

Edited by Douglas Mark Ponton, Uwe Zagratzki

Blues in the 21st Century

Myth, Self-Expression and Trans-Culturalism

SERIES IN MUSIC

About the editor

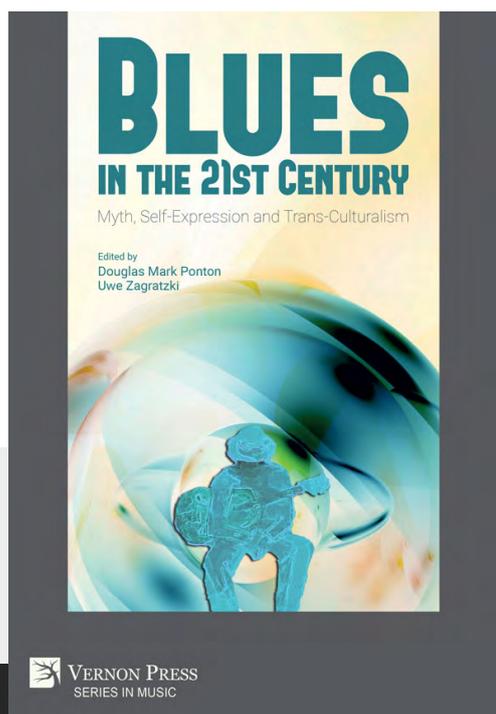
Douglas Mark Ponton is Associate Professor of English Language and Translation at the Department of Political and Social Sciences, University of Catania. His research interests include political discourse analysis, ecolinguistics, interactive sociolinguistics, applied linguistics, pragmatics, corpus linguistics, and critical discourse studies; he is also a keen amateur musician. Ponton's main publications are *For Arguments' Sake: Speaker Evaluation in Modern Political Discourse*, and *Meaning Politics: A Manual of Political Discourse Analysis*. As well as politics, his research deals with a variety of social topics, including tourism, the discourse of mediation, ecology, local dialect and folk traditions, including proverbs and Blues music. He has also published a paper on the figure of the bandit in popular song, exploring the lyrics of Bob Dylan and Woody Guthrie.

Uwe Zagratzki is Professor of Anglophone Literatures and Cultures and the Chair of Literature at the Institute of English, University of Szczecin, Poland. He has widely published on the topics of Scottish and Canadian Literature and Culture, Cultural Studies and War and Literature. His recent publications include co-editorships of and contributions to *Ideological Battlegrounds – Constructions of Us and Them Before and After 9/11*, *Exile and Migration*, *Disrespected Neighbo(u)rs – Cultural Stereotypes in Literature and Film*, *Perspectives on Canada – International Canadian Studies despite Harper and Trudeau*. His interest in the culture of the Blues, evolving from an early passion for rhythmical music, manifests itself in a study of the Blues in Germany (with Winfried Siebers, *Das Blaue Wunder – Blues aus deutschen Landen*) and contributions to specific collections (e.g. "From Early Country

Blues to Rap" in *Chaos in the Contact Zone*, 2017). He is also a founding member of a local group of Blues enthusiasts in Northwest Germany. After having organised annual international Blues concerts for 25 years, their 'Blueslawine' ('Blues Avalanche') was awarded the best national Blues event in 2017.

Summary

The book is the fruit of Douglas Mark Ponton's and co-editor Uwe Zagratzki's enduring interest in the Blues as a musical and cultural phenomenon and source of personal inspiration. Continuing in the tradition of Blues studies established by the likes of Samuel Charters and Paul Oliver, the authors hope to contribute to the revitalisation of the field through a multi-disciplinary approach designed to explore this constantly evolving social phenomenon in all its heterogeneity. Focusing either on particular artists (Lightnin' Hopkins, Robert Johnson), or specific texts (Langston Hughes' *Weary Blues* and *Backlash Blues*, Jimi Hendrix's *Machine Gun*), the book tackles issues ranging from authenticity and musicology in Blues performance to the Blues in diaspora, while also applying techniques of linguistic analysis to the corpora of Blues texts. While some chapters focus on the Blues as a quintessentially American phenomenon, linked to a specific social context, others see it in its current evolutions, as the bearer of vital cultural attitudes into the digital age. This multidisciplinary volume will appeal to a broad range of scholars operating in a number of different academic disciplines, including Musicology, Linguistics, Sociology, History, Ethnomusicology, Literature, Economics and Cultural Studies. It will also interest educators across the Humanities, and could be used to exemplify the application to data of specific analytical methodologies, and as a general introduction to the field of Blues studies.



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