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Welcome to the latest issue of the Hellenic Journal of Music, Education and Culture. This issue opens with a stimulating and thoughtful article by Dylan van der Schyff who reviews and contrasts a wide range of literatures concerning whether or not music should be considered as an essential and long-standing component of the human condition. The review provides the reader with contrasting perspectives on the origins of music and also suggests how these might be reconciled through a more nuanced and integrated perspective. With new and sometimes controversial research data emerging all the time on the possible benefits of engaging in music, this review provides a timely insight into some of the main protagonists and their theoretical positions.

The second article in this issue is by Robert Reigle who provides an overview of the history of recorded Kurdish music over the past century, beginning with the first recording in 1902. He argues persuasively of the musical, cultural and political importance of such media-based research study, not least to ensure that we capture essential features of our global musical heritage before they disappear and are forgotten. In this instance, the music relates to an example of a group of peoples whose ethnicity transcends simple geo-political borders. The article is an important reminder of the possible transitory nature of musical practices within communities who are relatively disempowered and whose access to music of personal choice is restricted. But it is equally a reminder of the power of music and media in capturing, shaping, nurturing and celebrating personal and social identity.

In the third and final article, Elissavet Perakaki, reports on an evaluation of a novel programme that was designed to engage adolescent pupils in Greek traditional music. The three-month programme provided examples of different aspects of traditional music and encouraged active music making as well as the development of propositional knowledge about the music. The emergent data suggest that an appropriate programme of music education can initiate changes in adolescent perceptions and that these are sustained over time. Although relatively small scale in design, the research squarely faces the challenge of how to enable young people who may have relatively fixed ideas to broaden their musical experiences. It addresses a common challenge for secondary school music education and also provides a useful framework for others who wish to gauge the impact of their teaching on this particular age group.

The fourth text of this issue is a book review by Kostas Chardas on Anastasia Siopsi's book on music that has been used in the modern representations of ancient theatre plays. Chardas discusses all the relevant topics that occur from Siopsi's book focusing on all those qualities that add to the knowledge about ancient Greek theatre. As he pinpoints, this is a book that came in order to cover an area that was underrepresented in the modern cultural studies in Greece.

The editors commend the work of the authors and the content of this volume to the interested reader. The topics that are addressed are both particular and generic, and transcend their particular research locations and contexts to provide insights that can inform both music education and cultural policy and practice.