

# Contents

Preface ix

Acknowledgments xix

## CHAPTER ONE

The Nation, the State, and the Cinema 1

## CHAPTER TWO

“The freedom to be different, to choose your own life”:

*Man of Ashes* (Nouri Bouzid, 1986) 40

## CHAPTER THREE

Laughter in the Dark:

Sexuality and the Police State in *Halfaouine* (Férid Boughedir, 1990) 67

## CHAPTER FOUR

Sexual Allegories of National Identity: *Bezness* (Nouri Bouzid, 1992) 99

## CHAPTER FIVE

The Colonizer and the Colonized: *The Silences of the Palace*  
(Moufida Tlatli, 1994) 123

CONTENTS

**CHAPTER SIX**

“It takes two of us to discover truth”:

*Essaïda* (Mohamed Zran, 1996) 157

**CHAPTER SEVEN**

“It takes a lot of unruly individuals to make a free people”:

*Bedwin Hacker* (Nadia El Fani, 2002) 191

**CHAPTER EIGHT**

Inventing the Postcolonial Nation/Constructing a Usable Past:

*The TV Is Coming* (Moncef Dhouib, 2006) 223

**CHAPTER NINE**

“Destiny answers the people’s call for life, darkness will be dispelled,  
and chains will break” 259

Notes 281

Filmography 341

Glossary 349

Bibliography 353

Index 369