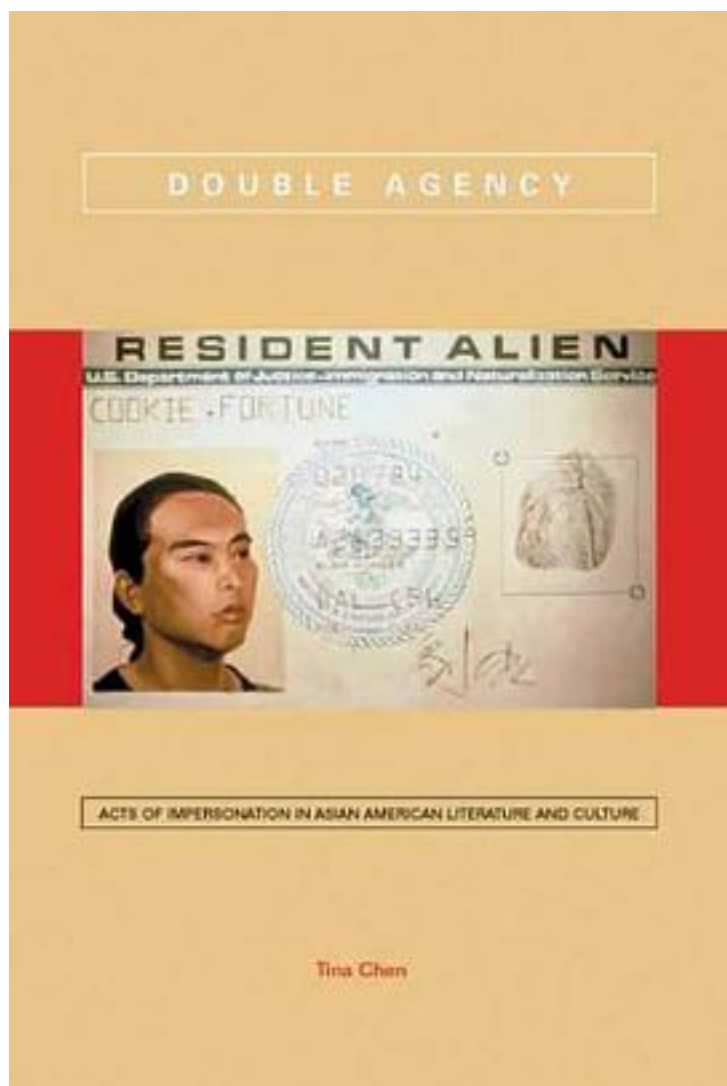


Double Agency



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In "Double Agency," Tina Chen proposes impersonation as a paradigm for teasing out the performative dimensions of Asian American literature and culture. Asian American acts of impersonation, she argues, foreground the limits of subjectivity even as they insist on the undeniable importance of subjecthood. By decoupling imposture from impersonation, Chen shows how Asian American performances have often been misinterpreted, read as acts of betrayal rather than multiple allegiance. A central paradox informing the book--impersonation as a performance of divided allegiance that simultaneously pays homage to and challenges authenticity and authority--thus becomes a site for reconsidering the implications of Asian Americans as double agents. In exploring the possibilities that impersonation affords for refusing the binary logics of loyalty/disloyalty, real/fake, and Asian/American, "Double Agency" attends to the possibilities of reading such acts as "im-personations"--dynamic performances, and a performance dynamics--through which Asian Americans constitute themselves as speaking and acting subjects.

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