why The Frog Has No Tail  
TWO FEASTS FOR ANANSI  
Why Anansi Is Very Thin in the Middle  
ANANSI PLAYS DEAD  
Why Anansi Hides In Dark Corners  
THE PORCUPINE'S HOE  
And Why There Are Many Hoes In Ashanti

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Produced by Folkways Records, New York © 1960

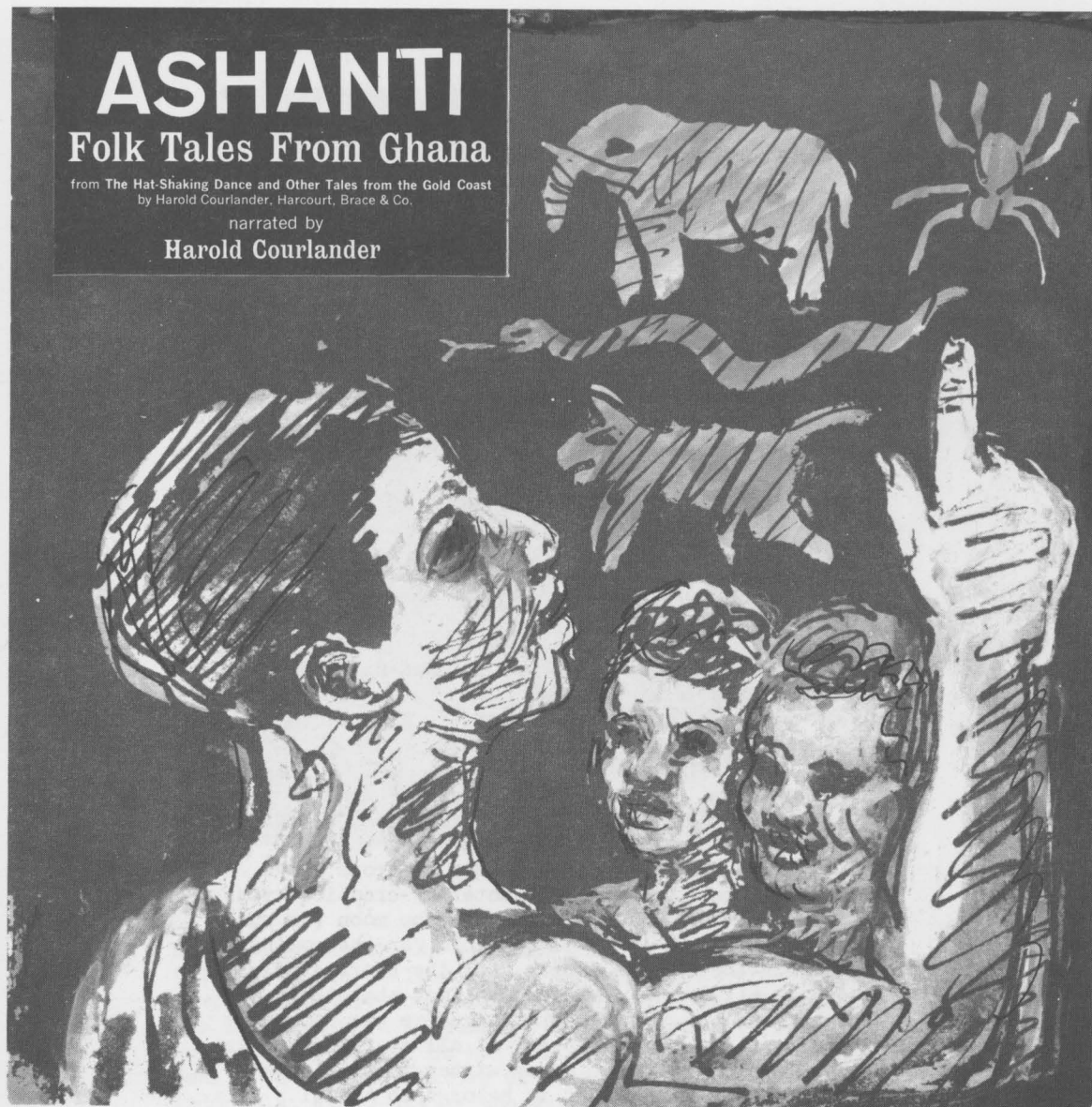
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ASHANTI FOLK TALES FROM GHANA

From The Hat-Shaking Dance and Other Tales from the Gold Coast, by Harold Courlander, Harcourt, Brace & Co.

Narrated by Harold Courlander

SIDE I

- Band 1: ALL STORIES ARE ANANSI'S  
How Anansi Got Them
- Band 2: ANANSI, THE OLDEST OF ANIMALS  
How Anansi Proved It
- Band 3: NYAME'S WELL  
Why The Frog Has No Tail

SIDE II

- Band 1: TWO FEASTS FOR ANANSI  
Why Anansi Is Very Thin in the Middle
- Band 2: ANANSI PLAYS DEAD  
Why Anansi Hides In Dark Corners
- Band 3: THE PORCUPINE'S HOE  
And Why There Are Many Hoes In Ashanti

These tales, read from the book The Hat-Shaking Dance and Other Tales from the Gold Coast by the author, Harold Courlander, are stories of the Ashanti people of Ghana.

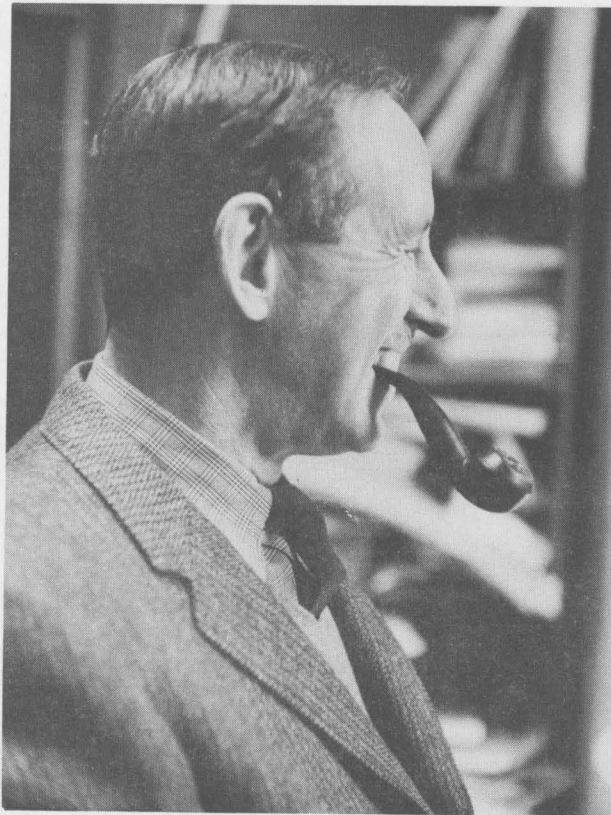
The chief hero, villain, and comedian of traditional Ashanti folk tales is the spider trickster, Anansi. His presence in Ashanti folklore appears to be ancient, for he figures not only in humorous tales but in some that have the character of creation myths. It is Anansi who is responsible for the moon (or sun) being in the sky. He is responsible for the coming of debt among the Ashanti people, for the sharing of wisdom by all people, and for the fact that there are many hoes in his country, whereas there was once only one. Anansi is also the owner of all stories that are told, and therefore when a man wishes to tell a tale he first acknowledges that it belongs to Anansi.

The Ashanti people now occupy the central part of the Republic of Ghana in West Africa. Life has changed greatly for them during recent years. Once a tribe of fierce warriors, they are today peacefully working together with other peoples of Ghana to make their country prosperous and respected. Tribal life has



not ceased altogether, however. Though the chief of the Ashanti, the Asantehene, works in a modern office and travels in a motor car, in the villages of the country the people still know more of the old ways than the new. They narrate legends of victorious wars and great kings, of hunting feats and migrations. They also tell of the exploits, the shrewdness, the foibles, and the stupidities of the spider hero, Anansi.

Photograph by David Gahr



Harold Courlander

Harold Courlander has selected some of the Ashanti tales from his collection and narrated them with direct simplicity. Mr. Courlander is an author and folklorist who is known as a specialist on African and Afro-American cultures. He has published a number of books dealing with the folklore of West Africa, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Asia, and of the Negro peoples of the New World. Two other recorded collections by Mr. Courlander have been issued by Folkways Records -- Indonesian Folk Tales and West African Folk Tales. A collection of his Haitian tales issued by Folkways, Uncle Bouqui of Haiti, has been voiced by Augusta Baker of the New York Public Library.

Included in this group of Ashanti folk tales are the following:

- Side I: 1. ALL STORIES ARE ANANSI'S (How Anansi Got Them)  
2. ANANSI, THE OLDEST OF ANIMALS (How Anansi Proved It)  
3. NYAME'S WELL (Why the Frog Has No Tail)

- Side II: 1. TWO FEASTS FOR ANANSI (Why Anansi Is Very Thin in the Middle)  
2. ANANSI PLAYS DEAD (Why Anansi Hides in Dark Corners)  
3. THE PORCUPINE'S HOE (and Why There Are Many Hoes in Ashanti)

Harold Courlander is a writer and folklorist who is well-known for his work in gathering folk tales and legends from Africa, the West Indies, the United States, and Southeast Asia. Most of the tales collected by Mr. Courlander were taken from indigenous storytellers in Nigeria, Ghana, Ethiopia, Haiti, Eritrea, Somaliland, and the United States. Some of his books of African tales are: The Cow-tail Switch (with George Herzog), The Fire On the Mountain (with Wolf Leslau), and The Hat Shaking Dance. He is the author of Kantchil's Lime Pit, a collection of Indonesian folk tales, and The Tiger's Whisker, stories from Asia and the Pacific. His collection of United States Negro tales, Terrapin's Pot of Sense, contains American stories which originated in West Africa.

Mr. Courlander is the author of two definitive books on Haitian life and lore -- Haiti Singing and The Drum and the Hoe, as well as a collection of Haitian tales written for children, Uncle Bouqui of Haiti. He is a novelist as well, having written one novel with a West Indian background and another set in the State of Alabama. He has been recording and writing about folk music of the world for more than two decades, and has published numerous articles and monographs on this subject. Some of his articles have appeared in the Ethnic Folkways Library series, of which he is General Editor.

In reading these tales from The Hat Shaking Dance, the author has captured a great deal of the spirit of the tales as told in their natural setting among the Ashanti of what was once the Gold Coast, now the Republic of Ghana.

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