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1 **Multi-branch Elastic Bound States in the Continuum**

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22 **Abstract**

23 Constructing highly localized wave field by means of bound states in the continuum (BICs) promotes
24 enhanced wave-matter interaction and offers approaches to high-sensitivity devices. Elastic waves can carry
25 complex polarizations and thus differ from electromagnetic waves and other scalar mechanical waves in
26 the formation of BICs, which is yet to be fully explored and exploited. Here, we report the investigation of
27 local resonance modes supported by a Lamb waveguide side-branched with two pairs of resonant pillars
28 and show the emergence of two groups of elastic BICs with different polarizations or symmetries.
29 Particularly, the two groups of BICs exhibit distinct responses to external perturbations, based on which a
30 label-free sensing scheme with enhanced-sensitivity is proposed. Our study reveals the rich properties of
31 BICs arising from the complex wave dynamics in elastic media and demonstrates their unique functionality
32 for sensing and detection.

33 **Introduction**

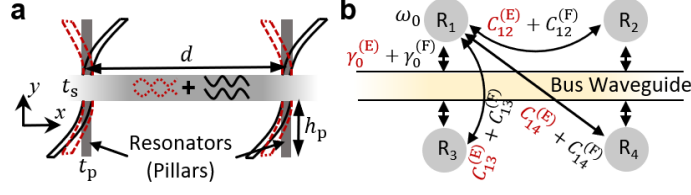
34 Enhancing wave-matter interaction through localized modes[1-3] is essential for achieving improved
35 sensitivity[4-10], nonlinearity[11-13], and emission rate[14], which lays the foundation of many
36 applications requiring high quality (Q) factor including lasers[15-17], biosensors[18, 19], vortex
37 generators[20-22] and other compact devices[23-26]. The localization of waves can be achieved in various
38 ways such as topological states[1, 2, 27, 28], in-gap defect modes[29, 30], Anderson localization[31, 32],
39 nonlinearity[33-35], and acoustic black hole effect[36-38], etc. An alternative way for energy “trapping” or
40 “isolation”, referred to as bound state in the continuum (BIC), rests on the mismatch between a localized
41 state and all nearby extended states, which features complete suppression of radiation in an open
42 environment. BICs have been realized in a wide variety of platforms such as photonic crystal slabs[39-41],

43 coupled cavities[14, 42], and waveguides[14, 43-48].

44 BICs in elastic wave systems distinct themselves from the acoustic and optic analogies by their intrinsic
45 multiple polarizations, which suggest new physics and opportunities not available in other wave
46 systems[49-51]. For example, a recent work utilized the polarization asymmetry between a solid resonator
47 and its radiation channels (non-viscous fluid) to achieve genuine elastic BICs, going beyond the so-called
48 “nonexistence theorem” for BIC construction[52]. Maznev and Every[51] showed the uniqueness of elastic
49 wave systems in terms of supporting non-symmetry-protected BIC without periodicity required in optical
50 cases. In this letter, by investigating the local modes of a Lamb waveguide side-branched with two pairs of
51 resonant pillars, we reveal the polarizations not only play a key role in forming elastic BICs in different
52 branches, but also enable these BICs have distinct responses to various perturbations.

53 **Theoretical Analysis**

54 We consider the elastic wave propagation along a layer side-branched with two pairs of pillars, which
55 forms a pillared elastic waveguide [Fig. 1(a)]. The four identical pillars, acting as four resonators, are
56 coupled via the waveguide hosting Lamb wave modes. d , t_s , t_p and h_p are the spacing between the two
57 columns of pillars, the waveguide thickness, and the thickness and height of the pillars, respectively ($t_s =$
58 1 mm, $t_p = 1$ mm and $h_p = 16$ mm throughout this paper). The reflection symmetry of the pillars
59 about the x axis guarantees the existence of two branches of decoupled local modes, namely, symmetric
60 and anti-symmetric modes [Fig. 1(a)]. For each branch of modes, the pillars are coupled exclusively via the
61 zeroth-order Lamb waves with the same symmetry (viz. the extensional or flexural waves of a beam), which
62 differs from the single-sided pillared waveguide with hybrid polarization[53]. The intrinsic losses caused
63 by material damping and weak vibro-acoustic couplings are neglected if not specified.



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FIG. 1. Lamb waveguide with two pairs of side-branched resonators. (a) Schematic of the pillared elastic waveguide. It supports both extensional (red dashed line) and flexural waves (black solid line). (b) Model representation of the four resonators (R_1, R_2, R_3 and R_4) coupled via the bus waveguide. For simplicity, only the couplings of R_1 with other pillars are plotted.

We use coupled-mode theory (CMT) to describe the open elastic wave system [Fig. 1(b)]. The individual resonance behavior of the four identical pillars is characterized by $\omega' = \omega_0 + i\gamma_0$, in which ω_0 and γ_0 represent the resonance frequency and radiative decay rate, respectively. The coupling between two different pillars R_i and R_j is defined as C_{ij} with $i \neq j$ and $i, j = 1, 2, 3, 4$. The temporal coupled-mode equations are written as $i\partial\mathbf{A}/\partial t = \mathbf{H}\mathbf{A}$ with $\mathbf{A} = [A_1, A_2, A_3, A_4]^T$ representing the amplitude vector. Since the CMT simplifies the pillars as lumped resonators with a specific flexural mode, the vector can be quantified either by the horizontal displacements or rotations of the pillar ends. The non-Hermitian Hamiltonian, \mathbf{H} , takes the form:

$$\mathbf{H} = \begin{pmatrix} \omega' & C_{12} & C_{13} & C_{14} \\ C_{21} & \omega' & C_{23} & C_{24} \\ C_{31} & C_{32} & \omega' & C_{34} \\ C_{41} & C_{42} & C_{43} & \omega' \end{pmatrix} \quad (1)$$

All couplings are reciprocal, namely, $C_{ij} = C_{ji}$. The reflection symmetries of the system about the x and y axes further yield $C_{12} = C_{34}$, $C_{14} = C_{23}$, and $C_{13} = C_{24}$. Considering the Lamb modes supported by the waveguide, the radiation and coupling can be expressed as the sum of the extensional and flexural components, $\gamma_0 = \gamma_0^{(E)} + \gamma_0^{(F)}$ and $C_{ij} = C_{ij}^{(E)} + C_{ij}^{(F)}$, where the superscript ‘‘E’’ or ‘‘F’’ represents

83 extensional or flexural waves. Moreover, the decoupled nature of the extensional and flexural modes
 84 implies that $\gamma_0^{(F)} = 0$ ($\gamma_0^{(E)} = 0$) and $C_{ij}^{(F)} = 0$ ($C_{ij}^{(E)} = 0$) for the symmetric (anti-symmetric) local
 85 modes[53]. The four eigenvalues of \mathbf{H} are obtained and classified into two branches according to their
 86 symmetries of eigenvectors about the x axis as given in Table 1.

87 Table. 1. Eigenvalues and eigenvectors of the Hamiltonian

Branch	Eigenvalue	Eigenvector
Symmetric	$\omega_0 + \left(i\gamma_0^{(E)} + C_{13}^{(E)} \right) \pm \left(C_{12}^{(E)} + C_{14}^{(E)} \right)$	$[\pm 1, 1, \pm 1, 1]$
Anti-symmetric	$\omega_0 + \left(i\gamma_0^{(F)} - C_{13}^{(F)} \right) \pm \left(C_{12}^{(F)} - C_{14}^{(F)} \right)$	$[\mp 1, -1, \pm 1, 1]$

88 For the symmetric branch, each pair of pillars at the same site oscillates in-phase and radiates as a
 89 monopole [Fig. 1(a)]. These two monopoles are coupled solely with extensional wave. The far-field
 90 coupling between the resonators is expressed as the radiative decay rate multiplied by a propagation phase
 91 delay $C_{ij}^{(E)} = \gamma_0^{(E)} e^{-ik^{(E)}d}$, in which $k^{(E)}$ denotes the extensional wavenumber[53]. The two eigenvalues
 92 of the symmetric (denoted by superscript ‘‘S’’) branch can thus be obtained as

$$93 \quad \omega_{\pm}^{(S)} = \omega_0 + i2\gamma_0^{(E)}(1 \pm e^{-ik^{(E)}d}) \quad (2)$$

94 Remarkably, BIC occurs for vanishing imaginary part of $\omega_{\pm}^{(S)}$, which corresponds to the condition $k^{(E)}d =$
 95 $n\pi$, ($n \in \mathbf{Z}$). This is similar to the two-resonator acoustic system[3, 44]. The BIC is a Friedrich-Wintgen
 96 (FW) BIC for $n = 0$ (i.e., d approaches zero) and a Fabry-Perot (FP) BIC[3] for $n \neq 0$.

97 The anti-symmetric case is in stark contrast to the symmetric case as a result of the out-of-phase motion
 98 of the two pillars at the same site. Each pair of pillars radiate as a dipole and are coupled to the waveguide
 99 through flexural wave [Fig. 1(a)]. The far-field couplings between the two individual pillars are expressed
 00 as $-i\gamma_0^{(F)} e^{-i(k^{(F)}d - \pi/2)}$, which contains a $\pi/2$ initial phase in addition to the propagation phase delay
 01 $k^{(F)}d$. Additionally, considering the always out-of-phase oscillation of the pillars on different sides of

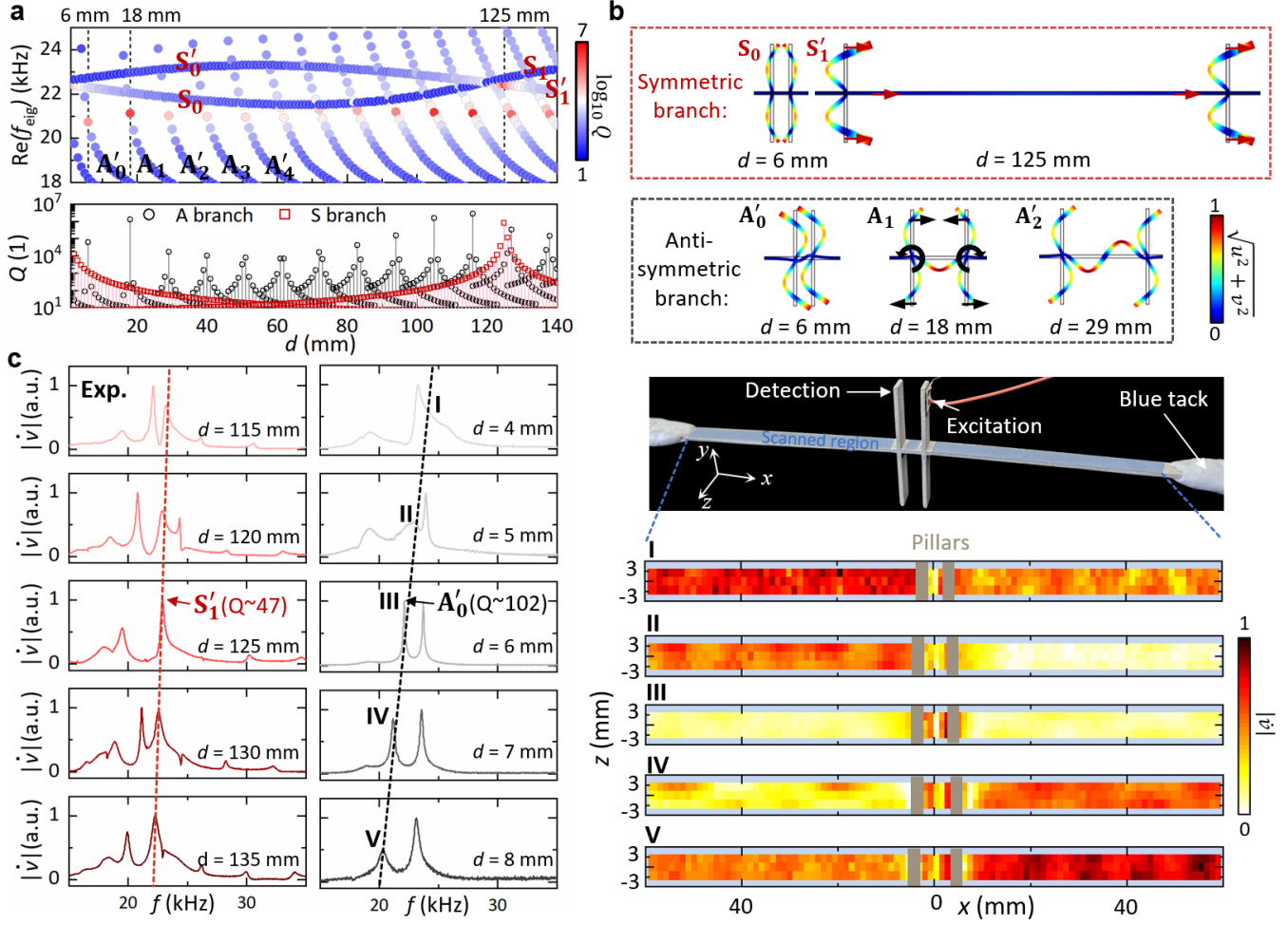
02 waveguide for flexural-wave coupling, i.e., R_1 and R_3 as well as R_1 and R_4 , an additional phase, $e^{i\pi}$, should
 03 be introduced when expressing their far-field couplings with radiative decay rate. Overall, the couplings
 04 are expressed as $C_{13}^{(F)} = i\gamma_0^{(F)} e^{i\pi}$, $C_{12}^{(F)} = i\gamma_0^{(F)} e^{-i(k^{(F)}d - \pi/2)}$, and $C_{14}^{(F)} = i\gamma_0^{(F)} e^{i\pi} e^{-i(k^{(F)}d - \pi/2)}$. The
 05 eigenvalues for the anti-symmetric (denoted by superscript ‘‘A’’) case are

$$06 \quad \omega_{\pm}^{(A)} = \omega'_0 + i2\gamma_0^{(F)} (1 \pm e^{-i(k^{(F)}d - \frac{\pi}{2})}) \quad (3)$$

07 Note that compared with the symmetric case (Eq. (2)), Eq. (3) has an additional $\pi/2$ phase difference. The
 08 forming condition of anti-symmetric BICs is given by vanishing $\text{Im}(\omega_{\pm}^{(A)})$ as $k^{(F)}d = n\pi + \pi/2$, ($n \in$
 09 \mathbf{Z}).

10 **BICs and quasi-BICs in the pillared Lamb waveguide**

11 To test the above analysis, we conduct 2D simulations under plane strain assumption using both the
 12 eigenvalue and frequency domain solvers of Solid Mechanics Module, COMSOL Multiphysics (v5.6).
 13 Perfectly matched layers are applied to the two ends of the waveguide to mimic outgoing boundary
 14 conditions (BCs)[63]. The base material is Aluminum with its density, Young’s modulus, and Poisson ratio
 15 being 2700 kg/m^3 , 76.27 GPa , and 0.32 , respectively. As predicted by CMT, the simulated
 16 eigenfrequencies show there exist two branches of local resonant modes, the anti-symmetric and symmetric
 17 branches denoted as A_e and S_e , ($e \in \mathbb{N}$), respectively, in which the subscript e represents the vibrational
 18 order of the region between pillars and a prime is used to distinguish if the mode shape is antisymmetric or
 19 symmetric along waveguide [Figs. 2(a)-(b)]. These modes display vanishing imaginary part ($Q =$
 20 $\text{Re}(\omega)/(2\text{Im}(\omega)) \rightarrow \infty$) for specific values of d , which are recognized as BICs[44]. A slight parameter
 21 detuning generally results in leaky modes with non-zero yet extremely small radiative loss, which are
 22 termed quasi-BICs[13, 64, 65].



23

24 FIG. 2. BICs and quasi-BICs in pillared elastic waveguide. (a) Resonance frequencies (the real part of
 25 eigenfrequency, $\text{Re}(f_{\text{eig}})$) and Q factors of the anti-symmetric and symmetric branches of eigenmodes as
 26 a function of d . The color scale represents the amplitude of Q in decibel (dB). (b) Mode shapes of the
 27 corresponding BICs and quasi-BICs. u and v are horizontal (x) and vertical (y) displacement
 28 components. (c) Measured frequency response and field distributions for the local modes in branch A'_0 and
 29 S'_1 . Left panel: frequency response functions (FRFs) of vertical velocity component $|\dot{v}|$. The dot lines trace
 30 the peaks of S'_1 and A'_0 . Upper right panel: photo of the sample and experimental setup. Lower right panel:
 31 field distributions of $|\dot{v}|$ at the peaks I-V marked in the left panel (see animations of fields in [53]).

32 For the symmetric branch, BICs appear when d is an integer multiple of the half wavelength (125
 33 mm) [Fig. 2(b)]. These BICs are formed through extensional-wave coupling among the pillars and do not

34 involve any flexural-wave coupling, similar to that in an acoustic two-resonator system[3, 44]. Regarding
35 the anti-symmetric case, multiple local modes can be observed in Fig. 2(a) owing to the much shorter
36 wavelength of flexural waves than extensional waves. Each of them can evolve into a BIC at a particular
37 spacing, e.g., A'_0 at $d = 6$ mm, A_1 at $d = 18$ mm and A'_2 at $d = 29$ mm [Fig. 2(b)], overall
38 consistent with the condition of BICs derived by Eq. (3). The couplings between the pillars and waveguides
39 can strongly alter the resonance frequencies as d varies, which leads to the transition of anti-symmetric
40 local modes from those formed by lower-order pillar mode to those formed by higher-order pillar mode[53].
41 Apart from the above eigenmode analysis, the multi-branch BICs can be characterized from a scattering
42 point of view[53].

43 Based on the simulation results, we 3D-print two groups of Aluminum pillared waveguide samples and
44 perform experimental measurements of their frequency responses using a Doppler laser-vibrometer [53]
45 [upper right panel of Fig. 2(c)] to characterize the BICs by examining the evolution of Q factors with varied
46 d (five samples for the symmetric branch S'_1 with $d = 115, 120, 125, 130, 135$ mm; five samples for
47 the anti-symmetric branch A'_0 with $d = 4, 5, 6, 7, 8$ mm). The sample ends are covered with damping
48 materials (blue tacks, ldj-01, bostik) to minimize boundary reflections. The excitation source is a piezo
49 patch (PZT-5H) polarized along its thickness direction. All samples are designed to be 5-mm-wide in z
50 direction, which is the same as the size of the piezo patch to ensure the consistency in excitations and avoid
51 the appearance of higher-order guided modes[53].

52 As expected, the Q factors approach their maxima at critical spacings in both S'_1 and A'_0 branches,
53 i.e. $Q = 47$ at $d = 125$ mm and $Q = 102$ at $d = 6$ mm, suggesting the vicinities of a symmetric and
54 an anti-symmetric BICs, respectively. The Q factors decrease as d deviates from the critical spacings, as

55 reflected in the broader and lower spectral peaks for S'_1 and A'_0 . The peak even disappears when $d =$
56 4 mm. Moreover, the scanned field distributions of the vertical velocity component ($|\dot{v}|$) for A'_0 around
57 the spectral peaks [lower right panel of Fig. 2(c)] display trapped flexural wave field within two pairs of
58 pillars when $d = 6$ mm and become leaky once d deviates from 6 mm, further confirming the existence
59 of anti-symmetric BIC in A'_0 . The experimental results are overall consistent with the simulation results[53].

60 **Sensitivity analysis to perturbations**

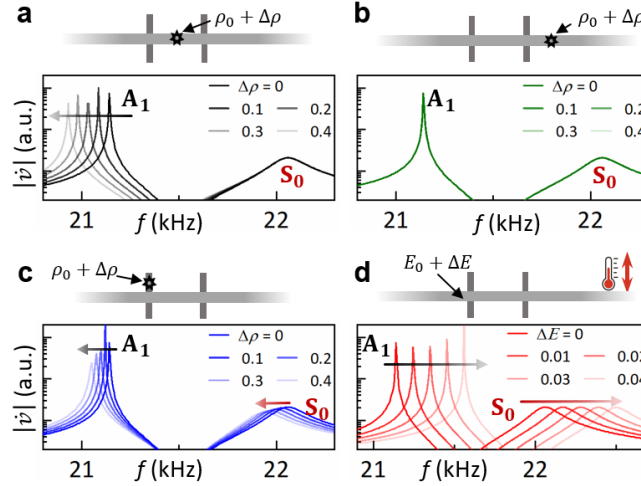
61 Dynamic-based approaches, which recognize material, structural, or environmental perturbation by
62 examining the changes in mode parameters such as mode shift, splitting, and broadening, have been used
63 in techniques ranging from optical microcavity sensing[16, 66] to non-destructive testing [68-70]. Below,
64 we reveal the unique spectral responses of the multi-branch BICs to different types of perturbations. We
65 focus on the parameter case of $d = 18$ mm where there are a BIC (21141 Hz) in A_1 and a quasi-BIC
66 ($22055 + 82i$ Hz) in S_0 . Four types of perturbation are considered [Fig. 3]. The environmental
67 perturbation refers to the fluctuation of surrounding temperature or hydrostatic pressure.

68 Since the flexural wave is fully trapped within the in-between region, the BIC in A_1 is rather sensitive
69 to the inner beam perturbation in terms of mode shift [Fig. 3(a)] induced by varied effective mode mass.
70 Such fully-trapped property in turn results in the immunity of this BIC to the perturbation in the outer
71 regions [Fig. 3(b)]. The BIC no longer exists if the perturbation is exerted at pillar due to the detuned
72 resonance and broken symmetry [Fig. 3(c)].

73 The quasi-BIC in S_0 , however, is almost immune to the perturbation in the entire waveguide [Figs.
74 3(a)-3(b)], due to the much larger extensional wavelength than perturbation size and the extremely weak
75 in-plane motion interacting with pillars[53]. Besides, we note that the perturbation exerted at pillars also

76 leads to perceivable mode shifts, though not as obvious as the anti-symmetric BIC [Fig. 3(c)].

77 The two states react in similar manners to the environmental perturbation as evidenced by the
 78 simultaneous mode shifts [Fig. 3(d)]. They are still a BIC and a quasi-BIC since the forming conditions can
 79 always be met for global parameter variations.



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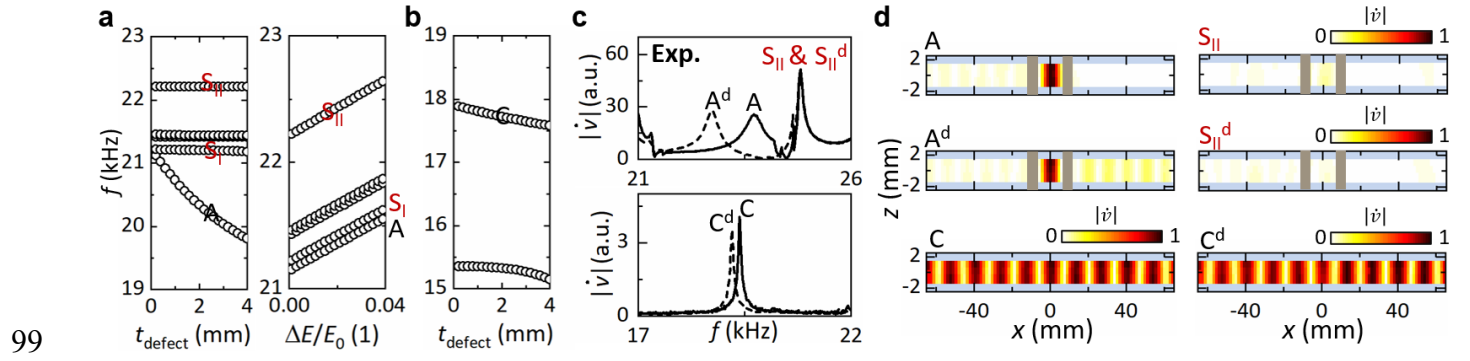
81 FIG. 3. Variations of the anti-symmetric BIC in A_1 and symmetric quasi-BIC in S_0 branch against
 82 different types of perturbation: (a) in-between region, (b) outer region, (c) pillars, and (d) environment. In
 83 (a-c), the defect is mimicked by a $1 \text{ mm} \times 1 \text{ mm}$ inclusion with density being $\rho_0 + \Delta\rho$ and $\Delta\rho/\rho_0 \in$
 84 $\{0, 0.1, 0.2, 0.3, 0.4\}$ at particular locations. In (d), the environmental perturbation is introduced by varying
 85 the Young's modulus of the entire structure as $E_0 + \Delta E$ with $\Delta E/E_0 \in \{0, 0.01, 0.02, 0.03, 0.04\}$ [53].

86

87 The ideal “radiation continuum” guaranteed by outgoing BCs, however, are inaccessible in practical
 88 sensing application. Instead, we are commonly faced with finite structures. In this case, the BICs degenerate
 89 into the corresponding localized modes of a finite structure[53], which can no longer be termed BICs but
 90 inherit their properties. To demonstrate this, we replace the above outgoing BCs with fixed-free ends, in
 91 which the length of beam is 160 mm. The BIC in A_1 , quasi-BIC in S_0 , and leaky mode in S'_0 , which exist

92 in the infinite pillared waveguide [Fig. 2(a)], now respectively become Modes A, S_I , and S_{II} of the finite
 93 beam.

94 In the simulated eigenfrequencies [Fig. 4(a)], Mode A shows large frequency shift to the in-between
 95 defect as a result of strong wave-defect interaction of BIC, suggesting its high sensitivity. As a reference,
 96 Mode C, the 14th flexural mode of the cantilever with the same dimensions but no pillars, is much less
 97 sensitive [Fig. 4(b)]. Modes S_I and S_{II} are immune to the defect yet shift in the same manner as Mode A
 98 under the environmental perturbation, as the quasi-BIC in S_0 behaves.



108
 109 The diverse sensitivities of the local modes are confirmed experimentally, as evidenced by the

10 measured 651-Hz-shift of Mode A, unshifted Mode S_{II} and 89-Hz-shift of Mode C in Fig. 4(c), in which
11 the defect is mimicked by gluing an 1 mm*1 mm* 10 mm block on the sample [53]. The measured fields
12 [Fig. 4(f)] further validate the properties of these local modes and their distinct responses to the defect, in
13 stark contrast to Modes C and C^d that appear as standing waves without any localization [see the comparison
14 with simulation in [53]].

15 **Discussions**

16 The above unique responses of the local modes degenerated from the elastic multi-branch BICs provide
17 rich information about the local and global variations occurred in the waveguide, which may inspire novel
18 schemes for detection or sensing. For example, based on the diverse sensitivities of Mode A and Mode S_{II}
19 to the inner beam perturbation in combination with their uniform responses to environmental perturbation,
20 the difference in their resonance frequencies can be defined as a new indicator to monitor material or
21 structural change[53]. It enables us to easily eliminate unwanted environmental influences (temperature,
22 pre-stress, etc.) from the overall mode shifts, contributing to label-free high-performance sensing scheme
23 to cope with varied working conditions.

24 **Conclusions**

25 To conclude, we have theoretically and experimentally demonstrated the formation of BICs with
26 different polarizations in a pillared Lamb waveguide. The symmetric configuration and multi-polarized
27 coupling lead to the decoupled symmetric and anti-symmetric branches of local modes, which can evolve
28 into BICs under certain conditions, depending on the monopolar or dipolar oscillation of the pairs of pillar
29 resonators at the same site. These states display striking contrast in response to the in-between perturbation
30 but vary similarly under environmental perturbation, which suggests a novel BIC-based sensing scheme.

31 Our work reveals the rich polarization of BICs carried by elastic wave as well as their promising
32 applications in areas of non-destructive testing and acoustic sensing.

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39

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