Dynastic preferences, recursive utility and time consistency*

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Abstract

We consider a class of infinite horizon, stochastic, non-stationary dynastic consumption-savings models with general forms of recursive, time-varying altruistic preferences including direct and indirect pure altruism as well as paternalistic altruism. It is well-known such models lead to time-inconsistent dynastic preferences. Within this class of economies, we propose a novel set-iterative procedure for characterizing all Markov perfect time-consistent solutions in the space of increasing investments. Our approach involves both: value function and policy iterations. We prove the existence of Markov Perfect equilibria in stationary, periodic, and also non-stationary strategies. We provide numerous applications to altruistic growth models, behavioral discounting models, and collective household models as well as discuss the role of various certainty equivalence operators.

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1 Introduction

Characterizing dynastic choice in models with intergenerational altruistic preferences has become a foundational topic in many important and diverse literatures in economics. Much of the current theoretical work in the literature addressing these questions begins with the seminal work on intergenerational bequests and transfers of Barro (1974) on Ricardian equivalence, and Becker and Tomes (1979), Laitner(e.g., Laitner (1979a,b)) or Loury (1981) on the role of bequest in the intergenerational transmission of wealth. Related important early work on bequest and capital accumulation is found in the papers of Kotlikoff and Summers (1981) and Bernheim and Bagwell (1988). Recent papers that stems for this and subsequent theoretical work on dynastic choice and altruism has appeared in the context of intergenerational resource allocations problem, and this literature is broad. It includes papers studying the structure of dynastic precautionary savings in the presence of health/income risk as in the papers of Kopczuk and Lupton (2007) and Boar (2021), models of health care spending, medicaid, and dynastic savings in the papers of Braun et al. (2017), De Nardi et al. (2016), Abbott et al. (2019), and Ameriks et al. (2020), bequest and social security in the macroeconomic models of social security (e.g., Laitner (1988), Fuster et al. (2007), and Imrohoroglu and Zhao (2018)), dynamic models of the household that study how parenting styles, endogenous dynastic preferences, and intergenerational parent investments for human capital development in models with indirect pure altruism and/or paternalism (as, for example, in the work of Doepke and Zilibotti (2017), Doepke and Sorrenti (2019), and Doepke et al. (2019)) to name just a few.

A notable feature of much of the work above is that authors in essence operate under the implicit assumption of perfect commitment between generations when computing or characterizing solutions to these models. This assumption abstracts from important issues and complications that typically arise in dynastic choice models with altruism associated with time inconsistency of preferences and limited commitment between dynastic agents. In a parallel line of work, the issue of limited commitment between generations (as well as the time inconsistency associated with intergenerational altruism itself) has been actually a focal point of the analysis. Early examples of work that studies the nature of *strategic* bequest motives in dynastic equilibrium growth models includes the papers of Bernheim et al. (1985), Bernheim and Ray (1986), Leininger (1986), and Perozek (1998), among others. But more recently there has been a large and important literature focusing on the nature of time consistent choice in dynamic (dynastic) collective choice models involving dynamic choices made by group of agents and/or society of individuals (e.g, see Jackson and Yariv (2015); Lizzeri and Yariv (2017), and Millner and Heal (2018))). Related to this work, there is also the problem of studying consumption-savings problems for dynamic collective households as discussed in the recent work of Mazzocco (2007) and Balbus et al. (2021). This issue of time consistency and altruism arises in the recent literature that studies the design of global environment policies within the context of overlapping generations of dynastic households and governments in both closed and open economies, see e.g. the work of Karp (2016), Gerlagh and Liski (2017), Millner (2020), and Iverson and Karp (2020) (among others). Finally, related issues arise also when one seeks to understand the structure of recursive social welfare functions and study time consistent social choice as in the papers of Phelan (2006), Farhi and Werning (2007), Asheim (2010), and Feng and Ke (2018).

A critical aspect of this recent theoretical and quantitative work on sustainable dynastic plans is that the primitive data defining the structure of intergenerational preferences and/or technologies is *stationary.* This assumption of the stationarity of the preferences seems very strong relative to recent experimental and empirical work, and has lead to a emerging literature that dynamic behavioral choice that allows for more general notions of behavioral discounting.[1] In such settings (and

[1] See the recent papers on generalizations of quasi-hyperbolic discounting models with infinitely-lived agents in the work of Balbus et al. (2022), Jensen (2021), and Richter (2021).

even in models with stationary recursive intergenerational preferences), what has been missing in this literature is to both allow for dynastic preferences that are in some important sense non-stationary (yet recursive), and providing a systematic approach to studying the existence and structure of more general forms of *sequential* time consistent solutions to dynastic choice problem. But even when assumptions on primitives are made to guarantee the stationarity of the economic environment under consideration, almost all of this existence work has focused exclusively on characterizing only *stationary* Markov perfect equilibrium (SMPE) as the model of interpersonal/intergenerational equilibrium (time consistent) dynastic choice. But nonstationary (subgame perfect) solutions can exist even when the primitive data is stationary. So developing methods to characterize at least a large set of sequential equilibrium than SMPE in the interpersonal game is potentially of independent interest. An appealing feature of any such sequential approach to time consistent choice would be if the approach allows one to focus on a much large set of sustainable (time consistent) dynastic plans while also allowing one to seek to obtain SMPE solutions also (in addition to nonstationary sequential time-consistent solutions), and do this all within a *single unified framework.*

With many of these research questions in mind, this paper proposes a systematic approach to studying *all* Markov perfect equilibria (or time-consistent solutions) in a class of dynastic consumption-savings models with recursive altruistic preferences. In particular, we propose a new set-iterative approach to constructing the set of all Markovian sustainable plans in the class of dynastic choice models we consider. Building on the recent axiomatic work on direct pure altruism of Galperti and Strulovici (2017), as well as motivated by a long line of the related work on nonpaternalistic and paternalistic altruism over the last four decades,[2] we consider a dynastic choice problem of generations connected by recursive preferences for both the case of pure (direct or indirect) as well as pa-

As will be clear in this paper, our new approach to constructing time consistent solution will extend to many of these models as well.

[2] For example, among many papers in this extensive literature, for nonpaternalistic altruism, see Barro (1974), Ray (1987), Saez-Marti and Weibull (2005), Pearce (2008); for paternalistic altruism, see Koopmans (1960), Bernheim and Ray (1986), Leininger (1986), Asheim (2010).

ternalistic altruism. The class of recursive preferences we consider is very general, allow for aggregators that are time-varying, non-stationary, defined in settings with uncertainty, and are in general time-inconsistent.

In the context of this dynastic choice framework, we begin by defining an appropriate intergenerational dynamic game where Markov perfect equilibrium provide a theory of *time-consistent dynastic choice.* Relative to this game, we develop a new set-iterative strategic dynamic programming approach which restricts it's domain to *Markovian strategies.* This restriction leads to very different approach than the typical "self-generation" approach that has been proposed to solving repeated/dynamic games in the existing literature (e.g., Abreu et al. (1990)).[3] Our approach is adapts this self-generation approach to the specific class of dynamic/stochastic game considered in this paper, and is shown to transform function spaces for both policies and values into themselves. In the end, for our class of models, we are able to characterize *all* the monotone Markov Perfect Equilibrium in stationary, periodic, and nonstationary strategies via the largest fixed point (under set inclusion) of our Markovian self-generation operator.

Our paper builds on the insights found in the axiomatic work of Galperti and Strulovici (2017), as well as related work on direct pure altruism models in many papers in the literature including Ray (1987), Saez-Marti and Weibull (2005), Pearce (2008), Fels and Zeckhauser (2008), among other. With that said, our results lead to three significant new directions : (i) by applying a general recursive aggregator approach, for the direct pure altruistic preference case, we are able to prove the existence of time consistent equilibria in dynastic choice models for general *time-varying* dynastic preference aggregators $\{V_t\}$ without imposing conditions such as intergenerational separability or altruistic stationarity, (ii) with our single unified framework, we are also able to prove the existence of time-consistent equilibria for models of indirect pure altruism (as in Koopmans

[3] For the recent literature on correspondence-based strategic dynamic programming, as well as an explanation of the traditional strategic dynamic programming approach to dynamic/stochastic games, see the papers of Bernheim et al. (1999), Phelan and Stacchetti (2001), Chade et al. (2008), Bernheim et al. (2015), Sleet and Ş. Yeltekin (2016), Yeltekin et al. (2017), Abreu et al. (2020a,b), among others.

(1960), Barro (1974), Loury (1981)) and Barczyk and Kredler (2020)) as well as those with paternalistic altruism (such as Bernheim and Ray (1986), Leininger (1986), Asheim (2010), and Mookherjee and Napel (2019)), (iii) we are able to consider time-consistent dynastic choice under uncertainty, allowing for random state transitions and general forms of certainty equivalence operators.

Our approach to equilibrium existence and equilibrium construction unifies the construction of (nonstationary) Markov perfect time consistent equilibria with the typical case studied in the existing literature on Stationary Markov Perfect equilibrium, as well as provides the first sufficient conditions in the literature on *periodic* Markov Perfect Equilibria. In addition, as many dynamic models of time-inconsistent choice with behavioral discounting are special cases of direct pure altruistic models (e.g., see Galperti and Strulovici (2017), section 4), we are also able to relate our Markovian strategic dynamic programming approach to the extensive literature on time consistent equilibria in dynamic models with behavioral discounting, such as quasi-hyperbolic discounting, hyperbolic discounting and generalized behavioral discounting with a single, infinitely-lived consumer, who is given an intergenerational interpretation.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 presents the model, notation and our main result. Section 3 then extends our results to a special case of periodic models and proves existence of periodic equilibria; in particular stationary ones. Section 4 is devoted to a generalization towards paternalistic models. Section 6 presents some special cases of our results and relations to the literature. Finally, in the last section of the paper, we provide an additional discussion of how our results fit into the existing literature. Four technical lemmas are moved to the Appendix.

2 Direct pure altruism and the main result

Consider an infinite sequence of generations index by $t \in \mathbb{N} = \{1, 2, \ldots\}$. Generation t has $s_t \in S = [0, \bar{s}]$ resources[4] for its own disposal. It divides it by choosing consumption[5] $c_t \in [0, s_t]$ and investment $i_t = s_t - c_t$. The resource is renewable and the amount of resources the next period s_{t+1} is a random value whose (Borel) distribution is $q_t(\cdot|i_t)$.

Remark 1 (State space)**.** This specification is very general and allows to cover many special cases. For example, it allows for $s_{t+1} = F(\omega_{t+1}, i_t)$ where $\omega_{t+1} \in \Omega$ is a random shock with distribution π_{t+1} on Ω and F a (production or transformation) function. Here F can be multiplicative with $F(\omega_{t+1}, i_t) = \omega_{t+1} g(i_t)$ (in which case ω_{t+1} can be interpreted as a random productivity shock, with and π a nonatomic distribution with support included on $[0, \frac{\bar{s}}{g(\bar{s})}]$) or additive $F(\omega_{t+1}, i_t) = g(i_t) + \omega_{t+1}$, (where ω_{t+1} can be interpreted as a random labour income) for some continuous and increasing g (and π a nonatomic distribution with support included in $[0, \bar{s} - g(\bar{s})]$). One can rewrite this transition process as: $Q(A|i_t) = \int_\Omega \mathbf{1}_A(F(\omega, i_t))\pi_{t+1}(d\omega)$, where $\mathbf{1}_A()$ is a indicator function of a Borel set $A \subseteq S$. Generally, this specification also allows for a deterministic state transitions.[6] But our further assumptions excluded deterministic transitions.

Borrowing constraint We can extend the analyzed case to consider borrowing constraint, s.t. $[-b, s]$ where s is a current period asset level. In fact our model easily extends to any constraint set of the form: $[\underline{A}(s), \overline{A}(s)]$ such that $\underline{A}$ and $\overline{A}$ are increasing.

[4] We consider a bounded states space and hence bounded rewards. Generalizations including unbounded states space or unbounded above reward space are possible. See Balbus et al. (2022) for a recent application in models of discounting.

[5] The choice of consumption and investment from $[0, s_t]$ may seem restrictive. In fact our formulation allows for more general cases with a production function $g(s_t)$, or some borrowing bounds introduced. This can be embedded in the formulation of V_t.

[6] Indeed, consider a typical transition between current and next period capital: $k_{t+1} = F(k_t) - c_t$ for some increasing and continuous production function $F : \mathbb{R}_+ \to \mathbb{R}_+$ and full depreciation. Introducing $s_t := F(k_t)$ as a state variable and $i_t := F(k_t) - c_t$ one obtains the transition given by $Q(A|i) = \mathbf{1}_A(F(i))$.

Depreciation and irreversible investment Moreover, although the transition Q_t does not depend on a state s, we can show a model with depreciation and e.g. irreversible investment requires only a small modification of a constraint set:

$$c \in A(s) = [0, F(s)]$$

for some increasing production function. Indeed, let s_t denote a capital and assuming that the investment is irreversible i.e. $i_t \in [(1-\delta)s_t, F(s_t)]$. Assume $S := [0, \bar{S}]$ where $\bar{S}$ is the highest solution to $F(\bar{S}) = (1-\delta)S$. We obtain:

$$V_t(F(s_t) - i_t, U^{t+1})$$

and $s_{t+1} = i_t + \omega_{t+1}$. Of course we need SSCP

We adopt a more general form of direct pure altruistic preferences as recently axiomatized by Galperti and Strulovici (2017). Formally, let a sequence of consumption $\{c_t\}$ by given and introduce the t-shift operator $c^t := (c_t, c_{t+1}, \ldots)$ as well as $c^{t,\tau} := (c_t, c_{t+1}, \ldots, c_{t+\tau})$. Then, we generate recursively a sequence of utilities $\{U_t\}$ using the following formula:

$$U_t = V_t(c_t, U^{t+1}). \tag{1}$$

This formulation is general and allows for a number of special cases. It includes, for example, the standard, stationary preferences of Koopmans (1960) in the form of *indirect* pure altruism, where $V_t(c_t, U^{t+1}) = W(c_t, U_{t+1})$, and in particular time-separable case with $W(c_t, U_{t+1}) = u(c_t) + \beta U_{t+1}$.[7] It also involves more general but time-separable cases with indirect pure altruism towards T (possibly infinitely many) consecutive generations $u(c_t) + \sum_{\tau=1}^{T} \beta_t^\tau U_{t+\tau}$, where β_t^τ is the weight placed by generation t on the utility of the $t+\tau$ generation. Interestingly, our formulation allows also for time-varying and non-exponential discounting

[7] In the paper, we use the term "direct" pure (nonpaternalistic) altruism as in Galperti and Strulovici (2017) to mean each generations preferences depend on every successor generations utility (or "well-being"). The indirect case is when the pure altruistic preferences only depend on a strict subset of successor generation utilities. Similar terminology is used for the "paternalistic" altruism case, excepting the fact that each generations preferences are defined over successor generations actual consumptions.

(see Balbus et al. (2022) for a related study). This includes quasi-hyperbolic discounting with $u(c_t) + \beta \sum_{\tau=1}^{\infty} \delta^\tau u(c_{t+\tau})$ as a special case (see Theorem 4 and the proof of Corollary 4 in Galperti and Strulovici (2017) for a derivation). We provide further examples in section 6.

Clearly, as shown by Galperti and Strulovici (2017), these preferences defined in equation (1) are generally time-inconsistent.[8] In what follows, therefore, we define an equilibrium concept that captures the notion of a time-consistent solution in this time-inconsistent environment, but unlike the existing literature, we do *not* restrict attention to constructing Stationary Markov Perfect Equilibria for models with primitive data that are time-invariant.[9] Let $h_t : S \mapsto S$ be a Markov policy for generation t. Formally, it is a Borel measurable function such that $h_t(s) \in [0, s]$ for any $s \in S$. For $i \in S$ and integer t, let $q_t^1(\cdot|i) = q_t(\cdot|i)$. Furthermore, for any policy h_{t+1} of $t+1$ let

$$q_t^2(\cdot|i, h_{t+1}) = \int\limits_S q_{t+1}(\cdot|h_{t+1}(s_{t+1}))q_t(ds_{t+1}|i)$$

be a transition in 2 steps. More generally, for any such $i \in S$, $\tau > 1$ and any profile $h^{t+1,\tau-1}$ applied from $t+1$ generation to $t+\tau$, define the transition in τ steps as follows:

$$q_t^{\tau+1}(\cdot|i, h^{t+1,\tau-1}) := \int_S q_{t+\tau}(\cdot|h_{t+\tau}(s_{t+\tau}))q_t^\tau(ds_{t+\tau}|i, h^{t+1,\tau-2}) \text{ for } i \in S.$$

Let $\Delta(S)$ be the set of all probability measures on S and $\mathscr{B}(S)$ be the set of all bounded Borel measurable functions on S.

We now define the Certainty Equivalent Operator, which plays a critical role in our work. We say $\hat{\mathcal{M}}_t(\cdot, \mu)$ is a *Certainty Equivalent Operator* if for any generation t, and any $\mu \in \Delta(S)$, $\hat{\mathcal{M}}_t : \mathscr{B}(S) \times \Delta(S) \mapsto \mathbb{R}$ satisfies:

- $\hat{\mathcal{M}}_t(\cdot, \mu)$ is Borel measurable;

[8] See Galperti and Strulovici (2017), Proposition 4. So apart from the special case of Koopmans (1960) with $V_t(c_t, U^{t+1}) = u(c_t) + \beta U_{t+1}$, the altruistic preferences are time inconsistent.

[9] In the next section of the paper, we consider periodic Markov Perfect Equilibria. In this case, a special case of our environment and our construction will lead to stationary Markov Perfect Equilibria.

- $\hat{\mathcal{M}}_t(\cdot, \mu)$ is monotone, that is if $f \leq g$ for μ-almost everywhere, then

$$\hat{\mathcal{M}}_t(f, \mu) \leq \hat{\mathcal{M}}_t(g, \mu);$$

- For any constant α we have $\hat{\mathcal{M}}_t(\alpha, \mu) = \alpha$;

To simplify notation, let:

$$\mathcal{M}_{i,t}(\cdot, h^{t+1,\tau-1}) := \hat{\mathcal{M}}_t\left(\cdot, q_t^{\tau+1}(\cdot|i, h^{t+1,\tau-1})\right),$$

with $\mathcal{M}_{i,t}(\cdot) := \hat{\mathcal{M}}_t(\cdot, q_t(\cdot|i))$.

Let $\mathcal{F}$ be the set of all increasing functions from S into S. On $\mathcal{F}$, we define the equivalence relation $\sim$ in which $f_1 \sim f_2$ if and only if $f_1(s) = f_2(s)$ for any s such that f_2 is continuous at s. Let $\mathscr{F}$ be the set of all equivalence classes of elements in $\mathcal{F}$ and

$$\mathscr{I} := \{h \in \mathscr{F} : h(s) \in [0, s] \text{ for all } s \in S\}.$$

Under some continuity assumptions (to be introduced in the moment), with $(f, h) \in (\mathscr{F} \times \mathscr{I})^\infty := \mathscr{V}$ we can now define the following operator for each date $t \in \mathbb{N}$ and for each $s \in S$:

$$T_t(f, h)(s) = \max_{i \in [0,s]} V_t\left(s - i, \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_2), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_3, h^{2,0}), \ldots, \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_{\tau+1}, h^{2,\tau-2}), \ldots\right)$$

Similarly, define the best reply mapping:

$$H_t(f, h)(s) = \arg\max_{i \in [0,s]} V_t\left(s - i, \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_2), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_3, h^{2,0}), \ldots, \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_{\tau+1}, h^{2,\tau-2}), \ldots\right). \tag{2}$$

The aforementioned problem of time-consistency of preferences in (1) is now evident from the above formulation. Indeed, whenever generation t cares about more generations than just the *immediate* descendant, one has to use policies h^2 to evaluate future streams of utilities f^3 in V_t. This may be surprising, as the model is paternalistic and hence preferences V_t do not depend directly on the consecutive generations' consumption choices. Nevertheless, we need sequence of (future) values *and policies* to evaluate current utility.

With all this in place, we can now define our equilibrium concept:

Definition 1. (Markov Perfect Equilibrium) A sequence of measurable policies $\{h_t\}$ is a Markov perfect equilibrium (or a time-consistent solution) whenever there exists a sequence of integrable values $\{f_t\}$ such that for any generation t and state $s \in S$ we have:

$$f_t(s) = T_t(f^{t+1}, h^{t+1})(s),$$
$$h_t(s) \in H_t(f^{t+1}, h^{t+1})(s).$$

Markov perfection is our main solution concept. It requires that h_t is a best response for the sequence of future generation utilities f^{t+1} each evaluated by the certainty equivalent operator using h^{t+1}. Observe, this definition precisely captures the notion of time consistency in our framework (see Strotz (1956)). It is still a rather simple equilibrium concept as Markovian strategies do not allow generations to condition future actions on states or actions of past generations. Our solution concept is also consistent with our main assumption regarding transition q_t, namely its non-atomic structure (see assumption 2 that we introduce in the moment). It implies, for example, that information about the *current* state cannot be used to *recall* past actions or past states (hence, our attention to Markovian strategies is justified). Finally, we should mention the induced equilibrium behavior can still be very rich due to nonstationarity of our environment.

Now, let us introduce more concise notation for construction of the set of Markov Perfect Equilibria. Let

$$\Phi_t(f, h)(s) := (T_t(f, h)(s), H_t(f, h)(s)).$$

More formally, note that $\Phi_t(f, h)(s) = \{T_t(f, h)\} \times [H_t(f, h)]$, where $[H_t(f, h)]$ is the set of equivalence classes whose elements are equivalent to one of the selections of $H_t(f, h)$, i.e.

$$[H_t(f, h)] := \{h \in \mathscr{I} : h \sim \gamma \text{ for some } \gamma \in Sel(H_t(f, h))\},$$

where $Sel(H_t(f, h)) := \{h : S \mapsto S : h(s) \in H_t(f, h)(s) \text{ for all } s \in S\}$.

There is a well-known natural homeomorphism between $\mathscr{F}$ and $\Delta(S)$. Given this, we endow $\mathscr{F}$ with it's inherited *weak topology*, so the convergence $\Rightarrow$ is defined as follows

$$f_n \Rightarrow f \Leftrightarrow \lim_{n\to\infty} f_n(s) = f(s), \text{ for any } s \in C_f$$

where C_f is the set of continuity points of f and $\mathscr{V}$ with the *standard product topology*. The convergence on $\mathscr{V}$ is denoted by $\Rightarrow$ as well, as is in case of standard weak convergence defined on the probability measures $\Delta(S)$.

With this notation, we are ready to define our key operator. Let $\Phi_t^{(0)}$ be the identity operator and for $\tau > 0$ define recursively the following:

$$\Phi_t^{(\tau)}(f, h) = \Phi_t(\Phi_{t+1}^{(\tau-1)}(f^2, h^2)). \tag{3}$$

Then, let define:

$$B_t^{(1)}(f, h) := (\Phi_t(f, h), f^2, h^2),$$

and then for $\tau > 1$, define recursively:

$$B_t^{(\tau)}(f, h) := B_t^{(1)} \circ B_{t+1}^{(\tau-1)}(f^2, h^2). \tag{4}$$

where $B_t^{(1)}$ is our shift operator that replaces the first element of the given sequence (f, g) with the appropriately chosen best-responses (values and policies), and similar notation then defines $B_t^{(\tau)}(f, h)$ with $1, 2, \ldots, \tau$ elements replaced. Finally, define

$$\mathcal{B}_t = \bigcap_{\tau=1}^{\infty} B_t^{(\tau)}(\mathscr{V}).$$

This definition of $\mathcal{B}_t$ requires a few comments. Although our construction resembles the celebrated APS technique developed for repeated games (Abreu et al. (1986) and Abreu et al. (1990))), as well as a related approach in Mertens and Parthasarathy (1987) for stochastic games, it is different, however. First, we operate in *function spaces* rather then working with correspondences. For our approach, this difference is of utmost importance not only from that vantage point of how we prove existence, but notably also that our operator is designed specifically to capture our notion of time-consistency when studying (nonstationary) Markovian policies. Indeed, as argued by Doraszelski and Escobar (2012) and later by Balbus and Woźny (2016), such an specification of an self-generating set-iterative operator allows one to construct the set of *short-memory* (non-stationary) equilibria where the whole history is summarized by the state variable. Indeed, it is clear from the construction that current actions and future values *cannot* be conditioned upon *past* actions. This is a critical difference relative to standard APS-type constructions such as employed in quasi-hyperbolic discounting problems in Bernheim et al. (2015), for example. The same concerns relate to the selection of continuation values. Here, these are independent of both current (and past) states.

Second, in our construction, we use both sequences of values and *policies*. This is novel (but also see some recent contribution of Abreu et al. (2020a) and Abreu et al. (2020b)), and proves necessary in our problem due to the presence of time-consistency in dynastic preferences. Indeed, as the principle of optimality does not work in our case, it is not sufficient to characterize the future paths (and current generation preferences) using sequence of values only.

Third, as will be evident in the statement and proof of the main result, our construction involves *two* set-valued iterations. The first one is necessary to define incentive compatibility (here, to define best-responses). Indeed, as the preferences of each generation depend on the whole sequence of future values and actions, they cannot be summarized via the auxiliary game for some single continuation value. Moreover, since we seek for perfect equilibria but the game is infinite-horizon we cannot iterate from the last period. Here, we solve this problem but considering a sequence of composed best-responses to the give sequence of equilibrium candidates τ period ahead in (3). Then we take the limit with τ and obtain the infinite sequence of best-responses shifted till infinity. This allows us to consider $\mathcal{B}_t$, the composed best response of generation t, starting from some large set of candidate equilibrium objects. The second set-valued iteration considers sequence of $\{\mathcal{B}_t\}$, where each element is composed of *infinite* sequence of equilibrium candidates, and in particular, allows to show non-emptiness of $\mathcal{B}_1 \subset \mathscr{V}$, from which any selection is a MPE (policy and value) sequence.

We now state and discuss our assumptions.

Assumption 1 (Preferences)**.** *Assume for any* t*,* V_t *has the form:*

$$V_t(s, y_1, y_2, \ldots) := G_t(s, K_t(y_1, y_2, \ldots))$$

where $G_t : S \times [a, b] \mapsto \mathbb{R}$ *for some real* $a < b$*,* $s \in S$*,* $y_\tau \in [a, b]$ *for any* $\tau \in \mathbb{N}$*,* $K_t : [a, b]^\infty \mapsto [a, b]$ *are both continuous functions satisfying the following conditions:*

(i) G_t *is increasing in both arguments satisfying* $\max_{s \in S, y \in [a,b]} |G_t(s, y)| \leq \gamma$ *for some* $\gamma > 0$*;*

(ii) for any $h > 0$*,* $y_1 > y_2$ *the function* $D_t^h : [0, \bar{s} - h] \mapsto \mathbb{R}$ *defined as*

$$D_t^h(s) := G_t(s, y_1) - G_t(s + h, y_2)$$

is a strictly single crossing function.[10]

Assumption 1 is rather standard excepting the fact that it allows for time-varying aggregators It implies the existence of a very general class of recursive and non-stationary preferences. The two conditions we impose, though, require a comment. We start from *(ii)*. It requires that D_t^h is a strictly single crossing function for any h and continuation y. It implies strict single crossing property between savings i_t and the state s_t. It is satisfied , for example, whenever the current period date t utility is strictly concave in c_t , for example.[11] It is worth stressing, the strictly single crossing property is a ordinal condition in this recursive aggregator setting, and hence rather weak. The reason it is appropriate to our dynamic (and cardinal) problem results from the assumed aggregative structure of V_t, as given by K_t, as well as the way SSCP is imposed on the utility from the current consumption, and hence between i_t and s_t. These conditions guarantee in our case that in any MPE, each generation t investment policy $h_t : S \mapsto S$ is monotone increasing.

Assumption 2 (Transition)**.** *Assume for any* t*:*

[10] I.e., for any $s_2 > s_1$ we have $D_t^h(s_1) \geq 0$ implies $D_t^h(s_2) > 0$.

[11] Similar assumptions are imposed in Balbus et al. (2015a, 2020) for a class of OLG models.

(i) $q_t : S \mapsto \Delta(S)$ *is a measurable transition probability;*

(ii) $q_t(\cdot|s)$ *is a nonatomic probability measure for any* $s \in S$*;*

(iii) if $s_1 > s_2$ *then* $q_t(\cdot|s_1)$ *stochastically dominates* $q_t(\cdot|s_2)$*;*

(iv) q_t *has Feller property i.e.*

$$s \in S \mapsto \int_S \varphi(s')q_t(ds'|s)$$

is continuous whenever $\varphi : S \mapsto \mathbb{R}$ *is.*

Few comments are in order. Assumptions (i), *(ii)* and *(iii)* are standard. Point *(ii)* is necessary to assure our method is well defined. Typical examples of transitions satisfying 2 include models with multiplicative or additive shocks. To see that consider a production function f_t with $s_{t+1} = f_t(z_t, i_t)$ where z_t is a random shock with nonatomic distribution π_t, and for ensuring (ii) we assume f_t is injective in z. For a Borel set B, we can rewrite this transition process as:

$$q_t(B|i_t) = \int_S \mathbf{1}_B(f_t(z, i_t))\pi_t(dz).$$

It is now clear that our assumption are satisfied whenever, for example, $f_t(z_t, i_t) = z_t g_t(i_t)$ or $f_t(z_t, i_t) = g_t(i_t) + z_t$, for some continuous and increasing g_t, and some non-atomic probability measure π_t representing technology shocks. So this assumption in many applications is not very restrictive. It should be noted, though, that without assumption (ii), examples can be constructed where the argmax operator in (2) may not be well-defined.[12]

Our final assumption imposes joint continuity of the certainty equivalence operator: that is,

Assumption 3 (Certainty Equivalent)**.** *Suppose* $\mu \in \Delta(S)$ *is nonatomic. Let* $f_n \Rightarrow f$ *in* $\mathscr{F}$*,* $\mu_n \Rightarrow \mu$ *in* $\Delta(S)$*, and let* $i_n \to i$ *in* S*. Then*

$$\mathcal{M}_{i_n,t}(f_n, \mu_n) \to \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f, \mu).$$

[12] See Example 1 in Balbus et al. (2016), for example.

Notice the typical examples of certainty equivalence operators from the recursive utility literature satisfy these conditions (e.g., expected utility, CE given by integrals, quasi-linear means or entropic risk-measures, etc.)[13]

Now, let $\mathscr{E}$ be the set of all Markov perfect equilibria. Then, we have the main existence theorem of the paper:

Theorem 1. *Assume 1, 2 and 3. Then:*

(i) Any of $B_t^{(\tau)}(\mathscr{V})$ is weakly compact and

$$B_t^{(\tau)}(\mathscr{V}) \subset B_t^{(\tau-1)}(\mathscr{V}) \subset \dots B_t^{(2)}(\mathscr{V}) \subset B_t^{(1)}(\mathscr{V}).$$

(ii) $\mathcal{B}_1$ is nonempty;

(iii) The following equality holds: $\mathscr{E} = \mathcal{B}_1$.

This is our main result. It proves *existence* of a Markov perfect equilibrium that are time-consistent solutions in the general class of altruistic consumption-savings/growth economies we study in this paper. Indeed, by definition for any selection from $\mathcal{B}_1$, say (f, h), we have $(f^2, h^2) \in \mathcal{B}_2$ and so on with $(f^t, h^t) \in \mathcal{B}_t$. This is the essence of time-consistency. As typically in self-generation arguments such equilibrium (selection) is non-stationary. In our case with time-variant preferences it is inevitable. All nonstationarity of equilibrium policies is, however, mapped into time index in our case. Indeed, Markov equilibria that we study do not depend on past actions or past draws of states. This is potentially restrictive per efficiency but justified under non-atomic noise condition. Second, MPE exists with each policy h_t *in a class of increasing and (with loss of generality) upper-semicontinuous investment functions*. Such characterization regarding consumption policies is generally not available. Examples can be constructed with equilibrium consumption being non-monotone functions of states. Third, under our assumptions there are no MPE outside $\mathscr{V}$. Indeed, according to assumption 1 (ii) best-response map returns increasing investment policies for any continuation

[13] See also Kreps and Porteus (1978), Epstein and Zin (1989), Le Van and Vailakis (2005) or Bloise and Vailakis (2018), Balbus (2020) more recently.

values (and policies). Fourth, our result is constructive in the sense it proposes an *iterative procedure* that converge to the *whole* set of MPE is our space of functions. Numerical algorithms can be proposed to compute this sequence of sets and approximate its limit. We now present the proof of theorem 1 with some technical lemmas moved to the appendix.

Proof. Identifying any element of $\mathscr{V}$ with a sequence of probability measures we conclude $\mathscr{V}$ is weakly compact. By Lemma 4 it follows that any of $B_t^{(\tau)}$ is a continuous operator on $\mathscr{V}$, hence $B_t^{(\tau)}(\mathscr{V})$ is weakly compact. Now we show the set $B_t^{(\tau)}(\mathscr{V})$ prefixed by $\mathscr{V}$ is descending (set inclusion order) in τ. Obviously, $B_t^{(1)}(\mathscr{V}) \subset \mathscr{V} = B_t^{(0)}$ for any τ and suppose it is true for some τ, that is

$$B_t^{(\tau)}(\mathscr{V}) \subset B_t^{(\tau-1)}(\mathscr{V}) \tag{5}$$

for any integer t. In particular we can substitute t by $t+1$ into (5). By equation (4) we easily conclude that (5) is true for $\tau+1$ as well. Hence for any $B_t^{(\tau)}(\mathscr{V})$ is descending in τ. As a result, $\mathcal{B}_t$ is nonempty and weakly compact. We show the inclusion $\subset$. If $(f^*, h^*) \in \mathscr{V}$. Then by definition of $\mathcal{E}$ and B_1^τ

$$(f^*, h^*) \in B_1^{(\tau)}((f^*)^{(\tau)}, (h^*)^{(\tau)}) \in B_1^{(\tau)}(\mathscr{V})$$

for any τ, hence $(f^*, h^*) \in \mathcal{B}_1$. Now we show $\supset$. Let $(f^*, h^*) \in \mathcal{B}_1$. For any τ there exists then $(\tilde{f}_\tau, \tilde{h}_\tau) \in \mathscr{V}$ such that

$$(f^*, h^*) = B_1^{(\tau)}(\tilde{f}_\tau, \tilde{h}_\tau)$$

By (4) we have

$$(\tilde{f}_\tau, \tilde{h}_\tau) = B_1^{(1)}(B_2^{(\tau-1)}(\tilde{f}_\tau, \tilde{h}_\tau))$$

and by definition of the operator $B_1^{(1)}$ we have

$$(f_1^*, h_1^*) = T_1(B_2^{(\tau-1)}(\tilde{f}_\tau, \tilde{h}_\tau))$$

and

$$((f^*)^2, (h^*)^2) = B_2^{(\tau-1)}(\tilde{f}_\tau, \tilde{h}_\tau).$$

Furthermore:

$$\begin{aligned}(f_2^*, h_2^*) &= T_2(B_3^{(\tau-2)}(\tilde{f}_\tau, \tilde{h}_\tau)), \\ ((f^*)^3, (h^*)^3) &= B_3^{(\tau-2)}(\tilde{f}_\tau, \tilde{h}_\tau).\end{aligned}$$

More generally for $k = 1, 2, \ldots, \tau$ we have:

$$\begin{aligned}((f^*)^k, (h^*)^k) &= B_k^{(\tau-k+1)}(\tilde{f}_\tau, \tilde{h}_\tau). \\ (f_k^*, h_k^*) &= B_k(B_{k+1}^{(\tau-k)}(\tilde{f}_\tau, \tilde{h}_\tau)).\end{aligned}$$

Hence for $k = 1, 2, \ldots, \tau$ we have

$$(f_k^*, h_k^*) = B_k((f^*)^{k+1}, (h^*)^{k+1}).$$

Since τ is arbitrary, we have the thesis. □

In the above results we have proven existence of the nonstationary Markov perfect equilibrium. In certain cases, driven by numerical or theoretical considerations, the authors seek further characterization of the equilibrium strategies including its stationarity. For this reason, we now specify our model to address such questions.

3 Periodic model and periodic solutions

We now assume our model takes a special periodic form, and construct periodic Markov Perfect Equilibrium. We begin with the following specialization of assumptions 1, 2, and 3:

Assumption 4 (Periodic model)**.** *Assume there exists T such that for any integer t,*

(i) $G_{t+T} = G_t$ *and* $K_{t+T} = K_t$*;*

(ii) $q_{t+T} = q_t$*;*

(iii) $\mathcal{M}_{t+T} = \mathcal{M}_t$

Under assumption 4, the dynastic altruistic preferences, the state transition structure, and the certainty equivalent will each have a periodic structure. Notice, additionally, one special case of assumption 4 is *time-invariance*, which is the case where $T = 1$.

We say that a Markov perfect equilibrium is *periodic* whenever $h_t = h_{t+T}$ for some T and any t. We now have our next key result in the paper.

Theorem 2. *Assume 1, 2, 3 and 4. Then, there exist a periodic Markov Perfect Equilibria. In particular, if the primitive data of the model is time-invariant* ($T = 1$), *then there is a stationary Markov Perfect equilibrium.*

This result is important for a number of reasons. First, periodic equilibria are fixed points of B_1^T (i.e. fixed points of the t-th orbit of our operator). Their existence is hence a consequence of similar reasoning and lemmata as used in the proof of the main theorem in the previous section. Second, as recently shown by Berg (2017) and Berg and Kitti (2019), such periodic equilibria (or in their language, "elementary subpaths") are important from both theoretical and numerical perspective. We refer to reader to there papers for a discussion. Finally, we have as a special case of existence of *stationary* MPE for the time-invariant version of our model (but not necessarily stationary) version model. We believe that this is the most general existence result within the unified methodological framework that is known in the literature (but also see the related results in Balbus et al. (2022)).

We finish this section with the proof of theorem 2 and discuss applications and relations to the literature in the final section.

Proof. For any finite sequence $(f_1, h_1, f_2, h_2 \ldots, f_T, h_T)$ define

$$J(f_1, h_1, f_2, h_2, \ldots, f_T, h_T) = (J_t(f_1, h_1, f_2, h_2 \ldots, f_T, h_T))_{t=1}^{\infty}$$

where $J_t(f_1, f_2, \ldots, f_T) = f_{t \bmod T} = f_{t - \lfloor \frac{t}{T} \rfloor T}$ and for $(f, h) \in \mathscr{V}$ we define

$$\Pi_T(f, h) = (f_1, h_1, f_2, h_2, \ldots, f_T, h_T).$$

Observe that $B_t^\tau = B_{t+T}^\tau$. Then the periodic distribution is $J(f_1^*, \ldots, f_T^*)$, where $(f_1^*, f_2^*, \ldots, f_T)$ is a fixed point of

$$(f_1, h_1, f_2, h_2 \ldots, f_T, h_T) \in (\mathscr{F} \times \mathscr{I})^T \mapsto \Pi_T(B_1^T J(f_1, \ldots, f_T)).$$

By Lemma 4 this operator is continuous. Obviously J and Π_T are continuous transformations too. Hence and by Schauder-Tychonoff Theorem, there exists a fixed point $(f_1^*, h_1^*, f_2^*, h_2^*, \ldots, f_T^*, h_T^*)$ of the operator above. □

4 Extensions toward paternalistic models

In this section, we show how our method can be extended towards models with direct paternalistic altruistic features. We do it by allowing the aggregator V_t to depend directly on the sequence of future generations' *consumption* policies h^t. For any $\mu \in \Delta(S)$ and Borel measurable and bounded $f : S \mapsto \mathbb{R}$, let $\hat{\mathcal{N}}$ be the Certainty Equivalent Operator used to evaluate the consumption policies of the future generations. To reduce computational burden, and for expositional simplicity, in this section we assume $\hat{\mathcal{N}}$ is time-invariant. But it should be clear from our argument, the generalization towards the case of time-varying $\hat{\mathcal{N}}$ is straightforward.

As before, let $\mathcal{N}_{i,t}(\cdot, h^{t+1,\tau-1}) = \hat{\mathcal{N}}\left(\cdot, q_t^{\tau+1}(\cdot|i, h^{t+1,\tau-1})\right)$, with $\mathcal{N}_{i,t}(\cdot) = \hat{\mathcal{N}}(\cdot, q_t(\cdot|i))$. We would need to adapt slightly our notation and assumptions from the previous section.

Assumption 5 (Preferences)**.** *Assume for any t, V_t has the form:*

$$V_t(s_1, s_2, y_2, s_3, y_3, \ldots) := G_t(s_1, K_t(s_2, y_2, s_3, y_3, \ldots))$$

where $G_t : S \times [a, b] \mapsto \mathbb{R}$ for some real $a < b$, and $K_t : (S \times [a, b])^\infty \mapsto [a, b]$ are both continuous functions satisfying the following conditions:

(i) G_t is increasing in both arguments satisfying $\max_{s \in S, y \in [a,b]} |G_t(s, y)| \leq \gamma$ for some $\gamma > 0$;

(ii) for any $h > 0$, $y_1 > y_2$ the function $D_t^h : [0, \bar{s} - h] \mapsto \mathbb{R}$ defined as

$$D_t^h(s) := G_t(s, y_1) - G_t(s + h, y_2)$$

is a strictly single crossing function.

We now adapt the definition on T and H to this new extended version of model as follows. Specifically, for $(f, h) \in (\mathscr{F} \times \mathscr{I})^\infty := \mathscr{V}$ let:

$$\hat{T}_t(f,h)(s) = \max_{i \in [0,s]} V_t \Big(s - i, \mathcal{N}^{\xi}_{i,t}(h_2), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_2), \mathcal{N}^{\xi}_{i,t}(h_3, h^{2,0}), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_3, h^{2,0}), ...$$

$$\dots, \mathcal{N}^{\xi}_{i,t}(h_{\tau+1}, h^{2,\tau-2}), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_{\tau+1}, h^{2,\tau-2}), \dots \Big)$$

for each $s \in S$ and $t \in \mathbb{N}$, where $\xi := (\xi_t)_{t=1}^{\infty}$ is a fixed sequence of functions from $\mathscr{V}$, $h \in \mathscr{I}$ and $\mathcal{N}^{\xi}_{i,t}$ is used to evaluate future consumption policies, say $h_{t+\tau}$ and composed with $\xi_{t+\tau}$ to represent current direct preferences towards consumption τ period ahead. More formally, we have:

$$\mathcal{N}^{\xi}_{i,t}(h_{t+\tau}, h^{t+1,\tau-2}) := \mathcal{N}_{i,t}(\xi_{t+\tau} \circ h_{t+\tau}, h^{t+1,\tau-2}).$$

As before, to simplify notation, we assume an evaluation $\xi := (\xi_t)_{t=1}^{\infty}$ that is nonstationary but time-invariant. Similarly define:

$$\hat{H}_t(f,h)(s) = \arg\max_{i \in [0,s]} V_t \Big(s - i, \mathcal{N}^{\xi}_{i,t}(h_2), \mathcal{M}^{\xi}_{i,t}(f_2),$$

$$\mathcal{N}^{\xi}_{i,t}(h_3, h^{2,0}), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_3, h^{2,0}), \dots, \mathcal{N}^{\xi}_{i,t}(h_{\tau+1}, h^{2,\tau-2}), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_{\tau+1}, h^{2,\tau-2}), \dots \Big).$$

Theorem 3. *Suppose Assumptions 2 and 5 are satisfied. Moreover, Assumption 3 is satisfied for both $\mathcal{M}$ and $\mathcal{N}$. Then:*

(i) Any of $B_t^{(\tau)}(\mathscr{V})$ is weakly compact and

$$B_t^{(\tau)}(\mathscr{V}) \subset B_t^{(\tau-1)}(\mathscr{V}) \subset \dots B_t^{(2)}(\mathscr{V}) \subset B_t^{(1)}(\mathscr{V}).$$

(ii) $\mathcal{B}_1$ is nonempty;

(iii) The following equality holds: $\mathscr{E} = \mathcal{B}_1$.

If additionally Assumption 4 holds, then there exist a periodic MPE. In particular, if the model is time-invariant ($T = 1$) then there is a stationary equilibrium.

Proof. Observe that the proof is almost the same as the proof of Theorem 1. We only need to adapt Lemma 4 to the assumptions of this theorem. Next we can continue the procedure from Theorem 1. To show the counterpart of Lemma 4 we show that if $(f_n, h_n) \to (f, g)$ in $(\mathscr{V} \times \mathscr{I})^\infty$ as $n \to \infty$, then

$$\hat{T}_t(f_n, h_n)(s) \to \hat{T}_t(f, h)(s) \text{ for any } s \in S \quad \text{and} \quad \hat{H}_t(f_n, h_n) \Rightarrow \hat{H}_t(f, h).$$

as $n \to \infty$. Let

$$\hat{\kappa}(i, f, h) := K_t \Big(\mathcal{N}^{\xi}_{i,t}(h_2), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_2), \mathcal{N}^{\xi}_{i,t}(h_3), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_3, h_2), \\ \ldots, \mathcal{N}^{\xi}_{i,t}(h_{\tau+1}, h^{2,\tau-2}), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_{\tau+1}, h^{2,\tau-2}), \ldots \Big).$$

By definition of $\hat{\kappa}$ we have

$$\hat{T}_t(f, h)(s) = \max_{i \in [0,s]} G_t(s - i, \hat{\kappa}(i, f, h)).$$

Combining Assumptions 1, 3 (applied for both $\mathcal{M}$ and $\mathcal{N}$) and Lemma 1 we have the joint continuity of $\hat{\kappa}$. Hence and by Assumption 1 and Berge Maximum Theorem we have that $T_t'(f, h)(s)$ is continuous in all three arguments. Hence $\hat{T}_t(f_n, h_n)(s) \to T(f, h)(s)$ whenever $(f_n, h_n) \to (f, h)$ in $\mathscr{V}$. Moreover, $\hat{H}_t(f, h)(s)$ have closed graph i.e. if $(f_n, h_n) \Rightarrow (f, h)$ in $\mathscr{F}$, $s_n \to s$, $i_n \to i$ as $n \to \infty$ such that $i_n \in \hat{H}_t(f_n, h_n)(s_n)$ for all n then $i \in \hat{H}_t(f, h)(s)$. But from Lemma 3 we have $\hat{H}_t(f_n, h_n) \Rightarrow \hat{H}_t(f, h)$. □

5 Remarks

Methodology... Rationalizability. Deleting (f,h) not consistent with

Invariant distributions

State dependence

Single state with multiple decision variables

Endogenous preferences

Certainty equivalents We finish this section by discussing a few examples (and a counterexample) illustrating the role of our assumptions placed on the certainty equivalent operator.

Example 1 (Endogenous disappointment aversion)**.** To exemplify the class of certainty equivalents, we consider a model that allows for endogenous preference formation in the form of (endogenous) disappointment aversion. Following Gul (1991), we construct the certainty equivalent $\hat{\mathcal{M}}$ as a unique solution of the equation:

$$\mathbb{R} \in \zeta = \int_S f(s')\mu(ds') - \delta \int_{s':f(s')<\zeta} (\zeta - f(s'))\mu(ds').$$

Here we show this certainty equivalent satisfies our continuity assumption.

Proposition 1. *If $f_n \Rightarrow f$, $\mu_n \Rightarrow \mu$ and μ is nonatomic, then $\mathcal{M}(f_n, \mu_n) \to \mathcal{M}(f, \mu)$.*

Proof. We show,

$$\Phi(\zeta, f, \mu) = \int_S f(s')\mu(ds') - \delta \int_{\{s':f(s')<\zeta\}} (\zeta - f(s'))\mu(ds')$$

is jointly continuous. We only need to show the continuity of

$$(\zeta, f, \mu) \mapsto \int_{\{s':f(s')<\zeta\}} (\zeta - f(s'))\mu(ds').$$

Let S_0 be the set of continuity points of f. Let $s' \in S$. If $f_n(s') < \zeta$ for all n, then $f(s') \leq \zeta$. Then

$$\mathbf{1}_{[0,\zeta_n)}(f_n(s'))(\zeta - f_n(s')) = f_n(s') - \zeta_n \to f(s') - \zeta.$$

If $f(s') < \zeta$ then $f(s') - \zeta = \mathbf{1}_{\{s' \in S: f(s')<\zeta\}}(f(s') - \zeta)$. If $f(s') = \zeta$ then

$$0 = f(s') - \zeta = (f(s') - \zeta)\mathbf{1}_{\{s' \in S: f(s')<\zeta\}}.$$

In both cases

$$\mathbf{1}_{[0,\zeta_n)}(f_n(s'))(\zeta - f_n(s')) \to \mathbf{1}_{[0,\zeta)}(f(s'))(\zeta - f(s'))$$

as $n \to \infty$. If $f_n(s') \geq \zeta$ for all n then $f(s') \geq \zeta$ as well. In such a case both side above are zeros at the same time. Applying Skorohod Representation Theorem again we conclude

$$\Phi(\zeta_n, f_n, \mu_n) \to \Phi(\zeta, f, \mu).$$

We show, the thesis. Let $\zeta_n = \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_n, \mu_n)$ and $\zeta = \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f, \mu)$. By definition

$$\zeta_n = \Phi(\zeta_n, f_n, \mu_n).$$

The sequence ζ_n is commonly bounded since

$$\zeta_n = \Phi(\zeta_n, f_n, \mu_n) \leq \int_S f_n(s')\mu_n(ds') \to \int_S f(s')\mu(ds').$$

Hence we may suppose without loss of generality $\zeta_n \to \zeta$. Then

$$\zeta_n = \Phi(\zeta_n, f_n, \mu_n) \to \Phi(\zeta, f, \mu)$$

as $n \to \infty$ since Φ is jointly continuous. Since $\zeta_n \to \zeta$ a the same time, $\zeta = \Phi(\zeta, f, \mu)$. Since Φ is decreasing in the first argument, $\zeta = \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f, \mu)$ □

Example 2 (Independence, Allais paradox and endogenous certainty equivalents)**.** We can also construct the certainty equivalent in the spirit of Dekel (1986). The lottery is identified with μf^{-1}. Following Dekel we find a fixed point of F

$$F(x) = \int_S w(f(s'), x)\mu(ds')$$

for some w- jointly continuous functions, increasing with the first argument and decreasing with respect to the second[14] such that $w(x, x) = x$ for $x \in \mathbb{R}_+$. That is $\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f, \mu)$ solves

$$\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f, \mu) = \int_S w\left(f(s'), \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f, \mu)\right)\mu(ds').$$

Similarly as in case of example 1, we conclude such equivalent obeys our assumptions.

[14] Dekel requires the existence of a unique fixed point. It is obviously obtained if F is decreasing.

Proposition 2. *$\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f,\mu)$ is increasing in both arguments whenever we restrict attention to increasing f. Assume μ is nonatomic. Then, if $\mu_n \Rightarrow \mu$ and $f_n \Rightarrow f$ then $\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_n,\mu_n) \to \tilde{\tilde{M}}(f,\mu)$.*

Proof. Let $\mu_1 \leq_{st} \mu_2$ and $f_1 \leq f_2$ pointwise and assume f_1, f_2 are both increasing. Then

$$\int_S w(f_1(s'),x)\mu_1(ds') \leq \int_S w(f_2(s'),x)\mu_2(ds').$$

Then

$$\begin{aligned}\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_1,\mu_1) &= \int_S w(f_1(s'),\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_1,\mu_1))\mu_1(ds') \\ \leq \int_S w(f_2(s'),\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_1,\mu_1))\mu_2(ds') &= F\left(\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_1,\mu_1)\right). \end{aligned} \tag{6}$$

Now suppose

$$\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_2,\mu_2) \leq \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_1,\mu_1).$$

Then by (6) we have

$$\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_2,\mu_2) = F\left(\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_2,\mu_2)\right) \geq F\left(\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_1,\mu_1)\right) \geq \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_1,\mu_1).$$

Hence we have $\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_2,\mu_2) = \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_1,\mu_1)$. Consequently we have the monotonicity restricted to increasing functions f. Now assume μ is nonatomic. Then repeating the same argument in case of example 1, we have the thesis. □

Example 3 (Counterexample for quantile models)**.** Notably, there are certainty equivalents will do not satisfy our continuity assumption. One important counterexample concerns the certainty equivalents given by quantiles. So let $\zeta > 0$ be given and let

$$\hat{\mathcal{M}}(f,\mu) := \inf\left\{x > 0 : \mu\left\{s \in S : f(s) < x\right\} \leq \zeta \leq \mu\left\{s \in S : f(s) \leq x\right\}\right\}.$$

Let $f_n \Rightarrow f$ in $\mathscr{F}$ and $\mu_n \Rightarrow \mu$ in $\Delta(S)$. Let $x_n := \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_n,\mu_n)$ and $x = \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f,\mu)$. We can then give a counterexample to $x_n \to x$.

Let $\zeta = 1/2$, $S = [0,1]$ and let μ_n be a measure whose density is $\rho_n(s) = \left(1 - \frac{1}{n}\right) s^{-\frac{1}{n}}$. The distribution function is $F_n(s) = s^{1-\frac{1}{n}}$ for $s \in [0,1]$. Clearly

$F_n(s) \to s$ for $s \in [0,1]$ hence $\mu_n \Rightarrow \mu$ where μ is a standard Lebesgue measure. Let

$$f_n(s) = \begin{cases} 2^n s^n & \text{for} \quad s \in [0,1/2] \\ 1 & \text{for} \quad s \in [1/2,1]. \end{cases}$$

Hence, the limit is $f_n \Rightarrow f$ where $f(s) = \mathbf{1}_{[1/2,1]}(s)$ for $s \in [0,1]$. We find x such that

$$\mu\{s \in S : f(s) < x\} \leq \frac{1}{2} \leq \mu\{s \in S : f(s) \leq x\}.$$

We have for any $s' \in (0,1)$

$$\mu\{s \in S : f(s) < s'\} = \mu\{s \in S : f(s) = 0\} = \frac{1}{2},$$

and

$$\mu\{s \in S : f(s) \leq s'\} = \mu\{s \in S : f(s) = 0\} = \frac{1}{2}.$$

Hence $x = \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f,\mu) = 0$. Furthermore, for $s' \in [0,1/2)$

$$\{s \in S : f_n(s) < s'\} = \left\{s \in S : s < \frac{\sqrt[n]{s'}}{2}\right\} = \left[0, \frac{\sqrt[n]{s'}}{2}\right).$$

Hence

$$\mu_n\{s \in S : f_n(s) < s'\} = \mu_n\{s \in S : f_n(s) \leq s'\} = \mu_n\left(\left[0, \frac{\sqrt[n]{s'}}{2}\right)\right) = \left(\frac{\sqrt[n]{s'}}{2}\right)^{1-\frac{1}{n}}.$$

We find $s' \in (0,1/2]$ such that

$$\left(\frac{\sqrt[n]{s'}}{2}\right)^{1-\frac{1}{n}} = \frac{1}{2} \Leftrightarrow s' = \frac{1}{2^{\frac{n}{n-1}}}.$$

Hence

$$x_n = \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f_n,\mu_n) = \frac{1}{2^{\frac{n}{n-1}}} \to \frac{1}{2} \neq 0 = x = \hat{\mathcal{M}}(f,\mu).$$

Interestingly, whenever the limiting measure is non-atomic the correspondence of certainty equivalents is upper-semicontinuous (has a closed graph). It is a continuous function only, when the limiting f is strictly increasing.

Unbounded above rewards?

Backward altruism?

6 Applications and related results

Example 4 (Separable non-paternalistic altruism and behavioral discounting)**.** Consider the special case of time separable aggregators:

$$V_t(c_t, U^t) = u(c_t) + \sum_{\tau=1}^{\infty} \beta_t^{\tau} U_{t+\tau},$$

where β_t^{τ} is a weight placed by generation t on the utility of the generation following τ periods ahead. Solving this model recursively, we obtain the following expression for the effective weight α_t^{τ} placed by generation t relative to the instantaneous utility τ periods ahead: it is given recursively by:

$$\alpha_t^{\tau} = \sum_{n=1}^{\tau} \beta_t^{n} \alpha_{t+n}^{\tau-n} \tag{7}$$

with initial $\alpha_t^0 = 1$. As a result, the preferences of generation t can be alternatively written as:

$$u(c_t) + \sum_{\tau=1}^{\infty} \alpha_t^{\tau} u(c_{t+\tau}). \tag{8}$$

The above expression allows one to see our model is general, and includes many behavioral discounting models in the existing literature as special cases. Specifically, for a given sequence of effective discount factors $\{\alpha_t^{\tau}\}$, we can compute the implied sequence of $\{\beta_t^{\tau}\}$ parameters. Solving the equation (7) recursively at each step, we then can determine β_t^{n}. Using this method, we can solve for the sequence $\{\beta_t^{\tau}\}$ for the quasi-hyperbolic or hyperbolic cases. Indeed, for example, for a time-invariant quasi-hyperbolic $(\beta - \delta)$ discounting, we have: $\beta_t^{\tau} = \beta\delta^{\tau}(1-\beta)^{\tau-1}$. The results of our Theorems 1 and 2 can be therefore be applied. See also Galperti and Strulovici (2017) for a related derivation of quasi-hyperbolic discount factors.[15] The exponential discount factor $\alpha_t^{\tau} = \delta^{\tau}$ for some $\delta \in (0,1)$ can be recovered by solving (7): $\beta_t^1 = \delta$ and $\beta_t^{\tau} = 0$ for $\tau > 1$. More recently Balbus et al. (2022) solve for behavioral discounting models, and in particular semi-hyperbolic model, e.g. $\beta_1 - \beta_2 - \delta$ quasi-hyperbolic discounting e.g. $\frac{\alpha_t^1}{1} = \beta_1\beta_2\delta$, $\frac{\alpha_t^2}{\alpha_t^1} = \beta_2\delta$ and $\frac{\alpha_t^{\tau+1}}{\alpha_t^{\tau}} = \delta$ for any $\tau > 1$. Solving (7), this model can be recovered using $\beta_t^1 = \beta_1\beta_2\delta$, $\beta_t^2 = \beta_1(\beta_2\delta)^2(1-\beta_1)$ and $\beta_t^3 = \beta_1\delta(\beta_2\delta)^2(1-\beta_1\beta_2(2-\beta_1))$ with $\beta_t^{\tau} = ...$ for $\tau > 3$.

[15] Recall, there model satisfies altruism-stationary according to their axiom 8.

See also Saez-Marti and Weibull (2005) for further discussion of the relationship between discounting and altruism.

Example 5 (Endogenous present bias)**.** Consider the following model[16]

$$U_t = u(c_t) + \gamma \exp(-\theta(c_t)) \sum_{\tau=1}^{T} \gamma^\tau U_{t+\tau}.$$

See Epstein and Hynes (1983); Obstfeld (1990); Uzawa (1968) for inspiration. We assume that $u : S \to \mathbb{R}$ is continuous, increasing and bounded. Moreover the objective must satisfy the strict single crossing property that we verity now. For given f, h denote:

$$g(i, s) = u(s - i) + \gamma \exp(-\theta(s - i)) Z_i(f, h).$$

We show that when u is nonpositive, increasing and strictly concave and θ is decreasing and concave then g has strictly increasing differences in (i, s) (and hence strict single crossing property). I will assume u and θ are differentiable (that helps but is not necessary).

$$g_2'(i, s) = u'(s - i) - \theta'(s - i)\gamma \exp(-\theta(s - i)) Z_i(f, h)$$

I claim $i \mapsto g_2'(i, s)$ is strictly increasing in i. Sketch

$$\begin{aligned} &-u''(s - i) + \theta''(s - i)\gamma \exp(-\theta(s - i)) Z_i(f, h) + \\ -[\theta'(s - i)\exp(-\theta(s - i))]^2 \gamma Z_i(f, h) &- \theta'(s - i)\gamma \exp(-\theta(s - i)) \frac{\partial}{\partial i} Z_i(f, h) \end{aligned}$$

This is strictly positive under the above assumptions. Indeed the first element: $-u''(s - i) > 0$. Then $Z_i(f, h) \leq 0$ so the second element: $\theta''(s - i) Z_i(f, h) \geq 0$. The third element: $-Z_i(f, h) \geq 0$. Moreover, since $i \mapsto Z_i(f, h)$ is increasing and $-\theta'(s - i) \geq 0$ the forth element is also nonnegative.

Example 6 (Endogenous intergenerational disagreement and parental transfers)**.** In the above examples, the weights α_t^τ placed on the value (or implied β_t^τ placed

[16] We would like to thank Jean-Pierre Drugeon and Bertrand Wignolle for proposing this example. We continue the study of this model in a joint research project entitled: *On present bias with explicit endogenous discounting functionals.*

on utility) of the successor generations were fixed. The literature on dynamic behavioral models of choice often studies interesting cases where such weights are themselves endogenous, however. For example, in models with magnitude effects, such weights can be state and/or investment dependent. Models with investment dependent weights can be easily be seen to fit into our framework and assumptions. The case of state dependent weights (or discount factors) can also be shown to fit into our framework but our key SSCP condition has to be strengthen to the cardinal case, namely strictly increasing differences (to assure that the best response is increasing for every continuation value).We now illustrate such environment in an altruistic OLG example, inspired by Pavoni and Yazici (2016), where the authors study the role of intergenerational disagreement on parental transfers. So let generation t preferences, endowed with state s_t and consuming c_t, by given by:

$$U_t = u(c_t) + \beta U_{t+1} + \delta(s_t) U_{t+2}.$$

That is, we assume each generation lives for one period, but derives utility from own consumptions and utility of the two consecutive offsprings (children and grandchildren). The weight placed on the children utility is β and the weight on grandchildren is given by $\delta(s_t)$ (and hence, is state dependent). We assume $\delta : S \to [0, 1)$ is monotone which implies that the richer the grandparents, the more they care about their grandchildren.

Although the current generation preferences are fixed (with β and $\delta(s_t)$), when making the investment decision each generation observes the weight placed on the following generation grandchildren is endogenous and under stochastic monotonicity assumptions placed on q, investment dependent. Indeed, when one generation (say, generation t) invests a lot, he/she makes its kids (generation $t + 1$) richer, but also makes the kids care more about their grandchildren (generation $t + 3$, for which generation t does not care directly). This creates a conflict or intergenerational disagreement on the optimal level of parental transfers. Moreover, observe the current example results in time-consistent intergenerational preferences only when $\delta(\cdot) = 0$. Hence, the higher the δ the higher the departure from time-consistent benchmark. This creates a friction between the direct benefit from investment and inheritance decisions of the following generations via time-inconsistency problem.

Under our stochastic setting the problem of each generation is then to choose $i_t \in [0, s_t]$ to maximize:

$$u(s_t - i_t) + \int_S \left[\beta f_{t+1}(s') + \delta(s_t) \int_S f_{t+2}(s'') q(ds''|h_{t+1}(s')) \right] q(ds'|i_t),$$

where, as in the general model, f_{t+1} (or f_{t+2}) is the considered utility of the following generation $t+1$ (or $t+2$ respectively) and h_{t+1} is the considered (investment) strategy of the following generation. It is straightforward to show that, whenever the period utility is strictly concave, and δ and q are increasing, then the objective has strict increasing differences between i_t and s_t, and our results (of theorems 1 and 2) hold.

We now present two examples involving paternalistic features and hence applications of our construction from section 4.

Example 7 (Consistent solutions in collective household models)**.** We now consider a dynamic maximization problem of a collective household with two individuals. Instantaneous utility functions of both individuals are given by continuous, strictly increasing and strictly concave u^1 and u^2 and we assume both discount the future utility streams exponentially with discount factors respectively given by δ_1 and δ_2. The first individual is more patient with $1 > \delta_1 > \delta_2 > 0$. The weights of both individuals utilities in the collective household preferences are $\eta_1 > 0$ and $\eta_2 > 0$. The utility of the collective household is then the following:

$$E_s \left\{ \sum_{t=0}^{\infty} \eta_1 \delta_1^t u^1(c_{1,t}) + \eta_2 \sum_{t=0}^{\infty} \delta_2^t u^2(c_{2,t}) \right\},$$

where $c_{i,t}$ is the i-th individual consumption in period t. Clearly, $c_{1,t}+c_{2,t} \leq s_t$, and we assume that s_t is a Markov chain controlled by $(c_{1,t}, c_{2,t})_{t=0}^{\infty}$, such that state s_{t+1} is drawn from distribution $q(\cdot|s_t - c_{1,t} - c_{2,t})$. See Gollier and Zeckhauser (2005), Zuber (2011) or Jackson and Yariv (2015) for motivation of studying such problems.

We now focus on a dynastic representation of this collective household problem with each (time-invariant) generation t preferences given by:

$$E_s \sum_{\tau=0}^{\infty} (\delta_1)^\tau \left(\eta_1 u^1(c_{1,t+\tau}) + \eta_2 \left(\frac{\delta_2}{\delta_1}\right)^\tau u^2(c_{2,t+\tau}) \right).$$

We will show how the tools from our paper can be used to characterize MPE in this problem also. In the collective household problem, MPE is given by the sequence $(h_{1,t}, h_{2,t}, h_t)_{t=0}^{\infty}$ of measurable functions $h_{i,t} : S \to S$ and $h_t : S \to S$ such that for any t we have: $h_{1,t}(s) + h_{2,t}(s) + h_t(s) = s$. We start with an important observation:

Proposition 3. *Suppose $(h_{1,t}, h_{2,t}, h_t)_{t=0}^{\infty}$ is a MPE. There exist measurable functions $\beta : S \to S$ and $\gamma : S \to S$ such that:*

- *for each t and each $s \in S$: $h_{1,t}(s) = \beta(c_t(s))$ and $h_{2,t}(s) = \gamma(c_t(s))$ where $c_t(s) = h_{1,t}(s) + h_{2,t}(s) = s - h_t(s)$.*
- *moreover β and γ are such that for each $c \in S$:*

$$\eta_1 u^1(\beta(c)) + \eta_2 u^2(\gamma(c)) = \max_{c_1, c_2 \geq 0} \{\eta_1 u^1(c_1) + \eta_2 u^2(c_2)\} \text{ s.t. } c_1 + c_2 \leq c.$$

Proof. Let $(h_{1,t}, h_{2,t}, h_t)_{t=0}^{\infty}$ be a MPE. Evaluate

$$w(s) := \sum_{t=1}^{\infty} (\delta_1)^t E_s \left(\eta_1 u^1(h_{1,t}(s_t)) + \eta_2 \left(\frac{\delta_2}{\delta_1}\right)^t u^2(h_{2,t}(s_t)) \right),$$

where E_s is take with resect to realisation of s_{t+1} governed by $Q(\cdot|h_t(s_t))$. Now suppose by contradiction that for some t consumptions $h_{1,t}, h_{2,t}$ are not solving

$$\max_{c_1, c_2 \geq 0} \{\eta_1 u^1(c_1) + \eta_2 u^2(c_2)\} \text{ s.t. } c_1 + c_2 \leq s - h_t(s),$$

for some s. That is, there exists s and c_1^*, c_2^* such that $c_1^* + c_2^* \leq s - h_t(s)$ and

$$\eta_1 u^1(c_1^*) + \eta_2 u^2(c_2^*) > \eta_1 u^1(h_{1,t}(s)) + \eta_2 u^2(h_{2,t}(s))$$

This implies that:

$$\eta_1 u^1(c_1^*) + \eta_2 u^2(c_2^*) + \delta_1 \int_S w(s') Q(ds'|s - h_t(s)) >$$
$$\eta_1 u^1(h_{1,1}(s)) + \eta_2 u^2(h_{2,1}(s)) + \delta_1 \int_S w(s') Q(ds'|s - h_t(s)).$$

Since c_1^* and c_2^* are feasible, this means that $(h_{1,t}, h_{2,t}, h_t)_{t=0}^{\infty}$ cannot be a MPE. □

The above lemma allows us to rewrite consumptions in any MPE $(h_{1,t}, h_{2,t}, h_t)_{t=0}^{\infty}$ in the collective household problem using the following substitution: $h_{1,t}(s) = \beta(s - h_t(s))$ and $h_{2,t}(s) = \gamma(s - h_t(s))$, where

$$\eta_1 u^1(\beta(c)) + \eta_2 u^2(\gamma(c)) = \max_{c_1, c_2 \geq 0} \{\eta_1 u^1(c_1) + \eta_2 u^2(c_2)\} \text{ s.t. } c_1 + c_2 \leq c.$$

Next let us introduce the aggregate utility from the aggregate consumption:

$$u_t(c) := \eta_1 u^1(\beta(c)) + \eta_2 \left(\frac{\delta_2}{\delta_1}\right)^t u^2(\gamma(c)).$$

Then the problem of finding MPE in the collective household model can be hence reduced to finding investment $(h_t)_t$ that is a MPE of the dynastic game with preferences:

$$E_s \sum_{\tau=0}^{\infty} \delta_1^{\tau} u_{\tau}(s_{t+\tau} - i_{t+\tau})$$

and transition $q(\cdot|i_{t+\tau})$. In the view of proposition 3 this is a special case of our model (with non-stationary paternalistic utility $\xi_\tau := u_\tau$) and our result (proposition 3) hold. Related results under stronger conditions were obtained by Drugeon and Wigniolle (2016) (algebraic examples for Cobb-Douglas technology and CIES preferences) and Balbus et al. (2021) (obtained GEE under stochastic convexity of the transition q).

Example 8 (OLG with two-sided altruism and future bias)**.** Gonzalez et al. (2018) consider an OLG economy with altruism where each generation preferences are given by:

$$U_t = u^y(c_t^y) + u^o(c_{t+1}^o) + \mu U_{t-1} + \lambda U_{t+1}.$$

Here $\mu > 0$ is the weight placed to backward and $\lambda > 0$ towards forward altruism. Solving the system of equalities (with $\mu + \lambda < 1$) they obtain well-being of generation t as:

$$\sum_{\tau=1}^{\infty} \theta^{\tau}(u^y(c_{t-\tau}^y) + u^o(c_{t-\tau+1}^o)) + u^y(c_t^y) + u^o(c_{t+1}^o) + \sum_{\tau=1}^{\infty} \delta^s(u^y(c_{t+\tau}^y) + u^o(c_{t+\tau+1}^o)),$$

where θ (resp. δ) is the effective backward (resp. forward) discounting factor; both obtained from solving the system of equalities above.[17] Ignoring the part of

[17] Here $\theta = \frac{1-\sqrt{1-4\mu\lambda}}{2\lambda}$ and $\delta = \frac{1-\sqrt{1-4\mu\lambda}}{2\mu}$. See page 440 in Gonzalez et al. (2018) but also Hori and Kanaya (1989).

preferences generation t cannot control we obtain

$$u^y(c_t^y) + \theta u^0(c_t^0) + \sum_{\tau=1}^{\infty} \delta^\tau [u^y(c_{t+\tau}^y) + \delta^{-1} u^o(c_{t+\tau}^o)].$$

Gonzalez et al. (2018) show for $\theta < 1 < \delta^{-1}$, these preferences exhibit forward bias (a form of quasi-hyperbolic discounting with present-bias > 1). They consider a sequence of short lived governments each aiming to maximize generation t preferences and seek for MPE of such intergenerational game. They consider CIES preferences, linear technology and focus on stationary MPE in linear strategies.

We now show how to map this problem into our model. Assume u^i is continuous, increasing and strictly concave. Recall, feasibility requires for any t: $c_t^0 + c_t^y + i_t \leq s_t$. Denote

$$u(c) := u^y(\beta(c)) + \theta u^0(\gamma(c)) = \max_{c^y, c^0 \geq 0} \{u^y(c^y) + \theta u^0(c^0)\} \text{ s.t. } c^y + c^0 \leq c,$$

where β and γ are the shares of the aggregate consumption c dedicated to young and old respectively. Similarly to lemma 3 above we can argue that in any MPE $h_t^y(s) = \beta(s - h_t(s))$ and $h_t^y(s) = \gamma(s - h_t(s))$. This allows us to write aggregate utility in period $t \geq 1$ as:

$$\tilde{u}(c) := u^y(\beta(c)) + \delta^{-1} u^0(\gamma(c)).$$

Hence finding MPE reduces to finding investment $(h_t)_t$ that is a MPE of the game with preferences given by:

$$u(s_t - i_t) + E_{s_t} \sum_{\tau=1}^{\infty} \delta^\tau \tilde{u}(s_{t+\tau} - i_{t+\tau}).$$

Again, this is a special case of our model with non-stationary paternalistic utility $\xi_t := \tilde{u}$) and our result (proposition 3) hold.

7 Relations to the literature

The results of this paper related to a large and growing literature on endogenous intergenerational preferences, dynastic choice, and time consistent consistency.

Galperti and Strulovici (2017) take an axiomatic approach to this topic, and characterizing the structure and representation of intergenerational altruism. (See also the early work of Ray (1987)). The authors show "direct pure altruistic preferences" include, as a special case, the quasi-hyperbolic discounting (see Strotz (1956), Pollak (1968), Phelps and Pollak (1968), Peleg and Yaari (1973), Laibson (1997), Balbus et al. (2015b, 2018), Bernheim et al. (2015), and Cao and Werning (2018)), among other important representations of dynastic preferences.[18] This paper is obviously closely related to this large and important literature as these models can be show to be special cases of the model studied here. What is different here, though, is we focus on an explicit dynastic choice formulation that allows for very general forms of dynamic inconsistency in the dynastic decision problem.

Of course, as in this paper, much of this existing literature on quasi-hyperbolic discounting, for example, the time consistent solution problem is formulated in the language of Markovian equilibrium in a *interpersonal dynamic game* with a countable number of players, with each player basically representing one generation of a dynastic choice problem. In the end, the tools in this paper can be apply to all of these models, as well as even the larger class of models with generalized behavioral discounting. See, for example, the early work of Loewenstein and Prelec (1992, 1993), and Rubinstein (2003) where the importance of studying models involving more generalized behavioral discounting is proposed, and Balbus et al. (2022), Jensen (2021), and Richter (2021) where the question of sufficient conditions for the existence of time consistent solutions in such decision problems is asked.[19]

The paper also, in general, allows for the interaction uncertainty and dynastic choice in the context of time consistent preferences. That is, we model time consistent dynastic choice in the stochastic dynastic setting, and in particular as at stochastic game. Therefore, our work here also relates to work that studies

[18] See also the recent axiomatic work of Chakraborty (2021) on present-bias, which weakens the stationary axioms in Koopmans (1960) and Halevy (2015), to obtain a very general characterization of present-bias preferences that includes quasi-hyperbolic as a special case.

[19] Our work could be also seen as related to an emerging literature on rationalizability, time preference, and decreasing patience such as the papers of Adams et al. (2014), Saito (2015), Echenique et al. (2020), Dziewulski (2018), and Chambers et al. (2021).

the interaction between behavioral discounting and uncertainty such as in Akerlof (1991), Loewenstein and Prelec (1992), Halevy (2008) and Saito (2009), Andreoni and Sprenger (2012), Baucells and Heukamp (2012) Ioannou and Sadeh (2016), Chakraborty et al. (2020), and DeJarnette et al. (2020), among many others.

From a methodological perspective, our work complements the a large literature studying subgame perfect equilibria in consumption-savings models with altruistic preferences, as well as correspondence-based strategic dynamic programming approaches to related problems in dynamic/stochastic games. For example, in Balbus et al. (2016), the authors prove existence of stationary MPE in a related class of stationary models with non-paternalistic altruism and separable preferences. Our results are more general as we cover a much large class of models with dynamically inconsistent preferences, and the method of construction of Markov perfect equilibrium is different. In addition, we do not restrict attention to stationary MPE, and we study the possibility of periodic structure in the set of all MPE.

In addition, relative to the literature on Markovian strategic dynamic programming approach, some existing work has also developed self-generation approaches that restrict attention to primarily short-memory subgame perfect strategies. Two notable papers approaching the existence problem in a related manner are Doraszelski and Escobar (2012) in the context of repeated games, and Balbus and Woźny (2016) in the context of dynamic/stochastic games. In each case, the authors restrict attention to short-memory "APS" type methods. Our approach differs substantially from the former paper as the interpersonal game the generates the time consistency problem is not a repeated game, rather at dynamic/stochastic game where state variables play a key role on the model.. Relative to the later paper, as in Balbus and Woźny (2016), we develop an self-generating correspondence-based approach the focus on Markovian strategies and values. But but here, our approach requires under much weaker conditions.

Technically, our self-generation approach has elements that are related to the papers on quasi-hyperbolic discounting that have use APS-type approaches (e.g., the important papers of Bernheim et al. (1999) and Bernheim et al. (2015)). See also the recent work of Baldauf et al. (2015) and Yeltekin et al. (2017). What is new here is our approach works for much more general classes of dynastic altruistic models[20], and restricts attention self-generating in function spaces for both values and Markovian strategies, we are able to prove very sharp characterizations of subgame perfect equilibria. We might add, even in the context of applying our methods to constructing time-consistent solutions in models with quasi-hyperbolic agents, we do not require linear production.

Finally, and importantly, our work is also methodologically similar to the approach taken to the existence of equilibrium in Balbus et al. (2017). This paper, though, allows for a much more general class of dynastic altruistic consumption-savings models. Finally, as in the recent work on APS methods and stochastic games, our work is related to Abreu et al. (2020a,b) in the sense that like these papers, we sharpen the APS approach by including the modeling of both strategies and values in the self-generation approach. In addition, as we study periodic Markov perfect equilibrium, our construction bears a relationship to the recent work on periodicity and self-generation by Berg (2017) and Berg and Kitti (2019).

A Appendix

Lemma 1. *Let $h_n \Rightarrow h$ as $n \to \infty$ in $\mathcal{I}^\infty$. Then for any $i \in S$*

$$q_t^{\tau+1}(\cdot|i, h_n^{t+1,\tau-1}) \Rightarrow q_t^{\tau+1}(\cdot|i, h^{t+1,\tau-1}) \text{ as } n \to \infty. \tag{9}$$

Proof. We prove (9) by induction with respect to τ. If $\tau = 1$ then by Assumption 2 the thesis is done. Now suppose (9) holds for some $\tau - 1$ with $\tau > 1$ and any $t \in \mathbb{R}$. We show (9) holds for τ and any $t \in \mathbb{R}$. Let $\phi : S \mapsto \mathbb{R}$ be a continuous function and $i \in S$. Let

$$w(i) := \int_S \varphi(s') q_{t+1}(ds'|i), \tag{10}$$

[20] See also the related to recent papers on repeated games with recursive payoffs in Obara and Park (2017).

and

$$\mu_n := q^{\tau}_{t+1}(\cdot|i, h^{t+2,\tau-1}_n) \text{ and } \mu := q^{\tau}_{t+1}(\cdot|i, h^{t+2,\tau-1}). \tag{11}$$

By induction hypothesis w is continuous and $\mu_n \Rightarrow \mu$. Moreover, μ is nonatomic, hence concentrated on the set of continuity points of $h_{t+\tau}$. Consequently there exist a probability space $(\Omega, \mathscr{B}, P)$ and a sequence of real valued random variables Y_n on Ω whose distribution is μ_n, a real valued random variable Y whose distribution is μ such that $Y_n(\omega) \to Y(\omega)$ for all $\omega \in \Omega$. Since μ is concentrated on the continuity points of $h_{t+\tau}$ hence

$$w(h_{t+\tau,n}(Y_n(\omega))) \to w(h_{t+\tau}(Y(\omega))) \text{ as } n \to \infty, \text{ for } P-a.a.\, \omega \in \Omega. \tag{12}$$

Combining (10), (11), (12) we have

$$\begin{aligned}\lim_{n\to\infty} \int_S w(h_{t+\tau,n}(s'))\mu_n(ds') &= \lim_{n\to\infty} \int_\Omega w(h_{t+\tau,n}(Y_n(\omega)))P(d\omega)\\ &= \int_\Omega w(h_{t+\tau}(Y(\omega)))P(d\omega) = \int_S w(h_{t+\tau}(s))\mu(ds)\end{aligned}$$

and hence (9). Hence the proof is complete. □

Lemma 2. *The operator Φ maps $\mathscr{V}$ into itself.*

Proof. Let $(f,h) \in \mathscr{V}$ and $t \in \mathbb{N}$. By Assumption 1 we immediately have that $T_t(f,h)$ is increasing. We show that any element of H_t is increasing. For $i \in S$ put

$$\kappa(i) := K_t\left(\mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_2), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_3, h_2), \ldots, \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_\tau, h^{t+1,\tau}), \ldots\right).$$

By Assumption 1 $H_t(f,h)(s) = \arg\max_{i\in[0,s]} G_t(s-i, \kappa(i))$. By Assumption 1 and Proposition 1 in Balbus et al. (2015a) it follows that any selection of $H_t(f,h)(s)$ is increasing. □

Lemma 3. *Let Γ is a non-empty valued correspondence from $[\alpha, \beta]$ into a bounded interval in $\mathbb{R}$. Suppose Γ has closed graph and any selection is increasing function. Then:*

(i) if $\Gamma(x)$ *is a singleton then any selection of* Γ *is continuous at* x*;*

(ii) if $\Gamma(x)$ *is not singleton, any selection of* Γ *is discontinuous at* x*.*

Proof. Suppose $\Gamma(x) = \{y\}$ and let γ be any selection of Γ. Then if $x_n \to x$ as $n \to \infty$, then all cluster points of the sequence $\gamma(x_n)$ is in $\Gamma(x)$. But $\Gamma(x) = \{y\}$ is a singleton, hence $\gamma(x_n) \to y$ as $n \to \infty$. But $\gamma(x) \in \Gamma(x)$ as well, hence $\gamma(x_n) \to \gamma(x)$ as $n \to \infty$. Consequently γ is continuous. Now suppose $\Gamma(x)$ is not singleton. Let $y_1 < y_2$ and both belong to $\Gamma(x)$. Then any selection γ of Γ satisfies

$$\lim_{x' \uparrow x} \gamma(x') \le y_1 < y_2 \le \lim_{x' \downarrow x} \gamma(x'),$$

hence γ is discontinuous at x. □

Lemma 4. *If* $(f_n, h_n) \to (f, h)$ *in* $\mathscr{V}$ *then* $T_t(f_n, h_n) \rightrightarrows T_t(f, h)$*. Moreover,* $\chi_n \rightrightarrows \chi$ *where* χ_n *is a selection of* $H_t(f_n, h_n)$ *and* χ *is a selection of* $H_t(f, h)$*.*

Proof. Let us modify definitions from Lemma 2. Let

$$\kappa(i, f, h) := K_t\left(\mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_2), \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_3, h_2), \ldots, \mathcal{M}_{i,t}(f_{\tau+1}, h^{2,\tau-2}), \ldots\right).$$

By definition of κ we have

$$T_t(f, h)(s) = \max_{i \in [0,s]} G_t(s - i, \kappa(i, f, h)).$$

Combining Assumptions 1, 3 and Lemma 1 we have the joint continuity of κ. Hence and by Assumption 1 and Berge Maximum Theorem we have that $T_t(f, h)(s)$ is continuous in all three arguments. Hence $T_t(f_n, h_n)(s) \to T(f, h)(s)$ whenever $(f_n, h_n) \to (f, h)$ in $\mathscr{V}$ and the more $T_t(f_n, h_n)(s) \rightrightarrows T(f, h)(s)$. Moreover, $H_t(f, h)(s)$ have closed graph i.e. if $(f_n, h_n) \rightrightarrows (f, h)$ in $\mathscr{F}$, $s_n \to s$, $i_n \to i$ as $n \to \infty$ such that $i_n \in H_t(f_n, h_n)(s_n)$ for all n then $i \in H_t(f, h)(s)$. But from Lemma 3 we have $H_t(f_n, h_n) \rightrightarrows H_t(f, h)$. □

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