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Transient charge and energy flow in the wide-band limit —
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Thanks to recent advances in ultra-fast pump-probe spectroscopies and nano-thermometry it is possible to study charge and energy flow at atomic time and length scales. In order to analyze the transient dynamics of nanoscale devices theoretically, the wide-band limit is a commonly used approximation. Here we investigate the applicability of the wide-band limit to the study of charge and heat transport through nanojunctions exposed to voltage biases and temperature gradients. We find that while this approximation faithfully describes the long-time steady-state charge and heat transport, it fails to characterize the short-time transient behavior of the junction. In particular, we find that the charge current flowing through the device shows a discontinuity when a temperature gradient is applied, while the energy flow is discontinuous when a voltage bias drives the dynamics and even diverges when the junction is exposed to both a temperature gradient and a voltage bias. We discuss this pathological behavior and propose two possible solutions.

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Topic: Focus Session: Frontiers of
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