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Genotropism, Freedom, and Heritability: A Philosophical–Genetic Reconstruction of Leopold Szondi's Fate Analysis

1. Introduction

In the genomic era, the idiom of "inherited risk" has moved far beyond medicine into education, work, and everyday explanations of personality and life chances. Polygenic scores, heritability estimates, and genome-wide association findings are increasingly invoked to explain who becomes what, whom one loves, what one fears, and what one is "suited for" (Plomin & Von Stumm, 2018). At the same time, this language easily acquires the status of a naturalised fate: a statistical destiny supposedly inscribed in the body and merely awaiting disclosure by genetic information. Yet the same developments that encourage such fatalistic simplifications also undermine genetic determinism. For most complex human traits, genetic influence is polygenic, developmentally mediated, and inseparable from family environments, institutions, and personal practices (Plomin & Von Stumm, 2018). The central question is therefore not whether heredity matters, but how it matters in a way that remains compatible with agency, meaning-making, and responsibility.

This question stands at the heart of Leopold Szondi's fate analysis (*Schicksalsanalyse*). In Szondi's view, human destiny unfolds through a series of existential choices: one chooses a partner, friends, an occupation, symptomatic solutions, and even a characteristic way of dying (Szondi, 1944). His concept of genotropism proposes that such fate choices are systematically shaped by inherited dispositions: latent familial tendencies that make certain objects, situations, and life paths appear familiar, compelling, or fitting, while others remain affectively neutral. Genotropism is thus not merely a claim about familial resemblance, but an attempt to describe how inherited ancestral potentials become psychologically effective in the very arena where the subject experiences itself as choosing.

Fate analysis situates this dynamic within a distinctive layer of depth psychology. Szondi posited a familial unconscious, distinct both from Freud's individual unconscious and from Jung's collective unconscious (Szondi, 1996). Later

interpretations describe this familial unconscious as a transgenerational field in which drives, identifications, and unresolved ancestral tasks seek repetition in the destinies of descendants (Kiss, 2010). This field becomes legible in patterns of partner choices of love, friendship, occupation, illness, and death. At the same time, fate analysis does not reduce the subject to compulsion. Szondi distinguishes compulsive fate from a freely chosen fate shaped by an ego capable of mediation and transformation, a capacity condensed in his notion of the Pontifex ego, the "bridge building" function that can recognise inherited pressure, negotiate with it, sublimate it, or at times refuse it (Szondi, 1956). Heredity, in this model, is neither an external chain that abolishes responsibility nor an inert background irrelevant to subjectivity, but a structuring condition that becomes ethically and clinically significant precisely because it encounters an ego capable of taking a stand.

Read literally as a mid-twentieth-century genetic theory, genotropism may seem scientifically obsolete. Its philosophical force, however, does not depend on the historical adequacy of its hereditary vocabulary. What remains viable is fate analysis's intuition that inherited propensities can bias what becomes salient, repeatedly available, or experienced as "one's own," while still leaving room for an ego-mediated practice of choice. The aim of this article is therefore to reconstruct genotropism in a way that preserves the conceptual core of fate analysis while bringing it into dialogue with contemporary behavioural genetics and sociogenomics without reducing it to either field.

Accordingly, genotropism is approached as a probabilistic interpretive framework for analysing how inherited predisposition becomes psychologically and socially effective within family mediated and ego-mediated contexts. The article offers a theoretically disciplined reconstruction designed to clarify the conceptual relations through which fate analytic claims may subsequently be assessed with precision. Several contemporary mechanisms are especially relevant to such a reconstruction, including genotype – environment correlation, assortative mating, and genetic nurture (Scarr & McCartney, 1983; Domingue et al., 2014; Kong et al., 2018; Border et al., 2022). Together, they offer empirically disciplined ways of thinking about how inherited propensities become effective through relational and institutional worlds rather than through DNA alone.

Finally, reconstructing genotropism in the genomic era is unavoidably ethical. Genetic information can easily become a contemporary screen for fantasies of necessity, control, and self-explanation (Rothstein, 2005; Garrison et al., 2019). By articulating genotropism as probabilistic predisposition within an ego-mediated field of choice, the present reconstruction aims to contribute not only to interdisciplinary conceptual clarity but also to a psychoanalytically informed ethics of genomic self-understanding. Later sections extend this argument into the domains of vocation and reproductive bioethics, where the tension between inherited predisposition and responsible self-formation becomes especially visible.

2. Theoretical Reconstruction of Genotropism

2.1. Fate Analysis as a Theory of Existential Choice

If genotropism is to be reconstructed in a way that remains faithful to Szondi, one must begin not with heredity as a biological datum but with fate as a structure of existential choice. Fate analysis does not read a human life as a mere succession of outward events. It reads a life through those recurrent decisions in which the subject appears to choose freely while at the same time revealing a deeper regularity (Szondi, 1944). As Szondi later formulated it, "Wahl macht Schicksal" – "choice makes fate" – and destiny comprises the totality of a human being's possible ways of existing (Szondi, 1963, 98).

This is why the classical catalogue of fate choices is so central to Szondi's project. In *Schicksalsanalyse*, decisive choices are not restricted to the selection of a love-partner. They also include the choice of friend, occupation, illness, and even form of death (Szondi, 1944). These are not treated as disconnected episodes but as privileged points at which a life becomes legible as destiny. What appears to consciousness as a personal decision may therefore also express a deeper inherited and genealogical pattern. Choice becomes the place where subjectivity and ancestry intersect.

From this perspective, fate analysis is not a doctrine of passive predestination. Its claim is subtler: a life acquires pattern through repeated selections that are consciously lived as one's own and yet are not random. The decisive question is therefore not simply why people differ, nor even why families resemble one another, but why certain choices return with such force in the same life and across generations (Szondi, 1944).

Existential choice is therefore the proper starting point for a contemporary reconstruction of genotropism. Fate is neither a hereditary script mechanically executed nor a purely spontaneous invention of the ego. It takes shape through those decisive selections in which inherited predispositions, lived attachments, and personal decisions become organised into a recognisable pattern. Fate analysis begins, accordingly, with a phenomenology of patterned choice: certain decisions matter because they condense the history of a life into nodal points through which destiny becomes readable (Szondi, 1944).

2.2. The Familial Unconscious between Freud and Jung

Szondi's concept of the familial unconscious should be understood as a distinct level within depth psychology. It is grounded neither in the repressed history of the individual alone nor in transpersonal archetypal universals alone, but in the psychic continuity of the family line. In this perspective, the family is not merely a biographical background or sociological setting. It is the medium through which inherited tendencies, drive relations, and latent possibilities become active in the destiny of descendants (Szondi, 1996).

What distinguishes this level most sharply is the mode in which unconscious life becomes manifest. Szondi's own formulation is decisive here: the three major branches of depth psychology may be differentiated according to three languages of the unconscious – symptom, symbol, and choice. As Szondi (1996, 67) writes, "the unconscious may find expression not only in symptoms and symbols, but also in acts of choice". In this triadic scheme, Freud's psychology is centred on the language of symptom, Jung's on the language of symbol, and fate analysis in the language of choice (Szondi, 1996). The familial unconscious is therefore not simply another hidden psychic layer, but a specific mode in which inherited pressures become legible through decisive selections within a life.

The familial unconscious does not primarily declare itself through isolated pathological signs, nor through symbolic imagery alone, but through recurrent patterns of selection. These are not accidental preferences later decorated by interpretation; they are privileged points at which inherited and genealogical tendencies become effective in lived existence (Szondi, 1944, 1996). The subject experiences itself as choosing, yet choice is already oriented by pressures that precede reflective intention. It is here that the descendant may unknowingly continue, distort, or interrupt an older familial line.

This also clarifies why the familial unconscious should not be treated as a mystical family essence or a ready-made script of destiny. What is transmitted is better understood as a repertoire of latent configurations that may become psychologically charged under particular conditions. This is why Szondi metaphorically describes the familial unconscious as a "revolving stage of inherited tendencies", on which unresolved ancestral tasks await repetition or transformation in the destinies of descendants (Szondi, 1996, 77). In this sense, the family line persists not as mechanical repetition, but as a patterned horizon of possibility.

Szondi's project therefore occupies a distinct position between classical psychoanalysis and analytical psychology. It claims that ancestry itself maintains a psychic afterlife – not as a mystical essence, but as latent configurations that become legible precisely where choices acquire genealogical weight (Szondi, 1944). As Kiss (2010) observes, this positions fate analysis as a "third way" between Freud and Jung, with Szondi's languages of the unconscious and conception of the family line as a specific medium of destiny establishing its unique conceptual terrain.

The next step is therefore to examine how this logic of the familial unconscious becomes concentrated in one of Szondi's most original concepts: genotropism as a logic of object choice.

2.3. Genotropism and the Logic of Object Choice

Genotropism, in its strict Szondian sense, begins not as a general doctrine of heredity but as a theory of object choice. Szondi later states the point explicitly: "Die Partner einer Liebe oder Freundschaft wie auch die eines Berufes, der mit Menschen zu tun hat, sind erbverwandt" ("The partners in love or friendship, as well as in a profession involving human beings, are hereditarily related") (Szondi, 1963, 211). In his early

work on marriage choice, Szondi asked how a decision experienced as intensely personal could nonetheless display a hidden regularity across family lines. The problem was not simply why an individual loves another, but why certain attachments recur with such force that they seem at once freely chosen and strangely prepared in advance (Szondi, 1937).

By the time of *Schicksalsanalyse*, this logic had been widened beyond the sphere of erotic attachment alone. The same structure that first appeared in marriage choice was extended to friend, occupation, illness, and form of death (Szondi, 1944). These are not merely different applications of a single hypothesis, but expressions of one fate analysis claim: decisive choices reveal more than conscious preference. They mark those points at which a life becomes readable as patterned rather than accidental.

This broader usage makes clear that the "object" of choice is not limited to another person. In fate analysis, an object may also be a vocation, a way of suffering, or a socially mediated role through which latent tendencies find expression. Vocation is especially important here. A profession is not treated as a neutral social outcome or a purely rational career decision, but as one of the most durable forms in which inherited dispositions, affective investments, and familial pressures may converge within a life (Szondi, 1944).

Understood in this way, genotropism concerns the selective weighting of objects within experience. It does not require the literal image of "genes attracting genes," nor does it imply that heredity dictates a single outcome. Its point is that certain persons, roles, and paths acquire a particular psychological force because they resonate with latent familial tendencies, while others remain affectively indifferent. The subject is still required to decide, but decision does not arise in a neutral world. It takes shape among objects that are already unevenly charged.

For a contemporary reconstruction, this is the most enduring insight of genotropism as a theory of object choice. What matters is not a literal hereditary attraction, but the claim that predisposition can become psychologically effective by shaping what is experienced as compelling, fitting, or available for investment. Genotropism is therefore best understood as a logic of selective orientation within choice rather than as a doctrine of mechanical hereditary determination. The next question, however, is whether such patterned choice leaves room for genuine freedom.

2.4. Compulsive Fate and Freely Chosen Fate

Fate, in Szondi's mature conception, is never exhausted by compulsion alone; nor is it dissolved into an abstract freedom of the will. This is what Szondi calls "*seelische Dialektik*", the interaction of opposed psychic functions that grounds and preserves the unity of the soul (Szondi, 1956, 259). One of the decisive distinctions of fate analysis is therefore that between compulsive fate and freely chosen fate. This distinction marks Szondi's distance both from simple hereditary determination and from any philosophy of pure self-creation. Destiny is shaped through conditions that precede the subject, yet it is not exhausted by them.

This becomes especially clear in *Ich-Analyse*, where Szondi insists that the inherited foundations of fate do not dictate one single life in advance. They open, rather, a finite horizon of possible destinies. Heredity therefore matters not as a fixed script, but as a structured condition within which more than one path remains possible (Szondi, 1956).

Szondi also makes clear that fate cannot be reduced to heredity alone. In his account, destiny is formed through a plurality of determinants: ancestral inheritance, drive-nature, milieu, mental environment, the ego, and spirit. The first of these belong more closely to the sphere of compulsion; the latter two open the possibility of another relation to what has been given. Compulsive fate names the domain in which inherited pressures, environmental circumstances, and habitual formations are lived as necessity. Freely chosen fate begins where the subject does not simply undergo these conditions, but enters into a more active relation to them (Szondi, 1956, 1963).

Freedom, in this sense, is not the absence of necessity; it is a transformed relation to necessity. Freely chosen fate is therefore not freedom from inheritance, but freedom within inheritance. What matters is not that the subject escapes all predisposition, but that inherited tendencies need not culminate in one and the same existential outcome. Fate analysis thus preserves a genuine place for responsibility without denying the weight of ancestry, milieu, and drive.

Kierkegaard (1849/1980) distinguishes two forms of despair – the lack of possibility and the lack of necessity – which together frame the self's relation to its own determination. A self is not free because it lacks determination, but because it can stand in a relation to what determines it. Szondi's distinction moves in a comparable direction. Compulsive fate designates the sphere in which necessity remains unworked through; freely chosen fate designates the sphere in which necessity is met by a subject capable of response rather than mere repetition.

Yet this still leaves an important question open. If freedom is neither sheer spontaneity nor escape from inheritance, what within the subject performs this mediating work? Szondi's answer lies in one of the central concepts of fate analysis: the ego as Pontifex oppositorum.

2.5. The Pontifex Ego and the Mediation of Opposites

The distinction between compulsive fate and freely chosen fate would remain merely formal if Szondi had not also developed a concept of the ego capable of mediating between them. This mediating instance is the Pontifex ego, or Pontifex oppositorum. In *Ich-Analyse*, the ego is not treated merely as an adaptive agency balancing inner impulse and outer reality. Szondi first describes it as that by means of which a person can bring about "new weightings or distributions of power" among the factors conditioning fate, such as inheritance, drive, and environment (Szondi, 1956, 68). He later sharpens the point by calling it a "higher ego for conscious control" and, more specifically, the "distributor of power" (Szondi, 1963, 91). It is the higher function through which inherited pressures, drive oppositions, social demands, and spiritual possibilities may be brought into a new relation (Szondi, 1956). The ego is therefore

not a secondary adjustment mechanism appended to heredity and drives; it is the point at which destiny becomes answerable.

This is why the image of the *pontifex* is so exact. The ego is "bridge building" not in the weak sense of compromise, but in the stronger sense of holding together what would otherwise split the person into destructive one-sidedness. Szondi gives the fullest formulation when he writes that "Das Ich ist der Pontifex oppositorum" and that the ego is the bridge capable of spanning the opposing poles of the soul (Szondi, 1956, 156). In this formulation, the ego is neither a passive mediator nor a simple compromise-maker, but an active distributor and organizer of psychic forces. Human existence, in Szondi's account, is constituted by tensions between opposed tendencies: conscious and unconscious, body and mind, material and spiritual, as well as the conflicts internal to the drive system itself. The task of the ego is therefore not simply to suppress one pole in favour of another, but to sustain a higher organisation in which opposites can be mediated rather than blindly enacted (Szondi, 1956).

In this sense, the Pontifex ego is the real locus of freely chosen fate. Heredity, drives, family line, and milieu may structure the conditions within which a life unfolds, but they do not themselves perform the work of integration. That work belongs to the ego. Freedom, for Szondi, therefore does not lie outside the inherited conditions of destiny; it lies in the mediating labour through which those conditions become inhabitable in a human way (Szondi, 1956). What genotropism begins by describing as a patterned pull toward certain objects, the Pontifex ego must complete as a work of selection, integration, and form. Only here does attraction become destiny in the full sense: not because inherited pressure disappears, but because it is transformed into a position the subject can inhabit as one's own.

This also explains why vocation occupies such an important place in fate analysis. Profession is not merely one more social outcome among others. It is one of the principal domains in which the ego may give durable and socially bearable form to inherited tendencies. In this respect, the Pontifex ego does not abolish drive life; it humanises and organises it (Szondi, 1944, 1956).

The ethical importance of this concept follows directly from its mediating role. If the ego were only a defensive or adaptive function, fate analysis would have no robust account of responsibility. But the Pontifex ego is more than adaptation. It names the capacity through which the subject may recognise inherited pressure, endure conflict, and decide how the given material of life is to be lived. Responsibility begins not where compulsion disappears, but where the subject becomes capable of responding to it (Szondi, 1956, 1963).

Without heredity and familial transmission, destiny would lose its depth; without the mediating ego, it would lose its freedom. Once this mediating role is made central, inherited predisposition can no longer be read as direct destiny. It becomes the structured material upon which the subject must work. The next step is therefore to ask how this model of inherited predisposition and ego-mediated choice may be reformulated in a non-deterministic way.

2.6. Toward a Non-Deterministic Reconstruction of Genotropism

Taken together, the preceding elements of fate analysis make clear that genotropism cannot be understood as an isolated hereditary hypothesis. In Szondi's own conceptual architecture, it belongs to a broader account of destiny in which existential choice, the familial unconscious, and the patterned selection of objects are internally linked. Human life is not presented as the passive execution of an inherited program, but neither is it treated as a sequence of choices arising in an affectively neutral world. The central intuition is rather that inherited and familial tendencies may become psychologically effective at those points where a subject experiences itself as choosing (Szondi, 1944, 1996).

This is why the distinction between compulsive fate and freely chosen fate is so important for any contemporary reconstruction. If fate were only compulsion, genotropism would collapse into hereditary determinism. If fate were only freedom, the very category of inherited predisposition would lose its depth. Szondi avoids both reductions by insisting that destiny unfolds within given conditions that do not dictate a single outcome in advance, and that freedom becomes real only through an ego capable of mediation and transformation (Szondi, 1956, 1963). What is inherited is therefore not a finished script of life, but a structured pressure, a field of latent orientations, tensions, and possibilities that may be repeated, altered, sublimated, or refused.

From this perspective, what remains philosophically viable in genotropism is not the literal image of hereditary attraction, but a more durable claim about the selective organisation of human existence. Certain persons, vocations, attachments, and forms of suffering acquire existential weight because they resonate with inherited predispositions and familial histories, while others remain comparatively indifferent. Genotropism, thus reconstructed, names not a direct biological mechanism of destiny, but a probabilistic and interpretive logic through which predisposition becomes meaningful in choice. Its proper domain is therefore not the reduction of the subject to ancestry, but the analysis of how ancestry enters the texture of lived decision (Kiss, 2010).

Only on this basis can genotropism be brought into relation with contemporary behavioural genetics without distortion. Once the primacy of mediation is secured, inherited predisposition may be examined not as direct destiny, but as one dimension of a larger process in which family environments, institutional worlds, and ego-mediated responses all play constitutive roles. The next step is therefore not to replace fate analysis with genetics, but to ask whether contemporary empirical models can illuminate, in a non-reductive way, the conditions under which inherited tendencies become effective in human life.

3. Contemporary Bridges and Methodological Horizons

3.1. Genotype – Environment Correlation and the Structuring of Life Contexts

The first and perhaps most disciplined bridge between reconstructed genotropism and contemporary behavioural genetics is provided by genotype – environment correlation (rGE). In the classical formulation of Scarr and McCartney, development is shaped not only by environmental inputs acting upon a passive individual, but also by the ways in which inherited differences influence what environments are actually encountered, elicited, and sought out (Scarr & McCartney, 1983).

For the present reconstruction, the importance of rGE lies in its capacity to redescribe one of the central intuitions of fate analysis in empirically sober terms. Once genotropism is freed from the image of direct hereditary attraction, it no longer needs to imply that genes choose or attract directly. What rGE clarifies, instead, is that the environments within which choices emerge are not neutral. Inherited differences may partly shape which settings are encountered, which responses are drawn from others, and which contexts later become available for sustained investment (Scarr & McCartney, 1983).

The three classical forms of rGE illuminate this process developmentally. Passive rGE is especially relevant to the familial world into which a child is born: parents contribute both genes and environments, so inherited predispositions are from the outset embedded in relational and institutional conditions. Evocative rGE helps explain why subjects do not merely receive environments passively, but elicit particular reactions, expectations, and opportunities from others. Active rGE extends the logic further: with development, individuals increasingly participate in selecting and sustaining those settings that resonate with their dispositions, interests, and capacities (Scarr & McCartney, 1983).

This perspective is especially important for a study concerned with vocation and life direction. If vocational life is one of the principal arenas in which fate becomes legible, then rGE helps explain how this arena may be progressively structured across development: first through family environments, then through school and social feedback, and later through increasingly selective commitments to educational and occupational niches (Scarr & McCartney, 1983). Recent sociogenomic work supports the relevance of this bridge while also disciplining its limits. Akimova et al. show that occupational status is associated with polygenic prediction, but that within-family prediction is substantially reduced relative to population-level prediction, suggesting that intergenerational transmission in this domain cannot be explained by direct genetic inheritance alone (Akimova et al., 2025).

For a reconstructed genotropism, the significance of rGE lies precisely here. It offers a non-reductive way of thinking about how inherited predispositions may help organise the life contexts within which attachments, commitments, and trajectories take form, without implying that heredity dictates a single destiny. In this sense, rGE does not confirm a literal doctrine of hereditary attraction. It helps reformulate, in disciplined empirical language, the claim that human choices emerge within

environments that are themselves partly structured across development by inherited differences.

3.2. Assortative Mating, Homophily, and the Non-Random Structure of Pairing

A second important bridge between reconstructed genotropism and contemporary sociogenomics is provided by assortative mating. If genotype – environment correlation helps explain how individuals partly enter and sustain particular life contexts, assortative mating addresses a different but closely related problem: why intimate and familial pairings are not random. In social science, assortative mating refers to the tendency of individuals to form unions with others who are similar on salient traits such as education, religion, status, or values. Contemporary genomic work does not replace this sociological insight, but complicates it by asking whether phenotypic homogamy may also be accompanied by measurable genetic similarity (Domingue et al., 2014).

For the present reconstruction, the importance of assortative mating lies in the fact that it offers a disciplined way of thinking about patterned partner choice without reverting to any literalised image of hereditary affinity. What contemporary research suggests, more cautiously, is that partner selection often has a non-random structure in which social similarity, educational sorting, and a weaker but detectable degree of genome-wide similarity may coexist. Domingue et al. report evidence for genetic assortative mating, but also show that its magnitude is substantially smaller than the magnitude of educational assortative mating in the same sample. Their results therefore indicate that genetic similarity accounts for only a limited proportion of educational sorting, rather than displacing the social processes through which homogamy is produced (Domingue et al., 2014).

This is conceptually important for any reconstruction of genotropism. It suggests that non-random pairing is real, yet it cannot be interpreted as a purely genetic phenomenon. Partner selection unfolds within socially structured opportunity spaces, institutional pathways, and culturally mediated preferences, but these are not wholly detached from inherited variation either. In this respect, assortative mating supports a restrained reinterpretation of one aspect of Szondi's intuition: a fitting choice of partner may reflect the convergence of familial background, educational trajectory, social location, and inherited predisposition, without requiring any direct theory of genetic attraction.

The point becomes even more important when one moves from single-trait assortative mating to cross-trait assortative mating (xAM). Border et al. show that xAM is widespread: individuals often assort not only on the same trait, but across correlated or socially entangled traits. Mate similarity may therefore emerge through combinations of education, socioeconomic position, personality, health-related traits, or psychiatric liability, rather than through a single dimension of likeness. Methodologically, this matters because where xAM is present, estimates of genetic correlation may be inflated if mating structure is not modelled appropriately (Border et al., 2022).

For the purposes of the present argument, this serves as an important caution. Assortative mating does not confirm genotropism, nor does it justify any appeal to inherited essence. What it offers is a contemporary model of how partner choice may acquire patterned and intergenerational regularity without ceasing to be socially mediated and biographically lived. In that sense, it helps translate a limited part of fate analysis into empirically disciplined terms while preserving the distinction between mechanism and meaning.

3.3. Genetic Nurture and the Family as a Mediated Hereditary Environment

A third key bridge between reconstructed genotropism and contemporary behavioural genetics is provided by the concept of genetic nurture. If genotype – environment correlation shows how inherited differences can help structure the environments individuals encounter and select, genetic nurture goes a step further by demonstrating that parental genotypes may shape offspring outcomes even through alleles that are not transmitted to the child. Kong et al. define this phenomenon explicitly as genetic nurture and show that non-transmitted alleles can affect the child through their effects on parents and other relatives, that is, through the environments those relatives create. In their analysis of educational attainment, the polygenic score computed from non-transmitted alleles had an estimated effect equal to 29.9% of the effect of the transmitted score, making clear that heredity becomes developmentally effective not only through direct transmission but also through mediated family life (Kong et al., 2018).

For the present reconstruction, this concept is especially important because it gives contemporary empirical form to one of the strongest intuitions of fate analysis: ancestry becomes effective through relational worlds rather than through DNA alone. In a Szondian idiom, what is inherited does not simply reappear as a direct internal program, but enters the life of the descendant through the family as a lived world of values, expectations, opportunities, prohibitions, and affective climates. A non-deterministic reconstruction of genotropism should therefore speak not of heredity as a closed causal line from gene to trait, but of hereditary predispositions that become active within mediating environments, above all within the family. Genetic nurture offers a disciplined way of articulating this claim without reverting to mystical notions of ancestral transmission.

This is also why genetic nurture is more than a technical supplement to genotype – environment correlation. The crucial point in Kong et al.'s formulation is not merely that the genomes of relatives matter, but that genome and environment are not independent in development. The child's phenotype is shaped not only by transmitted maternal and paternal alleles, but also by alleles that were not transmitted and nevertheless influence parental phenotypes and, through them, the child's developmental setting. Family environment is therefore not external to heredity; it is one of the principal pathways through which heredity is realised.

The relevance of this mechanism becomes even clearer when one turns to occupational status and intergenerational transmission. Akimova et al. show that

within-family prediction of occupational status is substantially reduced relative to population-based prediction, and they attribute important parts of this attenuation to indirect parental effects and assortative mating. They further report that a large share of the intergenerational transmission of occupational status cannot be explained by common-variant genetic inheritance alone, but must involve other factors such as family environments (Akimova et al., 2025). This suggests that career trajectories and social status are formed neither by direct inheritance alone nor by social factors treated as if they were independent of inherited predispositions. Rather, they emerge through a mediated interplay of genotype, parental action, family structure, and long-term stratified environments.

For fate analysis, this mediated model is conceptually decisive. Szondi's theory does not become plausible today because modern genetics confirms a literal doctrine of hereditary attraction. It becomes plausible insofar as contemporary research increasingly shows that inherited differences operate through family organized pathways, many of which are indirect, cumulative, and relational. Genetic nurture therefore helps reformulate familial inheritance in a way that is empirically sober and theoretically fertile: ancestry matters, but it matters through the family as a formative world rather than as a simple biological fate.

3.4. Achtnich's BBT as a Vocational Translation of Fate Analysis

The contemporary reconstruction of genotropism should not be pursued only through modern genetics. Within the fate analysis tradition itself, one of the most important methodological developments is Martin Achtnich's *Berufsbilder-Test* (BBT). The BBT is best understood not as an external illustration borrowed from vocational psychology, but as a vocational development internal to the Szondian problematic. In Achtnich's own formulation, the BBT is grounded in Leopold Szondi's theory as developed in fate analysis, specifically in his account of fate choices in love, friendship, occupation, illness, and death. On this basis, Achtnich derived eight factors for differentiating vocational inclinations (Achtnich, 1979/2010).

This historical relation is methodologically decisive. In Szondi's account, vocation is treated as a paradigmatic fate-bearing decision: it is one of the privileged domains in which inherited tendencies become socially organised and given durable form (Szondi, 1944). Achtnich's contribution was to take this vocational dimension of fate analysis and render it interpretable in a structured counselling instrument. In this sense, the BBT should be read as a vocational translation of fate analysis rather than as an independent method only later juxtaposed with Szondi. The concept of operotropism is especially useful here, since it marks the field in which work and profession function not merely as economic outcomes but as socially mediated channels through which deeper tendencies are stabilised in a life.

The crucial continuity between Szondi and Achtnich lies in the preservation of an underlying factor architecture. Achtnich does not simply reproduce the Szondi test, nor does he carry over its psychopathological vocabulary unchanged. What he preserves is the structural logic of the four vectors and eight factors, while translating that logic

into vocational inclination. In this vocational recoding, the fate analysis factor structure reappears as W, K, S, Z, V, G, M, and O, with internal differentiations such as S_H and S_E where vocational expression requires finer distinction. The point is not the literal transfer of every clinical meaning into vocational language, but the continuity of structure. Achtnich reworks the underlying logic of the Szondi system into a vocational typology suited to counselling, without dissolving its fate analysis origin. In this sense, the BBT may be understood as a depathologised and socially relocated form of fate analysis.

This is why the BBT should not be described simply as a pictorial interest inventory. Its theoretical ambition is deeper. The test asks the subject to sort ninety-six occupational photographs into attractive, unattractive, and indifferent groups, to further differentiate the attractive material, to associate to selected pictures, and to connect especially meaningful images in a brief narrative sequence (Achtnich, 1979/2010; Achtnich & Ferreira Filho, 1994). The BBT does not simply ask which occupations are preferred. It stages a sequence of identifications, exclusions, and symbolic investments through which vocational inclination becomes legible as a pattern of attraction, rejection, indifference, and meaning. Choice is experienced as one's own, yet its grounds remain only partially transparent to reflection.

At the same time, the BBT must not be conflated with the original Szondi test. Achtnich's own descriptions make clear that the BBT operates at a less basal and less pathological level. Its images are not psychiatric portraits with relatively fixed meanings, but occupational scenes already transformed by social reality and coded by primary and secondary inclinations. This does not weaken its relevance for the present argument. On the contrary, it clarifies why the BBT is especially suitable for a reconstruction centred on vocation. It occupies an intermediate level between raw drive theory and overt occupational outcome: precisely the level at which genotropism becomes intelligible as patterned vocational object choice rather than as literal hereditary attraction. Only in a secondary and carefully qualified sense might such a profile later be described as a "deep phenotype" for interdisciplinary work.

The Werner case from Achtnich's practice illustrates this especially well. Werner initially follows an apparently coherent paternal line: his father is a painter, and the son first enters the same craft. At the level of immediate biography, this first solution appears plausible and even continuous. Yet Achtnich's interpretation shows that it was only a partial vocational destiny. Werner's later movement toward teaching and special education does not cancel the earlier artistic line; it transforms and reworks it. What the BBT brings into view is therefore not simply the "correct profession" for a subject, but a structured vocational field in which family continuity, symbolic identification, sublimation, and ego-mediated correction interact. In Szondian terms, this is the passage from a merely repetitive vocational fate toward a more selectively appropriated and mediated destiny.

This also explains Achtnich's insistence on the distinction between vocation and career. The BBT clarifies inclinations, but it does not mechanically assign a life. Strong factor dispositions may need to be taken seriously, yet the actual shaping of a career remains the work of milieu, biography, opportunity structure, and ego-

formation. Most subjects do not present a single overwhelming factor, but several factors of comparable intensity that require interpretation rather than algorithmic placement. Here the BBT converges with the broader fate analysis distinction between compulsion and freedom: inherited and family structured force is acknowledged, yet mediation is not abolished. Later studies such as Melo-Silva et al. (2008) are important in this context not because they ground the method theoretically, but because they demonstrate its continued applicability and evaluability in contemporary vocational guidance. The primary conceptual sequence remains: first Szondi, then Achtnich, and only thereafter the later application and validation literature. In this sense, the BBT should be treated not as an external aid to fate analysis, but as one of its native methodological developments in the vocational sphere.

3.5. Epigenetics: Horizon and Limit

Epigenetics presents a particularly tempting horizon for any contemporary reconstruction of genotropism because it appears, at first sight, to offer a biological language for the historical sensitivity of heredity itself. If fate analysis insists that ancestry becomes effective not only through fixed inheritance but also through the living transmission of unresolved patterns, then the idea of environmentally responsive biological marks carried across generations seems especially attractive. Yet this very affinity is what makes caution necessary. As Heard and Martienssen emphasise, the widespread fascination with epigenetics is tied in part to the hope that human beings are more than the sum of their genes, but the question of whether environmentally induced epigenetic states are truly transmitted across generations in humans is quite different from the uncontroversial fact that environments influence gene expression (Heard & Martienssen, 2014).

For the present argument, the value of epigenetics lies less in confirming genotropism than in clarifying the boundary between metaphor and mechanism. Heard and Martienssen stress that intergenerational effects and transgenerational inheritance must be carefully distinguished. In mammals, many much cited findings concern exposure effects on the first generation or, in pregnant females, even on the germline of the future second generation. Such findings may be biologically important, but they do not yet constitute evidence of true transgenerational epigenetic inheritance. They further underline that mammalian germline and early embryonic reprogramming are robust, which leaves little room for the stable inheritance of environmentally induced epigenetic marks across multiple generations. For this reason, although epigenetic inheritance is common in plants and documented in some non-mammalian systems, support for environmentally induced transgenerational inheritance in humans remains limited (Heard & Martienssen, 2014).

Horsthemke sharpens this caution in a way that is especially important here. He defines transgenerational epigenetic inheritance as the transmission of epigenetic information through the germline and argues that, in humans, its study is confounded by genetic, ecological, and cultural inheritance. On his account, many apparently transgenerational findings are more plausibly explained by shared environment, foetal programming, or secondary epimutations rooted in underlying genetic variants. He

therefore warns that, in contrast with laboratory animals, it is impossible in humans to rule out ecological and cultural inheritance in any clean way, even where some genetic explanations can be excluded. His conclusion is deliberately sceptical: even if mechanisms of transgenerational epigenetic transmission do exist in humans, the intergenerational transmission of culture through communication, imitation, teaching, and learning is likely to exceed epigenetic inheritance both in magnitude and in detectability (Horsthemke, 2018).

This sceptical position is not a weakness for the present reconstruction. On the contrary, it is methodologically productive. It prevents the argument from sliding into a seductive but fragile claim in which epigenetics becomes a ready-made scientific validation of the familial unconscious. Fate analysis should not be retrofitted onto biology through speculative appeals to trauma inscribed in the genome or memory deposited in methylation. A more defensible conclusion is narrower and more useful: epigenetics keeps open the question of how developmental plasticity, environmental inscription, and biological regulation may intersect across generations, while also showing that current human evidence remains indirect, contested, and often better understood as intergenerational rather than transgenerational (Heard & Martienssen, 2014; Horsthemke, 2018).

For a non-deterministic reconstruction of genotropism, that limit matters as much as the horizon itself. Epigenetics is relevant not because it proves a literal hereditary transmission of unresolved ancestral life, but because it reminds us that biological inheritance is developmentally regulated and historically open in ways more complex than static genetic determinism allows. The philosophical lesson is therefore one of disciplined restraint: fate analysis may enter into dialogue with epigenetics only if it resists the temptation to mistake evocative biological metaphors for demonstrated mechanisms. In humans, the most robust forms of cross-generational transmission are likely to remain relational, symbolic, institutional, and cultural.

These empirical models, however, do not by themselves settle ethical questions. The next section therefore examines how genomic information becomes subjectively invested as fate.

4. Ethics, Psychoanalysis, and the Fantasy of the Genome as Fate

4.1. Genetic Exceptionalism and the Genome as Destiny

The problem of genetic exceptionalism arises whenever genomic information is treated as if it possessed a uniquely revelatory status, disclosing the subject's true identity more directly than other forms of medical or psychological knowledge. In bioethical debate, this position has been defined as the view that genetic information is special, unique, and specifically different from other kinds of medical information (Garrison et al., 2019). Garrison and colleagues argue that this binary idiom is often counterproductive and propose genomic contextualism instead: genomic data should be understood within the concrete contexts in which they are interpreted and used, rather than being granted a privileged metaphysical status from the outset.

For the present argument, the importance of this debate is not only legal or policy-related but also psychoanalytic. The genome can easily become a contemporary screen for fantasies of necessity. What previously appeared as conflict, ambivalence, or open-ended possibility may then be recoded as biological truth. In this sense, the rhetoric of the genome as destiny does not simply reflect scientific misunderstanding; it also answers a deeper wish for certainty in the face of anxiety. Genetic information is invested with the promise of ending interpretive labour: instead of confronting contradiction, contingency, and responsibility, the subject may seek refuge in a seemingly objective explanation of who one really is.

The ethical problem is intensified when genetic information is rhetorically exceptionalised. The opposition between exceptional and ordinary obscures more precise questions about which features of genomic data matter in which contexts. It also encourages the fantasy that the genome is either uniquely dangerous or uniquely truthful, rather than one source of information embedded in broader developmental, familial, and institutional worlds (Garrison et al., 2019). Once genomic information is granted such privilege, it becomes easier to imagine it as a final authority on the person.

Rothstein's critique adds a further dimension that is especially important here. Exceptionalising genetic information may increase essentialism, fatalism, self-stigma, and discrimination rather than reducing them (Rothstein, 2005). If genetic data are treated as uniquely revealing, they may come to function symbolically as a condensed statement of personal essence. What is probabilistic is then received as definitive; what is developmental is misread as fixed; and what should remain open to interpretation is converted into a verdict. In this respect, genetic exceptionalism encourages precisely the kind of reductionist reading of heredity that fate analysis was designed to resist.

A reconstructed genotropism offers a different language. It neither denies heredity nor treats it as a final script. What it insists on is that inherited tendencies become humanly meaningful only within a field of mediation: family worlds, symbolic identifications, institutional contexts, and the ego's capacity to take a stand. Against the fantasy of the genome as destiny, fate analysis proposes a more demanding but more adequate formulation: heredity may structure a horizon of probability, but it does not abolish interpretation, commitment, or responsibility. The next question, however, is how this exceptionalised status of genomic information is subjectively used once predisposition begins to be experienced as verdict.

4.2. Genetic Fatalism as Defence

If genetic exceptionalism concerns the status granted to genomic information, genetic fatalism concerns the subjective use to which that information is put. Fatalism arises when predisposition is no longer received as a probabilistic condition but as a verdict: genomic information is experienced as if it disclosed a fixed and authoritative truth about what a person will become. Predisposition is then lived less as a context of possibility than as a sentence already passed.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, this fatalism may be understood as a defence against the anxiety of freedom. The attraction of genetic explanation does not lie only in its scientific prestige; it also lies in the relief it appears to offer from ambivalence, conflict, and responsibility. What would otherwise have to be lived as tension – between desire and prohibition, aptitude and fear, attachment and refusal – can be displaced onto a seemingly external and objective cause. In this movement, the genome functions less as a biological mechanism than as a symbolic container for certainty. The subject no longer has to ask, "What am I doing with these tendencies?" but may instead say, "This is what my genes made me." Fatalism narrows the space of interpretation precisely by converting probability into necessity.

This narrowing becomes more likely when genomic information is stripped of developmental and relational context. The less such information is situated within biography, family life, institutional structure, and personal practice, the more easily it is received as destiny rather than as one input among others. In the same way, once genetic data are symbolically elevated into a privileged truth about the person, they are more readily experienced as immutable and identity defining. The danger here is not only social but intrapsychic: inherited probability begins to be treated as if it were personal essence, and the subject relinquishes the labour of interpretation, conflict, and selective commitment that fate analysis places at the centre of human destiny (Rothstein, 2005; Garrison et al., 2019).

This is why fate analysis offers a specifically useful counter language. Szondi's framework does not deny heredity; on the contrary, it insists that inherited tendencies help structure the horizon within which a life unfolds. But it also insists that inherited pressure does not speak the final word. The distinction between compulsive fate and freely chosen fate, together with the mediating role of the Pontifex ego, makes it possible to reformulate predisposition as challenge rather than verdict. What is inherited may constrain, burden, or orient the subject, but it must still be mediated, interpreted, and transformed.

Seen in this light, genetic fatalism is not merely an intellectual mistake; it is also an economy of psychic relief. It promises release from uncertainty by converting open-ended life into readable necessity. Yet the cost of this relief is high: it diminishes responsibility, flattens symbolic life, and obscures the developmental and relational conditions through which inherited tendencies become effective. Against this, a reconstructed genotropism proposes a more demanding position. The subject is neither sovereign over heredity nor reducible to it. The task is not to escape predisposition, but to assume a relation to it in which meaning, choice, and responsibility remain possible.

4.3. Reproductive Selection, Enhancement, and the Narrowing of Existential Openness

Debates on reproductive selection and enhancement bring the ethical problem of genomic culture to its sharpest point. If genetic exceptionalism grants genomic information a privileged symbolic status, and genetic fatalism turns predisposition into verdict, then reproductive selection radicalises both tendencies by relocating them into

advance decisions about what kinds of future lives ought to exist at all. Heredity is no longer approached primarily as a condition to be interpreted within a life; it becomes an object of optimisation. The question is no longer only how one should live with inherited predisposition, but which predispositions should be selected, excluded, or improved in advance.

Savulescu's principle of procreative beneficence formulates this position with particular clarity. Prospective parents, he argues, should select the child expected to have the best life, or at least as good a life as the others who could have been selected (Savulescu, 2001). Read at its strongest, this principle shifts reproductive choice beyond the prevention of grave suffering toward a norm of comparative optimisation. Within the horizon of the present article, the philosophical difficulty is not only that such a principle expands the authority of genomic prediction, but that it risks redefining existential openness in advance. If fate analysis insists that a meaningful life emerges through the subject's relation to inherited and contingent constraints, then procreative beneficence tempts us to imagine that the best future is the one in which such constraints have already been minimised before any subject can take a stand toward them.

This is why Sparrow's critique remains important. He argues that the language of procreative beneficence cannot be cleanly separated from eugenic reasoning, because both are organised around the idea that some future persons are preferable to others on grounds of predicted quality (Sparrow, 2007). Even where the rhetoric is individualised and liberal, the evaluative structure remains unstable: once selection is oriented toward the best child, normative assumptions about which traits count as desirable become unavoidable. Optimisation can then slide from the prevention of serious disease into the management of personality, behaviour, ability, and social worth. What begins as an apparently rational extension of reproductive responsibility may therefore reactivate older logics of comparison and exclusion in technologically updated form.

Weindling's historical analysis sharpens this warning by showing that the language of improvement and human betterment has long had ambiguous relations to eugenic projects. His study of Julian Huxley demonstrates the continuity, rather than the simple disappearance, of eugenic imaginaries in twentieth-century Britain, even when they were reformulated in modernised, secular, or scientifically progressive terms (Weindling, 2012). This historical perspective matters because it prevents the ethics of genomic choice from being discussed in a purely presentist register. Contemporary genomic culture can reactivate older dreams of directed human improvement while concealing them beneath the language of rational parental concern and reproductive responsibility.

From a fate analysis point of view, the deepest problem is not simply that optimisation may become coercive or discriminatory, though those risks are real. It is that the ideal of optimisation can erode the very structure of meaningful choice. Nietzsche's *amor fati* becomes relevant here in a restricted but important sense: not as passive resignation, and not as a glorification of suffering, but as an ethical defence of existential openness. What is at stake is not the refusal of therapeutic intervention, but

resistance to the illusion that a valuable life can be guaranteed by minimising all inherited difficulty in advance (Nietzsche, 1882/1974). Fate analysis adds that freedom becomes intelligible only where something resistant, contingent, or burdensome remains to be worked through. A life from which all difficulty has been preemptively removed may be easier to imagine as optimal, but it is also harder to imagine as a site of genuine appropriation, mediation, and destiny.

A reconstructed genotropism therefore offers a critical counter language to reproductive optimisation. It does not deny the moral seriousness of preventing grave suffering. But it does resist the fantasy that future human value can be secured by selecting the most advantageous predispositions in advance. Against the language of total control, fate analysis insists that meaning arises not from the elimination of every inherited burden, but from the subject's relation to what is given. The ethical question is therefore not how to produce the least resistant future, but how to preserve the openness within which a future subject may still become answerable for a life.

4.4. Clinical and Educational Implications

If the reconstruction proposed in this article is to remain more than a philosophical redescription, it must also clarify what practical difference it makes. Its value lies neither in predicting an individual's fate nor in replacing clinical or educational judgment with genomic information. Rather, reconstructed genotropism offers a disciplined language for speaking about predisposition without collapsing into fatalism. In this sense, its practical significance is mediating rather than predictive: it helps translate inherited pressure into a problem of interpretation, responsibility, and response.

In clinical settings, the first implication is interpretive restraint. Garrison et al. argue that genomic information should not be treated as a privileged script of identity, but understood contextually, in relation to development, family, institutions, and concrete use-cases (Garrison et al., 2019). For clinical work, this means resisting both reductive reassurance and reductive alarm. Genomic information should neither be denied nor elevated into a final truth about the person. It should be situated within the patient's developmental history, family relations, symbolic identifications, and current conflicts. A fate analysis vocabulary is helpful here because it frames inherited tendency as a field of structured possibility rather than as a verdict.

This contextual orientation is equally important in counselling and psychotherapy. As Kiss explains, the aim of fate analysis therapy is to help the subject move from the compulsive dimensions of fate toward a more freely chosen way of existence; ancestral inheritance is confronted not in order to submit to it, but in order to decide how it will be handled and what new fate may be formed from it (Kiss, 2010). A reconstructed genotropism therefore suggests a practical question for clinicians: not "What do the genes dictate?" but "How is inherited pressure being lived, repeated, defended against, or transformed?" The clinician's role is not to decode a hidden biological essence, but to help the subject recognise recurrent patterns of attraction,

conflict, and self-limitation so that they become available for more conscious mediation.

The educational implications are especially clear in the field of vocational guidance. Melo-Silva et al. stress that vocational guidance should not be understood narrowly as a one-time school-to-work transition, but as an educational process preparing adolescents and adults for multiple choices across life (Melo-Silva et al., 2008). This fits closely with the present reconstruction. If vocation is one of the privileged sites where fate becomes legible, then guidance should not be reduced to matching skills with labour market categories. It should create a reflective space in which interests, motivations, family expectations, symbolic identifications, and conflicts of direction can be worked through. Within that frame, the BBT acquires a specific value: not as a mechanical assignment device, but as a meaning-rich instrument that helps render vocational attraction, conflict, and identification interpretable. Used in this way, it can help the adolescent become the protagonist of his or her own occupational narrative rather than the passive bearer of familial expectation, social pressure, or pseudo-genetic verdict. Melo-Silva et al. further report that narrative work with preferred BBT images can reveal changes in protagonism, conflict resolution, and vocational identity formation across the guidance process, which makes the method especially relevant for a non-deterministic understanding of vocational choice.

A further implication concerns the communication of genetic and vocational information in schools, counselling services, and health institutions. The task is not to deny heritability, but to translate probabilistic information into forms that preserve agency. Instead of saying "you are destined for this" or "your genes explain this," practitioners should speak in a more differentiated way: certain tendencies, sensitivities, or paths may be more salient, but their meaning depends on how they are understood, supported, resisted, and integrated in a life. The practical promise of reconstructed genotropism is therefore modest but real: it supports an ethics and pedagogy of responsibility in which heredity is acknowledged, but the work of becoming a person is not surrendered to it. In this sense, it offers neither a deterministic anthropology nor a naïve voluntarism.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this article has been to show that Szondi's concept of genotropism can be retained, but only if it is reconstructed in a non-deterministic way. Read literally as a mid-twentieth-century genetic theory, genotropism cannot be sustained. Read as a philosophical-psychological framework, however, it remains conceptually productive. Its enduring insight is that human choice never unfolds within an affectively neutral world: certain persons, vocations, attachments, and forms of life become salient, compelling, or experientially fitting because they are already structured by inherited tendencies, family-mediated worlds, and unconscious patterns of significance. What

must be abandoned is not the intuition of structured choice, but the historically dated vocabulary that once attempted to explain it (Szondi, 1944, 1996; Kiss, 2010).

The reconstruction proposed here has therefore treated genotropism not as a deterministic causal doctrine, but as a probabilistic interpretive framework for thinking about patterned choice under conditions of constraint. Contemporary behavioural genetics and sociogenomics provide several disciplined empirical horizons for such a reconstruction. Genotype – environment correlation, assortative mating, and genetic nurture show, in different ways, that inherited differences may become effective through the environments people enter, the partners they select, and the family worlds in which development unfolds (Scarr & McCartney, 1983; Domingue et al., 2014; Kong et al., 2018; Border et al., 2022). The BBT demonstrates that fate analysis itself generated a vocational method capable of rendering patterned choice interpretable without abandoning its own depth psychological premises (Achtnich, 1979/2010). Epigenetics, by contrast, is valuable less as confirmation than as a methodological limit case: it reminds us that historical sensitivity in heredity remains an important question, but also that evocative biological metaphors must not be mistaken for demonstrated human mechanisms (Heard & Martienssen, 2014; Horsthemke, 2018). None of these contemporary domains proves genotropism. What they do provide is a disciplined empirical horizon within which Szondi's strongest intuition – that destiny is patterned without being biologically scripted – can be reformulated without mystification.

Yet the true centre of the argument lies elsewhere: in the claim that inherited pressure becomes philosophically and ethically meaningful only because it meets a subject capable of mediation. The distinction between compulsive fate and freely chosen fate, and above all the concept of the Pontifex ego, preserve what is strongest in fate analysis. Freedom here does not mean release from heredity; it means the capacity to recognise inherited possibilities, endure their pressure, and transform them into a position one can inhabit as one's own. In this sense, the Pontifex function names the locus of responsibility within a structured field of predisposition. It is the concept that prevents reconstructed genotropism from collapsing either into biological fatalism or into an abstract voluntarism without depth (Szondi, 1956, 1963).

This conclusion also defines the ethical significance of the reconstruction. Against genetic exceptionalism, fate analysis resists the fantasy that genomic information discloses the subject's essence in a uniquely final way (Rothstein, 2005; Garrison et al., 2019). Against genetic fatalism, it resists the conversion of predisposition into verdict. Against reproductive optimisation, it resists the illusion that the value of a future life can be secured by minimising all inherited difficulty in advance (Savulescu, 2001; Sparrow, 2007; Weindling, 2012). A reconstructed genotropism offers a different language: heredity may structure a horizon of probability, but it does not abolish interpretation, commitment, or responsibility. A human life is neither the execution of a hereditary script nor the expression of pure spontaneity. It is a destiny formed at the intersection of predisposition, mediation, and responsibility.

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