Network Optimization Calculus

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September 11, 2025

1 Introduction

This document provides a formal mathematical framework for understanding how agency and autonomy emerge within a system of interacting nodes, while maintaining cooperation with the fundamental natural laws of physics. The system is defined through a set of axioms and probabilistic transition rules that govern the evolution of relationships between nodes.

2 Primitive Concepts and Axioms

Axiom 1 (Node Existence). The system consists of a finite set of nodes:

$$\Omega = \{X_i\}_{i \in I}$$

where each node X_i is defined by a triple (Θ_i, V_i, I_i) representing:

- Θ_i: Type (qualitative category of the node)
- V_i: Intrinsic Value (inherent worth or potential)
- I_i: Intensity (capacity to engage in relationships)

Axiom 2 (Relational States). For any distinct pair of nodes (i, j), $i \neq j$, their relationship exists in one of three mutually exclusive symmetric states:

$$R = \{C, N, D\}$$

where:

- C: Cohesive (strong, positive binding)
- N: Neutral (weak, ambivalent, or nascent tie)
- D: Disjunctive (absence of positive relationship)

Axiom 3 (System State). At any time t, the complete state of the system is described by:

$$S_t = (\Omega, R_t)$$

where $R_t : \Omega \times \Omega \to R$ is a symmetric function defining the relationship state for all distinct node pairs. Self-relations are not defined.

3 Value Realization

Definition 1 (Value Realization Function). The realized value generated by a node pair (i, j) is given by:

$$\Lambda(i, j) = \Psi(i, j) \cdot (V_i I_i + V_j I_j)$$

where the coefficient $\Psi(i, j)$ is determined by the relational state:

$$\Psi(i, j) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } R_t(i, j) = C \\ 0 & \text{if } R_t(i, j) = N \text{ or } D \end{cases}$$

This definition ensures that value is only realized through cohesive relationships, following the principle of exact coherence.

4 Optimization Objective

Definition 2 (Realized Value). The total value currently generated by all connections:

$$O(S_t) = \sum_{i<j} \Lambda(i, j)$$

Definition 3 (Latent Value). The total value latent in all currently disjunctive connections:

$$L(S_t) = \sum_{\substack{i<j \\ R_t(i,j)=D}} (V_i I_i + V_j I_j)$$

Definition 4 (Adaptive Weights). The weights that balance exploitation of existing value against exploration of latent value:

$$\alpha(S_t) = \frac{|\{(i, j) : R_t(i, j) = C \text{ or } N\}|}{|\Omega|(|\Omega| - 1)/2}$$

$$\beta(S_t) = 1 - \alpha(S_t)$$

Definition 5 (Optimization Target). The system evolves toward a coherent state S^* defined as:

$$S^* = \arg\max_{S_t} [\alpha(S_t) \cdot O(S_t) + \beta(S_t) \cdot L(S_t)]$$

5 Transition Dynamics

Definition 6 (Allowed Transitions). System evolution occurs through incremental changes in relational states following:

$$D \leftrightarrow N \leftrightarrow C$$

Definition 7 (Agency in Neutral State). For relationships in the Neutral state, probabilistic transitions occur as:

$$P(R_{t+1}(i,j) = C \mid R_t(i,j) = N) = \alpha(S_t)$$

$$P(R_{t+1}(i,j) = D \mid R_t(i,j) = N) = \beta(S_t) = 1 - \alpha(S_t)$$

Definition 8 (Rare Transitions). With small probability ϵ, rare transitions occur:

$$P(R_{t+1}(i,j) = N \mid R_t(i,j) = C) = \epsilon$$

$$P(R_{t+1}(i,j) = N \mid R_t(i,j) = D) = \epsilon$$

6 Emergence of Autonomy

Definition 9 (System Autonomy). Autonomy emerges through the recursive relationship:

$$(\alpha_{t+1}, \beta_{t+1}) = f(\alpha_t, \beta_t, \{P(R_{t+1}(i,j) = C \mid R_t(i,j) = N)\}_{\forall i,j})$$

This creates a feedback loop where:

$$\alpha_t \to P(N \to C) \to \text{Distribution of } R_{t+1}$$

$$\text{Distribution of } R_{t+1} \to \alpha_{t+1} \to P(N \to C)_{t+1}$$

7 Cooperation with Natural Laws

Definition 10 (Degree of Cooperation). The system's cooperation with natural laws is quantified by:

$$\gamma(S_t) = \frac{O(S_t)}{O(S_t) + L(S_t)} \in [0, 1]$$

Definition 11 (Expected Cooperation). The system tends toward states that maximize:

$$E[\gamma(S_{t+\Delta t})] = \frac{\sum_{i<j}(V_i I_i + V_j I_j) \cdot P(R_{t+\Delta t}(i, j) = C)}{O(S_t) + L(S_t)}$$

8 Interpretation

This formalization captures three key philosophical principles:

1. **Agency within N:** The Neutral state represents genuine choice points where relationships can develop in multiple directions.
2. **Autonomy from the network:** System-wide behavior emerges from local interactions, creating global patterns not predetermined by initial conditions.
3. **Cooperation with natural laws:** The system evolves toward states that balance exploration and exploitation while respecting the fundamental constraints of the axioms.

The mathematical structure provides a framework for understanding how objective laws can coexist with genuine choice and emergent autonomy.