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Repeated Interaction with Ensemble of Ancillas

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We investigate the general open dynamics of a quantum system S undergoing a bombardment of short (unitary) interactions with an environment made of individual ancillas. We show how decoherence emerges from the fully unitary interaction of S with a large set of (in general non-identical) ancillas, and we compute the master equation that governs the dynamics of the system. Our findings may have applications in a range of fields both fundamental and applied: from the Quantum Zeno effect and the very foundations of the measurement problem to the study of decoherence and quantum thermodynamics.

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