Mega-projects are at the core of contemporary Arab town planning, and the papers in this issue of *Built Environment* illustrate the primacy of the urban project in the planning of large cities in the Arab World over the last twenty years. That said, is there an ‘Arab’ way of creating big projects? Can we highlight Arab specificities in the manner of implementation of such urban actions, or indeed within the eight countries – Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Sudan, Lebanon and Syria – discussed by the contributors to this issue?

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