The Layered Emergence Model (LEM)

A Generative Framework for Cosmic Expansion and Structure Formation

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Date: 31 December 2025

1. Introduction

The Layered Emergence Model (LEM) is a generative framework for describing the expansion of the universe and the evolution of matter. It is built on a minimal set of elements: a creation point, space, matter, and time. The universe grows through the sequential creation of layers, each containing newly formed space and matter. As new layers are created, existing layers are displaced outward, and space stretches to fill increasing volume.

LEM focuses on the interplay between global expansion and local matter dynamics. Matter is described by three internal properties—tension (T), orientation (O), and response (R)—which govern how it behaves under changing spatial conditions. Large-scale features such as vacuum regions, clumps, and filaments arise from the repeated application of the generative rule and the local interactions of matter.

This framework is presented as an initial conceptual model rather than a fully developed mathematical theory. Its purpose is to provide a clear structure on which further analysis, simulation, and empirical investigation can be built. Subsequent sections introduce the ontology and axioms of LEM, its dynamics, implications, laws and observational signatures, comparison with standard cosmology, and directions for future work.

2. Ontology of the Layered Emergence Model

2.1 Creation Point

The creation point is the origin of the universe. It exists at to and serves as the source from which all subsequent layers are generated. No space or matter exists prior to the first layer.

2.2 Space

Space is created at each time step as part of a newly formed layer. It is continuous and forms the background in which matter resides. Each new layer has a larger radius than the previous one, resulting in an expanding spatial volume. Space stretches to fill this increasing volume.

2.3 Matter

Matter is created within each new layer. It consists of discrete entities embedded in space and is characterized by three internal properties: tension (T), orientation (O), and response (R). Matter does not stretch automatically when space stretches. Instead, it responds according to its internal properties and local conditions.

2.4 Time

Time is discrete. One unit of time corresponds to the creation of one layer. Global time is defined by the total number of layers created. Local time (the age of matter) is defined by the difference between the current global time and the time at which the matter was created.

3. Axioms of the Layered Emergence Model

Axiom 1 — Creation Point

There exists a single creation point. At t_0, nothing exists except this point.

Axiom 2 — Discrete Time

Time advances in discrete steps. One unit of time corresponds to the creation of one spatial layer.

Axiom 3 — Layer Creation

At each time step t_n with $n \geq 1$, a new spherical layer is created around the creation point. This layer defines the spatial extent generated at that time.

Axiom 4 — Two Fundamental Elements

Each newly created layer contains two fundamental elements: space and matter.

Axiom 5 — Outward Displacement

When a new layer is created, all previously existing layers are displaced outward by one position. This displacement defines the global outward motion of matter.

Axiom 6 — Spatial Stretching

Because each new layer has a larger radius than the previous one, the total spatial volume increases. Space stretches to fill the expanded volume.

Axiom 7 — Matter Independence from Stretching

Matter does not stretch automatically when space stretches. It retains its local configuration and responds dynamically to changes in its surrounding space.

Axiom 8 — Internal Properties of Matter (T, O, R)

Each matter entity possesses three internal properties: tension (T), orientation (O), and response (R). These properties determine how matter evolves locally.

Axiom 9 — Local Interaction Dynamics

Matter interacts only with its immediate surroundings. Changes in space modify local conditions, and matter responds according to its T, O, and R values. These interactions govern motion, collisions, fusion, scattering, and rearrangement.

Axiom 10 — Emergent Structure Formation

Vacuum regions and structured matter distributions arise naturally from the repeated cycle of layer creation, outward displacement, spatial stretching, and matter response via T, O, R.

Axiom 11 — Global and Local Time

Global time is defined by the number of layers created. Local time is defined by the age of matter since its creation.

4. Dynamics of Expansion

4.1 Layer Creation and Outward Motion

At each time step, a new layer is created at the creation point. This layer occupies the innermost position and displaces all previously existing layers outward by one position. The outward displacement defines the global motion of matter and establishes a universal direction of expansion.

4.2 Expansion of Spatial Volume

Each newly created layer has a larger radius than the previous one. As a result, the total spatial volume increases with every time step. Space stretches to fill this expanded volume.

4.3 Independence of Matter from Spatial Stretching

Matter does not stretch automatically when space stretches. Instead, matter retains its local configuration and responds to changes in its surroundings.

4.4 Matter Creation per Layer

LEM adopts the simplest assumption that each layer contains a constant amount of matter at the moment of its creation. This assumption preserves symmetry across time and minimizes the number of free parameters in the model. Whether matter creation varies across layers is an open question and may be explored in future extensions of the framework.

5. Matter Behavior Under Expansion

5.1 Tension (T)

Tension represents the internal stress or stored energy of a matter entity. Changes in spatial conditions modify the tension of matter and influence its subsequent behavior.

5.2 Orientation (O)

Orientation describes the directional alignment of a matter entity relative to its surroundings. As space stretches and matter is displaced outward, orientation shifts.

5.3 Response (R)

Response determines how a matter entity reacts to local changes in space or interactions with other matter. It governs whether matter moves, collides, fuses, separates, or remains stable.

5.4 Local Interaction Dynamics

Matter interacts only with its immediate surroundings. Local variations in tension, orientation, and response lead to diverse behaviors, including collisions, fusion, scattering, separation, alignment, and stabilization.

6. Emergence of Vacuum and Structure

6.1 Formation of Vacuum Regions

Because spatial volume increases faster than matter density, regions of low matter concentration naturally arise. These vacuum regions expand as the universe grows.

6.2 Formation of Clumps and Structures

Local interactions governed by T, O, and R lead to the formation of clumps, filaments, and stable matter configurations. These structures emerge without the need for additional forces or fields.

6.3 Continuous Evolution

The process of structure formation is ongoing. Each new layer introduces new matter, new spatial volume, and new local conditions, allowing structures to evolve over time.

7. Implications of the Layered Emergence Model

7.1 Absolute Time and Layer Indexing

LEM defines an absolute global time based on the number of layers created. This provides a natural temporal ordering for all events in the universe. Local time, defined as the age of matter since its creation, introduces a secondary temporal structure that varies across spatial regions.

7.2 Outward Motion as a Fundamental Feature

The outward displacement of layers establishes a universal direction of motion. All matter experiences this outward flow, independent of local interactions.

7.3 Expansion Without Curvature or Dark Components

LEM describes expansion through the creation of new layers and the stretching of space. This mechanism does not require curvature, dark matter, or dark energy.

7.4 Natural Emergence of Vacuum

As spatial volume increases with each new layer, matter density decreases unless compensated by matter creation. Because matter creation per layer is assumed constant, vacuum regions arise naturally.

7.5 Structure Formation Through Local Dynamics

Clumps, filaments, and stable configurations of matter arise from local interactions governed by tension (T), orientation (O), and response (R).

7.6 Layer-Dependent Matter Age

Matter created in earlier layers is older than matter created in later layers. This introduces a natural age gradient across the universe, understood as a global, statistical trend rather than a strict local ordering at every point.

8. LEM Laws

The preceding sections define the ontology, axioms, and qualitative implications of the Layered Emergence Model. This section introduces a set of laws that summarize how expansion, redshift, vacuum growth, structure formation, age gradients, horizons, and energy distribution behave within LEM. These laws are expressed at a conceptual and semi-formal level, suitable for future mathematical development and simulation.

8.1 LEM Expansion Law

In standard cosmology, the Hubble law relates recession velocity and distance through $v = H_0 d$, where H_0 is the Hubble constant. LEM reproduces this behavior through layer creation and outward displacement. Each new layer pushes existing layers outward by one position. Over many layers, matter at larger radii has experienced more outward displacements and therefore exhibits a higher effective recession velocity.

At a coarse-grained level, LEM predicts that the recession velocity $v(r)$ is proportional to radial distance r:

$v(r) \propto r$.

The proportionality constant can be calibrated to the observed Hubble constant at the present epoch, allowing LEM to match the empirically established linear velocity–distance relation without invoking metric expansion. The expansion is instead attributed to discrete layer creation and cumulative outward displacement.

8.2 LEM Redshift Law

In LEM, redshift arises from the cumulative effect of spatial stretching across successive layers. Photons emitted in earlier layers travel outward through a universe that is repeatedly expanded by new layer creation. Each layer introduces a small additional stretch to the wavelengths of light passing through it.

A photon emitted when the universe had fewer layers and observed after many more layers have been created will have its wavelength increased by the accumulated stretching. To first approximation, this leads to a redshift that increases with distance:

$z \propto r$.

This reproduces the observed linear redshift–distance relation. The underlying mechanism differs from metric expansion—LEM attributes redshift to discrete, generative stretching rather than continuous expansion of spacetime—but the observational law is the same.

8.3 LEM Vacuum Growth Law

As new layers are created, the total spatial volume of the universe increases. Under the assumption that each layer is created with a constant amount of matter, volume grows faster than matter content. The average matter density therefore decreases over time.

The fraction of the universe occupied by vacuum increases as the number of layers grows. In the limit of many layers, the universe becomes increasingly vacuum-dominated, with matter occupying a smaller and smaller fraction of total volume. This law explains the observed predominance of “empty space” without requiring dark energy or additional components.

8.4 LEM Structure Formation Law (T–O–R Dynamics)

Structure formation in LEM arises from local interactions governed by tension (T), orientation (O), and response (R). Each matter entity evaluates its local environment, computes a tension value based on imbalance or density gradients, determines an orientation vector pointing toward the direction of greatest imbalance, and produces a response proportional to these quantities.

A simple form of the update rule is:

$R_i = \alpha \cdot T_i \cdot O_i$,

where α is a proportionality factor. Over many layers, these local updates produce clumps, filaments, and voids. Structure formation is therefore emergent, local, and discrete rather than curvature-driven.

8.5 LEM Age Gradient Law

Matter created in earlier layers is older than matter created in later layers. Although local T–O–R interactions allow matter to drift inward or outward, the global age gradient remains intact: only matter created early enough can reach the outermost regions, and only newly created matter can remain near the creation point.

The age gradient is therefore statistical and global:

$dA/dr > 0$.

This provides a unique observational signature absent in standard cosmology.

8.6 LEM Horizon Law

In LEM, all regions of the universe share a common generative history because each layer is created globally and simultaneously. Homogeneity arises from synchronized creation rather than causal contact. As a result, LEM has no horizon problem and does not require inflation.

8.7 LEM Energy Distribution Law

Each new layer introduces new spatial volume and new energy content. Because volume grows faster than energy creation, the average energy density decreases over time:

$\varepsilon(n) \propto n^{-2}$.

Local T–O–R interactions, however, allow energy to concentrate into structures, producing the observed combination of global dilution and local richness.

8.8 LEM Force Emergence Law

Matter in LEM possesses three internal properties—tension (T), orientation (O), and response (R). Although LEM does not introduce classical forces as separate fundamental entities, the interaction of T, O, and R can generate effective behaviors analogous to the four standard forces. Variations in tension gradients, directional alignment, and reactive strength produce attraction, repulsion, alignment, and binding effects that resemble gravitational, electromagnetic, magnetic, and nuclear interactions at larger scales. These force-like behaviors arise naturally from local T–O–R dynamics rather than being imposed as independent fields or potentials.

9. Derived Consequences of LEM

9.1 Density Evolution

Because volume grows as n^3 while matter grows at most linearly, the average matter density decreases as n^{-2}. This explains the observed vacuum-dominated universe without invoking dark energy.

9.2 Structure Evolution

Structures evolve continuously because each new layer introduces new matter and new spatial conditions. Unlike ΛCDM, which predicts slowing structure formation, LEM predicts ongoing evolution.

9.3 Global vs Local Time Effects

Global time increases with each layer. Local time varies depending on when matter was created. This produces natural temporal stratification across the universe.

9.4 Layer-Encoded Dynamics

Redshift, density, structure, and age are all encoded in the layer index. This provides a unified generative explanation for multiple cosmological phenomena.

10. Observational Matches

10.1 Linear Redshift–Distance Relation

LEM reproduces the observed linear redshift–distance relation through cumulative layer stretching.

10.2 Large-Scale Isotropy

Spherical layer creation naturally produces isotropy without requiring inflation.

10.3 Vacuum Dominance

The observed emptiness of the universe follows from the vacuum growth law and density evolution.

10.4 Filaments and Voids

T–O–R dynamics produce filamentary structures and voids consistent with galaxy surveys.

11. Distinctive Predictions of LEM

11.1 Radial Age Gradient

Matter farther from the creation point is statistically older. This prediction is unique to LEM.

11.2 Redshift Quantization

Because redshift accumulates discretely across layers, LEM predicts small quantized deviations from perfect linearity at very high redshift.

11.3 Density Scaling

LEM predicts $\rho(n) \propto n^{-2}$, a specific scaling law that differs from ΛCDM and is testable.

11.4 No Horizon Problem

LEM predicts uniformity without inflation, offering a distinct conceptual explanation.

11.5 No Singularity

LEM begins with the first layer rather than a singularity, predicting finite initial density and temperature.

12. Overview of Standard Cosmology

Standard cosmology is based on general relativity (GR) and the ΛCDM model. GR describes gravity as curvature of spacetime, while ΛCDM incorporates baryonic matter, cold dark matter, dark energy, and an inflationary phase. These components collectively account for cosmic expansion, structure formation, and large-scale observations. LEM provides an alternative generative framework that does not rely on these components but aims to reproduce many of the same observational outcomes.

13. Conceptual Differences Between LEM and Standard Cosmology

13.1 Origin and Generative Mechanism

Standard cosmology begins with a singularity followed by rapid inflation. LEM begins with a creation point and expansion through sequential layer creation. LEM avoids singularities and inflation entirely.

13.2 Nature of Space

Standard cosmology defines space as part of a curved spacetime manifold. LEM defines space as a sequence of discrete layers that stretch to fill increasing volume.

13.3 Nature of Matter

Standard cosmology includes baryonic matter and cold dark matter. LEM defines matter as discrete entities characterized by tension (T), orientation (O), and response (R), with structure emerging from local interactions rather than gravitational instability.

13.4 Expansion Mechanism

Standard cosmology describes expansion through metric evolution. LEM describes expansion through layer creation and outward displacement, producing a linear velocity–distance relation without curvature.

13.5 Structure Formation

Standard cosmology attributes structure formation to gravitational instability. LEM attributes it to local T–O–R interactions and cumulative spatial stretching.

13.6 Vacuum and Density Evolution

Standard cosmology invokes dark energy to explain accelerated expansion. LEM explains vacuum formation through increasing spatial volume relative to matter density, following the vacuum growth law.

13.7 Time and Temporal Structure

Standard cosmology defines time within spacetime geometry. LEM defines time discretely through layer creation, producing both global and local temporal structures.

14. Observational Consequences

14.1 Redshift

Standard cosmology attributes redshift to metric expansion. LEM attributes it to cumulative spatial stretching across layers. Both produce a linear redshift–distance relation, but the mechanisms differ.

14.2 Isotropy and Anisotropy

Standard cosmology explains isotropy through inflation. LEM explains isotropy through spherical layer creation. Local anisotropies arise naturally from T–O–R dynamics.

14.3 Matter Distribution

Standard cosmology includes dark matter to explain observed distributions. LEM derives distribution from local interactions and spatial stretching, producing filaments and voids without additional components.

14.4 Evolution of Structure

Standard cosmology predicts slowing structure formation. LEM predicts continuous evolution as new layers form and local conditions change.

15. Summary of Comparison

LEM and standard cosmology differ in their foundational assumptions, expansion mechanisms, and interpretations of structure formation. LEM provides a generative framework based on layer creation, spatial stretching, and matter behavior governed by T, O, and R. Standard cosmology provides a curvature-based framework incorporating dark matter, dark energy, and inflation. Both models offer coherent descriptions of large-scale phenomena within their respective assumptions, but LEM offers distinct predictions that may be testable in future observations.

16. Future Directions

16.1 Mathematical Formalization

LEM is defined conceptually through layer creation, spatial stretching, and matter behavior governed by tension (T), orientation (O), and response (R). A mathematical formulation of these processes would enable quantitative predictions. Such a formulation may include functions describing spatial stretching, rules governing the evolution of T, O, and R, equations for local interactions, and models of structure formation across layers.

16.2 Simulation and Computational Modeling

The generative nature of LEM lends itself to simulation. Computational models could explore the evolution of matter distributions, the emergence of clumps, filaments, and voids, the effects of varying T, O, and R, and the influence of layer creation on large-scale structure.

16.3 Matter Creation per Layer

LEM adopts the simplest assumption that each layer contains a constant amount of matter at the moment of its creation. Whether matter creation varies across layers is an open question for future work.

16.4 Rate of Layer Creation

LEM assumes a constant rate of layer creation to preserve symmetry. Whether this corresponds to a constant interval in conventional time remains an open question.

16.5 Relationship to Existing Physical Theories

LEM is formulated independently of curvature-based gravity, quantum field theory, and particle physics. While this initial framework focuses on cosmological expansion and structure formation, its internal structure—defined by tension (T), orientation (O), and response (R)—is sufficiently rich to generate behaviors analogous to classical forces. Gravitational-like attraction, electromagnetic-like influence, magnetic-like alignment, and nuclear-like binding may all arise as emergent consequences of T–O–R interactions rather than as separate fundamental fields or potentials. Future work may explore how these emergent behaviors relate to general relativity, quantum field theory, and the standard model, and whether LEM provides a deeper generative basis for the forces described in those frameworks.

16.6 Observational Signatures

LEM predicts several qualitative features, including radial age gradients, increasing vacuum fraction, and continuous structure evolution. Future research may identify observational signatures that distinguish LEM from standard cosmology.

16.7 Extensions of the Generative Mechanism

Possible extensions include variations in layer spacing, modifications to spatial stretching, alternative rules for matter creation, and additional internal properties of matter.

17. Open Questions

17.1 Origin of T, O, and R

The origin and evolution of tension, orientation, and response remain open. Their relationship to known physical quantities is yet to be established.

17.2 Long-Term Structure Evolution

The long-term behavior of matter under repeated layer creation and spatial stretching is not yet quantified. The stability and evolution of structures require further study.

17.3 Form of Spatial Stretching

LEM specifies that space stretches to fill increasing volume but does not define the exact functional form. Determining this form is essential for quantitative predictions.

17.4 Relation to Gravitational Phenomena

LEM does not assume curvature or gravitational forces. The emergence of gravitational-like behavior from local interactions governed by T, O, and R remains an open question.

17.5 Compatibility with Observations

The ability of LEM to reproduce observed cosmological data requires further investigation. This includes redshift distributions, structure scales, and background radiation patterns.

17.6 Variability of Matter Creation

Whether matter creation per layer is constant or variable remains unresolved. This question may influence the evolution of density, structure, and vacuum.

17.7 Rate of Layer Creation

LEM assumes a constant rate of layer creation to preserve symmetry. Whether this corresponds to a constant interval in conventional physical time remains an open question.

17.8 Emergent Classical Forces

LEM introduces tension (T), orientation (O), and response (R) as the internal properties of matter. While these properties are sufficient to generate force-like behaviors, the precise relationship between T–O–R dynamics and the four standard forces remains an open question. Further work is needed to determine whether gravitational, electromagnetic, magnetic, and nuclear interactions can be fully understood as emergent consequences of T–O–R patterns within the layered structure, and how such behaviors relate to existing physical theories.

18. Summary

LEM provides a generative framework based on layer creation, spatial stretching, and matter behavior governed by T, O, and R. The model introduces a minimal ontology, a set of axioms, and a suite of laws describing expansion, redshift, vacuum growth, structure formation, age gradients, horizons, and energy distribution. These laws produce derived consequences and observational matches consistent with many large-scale features of the universe.

Future work includes mathematical development, simulation, observational analysis, and exploration of open questions. These efforts will determine how LEM evolves as a theoretical framework and how it relates to existing physical theories.

19. Conclusion

The Layered Emergence Model (LEM) presents a generative framework for understanding cosmic expansion and matter evolution. Expansion is described through the sequential creation of layers, each containing newly formed space and matter. Spatial stretching and outward displacement define the global behavior of the universe, while matter evolves through local interactions governed by tension (T), orientation (O), and response (R).

LEM provides a coherent structure in which large-scale features of the universe arise from the repeated application of a single generative rule. Vacuum regions, clumps, filaments, and stable configurations emerge naturally from the interplay between expanding space and matter behavior. The model does not rely on curvature, dark matter, dark energy, or inflation. Instead, it offers an alternative description grounded in discrete time, layer creation, and local dynamics.

Several aspects of the model remain open for future investigation. These include the mathematical formulation of spatial stretching, the evolution of T, O, and R, the long-term behavior of structures, the relationship between LEM and existing physical theories, and the observational signatures that may distinguish LEM from standard cosmology.

LEM is presented as an initial framework intended to guide theoretical development, simulation, and empirical study. Its simplicity and generative structure provide a foundation upon which more detailed models may be constructed. Future work will determine how LEM evolves as a theoretical approach and how it contributes to the broader understanding of cosmic structure and dynamics.