

Nonlinear representation, backward SDEs, and application to the Principal-Agent problem

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Outline

- 1 The Principal-Agent problem
 - Formulation
 - Reduction to standard control problem
- 2 Linear and semilinear representation
- 3 Fully nonlinear representation
 - Revisiting random horizon backward SDEs
 - Random horizon 2nd order backward SDEs

(Static) Principal-Agent Problem

- Principal delegates management of output process X , only observes X
- Agent devotes effort $a \implies X^a$, chooses optimal effort by

$$V_A := \max_a \mathbb{E} U_A(\quad - c(a))$$

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- Principal delegates management of output process X , only observes X
 pays salary defined by contract $\xi(X)$
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$$V_A(\xi) := \max_a \mathbb{E} U_A(\xi(X^a) - c(a)) \implies \hat{a}(\xi)$$

- Principal chooses optimal contract by solving

$$\max_{\xi} \mathbb{E} U_P(X^{\hat{a}(\xi)} - \xi(X^{\hat{a}(\xi)})) \quad \text{under constraint} \quad V_A(\xi) \geq \rho$$

\implies Non-zero sum Stackelberg game

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Principal-Agent problem formulation

Agent problem :

$$V_0^A(\xi) := \sup_{\mathbb{P} \in \mathcal{P}} \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}} \left[K_T^\nu \xi(X) - \int_0^T K_t^\nu c_t(\nu_t) dt \right], \quad K_t^\nu := e^{-\int_0^t k_s^\nu ds}$$

$\mathbb{P} \in \mathcal{P}$: weak solution of Output process for some ν valued in U :

$$dX_t = b_t(X, \nu_t) dt + \sigma_t(X, \nu_t) dW_t^{\mathbb{P}} \quad \mathbb{P} - \text{a.s.}$$

- Given solution $\mathbb{P}^*(\xi)$, Principal solves the optimization problem

$$V_0^P := \sup_{\xi \in \Xi_\rho} \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}^*(\xi)} \left[R_T U(\ell(X)) - \xi(X) \right], \quad R_t := e^{-\int_0^t r_s ds}$$

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Principal-Agent problem formulation : non-degeneracy

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A subset of revealing contracts

- Path-dependent Hamiltonian for the Agent problem :

$$H_t(\omega, y, z, \gamma) := \sup_u \left\{ (\sigma_t \lambda_t)(\omega, u) \cdot z + \frac{1}{2} \sigma_t \sigma_t^\top(\omega, u) : \gamma - k_t(\omega, u) y - c_t(\omega, u) \right\}$$

- For $Y_0 \in \mathbb{R}$ and $Z, \Gamma \mathbb{F}^X - \text{prog meas}$, define

$$Y_t^{Z, \Gamma} = Y_0 + \int_0^T Z_t \cdot dX_t + \frac{1}{2} \Gamma_t : d\langle X \rangle_t - H_t(X, Y_t^{Z, \Gamma}, Z_t, \Gamma_t) dt, \mathcal{P} - \text{q.s.}$$

Proposition $V_A(Y_T^{Z, \Gamma}) = Y_0$. Moreover \mathbb{P}^* is optimal iff

$$\nu_t^* = \text{Argmax}_{u \in U} H_t(Y_t, Z_t, \Gamma_t) = \hat{\nu}(Y_t, Z_t, \Gamma_t)$$

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Proof : classical verification argument !

For all $\mathbb{P} \in \mathcal{P}$, denote $J_A(\xi, \mathbb{P}) := \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}} \left[K_T^\nu \xi - \int_0^T K_t^\nu c_t^\nu dt \right]$. Then

$$J_A(Y_T^{Z, \Gamma}, \mathbb{P}) = \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}} \left[K_T^\nu \left\{ Y_0 + \int_0^T Z_t \cdot dX_t + \frac{1}{2} \Gamma_t : d\langle X \rangle_t - H_t(Y_t, Z_t, \Gamma_t) dt \right\} - \int_0^T K_t^\nu c_t^\nu dt \right]$$

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with equality iff ν^* achieves the max of Hamiltonian

Principal problem restricted to revealing contracts

Dynamics of the pair (X, Y) under “optimal response”

$$dX_t = \underbrace{\nabla_z H_t(X, Y_t^{Z, \Gamma}, Z_t, \Gamma_t)}_{b_t(X, \hat{\nu}(Y_t, Z_t, \Gamma_t))} dt + \underbrace{\left\{ 2 \nabla_\gamma H_t(X, Y_t^{Z, \Gamma}, Z_t, \Gamma_t) \right\}^{\frac{1}{2}}}_{\sigma_t(X, \hat{\nu}(Y_t, Z_t, \Gamma_t))} dW_t$$

$$dY_t^{Z, \Gamma} = Z_t \cdot dX_t + \frac{1}{2} \Gamma_t : d\langle X \rangle_t - H_t(X, Y_t^{Z, \Gamma}, Z_t, \Gamma_t) dt$$

\implies Principal's value function under revealing contracts :

$$V_P \geq V_0(X_0, Y_0) := \sup_{(Z, \Gamma) \in \mathcal{V}} \mathbb{E} \left[U(\ell(X) - Y_T^{Z, \Gamma}) \right], \quad \text{for all } Y_0 \geq \rho$$

$$\text{where } \mathcal{V} := \left\{ (Z, \Gamma) : Z \in \mathbb{H}^2(\mathcal{P}) \text{ and } \mathcal{P}^*(Y_T^{Z, \Gamma}) \neq \emptyset \right\}$$

Reduction to standard control problem

Theorem (Cvitanic, Possamai & NT '15)

Assume $\mathcal{V} \neq \emptyset$. Then

$$V_0^P = \sup_{Y_0 \geq \rho} V_0(X_0, Y_0)$$

Given maximizer Y_0^* , the corresponding optimal controls (Z^*, Γ^*) induce an optimal contract

$$\xi^* = Y_0^* + \int_0^T Z_t^* \cdot dX_t + \frac{1}{2} \Gamma_t^* : d\langle X \rangle_t - H_t(X, Y_t^{Z^*, \Gamma^*}, Z_t^*, \Gamma_t^*) dt$$

To prove the main result, it suffices that

$$\text{for all } \xi \in ?? \quad \exists (Y_0, Z, \Gamma) \quad \text{s.t.} \quad \xi = Y_T^{Z, \Gamma}, \quad \mathcal{P} - q.s.$$

OR, weaker sufficient condition :

$$\text{for all } \xi \in ?? \quad \exists (Y_0^n, Z^n, \Gamma^n) \quad \text{s.t.} \quad "Y_T^{Z^n, \Gamma^n} \longrightarrow \xi"$$

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From fully nonlinear HJB equation to semilinear

- $H_t(\omega, y, z, \gamma)$ non-decreasing and convex in γ , Then

$$H_t(\omega, y, z, \gamma) = \sup_{\sigma \geq 0} \left\{ \frac{1}{2} \sigma^2 : \gamma - H_t^*(\omega, y, z, \sigma) \right\}$$

Denote $k_t := H_t(Y_t, Z_t, \Gamma_t) - \frac{1}{2} \hat{\sigma}_t^2 : \Gamma_t + H_t^*(Y_t, Z_t, \hat{\sigma}_t) \geq 0$

Then, required representation $\xi = Y_T^{Z, \Gamma}$, \mathcal{P} -q.s. is equivalent to

$$\xi = Y_0 + \int_0^T Z_t \cdot dX_t + H_t^*(Y_t, Z_t, \hat{\sigma}_t) dt - \int_0^T k_t dt, \quad \mathcal{P} - \text{q.s.}$$

\implies 2BSDE up to approximation of nondecreasing process K

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Linear representation of random variables

Predictable Representation Property of BM

Theorem

For all $\xi \in \mathbb{L}^2(\mathcal{F}_T^W)$, there is a unique (Y, Z) \mathbb{F}^W -prog. meas. s.t.

$$\xi = Y_t + \int_t^T Z_s dW_s, \quad \mathbb{P} - a.s. \quad \mathbb{E} \left[\int_0^T (|Y_t|^2 + |Z_t|^2) dt \right] < \infty,$$

- For $\xi = g(W_T)$: Heat equation and Itô's formula
- True for $\xi = g(W_{t_1}, \dots, W_{t_n})$... conclude by density argument

Heat equation with path dependent boundary condition

Connection with $W^{1,2}$ -solution of Heat equation

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Semilinear representation of random variables

Here again, $\xi = \xi(W_s, s \leq T)$. Let

$$f : \mathbb{R} \times \Omega \times \mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R}^d \longrightarrow \mathbb{R}, \quad \text{Lip in } (y, z), \text{ unif in } (t, \omega), \quad \mathbb{E} \left[\int_0^T |f_s^0|^2 ds \right] < \infty$$

Theorem (Pardoux & Peng '92)

For all $\xi \in \mathbb{L}^2(\mathcal{F}_T^W)$, there is a unique \mathbb{F}^W -prog. meas. (Y, Z) ,
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$$Y_t = \xi + \int_t^T f_s(Y_s, Z_s) ds - \int_t^T Z_s dW_s, \quad \mathbb{P} - a.s.$$

Unique fixed point for the Picard iteration

$$(Y, Z) \longmapsto Y'_t = \xi + \int_t^T f_s(Y_s, Z_s) ds - \int_t^T Z'_s dW_s, \quad 0 \leq t \leq T$$

$W^{1,2}$ -type solution of semilinear heat equation with

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Backward SDE and semilinear PDE

Rewrite the backward SDE in differential form

$$dY_t = -f_t(Y_t, Z_t)dt + Z_t dW_t, \quad t \leq T, \quad \text{and } Y_T = \xi, \quad \mathbb{P} - \text{a.s.}$$

In the Markovian case $\xi = g(W_T)$ and $f_t(y, z) = f(t, W_t, y, z) \implies$

$$Y_t = v(t, W_t), \quad \text{so that } dY_t = \partial_t v(t, W_t)dt + Dv(t, W_t) \cdot dW_t + \frac{1}{2} \Delta v(t, W_t)dt$$

by Itô's formula. Direct identification yields

$$Z_t = Dv(t, W_t) \quad \text{and} \quad \partial_t v(t, W_t) + \frac{1}{2} \Delta v(t, W_t) = -f_t(v, Dv)$$

Backward SDE \equiv path-dependent semilinear PDE with Sobolev-type of regularity [Barles & Lesigne '97]

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Towards fully nonlinear PDEs : probabilistic framework

In order to cover fully nonlinear PDEs, we need

quasi-sure stochastic analysis...

$$\Omega := \{\omega \in C^0(\mathbb{R}_+, \mathbb{R}^d) : \omega(0) = 0\}$$

X : canonical process, i.e. $X_t(\omega) := \omega(t)$

$$\mathcal{F}_t := \sigma(X_s, s \leq t), \mathbb{F} := \{\mathcal{F}_t, t \geq 0\}$$

$\langle X \rangle$: quadratic variation process (defined on $\mathbb{R}_+ \times \omega$)

$$\langle X \rangle_t := X_t^2 - \int_0^t 2X_s dX_s = \mathbb{P}\text{-}\lim_{|\pi| \rightarrow 0} \sum_{n \geq 1} |X_{t \wedge t_n^\pi} - X_{t \wedge t_{n-1}^\pi}|^2$$

for all semimartingale probability measure \mathbb{P} on Ω , and

$$\hat{\sigma}_t^2 := \overline{\lim}_{h \searrow 0} \frac{\langle X \rangle_{t+h} - \langle X \rangle_t}{h}$$

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Semimartingale measures on canonical space

\mathcal{P}^W : collection of all semimartingale measures \mathbb{P} such that

$$dX_t = b_t dt + \sigma_t dW_t, \quad \mathbb{P} - \text{a.s.}$$

for some \mathbb{F} -processes b and σ , and \mathbb{P} -Brownian motion W

Class of prob. meas. on Ω : $\mathcal{P} \subset \mathcal{P}^W$

→ sufficiently rich (to satisfy DP properties...)

→ if not, enrich it...

- \mathcal{P} -quasi-surely MEANS \mathbb{P} -a.s. for all $\mathbb{P} \in \mathcal{P}$

Semimartingale measures on canonical space

\mathcal{P}^W : collection of all semimartingale measures \mathbb{P} such that

$$dX_t = b_t dt + \sigma_t dW_t, \quad \mathbb{P} - \text{a.s.}$$

for some \mathbb{F} -processes b and σ , and \mathbb{P} -Brownian motion W

Class of prob. meas. on Ω : $\mathcal{P} \subset \mathcal{P}^W$

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Nonlinear expectation operators

- \mathcal{P}^0 : subset of local martingale measures, i.e.

$$dX_t = \sigma_t dW_t, \quad \mathbb{P} - \text{a.s. for all } \mathbb{P} \in \mathcal{P}^0$$

\implies Nonlinear expectation $\mathcal{E}_t := \sup_{\mathbb{P} \in \mathcal{P}^0} \mathbb{E}_t^{\mathbb{P}}$

- $\mathcal{P}^L(\mathbb{P}) := \left\{ \mathbb{Q} = \mathcal{E} \left(\int_0^\cdot \lambda_t \cdot dW_t \right) \cdot \mathbb{P} : \|\lambda\|_{L^\infty} \leq L \right\}$

\implies Nonlinear expectation $\mathcal{E}_t^{\mathbb{P}} := \sup_{\mathbb{P}' \in \mathcal{P}^L(\mathbb{P})} \mathbb{E}_t^{\mathbb{P}'}$

- $\mathcal{P}^L := \cup_{\mathbb{P} \in \mathcal{P}^0} \mathcal{P}^L(\mathbb{P})$

\implies Nonlinear expectation $\mathcal{E}_t^L := \sup_{\mathbb{P} \in \mathcal{P}^L} \mathbb{E}_t^{\mathbb{P}}$

Nonlinearity

Assumptions $F : \mathbb{R}_+ \times \omega \times \mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R}^d \times \mathbb{S}_+^d \longrightarrow \mathbb{R}$ satisfies

(C1_L) Lipschitz in $(y, \sigma z)$:

$$|F(., y, z, \sigma) - F(., y', z', \sigma)| \leq L (|y - y'| + |\sigma(z - z')|)$$

(C2_μ) Monotone in y :

$$(y - y') \cdot [F(., y, \cdot) - F(., y', \cdot)] \leq -\mu |y - y'|^2$$

Denote $f_t(y, z) := F_t(y, z, \hat{\sigma}_t)$ and $f_t^0 := f_t(0, 0)$

Wellposedness of random horizon backward SDEs

τ : stopping time, ξ is \mathcal{F}_τ -meas., consider the backward SDE :

$$Y_{t \wedge \tau} = \xi + \int_{t \wedge \tau}^{\tau} f_s(Y_s, Z_s) ds - \int_{t \wedge \tau}^{\tau} (Z_s \cdot dX_s + dN_s), \quad \mathbb{P} - \text{a.s.}$$

where N martingale with $\langle N, X \rangle = 0$, \mathbb{P} -a.s.

Theorem (Y. Lin , Z. Ren, NT & J. Yang '17)

Let $\|\xi\|_{\mathcal{L}_{\rho, \tau}^q(\mathbb{P})} < \infty$, $\bar{f}_{\rho, \tau}^{q, \mathbb{P}} := \mathcal{E}^{\mathbb{P}} \left[\left(\int_0^\tau |e^{\rho t} f_t^0|^2 ds \right)^{\frac{q}{2}} \right]^{\frac{1}{q}} < \infty$, for some $\rho > -\mu$, $q > 1$. Then the BSDE has a unique solution with

$$\|Y\|_{\mathcal{D}_{\eta, \tau}^p(\mathbb{P})} + \|Z\|_{\mathcal{H}_{\eta, \tau}^p(\mathbb{P})} + \|N\|_{\mathcal{N}_{\eta, \tau}^p(\mathbb{P})} \leq C(\|\xi\|_{\mathcal{L}_{\rho, \tau}^q(\mathbb{P})} + \bar{f}_{\rho, \tau}^{q, \mathbb{P}})$$

for all $p \in (1, q)$ and $\eta \in [-\mu, \rho)$

Darling & Pardoux '97 : $\bar{\rho} := \rho + \frac{L^2}{2}$, $\mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}}$, instead of ρ , $\mathcal{E}^{\mathbb{P}}$.

Norms

We have used the notations

$$\begin{aligned} \|\xi\|_{\mathcal{L}_{\rho, \tau}^q(\mathbb{P})}^p &:= \mathcal{E}^{\mathbb{P}} \left[|e^{\rho\tau} \xi|^q \right] \\ \|Y\|_{\mathcal{D}_{\eta, \tau}^p(\mathbb{P})}^p &:= \mathcal{E}^{\mathbb{P}} \left[\sup_{t \leq \tau} |e^{\eta t} Y_t|^p \right] \\ \|Z\|_{\mathcal{H}_{\eta, \tau}^p(\mathbb{P})}^p &:= \mathcal{E}^{\mathbb{P}} \left[\left(\int_0^T |e^{\eta t} \hat{\sigma}_t^T Z_t|^2 dt \right)^{\frac{p}{2}} \right] \\ \|N\|_{\mathcal{N}_{\eta, \tau}^p(\mathbb{P})}^p &:= \mathcal{E}^{\mathbb{P}} \left[\left(\int_0^T e^{2\eta t} d[N]_t \right)^{\frac{p}{2}} \right] \end{aligned}$$

Random horizon reflected backward SDEs

Find (Y, Z) such that :

$$Y_{\cdot \wedge \tau} = \xi + \int_{\cdot \wedge \tau}^{\tau} f_s(Y_s, Z_s) ds - (Z_s \cdot dX_s + dU_s), \quad Y \geq S, \quad \mathbb{P} - \text{a.s.}$$

and $\mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}} \left[\int_0^{t \wedge \tau} (1 \wedge (Y_{r-} - S_{r-})) dU_r \right] = 0$, for all $t \geq 0$,

where $U_{\wedge t}$ is a càdlàg \mathbb{P} -supermartingale, for all $t \geq 0$, starting from $U_0 = 0$, orthogonal to X , i.e. $[X, U] = 0$

Theorem (Y. Lin, Z. Ren, NT & J. Yang '17)

Assume further that S càdlàg, $\mathbb{F}^{+, \mathbb{P}}$ -adapted, $\|S^+\|_{\mathcal{D}_{\rho, \tau}^q(\mathbb{P})} < \infty$.

Then, the reflected BSDE has a unique solution

$(Y, Z) \in \mathcal{D}_{\eta, \tau}^p(\mathbb{P}) \times \mathcal{H}_{\eta, \tau}^p(\mathbb{P})$, for all $p \in (1, q)$ and $\eta \in [-\mu, \rho]$.

Random horizon 2nd order backward SDE

For a stop. time τ , and \mathcal{F}_τ -measurable ξ :

$$Y_{t \wedge \tau} = \xi + \int_{t \wedge \tau}^{\tau} F_s(Y_s, Z_s, \hat{\sigma}_s) ds - \int_{t \wedge \tau}^{\tau} Z_s \cdot dX_s + \int_{t \wedge \tau}^{\tau} dK_s, \quad \mathcal{P} - \text{q.s.}$$

K non-decreasing, $K_0 = 0$, and minimal in the sense

$$\inf_{\mathbb{P} \in \mathcal{P}} \mathbb{E}^{\mathbb{P}} \left[\int_{t_1 \wedge \tau}^{t_2 \wedge \tau} dK_t \right] = 0, \quad \text{for all } t_1 \leq t_2$$

Remark Deterministic finite horizon $\tau = T$: $(C2)_\mu$ not needed
 Soner, NT & Zhang '14
 Possamaï, Tan & Zhou '16

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Connection with fully nonlinear PDEs

Rewrite the 2BSDE in differential form

$$dY_t = -F_t(Y_t, Z_t, \hat{\sigma}_t)dt + Z_t \cdot dX_t - dK_t, \quad t \leq \tau, \quad \text{and } Y_T = \xi, \quad \mathcal{P} - \text{q.s.}$$

Markovian case $\xi = g(X_T)$ and $f_t(y, z) = f(t, X_t, y, z) \implies Y_t = v(t, X_t)$

$$dY_t = \partial_t v(t, X_t)dt + Dv(t, X_t) \cdot dX_t + \frac{1}{2} \text{Tr}[\hat{\sigma}_t^2 D^2 v(t, X_t)]dt, \quad \mathcal{P} - \text{q.s.}$$

by Itô's formula. Direct identification yields

$$Z_t = Dv(t, X_t) \quad \text{and} \quad \partial_t v(t, X_t) + \frac{1}{2} \text{Tr}[\hat{\sigma}_t^2 D^2 v(t, X_t)] \leq -F_t(v, Dv, \hat{\sigma}_t)$$

Finally, the minimality condition on K implies the fully nonlinear PDE

$$\partial_t v(t, X_t) + \sup_{\sigma} \left\{ \frac{1}{2} \text{Tr}[\sigma^2 D^2 v(t, X_t)] + F_t(v, Dv, \sigma) \right\} = 0$$

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$$dY_t = -F_t(Y_t, Z_t, \hat{\sigma}_t)dt + Z_t \cdot dX_t - dK_t, \quad t \leq \tau, \quad \text{and } Y_\tau = \xi, \quad \mathcal{P} - \text{q.s.}$$

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Wellposedness of random horizon 2nd order backward SDE

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Let $\|\xi\|_{\mathcal{L}_{\rho,\tau}^q(\mathcal{P}^L)} < \infty$, $\bar{f}_{\rho,\tau}^q := \mathcal{E}^L\left[\left(\int_0^\tau |e^{\rho t} f_t^0|^2 ds\right)^{\frac{q}{2}}\right]^{\frac{1}{q}} < \infty$, for some $\rho > -\mu$, $q > 1$. Then the Random horizon 2BSDE has a unique solution (Y, Z) with

$$Y \in \mathcal{D}_{\eta,\tau}^p(\mathcal{P}^L), \quad Z \in \mathcal{H}_{\eta,\tau}^p(\mathcal{P}^L) \quad \text{for all } \eta \in [\mu, \rho), \quad p \in [1, q)$$

$$\|\xi\|_{\mathcal{L}_{\rho,\tau}^q(\mathcal{P})}^p := \mathcal{E}^L\left[|e^{\rho\tau}\xi|^q\right]$$

$$\|Y\|_{\mathcal{D}_{\eta,\tau}^p(\mathcal{P})}^p := \mathcal{E}^L\left[\sup_{t \leq \tau} |e^{\eta t} Y_t|^p\right]$$

$$\|Z\|_{\mathcal{H}_{\eta,\tau}^p(\mathcal{P})}^p := \mathcal{E}^L\left[\left(\int_0^\tau |e^{\eta t} \hat{\sigma}_t^T Z_t|^2 dt\right)^{\frac{p}{2}}\right]$$