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Higher Order Approximate Markov Chain Filters

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Abstract. The aim of this paper is to construct higher order approximate discrete time filters for continuous time finite-state Markov chains with observations that are perturbed by the noise of a Wiener process.

1. Introduction.

The systematic construction and investigation of filters for Markov chains goes back to Wonham [11], Zakai [12] and Fujisaki, Kallianpur and Kunita [2]. Later the question of finding discrete time approximations for the optimal filter was considered by Clark and Cameron [1] and Newton [7], [8].

At first we introduce in the following filters for continuous time finite state Markov chains. Let (Ω, \mathcal{A}, P) be the underlying probability space and suppose that the state process $\xi = \{\xi_t, t \in [0, T]\}$ is a continuous time homogeneous Markov chain on the finite state space $\mathcal{S} = \{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_d\}$. Its d -dimensional probability vector $p(t)$, with components

$$(1) \quad p_i(t) = P(\xi_t = a_i)$$

for each $a_i \in \mathcal{S}$, then satisfies the vector ordinary differential equation

$$(2) \quad \frac{dp}{dt} = A p$$

where A is the intensity matrix. In addition, suppose that the m -dimensional observation process $W = \{W_t, t \in [0, T]\}$ is the solution of the stochastic equation

$$(3) \quad W_t = \int_0^t h(\xi_s) ds + W_t^*,$$

where $W^* = \{W_t^*, t \in [0, T]\}$ with $W_0^* = 0$ is an m -dimensional standard Wiener process with respect to the probability measure P , which is independent of the process ξ . Finally, let \mathcal{Y}_t denote the σ -algebra generated by the observations W_s for $0 \leq s \leq t$. In what follows we shall use superscripts to label the components of vector-valued stochastic processes.

Our task is to filter as much information about the state process ξ as we can from the observation process W . With this aim we shall evaluate the conditional expectation

$$E(g(\xi_T) | \mathcal{Y}_T)$$

with respect to P for a given function $g : S \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$.

By application of the Girsanov transformation we obtain a probability measure \dot{P} where

$$(4) \quad d\dot{P} = L_T^{-1} dP$$

with

$$(5) \quad L_T = \exp\left(-\frac{1}{2} \int_0^T |h(\xi_s)|^2 ds + \int_0^T h(\xi_s)^\top dW_s\right)$$

such that W is a Wiener process with respect to \dot{P} .

Let us introduce the un-normalized conditional probability X_t^i for the state $a_i \in S$ at time t as the conditional expectation

$$(6) \quad X_t^i = \dot{E}(I_{\{a_i\}}(\xi_t) L_t | \mathcal{Y}_t),$$

$i \in \{1, \dots, d\}$, $t \in [0, T]$, with respect to the probability measure \dot{P} , where $I_{\{a_i\}}(x)$ is the indicator function taking the value 1 when $x = a_i$ and the value 0 otherwise. It follows from a basic assertion in Fujisaki, Kallianpur and Kunita [2], also known as Kallianpur-Striebel formula, that the conditional probabilities of ξ_t given \mathcal{Y}_t are

$$(7) \quad P(\xi_t = a_i | \mathcal{Y}_t) = E(I_{\{a_i\}}(\xi_t) | \mathcal{Y}_t) = X_t^i / \sum_{k=1}^d X_t^k$$

for $a_i \in S$ and $t \in [0, T]$, where the d -dimensional process $X_t = \{X_t^1, \dots, X_t^d\}$ of the un-normalized conditional probabilities satisfies the Zakai equation,

$$(8) \quad X_t = p(0) + \int_0^t A X_s ds + \sum_{j=1}^m \int_0^t H_j X_s dW_s^j$$

for $t \in [0, T]$, which is a homogeneous linear Ito equation. H_j is the $d \times d$ diagonal matrix with i th component $h_j(a_i)$ for $i = 1, \dots, d$ and $j = 1, \dots, m$.

The optimal least squares estimate for $g(\xi_t)$ with respect to the observations W_s for $0 \leq s \leq t$, that is with respect to the σ -algebra \mathcal{Y}_t , is given by the conditional expectation

$$(9) \quad \begin{aligned} \Pi_t(g) &= E(g(\xi_t) | \mathcal{Y}_t) \\ &= \sum_{k=1}^d g(a_k) X_t^k / \sum_{k=1}^d X_t^k, \end{aligned}$$

which we call the optimal filter or Markov chain filter.

2. Approximate Filters.

To compute the optimal filter (9) we have to solve the Ito equation (8). In practice, however, it is impossible to detect W completely on $[0, T]$. Electronic devices are often used to obtain increments of integral observations over small time intervals, which in the simplest case are the increments of W in integral form

$$\int_{t_0}^{\tau_1} dW_s^j, \dots, \int_{t_n}^{\tau_{n+1}} dW_s^j, \dots,$$

for each $j = 1, \dots, m$, $\tau_n = n\delta$ for $n = 0, 1, 2, \dots$. We shall see in the next section that with such integral observations it is possible to construct strong discrete time approximations Y^δ with time step δ of the solution X of the Zakai equation (8). Then for the given function g we can evaluate the expression

$$(10) \quad \Pi_t^\delta(g) = \sum_{k=1}^d g(a_k) Y_t^{\delta,k} / \sum_{k=1}^d Y_t^{\delta,k}$$

for $t \in [0, T]$, which we shall define to be the corresponding approximate Markov chain filter.

We shall say that a discrete time approximation Y^δ with step size δ converges on the time interval $[0, T]$ with order $\gamma > 0$ to the corresponding solution X of the stochastic differential equation if there exists a finite constant K , not depending on δ , and a $\delta_0 \in (0, 1)$ such that

$$(11) \quad E(|X_{\tau_n} - Y_{\tau_n}^\delta|) \leq K \delta^\gamma$$

for all $\delta \in (0, \delta_0)$ and $\tau_n \in [0, T]$. We note that the expectation in (11) is with respect to the probability measure \dot{P} under which W is a Wiener process. Analogously we say that an approximate Markov chain filter $\Pi^\delta(g)$ with step size δ converges on the time interval $[0, T]$ with order $\gamma > 0$ to the optimal filter $\Pi(g)$ for a given function g if there exists a finite constant K , not depending on δ , and a $\delta_0 \in (0, 1)$ such that

$$(12) \quad E(|\Pi_{\tau_n}(g) - \Pi_{\tau_n}^\delta(g)|) \leq K \delta^\gamma$$

for all $\delta \in (0, \delta_0)$ and $\tau_n \in [0, T]$. In contrast with (11) we take the expectation in (12) with respect to the original probability measure P .

PROPOSITION. *An approximate Markov chain filter $\Pi^\delta(g)$ with step size δ converges on the time interval $[0, T]$ with order $\gamma > 0$ to the optimal filter*

$\Pi(g)$ for a given bounded function g if the discrete time approximation Y^δ used in it converges on $[0, T]$ to the solution X of the Zakai equation (8) with the same order γ .

PROOF. In view of (12) we need to estimate the error

$$(13) \quad \begin{aligned} F_{\tau_n}^\delta(g) &= E(|\Pi_{\tau_n}(g) - \Pi_{\tau_n}^\delta(g)|) \\ &= \dot{E}(L_{\tau_n}|\Pi_{\tau_n}(g) - \Pi_{\tau_n}^\delta(g)|) \end{aligned}$$

for all $\tau_n \in [0, T]$. We shall write

$$(14) \quad G_{\tau_n}(f) = \sum_{k=1}^d f(a_k) X_{\tau_n}^k$$

and

$$(15) \quad G_{\tau_n}^\delta(f) = \sum_{k=1}^d f(a_k) Y_{\tau_n}^{\delta,k}$$

for any bounded function $f : \mathcal{S} \rightarrow \mathfrak{R}$, $\delta \in (0, \delta_0)$ and $\tau_n \in [0, T]$. Then similarly to Picard [9] we can use (6), (9) and (10) to rewrite the error (13) in the form

$$(16) \quad \begin{aligned} F_{\tau_n}^\delta(g) &= \dot{E}(G_{\tau_n}(1)|\Pi_{\tau_n}(g) - \Pi_{\tau_n}^\delta(g)|) \\ &= \dot{E}\left(G_{\tau_n}(1)\left|\frac{1}{G_{\tau_n}(1)}(G_{\tau_n}(g) - G_{\tau_n}^\delta(g) \right. \right. \\ &\quad \left. \left. + \Pi_{\tau_n}^\delta(g)(G_{\tau_n}^\delta(1) - G_{\tau_n}(1))\right)\right|) \\ &\leq \dot{E}(|G_{\tau_n}(g) - G_{\tau_n}^\delta(g)|) + \dot{E}(|\Pi_{\tau_n}^\delta(g)| | G_{\tau_n}^\delta(1) - G_{\tau_n}(1)|) \\ &\leq K_1 \sum_{k=1}^d \dot{E}(|Y_{\tau_n}^{\delta,k} - X_{\tau_n}^k|). \end{aligned}$$

Finally, using (11) in (16) gives the estimate $F_{\tau_n}^\delta(g) \leq K_2 \delta^\gamma$ and hence the desired convergence rate. \square

3. Explicit Filters.

It remains to describe discrete time approximations converging with a given order $\gamma > 0$ to the solution of the Zakai equation (8) which can be used in a corresponding approximate filter. A systematic presentation of such discrete time approximations can be found in Kloeden and Platen [3]. Given an

equidistant time discretization of the interval $[0, T]$ with step size $\delta = \Delta = T/N$ for some $N = 1, 2, \dots$, we define the partition σ -algebra \mathcal{P}_N^1 as the σ -algebra generated by the increments

$$(17) \quad \Delta W_0 = \int_0^\Delta dW_s^j, \quad \dots, \quad \Delta W_{N-1} = \int_{(N-1)\Delta}^{N\Delta} dW_s^j$$

for all $j = 1, \dots, m$. Thus \mathcal{P}_N^1 contains the information about the increments of W for this time discretization. The simplest discrete time approximation obtained from the Euler scheme (see Maruyama [5]) has for the Zakai equation (8) the form

$$(18) \quad Y_{\tau_{n+1}}^\delta = [I + A \Delta + G_n] Y_{\tau_n}^\delta$$

with

$$(19) \quad G_n = \sum_{j=1}^m H_j \Delta W_n^j$$

and initial value $Y_0 = X_0$, where I is the $d \times d$ unit matrix. The scheme (18) converges under the given assumptions with order $\gamma = 0.5$. For a general stochastic differential equation this is the maximum order of convergence that can be achieved under the partition σ -algebra \mathcal{P}_N^1 , as was shown by Clark and Cameron [1]. However, the special multiplicative noise structure of the Zakai equation (8) allows the order $\gamma = 1.0$ to be attained with the information contained in \mathcal{P}_N^1 . Milstein [6] proposed a scheme of order $\gamma = 1.0$, which for equation (8) has the form

$$(20) \quad Y_{\tau_{n+1}}^\delta = \left[I + \underline{A} \Delta + G_n \left(I + \frac{1}{2} G_n \right) \right] Y_{\tau_n}^\delta$$

where

$$(21) \quad \underline{A} = A - \frac{1}{2} \sum_{j=1}^m H_j^2.$$

Newton [7] searched for a scheme which is asymptotically the "best" in the class of order 1.0 schemes in the sense that it has the smallest leading error coefficient in an error estimate similar to (11). He obtained the scheme

$$(22) \quad Y_{\tau_{n+1}}^\delta = \left[I + \underline{A} \Delta + G_n + \frac{\Delta^2}{2} A^2 + \frac{\Delta}{2} A G_n - \frac{\Delta}{2} G_n A + G_n \underline{A} \Delta + \frac{1}{2} G_n^2 + \frac{1}{6} G_n^3 \right] Y_{\tau_n}^\delta$$

which is called asymptotically efficient under \mathcal{P}_N^1 .

We can obtain higher order convergence by exploiting additional information about the observation process such as contained in the integral observations

$$(23) \quad \Delta Z_0^j = \int_0^\Delta \int_0^s dW_\tau^j ds, \quad \dots, \quad \Delta Z_{N-1}^j = \int_{(N-1)\Delta}^{N\Delta} \int_{(N-1)\Delta}^s dW_\tau^j ds$$

for all $j = 1, \dots, m$, easily measured in practice by digital devices. We shall define as the partition σ -algebra $\mathcal{P}_N^{1.5}$ the σ -algebra generated by \mathcal{P}_N^1 together with the multiple integrals $\Delta Z_0^j, \dots, \Delta Z_{N-1}^j$ for all $j = 1, \dots, m$. The order 1.5 strong Taylor scheme described in Platen [10] and Kloeden and Platen [3] uses for the Zakai equation (8) only the information contained in $\mathcal{P}_N^{1.5}$. It takes the form

$$(24) \quad Y_{\tau_{n+1}}^\delta = \left[I + \underline{A} \Delta + G_n + \frac{\Delta^2}{2} A^2 + A M_n - M_n A + G_n \underline{A} \Delta + \frac{1}{2} G_n^2 + \frac{1}{6} G_n^3 \right] Y_{\tau_n}^\delta$$

where

$$(25) \quad M_n = \sum_{j=1}^m H_j \Delta Z_n^j.$$

We note that we obtain the order 1.0 scheme (22) from (24) if we replace the ΔZ_n^j by their conditional expectations under \mathcal{P}_N^1 with respect to the probability measure \tilde{P} , that is we substitute $\frac{1}{2} G_n \Delta$ for M_n in (24).

In order to form a scheme of order $\gamma = 2.0$ we need the information from the observation process expressed in the partition σ -algebra \mathcal{P}_N^2 which is generated by $\mathcal{P}_N^{1.5}$ together with the multiple Stratonovich integrals

$$(26) \quad \begin{aligned} J_{(j_1, j_2, 0), n} &= \int_{\tau_n}^{\tau_{n+1}} \int_{\tau_n}^{s_3} \int_{\tau_n}^{s_2} \circ dW_{s_1}^{j_1} \circ dW_{s_2}^{j_2} ds_3, \\ J_{(j_1, 0, j_2), n} &= \int_{\tau_n}^{\tau_{n+1}} \int_{\tau_n}^{s_3} \int_{\tau_n}^{s_2} \circ dW_{s_1}^{j_1} ds_2 \circ dW_{s_3}^{j_2}, \end{aligned}$$

for all $n = 0, 1, \dots, N-1$ and $j_1, j_2 = 1, \dots, m$. Here the symbol "o" denotes the Stratonovich integration. Electronic devices can extract these Stratonovich integrals from the observation measurements in practical filtering situations. Using this information we can apply the order 2.0 strong Taylor scheme in Kloeden and Platen [3] to the Zakai equation (8) to obtain the approximation

$$Y_{\tau_{n+1}}^\delta = \left[I + \underline{A} \Delta \left(I + \frac{1}{2} \underline{A} \Delta \right) - M_n \underline{A} + \underline{A} M_n \right]$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 (27) \quad & +G_n \left(I + \underline{A} \Delta + \frac{1}{2} G_n \left(I + \frac{1}{3} G_n \left(I + \frac{1}{4} G_n \right) \right) \right) \\
 & + \sum_{j_1, j_2=1}^m \left(\underline{A} H_{j_2} H_{j_1} J_{(j_1, j_2, 0), n} + H_{j_2} \underline{A} H_{j_1} J_{(j_1, 0, j_2), n} \right. \\
 & \left. + H_{j_2} H_{j_1} \underline{A} (\Delta J_{(j_1, j_2)} - J_{(j_1, j_2, 0)} - J_{(j_1, 0, j_2)}) \right) Y_{\tau_n}^\delta.
 \end{aligned}$$

We remark that the corresponding orders of strong convergence of the schemes described above follow from a convergence theorems in Platen [10] or Kloeden, Platen [3].

4. Implicit Filters.

Explicit discrete time approximations can sometimes behave numerically unstable. In such a situation control is lost over the propagation of errors and the approximation is rendered useless. We can then use an implicit discrete time scheme to obtain a numerically stable approximation. Here we state some of the implicit discrete time schemes from Kloeden and Platen [3], [4] applied to the Zakai equation (8). These express an iterate in terms of itself and its predecessor, but since the Zakai equation is linear they can all be rearranged algebraically to express the next iterate just in terms of its predecessor. After rearranging we have from the family of implicit Euler schemes

$$(28) \quad Y_{\tau_{n+1}}^\delta = (I - \alpha A \Delta)^{-1} \left[I + (1 - \alpha) A \Delta + G_n \right] Y_{\tau_n}^\delta$$

where $\alpha \in [0, 1]$ denotes the degree of implicitness. The scheme (28) converges with order $\gamma = 0.5$. The family of implicit Milstein schemes, all of which converge with order $\gamma = 1.0$, gives us

$$(29) \quad Y_{\tau_{n+1}}^\delta = (I - \alpha \underline{A} \Delta)^{-1} \left[I + (1 - \alpha) \underline{A} \Delta + G_n \left(I + \frac{1}{2} G_n \right) \right] Y_{\tau_n}^\delta.$$

In principle to each explicit scheme there corresponds a family of implicit schemes by making implicit the terms involving the nonrandom multiple stochastic integrals such as Δ or $\frac{1}{2} \Delta^2$. As a final example we mention the order 1.5 implicit Taylor scheme yielding

$$\begin{aligned}
 (30) \quad Y_{\tau_{n+1}}^\delta = & \left(I - \frac{1}{2} \underline{A} \Delta \right)^{-1} \left[I + \frac{1}{2} \underline{A} \Delta + G_n \underline{A} \Delta - M_n \underline{A} + \underline{A} M_n \right. \\
 & \left. + G_n \left(I + \frac{1}{2} G_n \left(I + \frac{1}{3} G_n \right) \right) \right] Y_{\tau_n}^\delta.
 \end{aligned}$$

5. A Numerical Example.

We consider the random telegraphic noise process, that is the two state continuous time Markov chain ξ on the state space $\mathcal{S} = \{-1, +1\}$ with intensity matrix

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} -50.0 & 50.0 \\ 50.0 & -50.0 \end{bmatrix}$$

and initial probability vector $p(0) = (0.9, 0.1)$. Further, we suppose that the observation process W satisfies the stochastic equation (3) with $h(1) = 5$ and $h(-1) = 0$.

Our task is to determine the actual state of the chain on the basis of these observations. We could say that ξ_t has most likely the value $+1$ if $P(\xi_t = +1 | \mathcal{Y}_t) \geq 0.5$. We evaluate the conditional probability

$$p_1(t) = P(\xi_t = +1 | \mathcal{Y}_t) = E(I_{\{+1\}}(\xi_t) | \mathcal{Y}_t) = \Pi_t(I_{\{+1\}}),$$

which is the optimal filter here. To obtain an approximation of $\Pi_t(I_{\{+1\}})$ we can use a filter $\Pi_t^\delta(I_{\{+1\}})$ based on a discrete time approximation. For a comparison of approximate filters we shall suppose that we have here a scenario of a realization of the Markov chain on the interval $[0, 4]$ with $\xi_t = 1$ for $0 \leq t < 0.5$ and $\xi_t = -1$ for $0.5 \leq t \leq 4.0$. Using this realization of the Markov chain we computed the approximate filters $\Pi_t^\delta(I_{\{+1\}})$ for the same realization of the Wiener process W^* using the above mentioned schemes with equidistant step size $\delta = \Delta = 2^{-7}$.

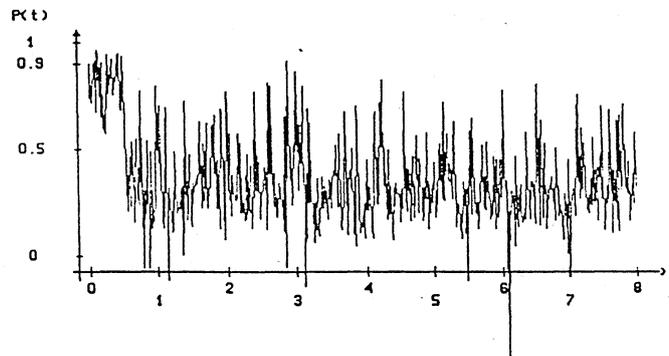


Figure 1. $p_1(t)$ for the explicit order 1.5 strong Taylor filter.

Two calculated $p_1(t)$ paths are plotted in Figures 1 and 2 respectively. The result for the order 1.5 Taylor filter which is an explicit one is plotted in Figure 1. Considerably more sensitive detections of the jump of the Markov chain from state 1 to state -1 at $t = 0.5$ were obtained by implicit schemes.

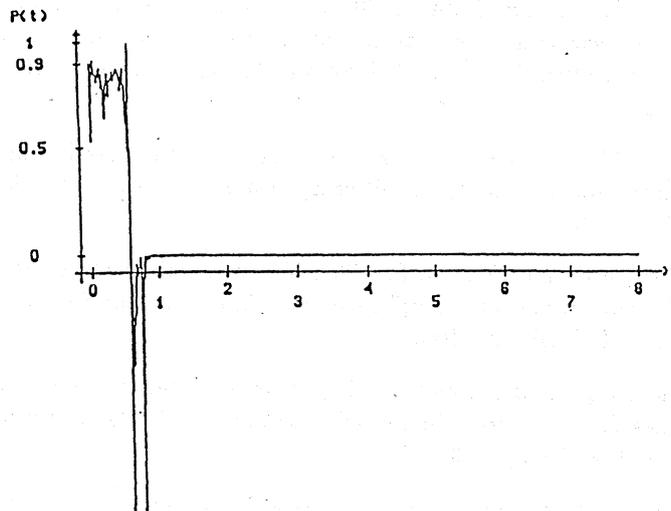


Figure 2. $p_1(t)$ for the implicit order 1.5 Taylor filter.

Figure 2 shows the result with the implicit order 1.5 Taylor scheme. The above numerical example underlines the importance of implicit stochastic numerical schemes. Also the additional information given by multiple stochastic integrals turns out to be substantial for a sensitive detection of a signal.

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