

# Ancillary qubits

Quantum Computing Minicourse ICTP-SAIFR

---

Stefano Carrazza<sup>‡</sup> and Matteo Robbiati<sup>†</sup>

8 April 2024

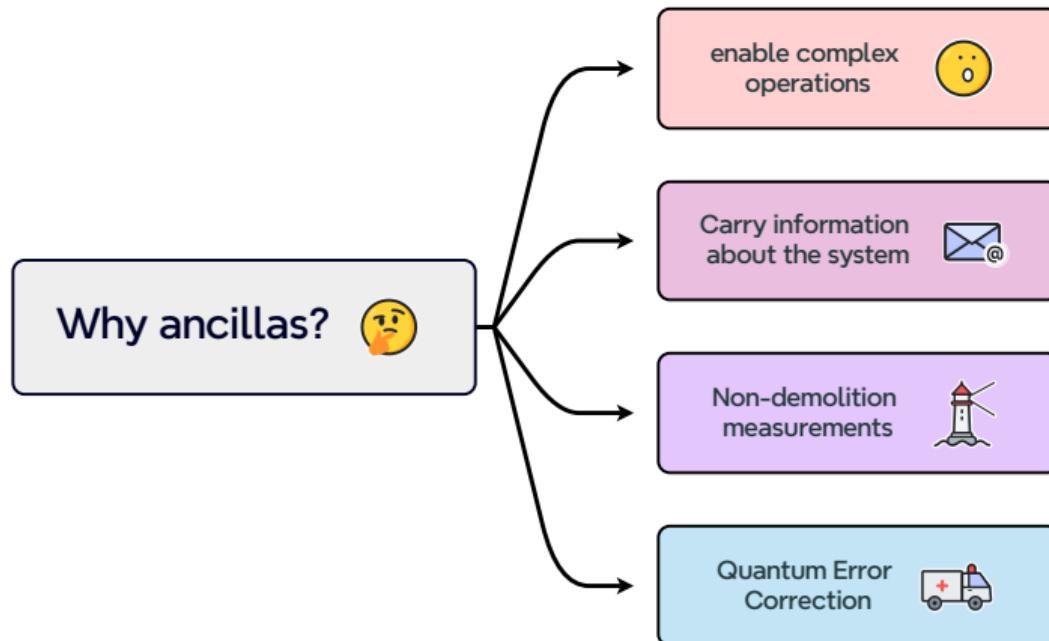
<sup>‡</sup> Associate Professor & Researcher, University of Milan and INFN Milan, Italy.

<sup>†</sup> PhD candidate, University of Milan, Italy and CERN, Switzerland.



## Ancillary qubits

Ancilla qubits are extra qubits, which help a qubit system in some computations. For example:



## The phase kickback

---

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

## The phase kickback

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

1. Take into account two qubits: a system qubit  $x$  and an ancilla  $y$ .

## The phase kickback

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

1. Take into account two qubits: a system qubit  $x$  and an ancilla  $y$ .
2. Suppose we prepare  $x$  into a superposed state and  $y$  into the excited state:

$$|x\rangle = H|0\rangle = \frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}, \quad |y\rangle = |1\rangle.$$

## The phase kickback

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

1. Take into account two qubits: a system qubit  $x$  and an ancilla  $y$ .
2. Suppose we prepare  $x$  into a superposed state and  $y$  into the excited state:

$$|x\rangle = H|0\rangle = \frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}, \quad |y\rangle = |1\rangle.$$

3. Let's consider now a controlled  $Z$  operation.

## The phase kickback

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

1. Take into account two qubits: a system qubit  $x$  and an ancilla  $y$ .
2. Suppose we prepare  $x$  into a superposed state and  $y$  into the excited state:

$$|x\rangle = H|0\rangle = \frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}, \quad |y\rangle = |1\rangle.$$

3. Let's consider now a controlled  $Z$  operation.
4. What happen if we now apply the  $CZ$  using  $x$  as control and  $y$  as target?

## The phase kickback

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

1. Take into account two qubits: a system qubit  $x$  and an ancilla  $y$ .
2. Suppose we prepare  $x$  into a superposed state and  $y$  into the excited state:

$$|x\rangle = H|0\rangle = \frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}, \quad |y\rangle = |1\rangle.$$

3. Let's consider now a controlled  $Z$  operation.
4. What happen if we now apply the  $CZ$  using  $x$  as control and  $y$  as target?
5. we could expect something happen on the target qubit! Not really:

## The phase kickback

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

1. Take into account two qubits: a system qubit  $x$  and an ancilla  $y$ .
2. Suppose we prepare  $x$  into a superposed state and  $y$  into the excited state:

$$|x\rangle = H|0\rangle = \frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}, \quad |y\rangle = |1\rangle.$$

3. Let's consider now a controlled  $Z$  operation.
4. What happen if we now apply the  $CZ$  using  $x$  as control and  $y$  as target?
5. we could expect something happen on the target qubit! Not really:

$$CZ\left(\frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} \otimes |1\rangle\right) = CZ\left(\frac{|01\rangle + |11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}\right) =$$

## The phase kickback

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

1. Take into account two qubits: a system qubit  $x$  and an ancilla  $y$ .
2. Suppose we prepare  $x$  into a superposed state and  $y$  into the excited state:

$$|x\rangle = H|0\rangle = \frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}, \quad |y\rangle = |1\rangle.$$

3. Let's consider now a controlled  $Z$  operation.
4. What happen if we now apply the  $CZ$  using  $x$  as control and  $y$  as target?
5. we could expect something happen on the target qubit! Not really:

$$CZ\left(\frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} \otimes |1\rangle\right) = CZ\left(\frac{|01\rangle + |11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}\right) = \frac{|01\rangle + Z|11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} =$$

## The phase kickback

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

1. Take into account two qubits: a system qubit  $x$  and an ancilla  $y$ .
2. Suppose we prepare  $x$  into a superposed state and  $y$  into the excited state:

$$|x\rangle = H|0\rangle = \frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}, \quad |y\rangle = |1\rangle.$$

3. Let's consider now a controlled  $Z$  operation.
4. What happen if we now apply the  $CZ$  using  $x$  as control and  $y$  as target?
5. we could expect something happen on the target qubit! Not really:

$$CZ\left(\frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} \otimes |1\rangle\right) = CZ\left(\frac{|01\rangle + |11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}\right) = \frac{|01\rangle + Z|11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{|01\rangle - |11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} =$$

## The phase kickback

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

1. Take into account two qubits: a system qubit  $x$  and an ancilla  $y$ .
2. Suppose we prepare  $x$  into a superposed state and  $y$  into the excited state:

$$|x\rangle = H|0\rangle = \frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}, \quad |y\rangle = |1\rangle.$$

3. Let's consider now a controlled  $Z$  operation.
4. What happen if we now apply the  $CZ$  using  $x$  as control and  $y$  as target?
5. we could expect something happen on the target qubit! Not really:

$$CZ\left(\frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} \otimes |1\rangle\right) = CZ\left(\frac{|01\rangle + |11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}\right) = \frac{|01\rangle + Z|11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{|01\rangle - |11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{|0\rangle - |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} \otimes |1\rangle.$$

## The phase kickback

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

1. Take into account two qubits: a system qubit  $x$  and an ancilla  $y$ .
2. Suppose we prepare  $x$  into a superposed state and  $y$  into the excited state:

$$|x\rangle = H|0\rangle = \frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}, \quad |y\rangle = |1\rangle.$$

3. Let's consider now a controlled  $Z$  operation.
4. What happen if we now apply the  $CZ$  using  $x$  as control and  $y$  as target?
5. we could expect something happen on the target qubit! Not really:

$$CZ\left(\frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} \otimes |1\rangle\right) = CZ\left(\frac{|01\rangle + |11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}\right) = \frac{|01\rangle + Z|11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{|01\rangle - |11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{|0\rangle - |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} \otimes |1\rangle.$$

6. adding an extra  $H$  to the control qubit, we will detect the state manipulation!

## The phase kickback

One clever trick we can implement using ancillas is the **phase kickback**.

1. Take into account two qubits: a system qubit  $x$  and an ancilla  $y$ .
2. Suppose we prepare  $x$  into a superposed state and  $y$  into the excited state:

$$|x\rangle = H|0\rangle = \frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}, \quad |y\rangle = |1\rangle.$$

3. Let's consider now a controlled  $Z$  operation.
4. What happens if we now apply the  $CZ$  using  $x$  as control and  $y$  as target?
5. we could expect something happen on the target qubit! Not really:

$$CZ\left(\frac{|0\rangle + |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} \otimes |1\rangle\right) = CZ\left(\frac{|01\rangle + |11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}}\right) = \frac{|01\rangle + Z|11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{|01\rangle - |11\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} = \frac{|0\rangle - |1\rangle}{\sqrt{2}} \otimes |1\rangle.$$

6. adding an extra  $H$  to the control qubit, we will detect the state manipulation!

### Important

This happens if the ancilla is prepared into a state which is eigenvector of the controlled operation.

# Is the phase kickback useful?

Some of the most powerful and famous quantum computing algorithms make use of the phase kickback



Figure 1: Deutsch-Josza

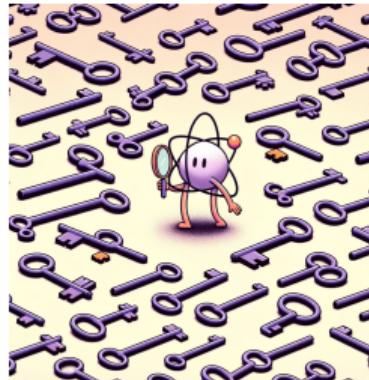


Figure 2: Grover

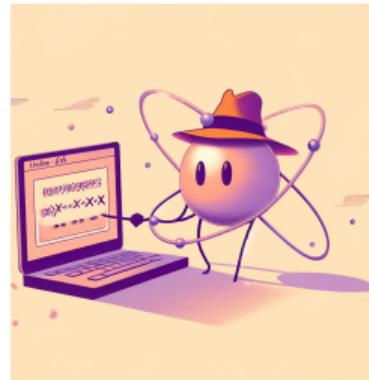


Figure 3: Shor

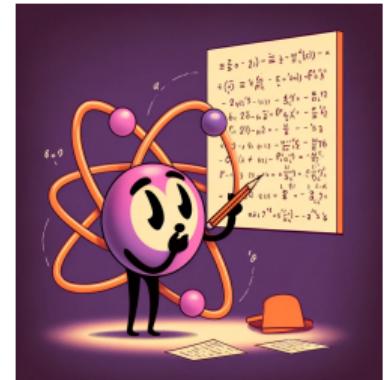


Figure 4: HHL

All of them are proved to outperform any classical algorithm, leading to a theoretical **quantum advantage**!

It can be useful to define the phase kickback using the concept of quantum **oracle**.

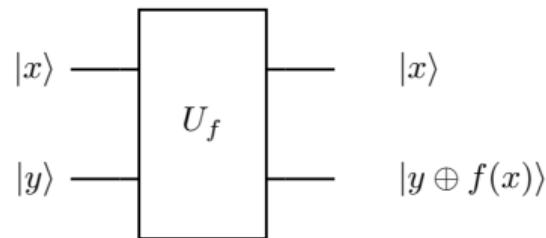
1. Considering a system of qubits of state  $|x\rangle$  and a set of extra qubits of state  $|y\rangle$ ;

It can be useful to define the phase kickback using the concept of quantum **oracle**.

1. Considering a system of qubits of state  $|x\rangle$  and a set of extra qubits of state  $|y\rangle$ ;
2. in reversible computation  $x$  is called **input register** and  $y$  **output register**. In this course  $x$  will always be composed of our system of qubits and  $y$  will be ancillary qubits;

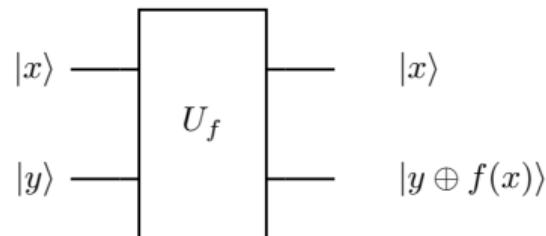
It can be useful to define the phase kickback using the concept of quantum **oracle**.

1. Considering a system of qubits of state  $|x\rangle$  and a set of extra qubits of state  $|y\rangle$ ;
2. in reversible computation  $x$  is called **input register** and  $y$  **output register**. In this course  $x$  will always be composed of our system of qubits and  $y$  will be ancillary qubits;
3. considering a function  $f(x)$ , acting on  $y$ , we define oracle  $U_f$ , a **black box** operator whose action on  $|y\rangle$  is:



It can be useful to define the phase kickback using the concept of quantum **oracle**.

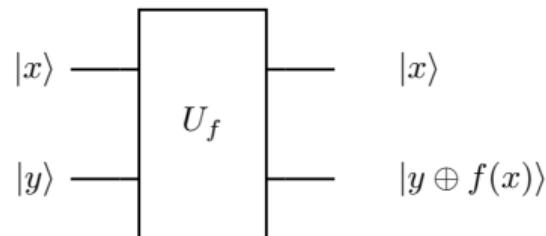
1. Considering a system of qubits of state  $|x\rangle$  and a set of extra qubits of state  $|y\rangle$ ;
2. in reversible computation  $x$  is called **input register** and  $y$  **output register**. In this course  $x$  will always be composed of our system of qubits and  $y$  will be ancillary qubits;
3. considering a function  $f(x)$ , acting on  $y$ , we define oracle  $U_f$ , a **black box** operator whose action on  $|y\rangle$  is:



In the explicit case of the phase kickback, we can use  $U_f$  to write the action:  $U_f |x\rangle |- \rangle = (-1)^x |x\rangle |- \rangle$ .

It can be useful to define the phase kickback using the concept of quantum **oracle**.

1. Considering a system of qubits of state  $|x\rangle$  and a set of extra qubits of state  $|y\rangle$ ;
2. in reversible computation  $x$  is called **input register** and  $y$  **output register**. In this course  $x$  will always be composed of our system of qubits and  $y$  will be ancillary qubits;
3. considering a function  $f(x)$ , acting on  $y$ , we define oracle  $U_f$ , a **black box** operator whose action on  $|y\rangle$  is:



In the explicit case of the phase kickback, we can use  $U_f$  to write the action:  $U_f |x\rangle |-\rangle = (-1)^x |x\rangle |-\rangle$ .

Extending it to a multi-dimensional case, we can write:  $U_f |x\rangle |-\rangle = (-1)^{f(x)} |x\rangle |-\rangle$ , whith  $f(x) \in \{0, 1\}$ .

# Let's code!

