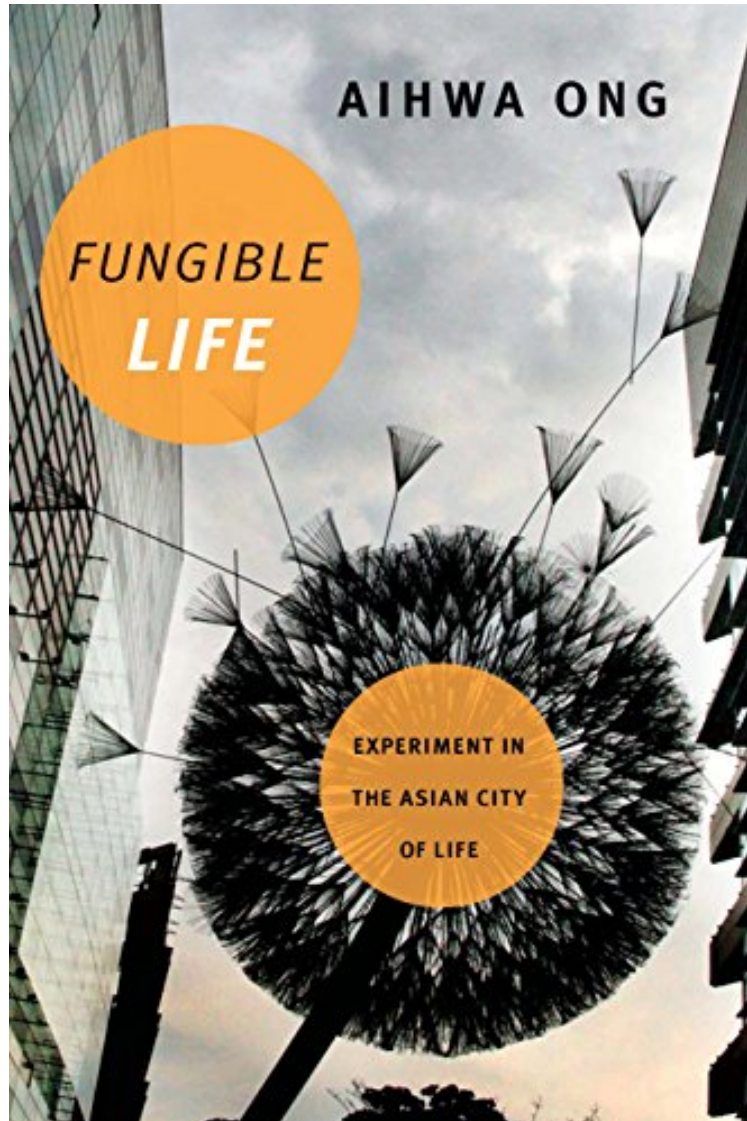


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## Fungible Life: Experiment in the Asian City of Life

*Aihwa Ong*

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**Aihwa Ong : Fungible Life: Experiment in the Asian City of Life** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fungible Life: Experiment in the Asian City of Life:

In Fungible Life Aihwa Ong explores the dynamic world of cutting-edge bioscience research, offering critical insights into the complex ways Asian bioscientific worlds and cosmopolitan sciences are entangled in a tropical environment brimming with the threat of emergent diseases. At biomedical centers in Singapore and China scientists map genetic

variants, disease risks, and biomarkers, mobilizing ethnicized "Asian" bodies and health data for genomic research. Their differentiation between Chinese, Indian, and Malay DNA makes fungible Singapore's ethnic-stratified databases that come to "represent" majority populations in Asia. By deploying genomic science as a public good, researchers reconfigure the relationships between objects, peoples, and spaces, thus rendering "Asia" itself as a shifting entity. In Ong's analysis, Asia emerges as a richly layered mode of entanglements, where the population's genetic pasts, anxieties and hopes, shared genetic weaknesses, and embattled genetic futures intersect. Furthermore, her illustration of the contrasting methods and goals of the Biopolis biomedical center in Singapore and BGI Genomics in China raises questions about the future direction of cosmopolitan science in Asia and beyond.

"Taking up the question of how scientific knowledge is governed at a global scale, Aihwa Ong addresses the neglected yet critically important ways cutting-edge life sciences are 'translated' to non-European and non-U.S. sites. With an expansive theoretical horizon and broad conceptual goals, *Fungible Life* is of interest to scholars in medical anthropology, the anthropology of science and technology, science and technology studies, and those who study comparative modernities in contemporary Asia."