

# Progress and Perspectives on Phononic Crystals

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Phononic crystals (PnCs) control the transport of sound and heat similarly to the control of electric currents by semiconductors and metals or light by photonic crystals. Basic and applied research on PnCs spans the entire phononic spectrum, from seismic waves and audible sound to gigahertz phononics for telecommunications and thermal transport in the terahertz range. Here, we review the progress and applications of PnCs across their spectrum, and we offer some perspectives in view of the growing demand for vibrational isolation, fast signal processing, and miniaturization of devices. Current research on macroscopic low-frequency PnCs offers complete solutions from design and optimization to construction and characterization of, e.g., sound insulators, seismic shields and ultrasonic imaging devices. Hypersonic PnCs made of novel low-dimensional nanomaterials can be used to develop smaller microelectromechanical systems and faster wireless networks.

## I. INTRODUCTION

In 1932, Frenkel<sup>1</sup> used the term phonon to describe a quantum of the acoustic field, a new hypothetical particle introduced two years earlier by Tamm.<sup>2</sup> The word phonon originates in Greek  $\varphi\omega\nu\eta$  (phonē, meaning voice) and it is an analogy to a photon being the quantum of the electromagnetic field. Needless to say that the importance of phonons in fundamental and applied research goes far beyond the common understanding of sound. The full phononic spectrum spans a broad, mostly inaudible, range of frequencies from a few millihertz up to dozens of terahertz. In general, the phononic spectrum (Fig. 1) consists of infrasounds (<few Hz), audible sound (from few Hz to 20 kHz), ultrasounds (from 20 kHz to 1 GHz), hypersounds (from 1 GHz to 1 THz) and heat ( $\approx$  1 THz at room temperature). For all these bands, acoustic waves/phonons are information and energy carriers that play an inherent role in condensed matter physics. The properties of the hosting medium dictate two fundamental features of phonons, i.e., their dispersion relation (spectral and spatial) and mean free path (lifetime, attenuation).<sup>3,4</sup> For bulk, homogeneous solids, one can distinguish three orthogonal modes (polarizations) of acoustic phonons: one (fast) longitudinal and two (slow) transverse phonons. At wavelengths much longer than the interatomic distances, all three modes are non-dispersive (phase and group velocities are independent of the momentum), typically up to hundreds of GHz. Hence, classical elastodynamics is sufficient to determine the phonon velocities.<sup>5</sup>

To alter the phonon propagation, one can employ spatial confinement and modulation of the material. The former approach turns bulk acoustic waves (BAWs) into surface acoustic waves (SAWs) propagating in close vicinity of free surfaces (Rayleigh, Sezawa, and Love waves) or Lamb waves in free-standing slabs and membranes.<sup>6</sup> The second strategy was successfully realized in Phononic Crystals (PnCs), i.e., synthetic materials with periodic modulation of elastic properties utilizing the wave-like nature of phonons. The structure of PnCs mimics the arrangement of atoms in natural crystals

and results in phononic features typical for thereof. These are: the appearance of the second-order Brillouin zones, modification of the phonon dispersion, zone folding, and band gaps due to Bragg reflections. In addition to Bragg gaps (BG), the so-called hybridization gaps (HG) can appear when the periodic scatterers are made of mechanical resonators such as pillars, spheres, or stripes. The avoided crossing of the localized modes and propagating waves leads to sub- or super-wavelength stop bands robust to the PnC lattice imperfections.<sup>7-12</sup>

The first theoretical proposals for 2D acoustic band gap materials were published almost simultaneously by Sigalas and Economu,<sup>13</sup> and Kushwaha et al.<sup>14</sup> Notably, one has to give credit to much earlier works from the 70s and 80s on the propagation of SAWs in periodically corrugated surfaces, being in fact 1D PnCs.<sup>15-17</sup> The last three decades have faced a flourishing of theoretical and experimental research on PnCs in the full phononic spectrum. Quite often, these studies were inspired by the achievements of the more mature fields of photonics and electronics. Nevertheless, the field of PnCs has introduced its original concepts employing the nature of phonons, their coupling with other elementary excitations, and their inseparable connection with the condensed matter.<sup>7-12,18</sup>

This paper presents an experimentalists' point of view on the recent progress and prospects of PnCs. We present an overview of the advances in fabrication, experimental characterization, and new features for the broad spectrum of acoustic waves/phonons. The paper is organized as follows: First, we consider macroscopic PnCs aiming at manipulation of sub-GHz waves (infrasound, sound, and ultrasound). Second, we focus on PnCs of a sub-micrometer feature size operating at GHz frequencies (hypersound). Third, we consider THz photon – GHz phonon coupling, both at sub-micrometer wavelengths, in periodic phononic-photonic crystals (phoxonic, optomechanical crystals). Fourth, we discuss the role of THz phonons as the heat carrier in periodically modulated structures. Finally, we cover recent advances and prospects of topological phononics in a broad spectrum of frequencies.

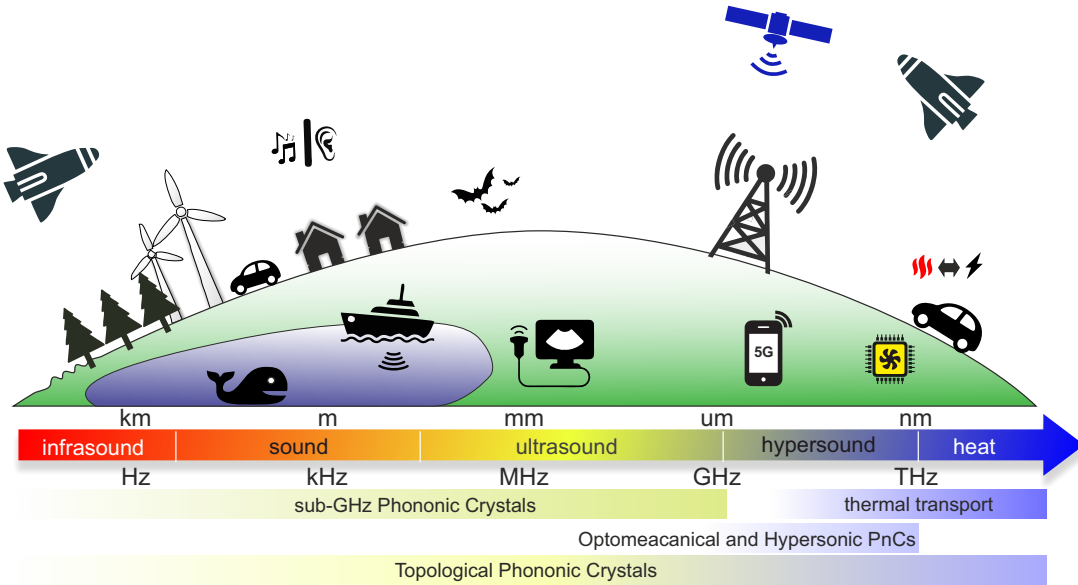


FIG. 1. The phononic spectrum - some natural and human-made sources of acoustic waves/phonons relevant for the considered applications of phononic crystals.

## II. SUB-GIGAHERTZ PHONONIC CRYSTALS

Since the earlier works on sonic band gap crystals,<sup>19,20</sup> research on PnCs and acoustic metamaterials (AMMs) in the sub-GHz frequency spectrum is an active domain with promising applications. First, the technological advances in additive manufacturing (3D printing) offered a great solution to transfer many intricate theoretical designs into laboratory-scale structures. The challenges of practical applications can be resolved with auxetic metamaterials, acoustic meta-surfaces, tunable and multifunctional AMMs. In particular, widening the locally resonant band gaps of periodic structures can improve the performance of seismic shields, ultrasonic waveguides and other phononic devices. Sub-GHz phononics need a heterogeneous community to bring together the concepts of several scientific disciplines: device physics, geology, mathematics, civil engineering, electronics and telecommunications, to name a few. Here, we address the possible directions of phononic materials research for manipulating seismic waves, sound, and ultrasonic waves with the feature size ranging from a few meters to micrometer scale, respectively. Theoretical PnC designs are out of the scope of this perspective, and a detailed review on PnCs and AMMs can be found in other articles.<sup>4,21–26</sup>

The practical size limitation of PnCs is enough to motivate locally resonant structures for ultra-low frequency applications. However, functional sub-wavelength scale PnCs need improvement regarding compactness, weight and cost effectiveness. For example, a metabarrier consisting of few-meter-sized resonant structures (cylindrical mass in concrete slabs)<sup>27</sup> can convert the seismic Rayleigh surface waves (RSWs) to shear BAWs that attenuate on the soil surface. Such locally resonant structures are widely used as seismic

shields/insulators<sup>27–29</sup> in the configurations like inclusions in the soil<sup>28,30</sup> or buried mass resonators.<sup>31,32</sup> Interestingly, AMMs are not strictly artificial. A forest of trees can act as natural PnC<sup>33–35</sup> [Fig. 2 (a)] and offers large attenuation of seismic RSWs and shear waves (S-waves) in the broad frequency range below 150 Hz [Fig. 2 (b)]. Graded vertical pillars arranged on an elastic substrate can block RSWs by reflecting them (classical wedge showing rainbow effect) or by converting them to BAWs (inverse wedge).<sup>36</sup> These experiments have to be realized in the geological scale and they involve designing tree wedges with height varying profiles and artificial vertical pillars for seismic protection. However, the potential of each design depends on the geometry of the structure and the viscoelastic properties of the soil.<sup>31</sup>

While numerous theoretical models<sup>21,31,46–48</sup> of phononic structures in various geometries and dimensions are available, the experimental realization is still challenging. Fabrication methods experience several limitations in terms of low-cost raw material choice, minimum feature size, aspect ratios, or support requirements.<sup>49</sup> Additive manufacturing technologies, including stereolithography, material jet printing, fused deposition modeling, microlaser sintering/melting make the design of 3D sonic PnCs much more feasible in the millimeter scale.<sup>49–52</sup> Rainbow metamaterials are one of the best examples of structures with broad and robust sonic band gaps.<sup>53</sup> Such systems with lightweight structures were first observed in the context of optical waves,<sup>54</sup> and were further expanded to realize their acoustic analogs. Chen et al.<sup>55</sup> have designed a gradient metamaterial beam for the enhancement of flexural waves. Disorder induced bandgap tuning has been studied using a 3D printed cantilever-in-mass design showing the wave trapping effect.<sup>51</sup> This study revealed that mistuning in the design of the metamaterial can destroy its band gaps. In some

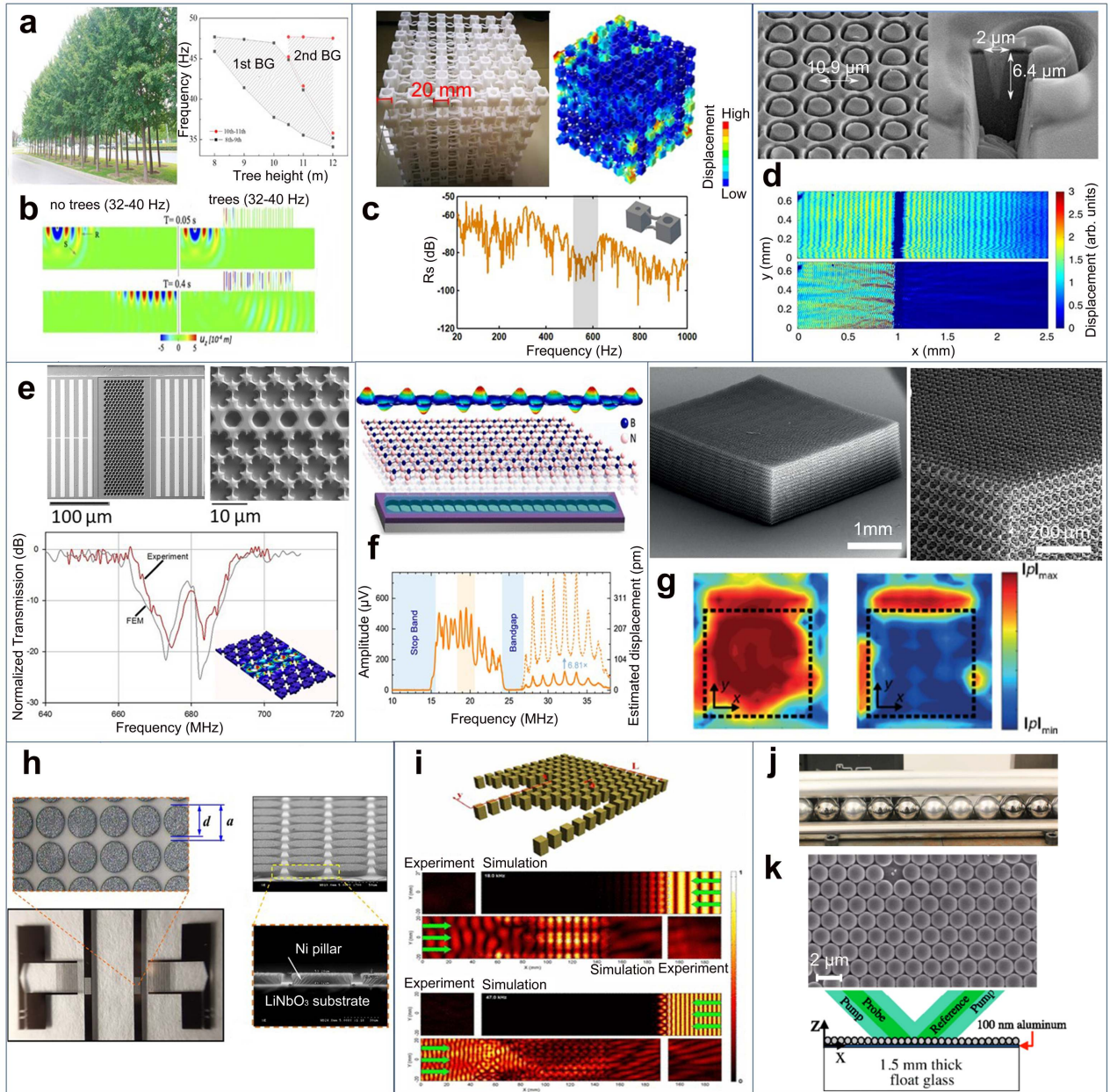


FIG. 2. Sub-GHz phononic materials: (a) natural PnC made of trees<sup>35</sup> and (b) filtering of seismic Rayleigh and S-waves.<sup>33</sup> (c) 3D sonic rainbow metamaterial<sup>37</sup> and (d) annular hole PnC.<sup>38</sup> Waveguides made of (e) SiC – air PnC in a hexagonal lattice,<sup>39</sup> (f) h-BN coupled resonator arrays,<sup>40</sup> (g) microlattice for ultrasonic transmission.<sup>41</sup> Pillar PnC arrays for (h) acoustofluidics<sup>42</sup> and (i) acoustic diode.<sup>43</sup> Tunable granular crystals: (j) macroscopic bead array of steel-aluminum spheres of millimeter size,<sup>44</sup> (k) self-assembled 2D layer of polystyrene particles of 1  $\mu\text{m}$  diameter and the schematic of the pump-probe experimental setup to probe the interactions between spherical particles contact resonances and propagating SAWs.<sup>45</sup> The (a-k) are reproduced with permissions from<sup>33,35,37–45</sup> with copyrights obtained from 2019 Elsevier Ltd./iswcr, 2016 Springer Nature, 2020 Springer Nature, 2017 Springer Nature, 2018 AIP Publishing, 2019 American Chemical Society, 2016 American Physical Society, 2019 Elsevier Ltd., 2011 American Physical Society, 2019 IOP Publishing, 2017 American Physical Society, respectively.

cases, irregularities in the design of PnCs can lead to wider band gaps. For sonic rainbow PnCs [Fig. 2 (c)], a nearly periodic system of cuboids connected by curved beams, shows an attenuation bandwidth twice that of the periodic design of equal mass.<sup>56</sup> Although 3D printing methods have revolutionized microscale structures with complex geometries, a

large scale production strategy at low cost is still under development. 4D printing methods is the next game-changer, which may accelerate the scaling-up procedure from laboratory prototypes to large-scale devices.<sup>57</sup> In addition, artificial intelligence (AI) based techniques, like topological optimization and machine learning, may lead to improved design

methodologies.<sup>58–60</sup>

Recently, soft AMMs were introduced to manipulate ultrasonic waves for applications like sub-wavelength imaging, acoustic lenses, and transformation acoustics.<sup>61,62</sup> The design is based on sub-wavelength resonators suspended in an acoustic fluid. Such “soft-gel nature” offers a feasible step towards tunable and responsive AMMs that allows molding the metamaterial in the desired shape, size, and dimensions. 3D ultrasonic metafluid with macroporous microbeads fabricated by soft matter techniques exhibited double negative acoustic impedances. The silicon rubber beads of mean radius 160  $\mu\text{m}$  suspended in the water-based gel matrix act as Mie resonators showing strong monopolar and dipolar resonances. This approach can be exploited on a large scale to produce zero or negative index materials for acoustic imaging applications.<sup>22,24,63,64</sup>

Hierarchical architectures have been used to improve structural integrity and to minimize the amount of material. Several works have explored how the unit cell geometries, lattice material, and dimensions, can tailor the phononic properties.<sup>65–67</sup> A 3D microlattice [Fig. 2 (g)] made by 2-photon lithography can exploit the ultrasonic wave propagation in water by elastoacoustic hybridization. The lattice design with truss-like elements (lattice constant about 70  $\mu\text{m}$ ) allows tailoring the HG that effectively attenuates the acoustic waves due to fluid interaction. A very high transmission ( $> 80\%$ ) in the high frequency ultrasonic range (nearly 30 MHz) is observed outside this band gap due to the impedance matching with that of water. This can be further used in biomedical imaging, where smaller penetration depth and higher resolution are important.<sup>41</sup> These microlattices are scalable and can find use as resonators, acoustic insulators, and ultrasonic transducers.<sup>68</sup>

Micro-electro-mechanical systems (MEMS) harnessing RF SAWs are important for signal processing and telecommunications.<sup>73</sup> A standard design of SAW devices is a periodic array of etched holes.<sup>74</sup> However, the band gaps of such systems lie in the frequency range of leaky SAWs. In that sense, locally resonant (LR) structures in composite pillar arrays were used to open low-frequency LR band gaps for SAW propagation.<sup>75</sup> A finite depth annular hole PnC<sup>38</sup> [Fig. 2 (c)] analogous to the pillared architecture revealed potentially improved LR band gaps. The uniform array of holes were fabricated in a lithium niobate ( $\text{LiNbO}_3$ ) delay line using focused ion beam (FIB) etching. Moreover, the SAW attenuation has additional geometric freedom compared to the cylindrical pillar designs allowing tailorable SAW dispersions. This design can be exploited where strong acoustic confinement and miniaturization are indispensable. For example, a pillar PnC device [Fig. 2 (h)] made of nickel pillars electroplated on  $\text{LiNbO}_3$  substrate achieved perfect scattering of standing SAWs (nearly 30 MHz). This generated strong acoustic radiation force and was exploited for concentrating and separating polystyrene microparticles.<sup>42</sup> The annular hole PnC design can be exploited in SAW devices for microfluidics<sup>76–78</sup> and further extended to different particle-size combinations and biomolecules.

The introduction of defect modes in a periodic crystal can

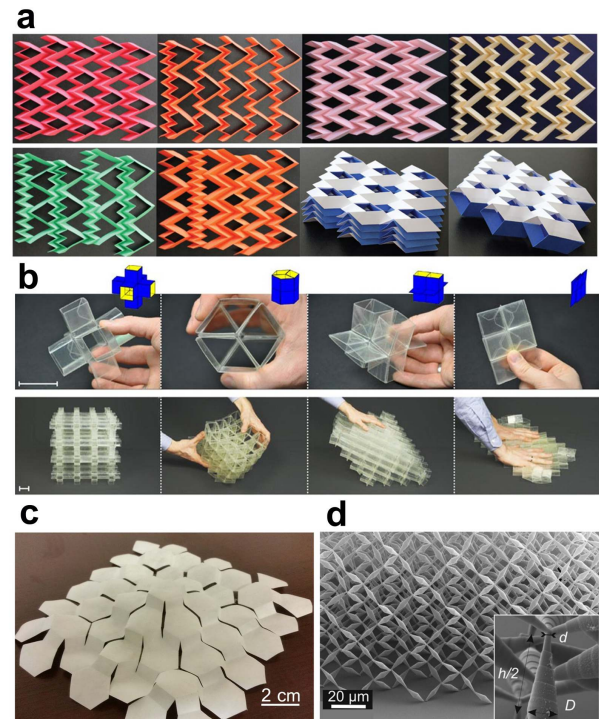


FIG. 3. Reconfigurable metamaterials: Origami inspired metamaterial designs. (a) Unit cells with holes arranged in layers<sup>69</sup>, (b) mechanical MMs with cubic microstructures<sup>70</sup>, (c) combining cut fold structures in 2D sheets<sup>71</sup> and (d) pentamode metamaterial<sup>72</sup> design by 3D DLW optical lithography. Figures (a-d) reproduced with permissions from<sup>69–72</sup> and copyrights requested from 2015 AAAS Publishing, 2016 Springer Nature, 2015 PNAS, 2012 AIP Publishing, respectively.

trap the acoustic energy. For example, inserting space gaps in a square array of cylindrical pillars improves the performance of demultiplexing and wave filtering.<sup>79</sup> A 2D SiC-air PnC with circular inclusions produced waveguiding at 680 MHz allowing 39% transmission of the acoustic energy [Fig. 2 (e)].<sup>39</sup> Comparison of 90° bend and straight waveguides showed that curved paths produce additional losses.<sup>80</sup> A coupled-resonator array [Fig. 2 (f)] using hexagonal boron nitride PnC (fabricated by the integrative approach of dry exfoliation after FIB etching and patterning) supported the MHz wave propagation over an effective distance of 1.2 mm.<sup>40</sup> The piezoelectric properties of this crystal, and van der Waals layered materials, can be explored further to generate tunable devices for RF applications. Recently a virtual soft boundary based AMM design with resonant tube arrays allowed frequency separation keeping the flow of the medium unaffected.<sup>81</sup> This method can be further explored to design complex functional waveguides and is also viable for microfluidic applications in the future. Waveguides suffer signal losses; future phononic devices have a significant role in achieving better confinement.

Granular crystals, ordered macroscopic beads [Fig. 2 (j)] interacting via adhesion forces exhibited interesting wave propagation characteristics.<sup>82,83</sup> From the experimental veri-

fication of “sonic vacuum”<sup>45,84</sup> these crystals demonstrated non-linear waves (solitons) with strong localization, discrete breathers,<sup>85</sup> rotational elastic wave propagation,<sup>86</sup> and several engineering applications as tunable wave filters, acoustic lenses, switches, and rectifiers.<sup>87,88</sup> The flexibility in terms of size, shape, stiffness, and spatial orientation of solid particles in the lattice makes them easily tailorable for acoustic phenomena. In addition, tunability in terms of precompression transformed the wave propagation from a highly non-linear regime (with no compression) to a nearly linear regime (with precompression).

Self-assembling has enabled scaling down granular crystals to micron feature size large area/volume structures. In such systems (example in [Fig. 2 (k)]), laser pump-probe experiments (transient grating technique) revealed a critical role of inter-particle and particle-substrate bonding due to adhesion in forming acoustic band gaps for SAWs and Lamb waves.<sup>89,90</sup> Notably, even disordered 2D granular crystals could effectively attenuate SAWs near their resonant frequency, serving as a perfect metamaterial for wave attenuation and filtering.<sup>91</sup> Compared with commonly used pillar resonant structures, microgranular crystals are weakly adhered to the substrate. In perspective, the resonant frequency can be tailored by the inter-particle and particle-substrate contacts via temperature or hydrostatic pressure treatments below the glass transition temperature.<sup>92,93</sup> A complex contact dynamics of SAW attenuation was explained by Hiraiwa for tailored microspheres using scanned laser ultrasonics.<sup>94</sup> The interparticle stiffness was modified via the deposition of a thin aluminum film over the monolayer, ultimately exhibiting horizontal-rotational contact resonances in addition to vertical resonances. This improved the attenuation regime opening additional band gap at the lower resonances. Recently, splitting of the spheroidal contact resonance resulting from the symmetry breaking of the substrate was explained.<sup>45</sup> These studies can lead to engineering of SAWs devices such as filters, sensors and waveguides. In addition, advances in self-assembly enable scaling down to nanosphere dimensions, opening a broad horizon to manipulate wave propagation in the hypersonic regime (see section 3).

An important aspect of phononic materials, which broadens their potential applications, is tunability. Some examples are self-modulated metamaterials,<sup>95–97</sup> Helmholtz resonators,<sup>98</sup> membranes,<sup>99,100</sup> fluid-filled hollow pillars (whispering gallery modes),<sup>101</sup> split ring resonators,<sup>102</sup> piezoelectric materials,<sup>103,104</sup> decorated membrane resonators (DMRs),<sup>105</sup> and electromagnetic field controls.<sup>106,107</sup> Some studies have also focused on flexible origami and kirigami-inspired – cut and folded metamaterials<sup>70</sup> [Fig. 3 (a-c)]. A waveguide<sup>108</sup> designed for audible frequency proposed a broad working band and switchable sound propagation. Pentamode metamaterials [Fig. 3 (d)] having their rigidity maintained about the point contacts of elongated unit cells show that their bulk and shear nature is essentially decoupled.<sup>72,109</sup> Several of such designs can be proposed by virtue of their richness in deformation modes. We also envision that bio-inspired and natural PnCs and AMMs will become a more intensive field of study.<sup>110–112</sup> Overall, the future of sub-GHz phononics is

vested in active and reconfigurable structures.

### III. HYPERSONIC PHONONIC CRYSTALS

The frequency of one gigahertz is the conventional boundary between ultrasounds and hypersounds that can also be assumed in the description of PnCs. Due to their small feature size, which is typically less than one micrometer, the fabrication, experimental characterization and applications of hypersonic PnCs differ significantly from those of sub-GHz PnCs. Hypersonic PnCs can be potentially useful for the development of high-frequency signal processing devices for wireless communications. Nowadays, the operational frequency of wireless communications is in the order of 1 GHz. The future front-end modules have to manage signals from a few to hundreds of GHz to reach the requirements of the next-generation wireless networks. For this purpose, hypersonic PnCs can be implemented as BAW, SAW and Lamb waves filters, according to their architecture.

#### A. Hypersonic phononic crystals in various dimensions

Three-dimensional (3D) hypersonic PnCs allow tailoring of BAWs dispersion employing Bragg reflections and local resonances similarly to sub-GHz PnCs. To date, a vast variety of 3D PnCs were fabricated employing self-assembling of monodispersed sub-micrometer particles into colloidal crystals (CCs). As in the case of sub-GHz PnCs, the key advantages of CCs are their large volume, low-cost and low-effort fabrication, maintaining high-quality translational order. Also, the forbidden range of frequencies can be adjusted by the NPs size and material, and the material of the matrix. The first experimental observation of GHz band gaps was reported by Cheng et al.<sup>113</sup> in solid/liquid PnCs. The structures were made of polystyrene (PS) nanoparticles (NPs) self-assembled into face-centered-cubic (fcc) CCs and infiltrated with various fluids. Notably, the observed BG (at about 5 GHz) offered some degree of tuneability by the NPs size and the infiltrated fluid type. Figure 4 (a) displays an example of a solid/solid PnC that was fabricated from self-assembled PS NPs embedded in polydimethylsiloxane (PDMS) matrix.<sup>114</sup> The band diagram and transmission spectrum calculated for this material revealed both BG and HG. However, the experimental data confirmed only the former type centered at about 4 GHz. In addition to the geometry and material parameters, the phononic dispersion of CC PnCs can be tailored by bondings between the NPs. This effect and filtering due to the local resonances were reported for CCs made of silica NPs.<sup>115</sup> For this material, the femtosecond pump-probe technique revealed a long-living mode at 7.5 GHz matching the center of the calculated band gap. It was demonstrated that the sintering of silica NPs could modify this stop band.

The reduction of CC’s symmetry results in higher acoustic anisotropy of PnCs. This effect was observed for CCs fabricated from non-spherical NPs, i.e., nanoellipsoids depicted in Fig. 4 (b). In such PnCs, the phononic dispersion [Fig. 4

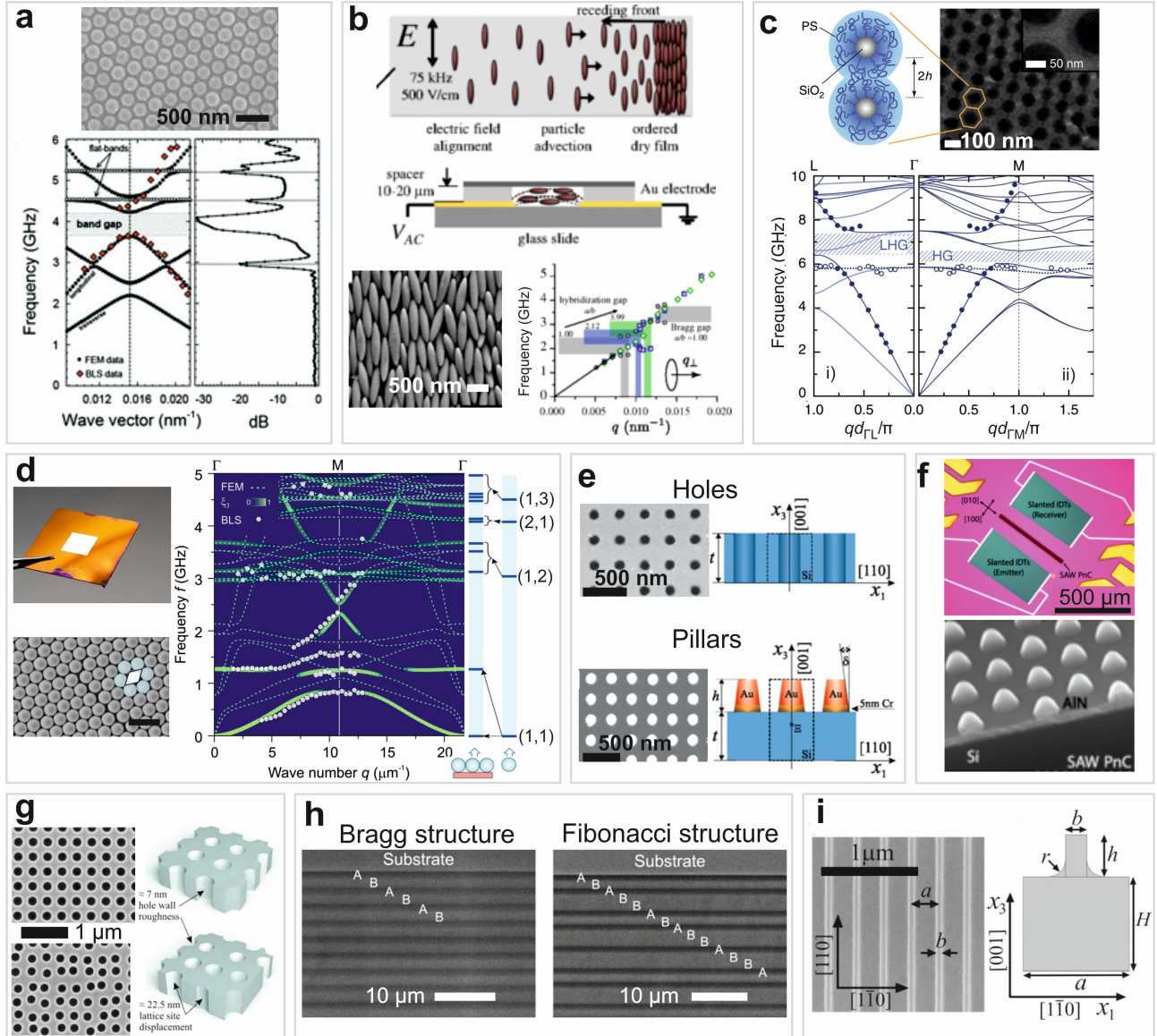


FIG. 4. (a) 3D PnC made of PS spheres embedded in solid PDMS matrix and corresponding band structure.<sup>114</sup> (b) 3D PnC realized of carboxylate modified PS nanoellipsoids. Phononic band diagrams for the  $q_{\perp}$  propagation directions when  $\alpha/b = 2.12$  (blue squares),  $\alpha/b = 3.99$  (green diamonds) and for  $\alpha/b = 1$  (black circles).<sup>116</sup> (c) PS brush-grafted silica NPs assembly; Dispersion calculated along (i) [111] shows non-degenerate longitudinal (dark solid lines), double degenerate transverse (light solid lines) and deaf bands (dotted lines); (ii) [112] shows non-degenerate of mixed character and the flat band. Hybridization gaps LHG (for longitudinal modes) and HG (for all modes) are indicated with shaded areas.<sup>117</sup> (d) 2D PnC composed of single layer PS nanoparticles self-assembled on a thin  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  membrane, and related dispersion relation.<sup>118</sup> (e) Solid-air and solid-solid 2D PnC fabricated by making a pattern of holes and pillars in/on a thin Si membrane, respectively.<sup>119</sup> (f) Optical image of the device showing a ribbon of the SAW PnC between emitter and receiver (top). SEM image of the cross section of 2D pillar-based SAW-PnC structure (bottom).<sup>120</sup> (g) SEM images of 2D PnC with ordered (top) and disordered pattern of holes (bottom) in Si membrane.<sup>121</sup> (h) Bragg structure made of periodically altering layers of Si with different porosity (left) and quasi periodic Fibonacci structure (right) formed by stacking layers according to Fibonacci sequence.<sup>122</sup> (i) 1D SAW PnC realized by rectangular-like periodic grooves on the (001) surface of crystalline silicon.<sup>123</sup> In (a-d) the experimental dispersion relations (full/open points) were measured by Brillouin light scattering and calculated by finite element method (FEM). Panel (a) shows a calculated transmission spectrum. Figures (a-i) are reproduced with permissions from Refs. 114, 116–123 and copyrights obtained from 2013 American Physical Society, 2014 American Physical Society, 2015 Springer Nature, 2020 American Chemical Society, 2015 American Physical Society, 2018 American Physical Society, 2016 American Chemical Society, 2014 AIP Publishing, and 2014 AIP publishing, respectively.

(b)] can be tuned by changing the NP's aspect ratio, which leads to unidirectional HG.<sup>116</sup> The symmetry reduction of PnCs was also achieved by directional deformation of flexible solid/solid CCs. This was demonstrated for PS-PDMS CCs stretched along the  $[1\bar{1}1]$  direction. In this case, the unidirectional expansion of about 17% resulted in the red-shift of the BG. Notably, HGs were found as practically resilient to structural changes.<sup>124</sup> This effect can be utilized in flexible devices that require the performance of PnCs robust to large deformations. In a more general context, HGs are independent of the PnCs' structural imperfections. A recent study has demonstrated a new approach for tunability of HGs in hybrid organic/inorganic PnCs through a complex structure of spherical NPs. The PnCs were composed of self-assembled PS brush-grafted silica NPs with elastic anisotropy across the silica core – polymer shell interface. The spectral position of HGs was adjusted within 5.5-10 GHz range by the degree of polymerization, grafting density, and NP core size [Fig. 4 (c)].<sup>117</sup>

Two-dimensional (2D) hypersonic PnCs have been utilized for altering the propagation of different types of SAWs or Lamb waves. Such systems were designed as 2D periodic patterns on the free surface of bulk or membrane and fabricated employing the bottom-up or top-down approach. The former method is based on large-area 2D CC, i.e., self-assembling of NPs into close-packed monolayers. Figure 4 (d) displays 2D PnCs composed of a PS NPs monolayer deposited on a 50 nm thick  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  membrane.<sup>118</sup> For these systems, the measured and calculated phononic dispersion pointed to three distinct types of band gaps for Lamb waves. Namely, they were related to the lattice period (BG), NP-membrane contact resonance (HG), and local resonances of NPs (HG). Notably, the latter type was found to appear in the sub-wavelength (below BG) and super-wavelength (above BG) regimes. The central frequencies of all three types of band gaps can be tuned by particle size, membrane thickness, and adhesion at the NP-NP and NP-membrane interfaces.

The top-down fabrication requires more effort as typically it is based on electron beam lithography (EBL) and reactive ion etching (RIE).<sup>125</sup> Here, one can distinguish two types of PnCs: solid/air and solid/solid differing in the periodic motifs. The former is realized by the substrate perforation (holes), while the latter by the periodic mass loading (pillars). Both of these schemes were exploited in the PnCs dedicated to SAWs management.<sup>120,126–129</sup> In this case, the frequency stop bands were detuned, in addition to the lattice spacing, by the geometric parameters, i.e., size and shape of holes<sup>130,131</sup> and pillars<sup>119,126,129,132,133</sup> and by solid<sup>134</sup> or liquid inclusions.<sup>130</sup> Figure 4 (e) illustrates two examples of PnCs, i.e., solid/air and solid/solid fabricated from 250 nm thick Si membrane.<sup>119</sup> The solid-air PnC revealed BG for all types of Lamb (waves and BG for symmetric modes, both about 13 GHz. The band diagrams of solid-solid PnC showed apparent hybridization of local resonances of pillars with propagating waves in the membrane, albeit HG was not detected. Overall, 2D PnCs offer a versatile platform for manipulating of confined (SAW, Lamb) acoustic signals in the GHz regime, which can be utilized in wireless communication devices. For example, PnC

made from periodically etched silica film on a quartz substrate was demonstrated as a 1.25 GHz one-port Love waves resonator.<sup>128</sup> In addition, recent work reported piezoelectric and CMOS-compatible pillar-based PnCs [Fig. 4 (f)]. The experimentally measured transmission spectra revealed a 150 MHz wide SAW band gap with the central frequency at about 1.65 GHz.<sup>120</sup>

Both for top-down and bottom-up approaches, the imperfections are an unavoidable issue. Nevertheless, the deviation from the ideal translational order of the lattice can lead to new phononic features. In particular, the disorder can destroy the coherent effects as it was experimentally proved for the example of holey Si membrane illustrated in Fig. 4 (g).<sup>121</sup> Also, theoretical studies revealed that the disorder could result in band gap broadening and acoustic Anderson localization in PnCs.<sup>135,136</sup> Undoubtedly, both works deserve experimental verification in the near future.

One-dimensional (1D) hypersonic PnCs are relatively less complex structures than previously discussed 2D and 3D PnCs. However, they can offer distinct phononic behavior for BAWs, SAWs, or Lamb waves propagating parallel or perpendicular to the periodicity. In practice, 1D bulk PnCs are superlattices (SLs), i.e., stacks of periodically alternating layers of different elastic impedances.<sup>140–144</sup> 1D PnCs are straightforward systems, which can host both phononic and photonic band gaps. The first direct measurement of the hypersonic phononic band gap in  $\text{SiO}_2/\text{PMMA}$  SLs was reported by Gomopoulos et al.<sup>145</sup> The Brillouin light scattering (BLS) results revealed that the BG in such PnCs could be altered through the porosity of  $\text{SiO}_2$  layers. The lattice imperfections, defects, or aperiodicity were investigated experimentally in terms of new phononic effects. The defects were investigated by probing the acoustic transmission<sup>146</sup> and dispersion relation (BLS)<sup>144</sup>. Going further, the aperiodic (quasiperiodic) 1D Fibonacci SLs [Fig. 4 (h)] were studied employing acoustic transmission<sup>122</sup> and femtosecond pump-probe spectroscopies<sup>143</sup>. In this case, the aperiodic structures were found as better acoustic filters than their ordered counterparts. In the case of the lattice disorder, acoustic Anderson localization was predicted theoretically for GaAs/AIAs SLs.<sup>147</sup> The propagation of SAWs in surfaces periodically corrugated in one dimension was theoretically studied already in the 70s. The recent experimental realizations of hypersonic 1D SAW PnCs were examined by BLS and pump-probe experiments.<sup>123,126</sup> Figure 4 (i) displays SEM image of PnCs made out of rectangular-like periodic grooves made on the (001) surface of crystalline silicon.<sup>123</sup> This system revealed hypersound filtering due to BG in the direction perpendicular to the grooves, while along the grooves, it worked as a waveguide for Lamb waves confined in the stripes. Recently, 1D gourd-shape PnC tethers showed reduced anchor losses and improved quality factor for Lamb wave resonators in the GHz range. This single-chip system can be potentially explored for applications for wireless communication devices.<sup>148</sup>

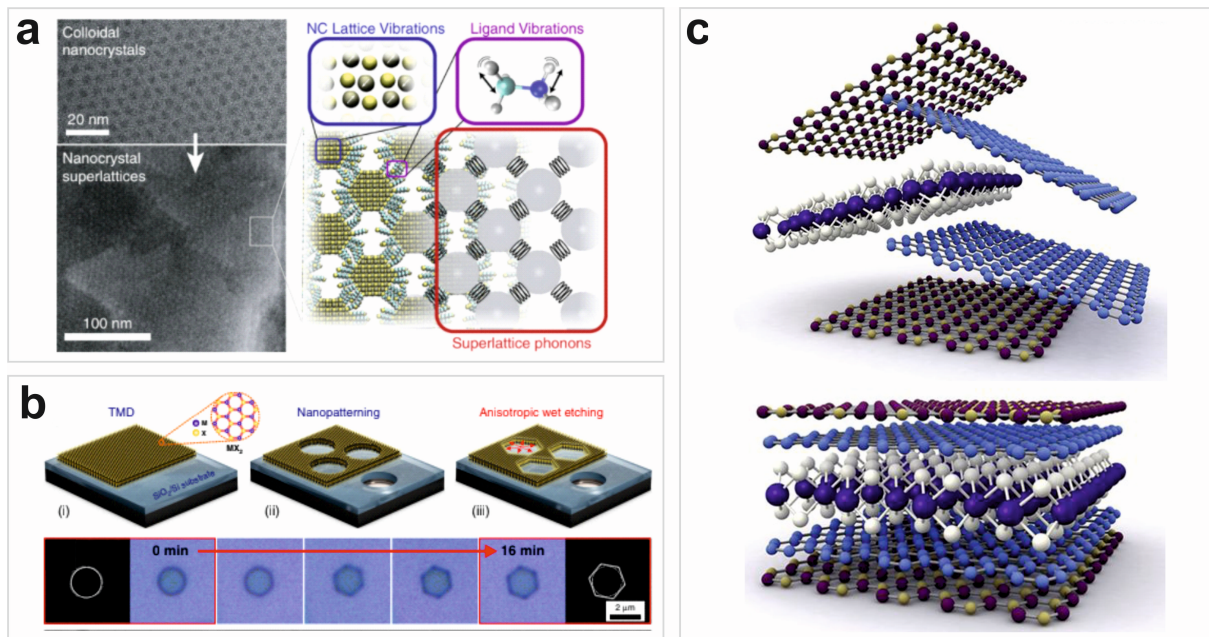


FIG. 5. Novel materials for nanophononics. Colloidal crystals made of ultrasmall semiconducting nanocrystals linked with polymeric ligands.<sup>137</sup> (b) Nanopatterning and wet etching of supported TMDCs thin films.<sup>138</sup> (c) Illustration of 1D heterostructures made of vdW layered materials.<sup>139</sup> Figures (a-c) are reproduced with permissions from Refs. 137–139 and copyright obtained from 2019 Springer Nature, 2020 Springer Nature, and 2016 AAAS Publishing, respectively.

## B. Metamaterials made of low-dimensional nanostructures

The PnCs mentioned so far have their band gaps centered around 1-20 GHz. To achieve higher frequencies ( $\sim 100$  GHz to 1 THz) the PnCs need to have smaller feature sizes, i.e., in the order of tens to few nanometers. This downscaling implies a major challenge for standard nanofabrication techniques. Potentially, smaller PnCs can be assembled by low-dimensional materials like nanoclusters or quantum-dots (0D), nanotubes or nanorods (1D) and graphene-like materials (2D).

0D building blocks for nanodevices (e.g., quantum dots of chalcogenides and perovskites) have been widely studied due to their potential applications in optoelectronic devices, light-emitting diodes, photodetectors, and solar cells.<sup>149,150</sup> Notably, 0D structures of chalcogenides like CdSe, CdS and PbS can self-assemble and form CCs.<sup>137,151–154</sup> The available literature is comparably extensive for colloids based on perovskites such as mixed-halide nanocrystals,<sup>155</sup> or organometal halide perovskites.<sup>156</sup> More information on semiconducting colloids can be found in previous reviews.<sup>149,150,157</sup> Such systems have already been considered for the construction of photonic crystals.<sup>156,158</sup> In comparison with photonics, the application of 0D semiconductors in phononic devices is limited. However, acoustic phonons and various other structural motions affect the electronic states and optical properties of chalcogenide and perovskite colloids and crystals.<sup>159–163</sup> Regarding extrinsic interactions, scattering of SAWs on supported quantum dots can modify their energy levels.<sup>164</sup> This interaction enables various interesting applications at the in-

terface of phononics and optoelectronics, which involve control of semiconducting quantum dots with SAW devices.<sup>165</sup> Based on all the above, CCs made of 0D semiconducting nanostructures represent a new type of phononic metamaterial that deserves additional experimental investigations —see Fig. 5 (a) and the work of Yazdani et al.<sup>137</sup>

While the formation of CCs relies on the spontaneous behavior of 0D nanostructures (self-assembly), the synthesis of metamaterials out of 2D nanostructures can be more controlled. For instance, 2D PnCs can be fabricated by patterning transition metal di-chalcogenides (TMDCs) —see Fig. 5 (b) and the work of Munkhbat et al.<sup>138</sup> These graphene-like materials have attracted considerable attention over the last decade. Thus their mechanical, electronic, thermal, and optical properties are relatively well-known. TMDCs are also termed layered materials and van der Waals (vdW) materials. This means that their atoms are arranged in 2D layers held together by weak vdW bonds. Hence, various TMDCs, like MoS<sub>2</sub>, MoSe<sub>2</sub> and WS<sub>2</sub>, can be prepared in the form of ultrathin membranes.<sup>166–170</sup> The thickness of TMDCs can be as small as one layer using liquid<sup>171</sup> or mechanical<sup>172</sup> exfoliation from the bulk. In order to employ these materials as 2D PnCs, it is necessary to introduce periodic patterns. This can be achieved in various ways. For instance, Yun et al. created nanopatterns on supported MoS<sub>2</sub> by block copolymer lithography.<sup>173</sup> Munkhbat et al.<sup>138</sup> created TMDC metamaterials with a three-step process: i) transfer of mechanically exfoliated TMDCs on a desired substrate, ii) use of nanopatterning techniques like EBL, RIE or focused ion beam (FIB) and iii) anisotropic wet etching [Fig. 5 (b)]. This approach offers perforated TMDCs (like WS<sub>2</sub>, MoS<sub>2</sub>, and MoSe<sub>2</sub>) with nearly atomi-

cally sharp zig-zag edges.<sup>138</sup> Moreover, FIB can be used to introduce single-atom defects/holes in free-standing monolayer TMDCs.<sup>174</sup> Kozubek et al.<sup>175</sup> used highly charged ions to drill well-defined pores in free-standing MoS<sub>2</sub> with sizes of several nanometers. Irradiation with He<sup>+</sup> has also been used to perforate free-standing TMDCs (MoS<sub>2</sub>).<sup>176</sup> Additionally, linear patterning of TMDCs<sup>173</sup> can be used to prepare metamaterials with grooves. Zhang et al. moved a step further and demonstrated atomically thin photonic crystals made of square arrays of holes on free-standing WS<sub>2</sub>.<sup>170</sup> Additional flexibility in the design of TMDC metamaterials can be achieved with nanopatterning of vdW heterostructures as the ones illustrated in Figure 5 (c).<sup>139</sup> In this case, the system will act as a 1D superlattice normal to the layers and as a 2D metamaterial parallel to them.

The use of low-dimensional nanomaterials to construct novel PnCs will introduce new challenges for experimental and theoretical studies in phononics. Widely adopted experimental techniques like BLS, pump-probe measurements, Raman, X-ray, and neutron scattering will have to deal with poor signal-to-noise ratio due to the small dimensions of the samples. Spectroscopic techniques based on inelastic light scattering (for instance, spontaneous BLS) will be limited by the opaqueness of the samples and the high frequencies (small thermal occupations) of acoustic phonons. Moreover, the confined acoustic phonons are expected to be affected by various microscopic couplings that need to be measured. For instance, the use of metallic, semiconducting, or magnetic nanomaterials will enable couplings of acoustic phonons with plasmons, electron-hole pairs, and magnons. We believe that many of these challenges can be addressed with pumped-BLS, a recently developed hybrid technique that combines ultrafast photoexcitation of confined acoustic phonons with BLS detection in frequency-domain.<sup>177</sup> This technique offers hundred-fold amplification of BLS signal from semiconducting nanomembranes and reveals interactions of acoustic phonons with charge carriers —see Vasileiadis et al. for further details.<sup>177</sup>

#### IV. OPTOMECHANICAL CRYSTALS

The commensurated wavelength of GHz phonons and telecommunications electromagnetic radiation in the most important platforms for microelectronics and photonics, as silicon and silicon nitride, allowed the demonstration of optomechanical (OM) coupling in micron size cavities.<sup>178</sup> Optomechanical coupling exploits co-localization of phonons and photons to maximize the energetic exchange between them, paving the way to manipulate phonon population until reaching average population below 1 in selected modes (Ground State cooling<sup>179</sup> – red detuned light excitation) and generation of amplified coherent phonon emission or phonon lasing<sup>180</sup> (blue detuned light excitation) for example. In the same kind of cavities, other schemes exploit optical free carrier generation and thermal dynamics to generate self-sustained amplified phonons at lower frequencies.<sup>181</sup> Optomechanics is a huge research field with a plethora of

promising applications in telecommunications and sensors (e.g. memories<sup>182</sup> and accelerometers<sup>183</sup>). It has a long term vision in quantum computation exploiting coherent phonon manipulation,<sup>184</sup> and in topological phonon propagation with OM as driving effect.<sup>185</sup> In this direction, plenty of efforts have been devoted to increasing phonon lifetime by shielding the structures from the sources of dephasing, first by a phonon band gap structure surrounding the OM cavities, after by selecting unit cells already providing its own bandgap (in 1D<sup>186</sup> [Fig. 6 (a)] and 2D<sup>187</sup>).

In particular, self-driven OM oscillators are ideal building blocks for exploring the collective dynamics of networks of coupled oscillators.<sup>188,189</sup> The observation, control, and exploitation of collective phenomena such as synchronization will find various additional applications, such as neuromorphic computational platforms, on-chip robust time keepers, and mass, gas, and force sensors with extremely low phase noise. Experimental observation of synchronization phenomena in pairs of coupled OM oscillators<sup>190,191</sup> has been already reported and scaling up the number of coupled oscillators would not substantially increasing the technological requirements.

We center now our attention to the capability of OM systems for ultrasensitive sensing of mechanical wave propagation using light (transduction), placing an optomechanical transfer gate, in the form of an integrated optomechanical cavity<sup>192</sup> or visualizing the movement of an antenna-like mechanical resonator coupled to propagating phonon modes, that can be simply done by analyzing the modulation of a reflected beam,<sup>193</sup> is essential to build circuit functionalities using phonons. This capability is particularly technologically relevant as it is currently being extended to bridge the transfer of information between microwave electrical and optical modulated signals in an energy efficient way. Hybrid systems, including piezoelectric and optomechanical system, report the highest yields in the GHz regime at modest power dissipations in the standard LiNbO<sub>3</sub> platform<sup>194</sup> [Fig. 6 (b)], what can cover a crucial demand of our information society: efficient transceivers for the huge data centers operating nowadays. In such systems, an incident microwave signal in an Interdigitated Transducer (IDT) is converted to a propagating phonon, guided and transform until scattering towards an OM cavity where an optical signal, previously injected in the circuit, is modulated by the signal. This process is bidirectional: a modulated optical signal injected in the circuit can excite mechanical motion in the OM cavity, that guided and transformed towards the IDT generates a microwave signal.

Those systems could become more compact if efficient GHz phonon generation replaces IDTs, in that sense, the first proof-of-concept experiment,<sup>180</sup> where GHz phonons are generated in an OM cavity, routed by phononic waveguides and transduced back to RF signal by another OM cavity, have been followed by studies to increase phonon lifetime, that is, minimizing phonon waveguide losses by exploiting phononic bandgap acoustic shielding,<sup>195</sup> engineering elastic strain<sup>196</sup> or using topologically protected edge states.<sup>197</sup>

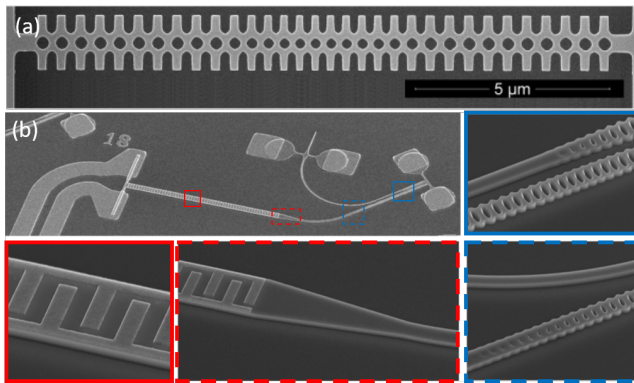


FIG. 6. Optomechanical crystals. (a) 1D OM crystal with full Phononic bandgap. Reproduced with permission from Ref. 181, copyrights obtained from 2015 Springer Nature. (b) Scanning electron micrographs (SEM) of one piezo-optomechanical transducer. Zoomed-in SEMs show the conversion region between microwave and mechanics (red) and between mechanics and optics (blue) from Ref. 191.

## V. THERMAL TRANSPORT

Phonons are the primary heat carriers in solid dielectrics and semiconductors. According to Bose-Einstein statistics, at room temperature (RT), phonons of frequencies up to several THz are excited.<sup>3,198</sup> Notably, this broad-spectrum contributes to the transport of the vibrational energy and can be effectively tailored by the spatial nanoconfinement.<sup>199–202</sup> The recent remarkable progress in the field of the nanoscale thermal transport has proved that the breakdown of the Fourier’s law, strong suppression of the phononic thermal conductivity, wave-like propagation of heat, observation of the second sound in solids at moderate temperatures, thermal cloaking, focusing and rectification, to name a few.<sup>4,18</sup> Nowadays, it is clear that confinement of thermal phonons at micro- and nanoscale offers fascinating features and challenges in their transfer to the mainstream technology applications. To explain the basic concept of nanoscale thermal engineering, we recall the kinetic theory, which defines the phononic thermal conductivity as  $\kappa \propto C v_g \Lambda$ .<sup>200</sup> Here,  $C$  is the heat capacity,  $v_g$  denotes the average group velocity, and  $\Lambda$  stands for the mean free path (MFP) of phonons. The latter parameter is an average distance traveled by a phonon between two scattering events, which can occur on impurities, imperfections, phonons (umklapp), electrons, and boundaries.<sup>5,18,200</sup> Notably, this much-simplified description allows for a good estimation of thermal conductivity for various materials. Furthermore, it points to phonon MFP and group velocity as being essential to alter the thermal conductivity. The research from the last decade has revealed that both of these quantities can be modified using PnCs with sub-micrometer feature size.<sup>4,18,203–219</sup> Indeed, shortening of the phonon MFP can result from imperfections between periodic motives and the matrix constituting PnCs. In this case, the interface roughness is comparable with the wavelength of thermal phonons. Thus, thermal phonons behave like particles that are diffusively scattered on the interfaces. As the phase is

not preserved, this phenomenon is referred to as the incoherent effect.<sup>18,220,221</sup>

The second-order periodicity of PnCs alters the phonon dispersion relation, which implies reduced  $v_g$ , altered DOS, and under certain conditions, phononic bandgaps.<sup>9,10,119,220</sup> This approach utilizes the wave nature of phonons, and it requires both specular reflections from interfaces and MFPs of phonons (more rigorously phonon coherence length) that are at least a few times longer than the PnC periodicity. This phenomenon is referred to as the coherent effect in the literature, while PnCs are termed thermocrystals.<sup>18,209</sup> Unambiguous experimental evidence for the coherent heat conduction, thermal phonon localization, and crossover from coherent and incoherent regimes was demonstrated for 1D PnCs (superlattices). Notably, such phenomena to be observed at room temperature require structures of dense and atomically smooth interfaces.<sup>212–214</sup>

The dual, wave-particle nature of thermal phonons in 2D PnCs is a topic of ongoing widespread debate. Numerous works have reported reducing phononic heat conduction in membranes of periodic porosity with respect to the pristine membrane. The controversial issue that has arisen is the contribution of coherent effects near room temperature in PnCs with lattice parameter greater than 100 nm.<sup>121,203,205,208,218,222,225,226</sup> In this case, the relevant PnCs were made using electron beam lithography (EBL) and reactive ion etching (RIE) or focused ion beam (FIB) milling (see examples in Fig. 7). Both approaches allow the fabrication of holes with roughness of few nanometers and amorphization in the best scenario.<sup>125,203,208</sup> To date, a real demonstration of the coherent effects was only possible at few Kelvin and sub-Kelvin temperatures for Si and Si<sub>3</sub>N<sub>4</sub> PnCs, respectively. In these conditions, heat is carried via long MFP, GHz phonons of about micrometer wavelengths that are much larger than the surface roughness. On the other hand, in bulk Si at room temperature, MFPs span a broad range, and those longer than one  $\mu\text{m}$  contribute to 50% of the total thermal conductivity at room temperature. In general, this allows thermal phonons to travel over several lattice periods of PnCs and interfere, and thereby manifest wave-like nature. Accordingly, some of the prior works explained the suppression of  $\kappa$  as a combination of incoherent and non-negligible, coherent effects. Recent works, based on indirect and direct methods, have not confirmed those results. Namely, the disordered and aperiodic PnCs show the same thermal conductivity as their ordered counterparts [Fig. 7 (b)].<sup>203</sup> More directly, results obtained using BLS<sup>119</sup> and ASOPS<sup>121</sup> have confirmed modification of the phonon dispersion up to tens of GHz, what is relevant at very low temperatures, but negligible at RT. Furthermore, two-phonon Raman spectra [Fig. 7 (c)] that reflect phonon DOS proved no difference between spectra of PnCs and pristine membrane in the THz.<sup>205</sup> Even though the concept of the room temperature thermocrystal is doable, it can only be implemented in PnCs of the few-nanometer period and atomically smooth interfaces.<sup>18</sup>

Further development of PnCs dedicated to the management of thermal phonons can result from application-oriented directions such as thermal energy harvesting, extreme temperatures

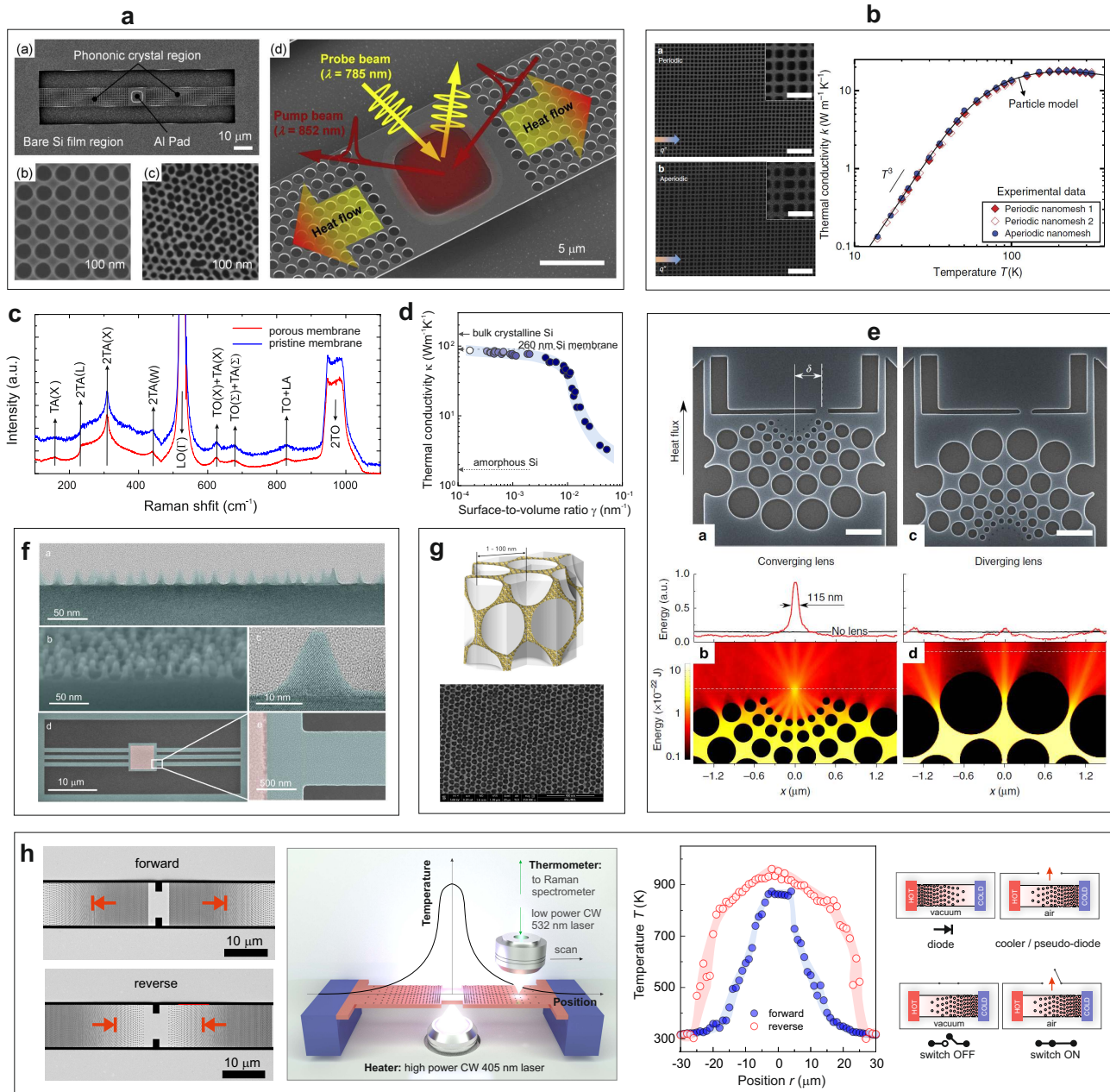


FIG. 7. (a) SEM images of the Si PnCs fabricated in a suspended architecture for thermal reflectance measurement.<sup>215</sup> (b) SEM image of a (left panel) periodic Si nanomesh with a period of 100 nm and (middle panel) an aperiodic Si nanomesh with the pitch varied from 80 to 120 nm. Scale bars are 200 nm (inset) and 600 nm (main). (right panel) Measured thermal conductivities of periodic and aperiodic nanomeshes as a function of temperature indicate the negligible role of the coherent effects.<sup>203</sup> (c) One- and two-phonon Raman spectra of pristine 250 nm membrane without and with pores obtained at room temperature. The critical points of the first Brillouin zone are identical for both samples.<sup>205</sup> (d) Thermal conductivity of porous membranes at 300 K as a function of the surface-to-volume ratio.<sup>216</sup> (e) SEM images of (left upper panel) converging and (right upper) diverging thermal lens samples with slits for heat dissipation. The scale bar is 1  $\mu\text{m}$ . Monte Carlo simulations results of (bottom left) the formation of a hot spot in the focal point and (bottom right) dispersion of heat in the diverging lens.<sup>222</sup> (f) TEM and SEM images of 20 nm-high nanopyllars fabricated on 50 nm-thick silicon membranes.<sup>223</sup> (g) A scheme and SEM image of a metalattice made of a closely spaced distribution of spherical voids in crystalline silicon.<sup>224</sup> (h) From left to right: SEM images of the thermal rectifiers in the forward and reverse configurations, schematic of the two-laser Raman thermometry experiment, temperature profiles of the test devices in the forward (solid purple circles) and reverse (red-outlined circles) configurations, schematics of possible devices based on the thermal rectifier.<sup>216</sup> The (a-h) are reproduced with permissions from Refs. 203, 215, 222–224 with copyrights obtained from 2020 Elsevier Ltd, 2017 Springer Nature, 2017 Springer Nature, 2020 Elsevier Ltd, 2017 Springer Nature, 2020 American Chemical Society.

and gradients, effective heat dissipation, geometry engineering towards ray-like heat transfer, the synergetic combination of conduction with convection or radiation, and thermal rectification, new materials as platforms for PnCs, and materials hosting other elementary excitations being, in addition to phonons, heat carriers.

The reduced thermal conductivity in 2D porous PnCs holds great potential for applications in thermal energy harvesting, sensing, and heat flow management.<sup>227</sup> In particular, crystalline porous Si membranes can be used to realize Slack's "phonon glass – electron crystal", i.e., hypothetical material of maximized thermoelectric (TE) figure of merit  $ZT$ .<sup>228</sup> Hence, the perforation leading to  $\kappa$  as low as the amorphous limit has to maintain the electronic properties. The latter can be further engineered by doping towards an optimized electronic power factor. Yet, recent works have reported TE generators made of porous Si membranes with  $ZT \ll 1$  around RT, which is significantly less than what is offered by conventional materials.<sup>207,210,211,227</sup> However, Si PnCs are CMOS-compatible and therefore can be easily implemented in mainstream technology. For instance, the upcoming market of the Internet of Things can benefit from cheap and robust self-powered units or sensors based on such structures.

Furthermore, silicon and silicon on insulator (SOI) technologies are the most mature for producing micro and nanoscale devices dedicated to high-temperature applications.<sup>229</sup> The high temperature is a considerable value market for thermal sensing and energy harvesting in the automotive, airspace industry, space exploration, metallurgy, and conventional energy production.<sup>230</sup> Besides a few recent works<sup>205,216</sup>, thermal properties of PnCs at temperatures exceeding 500 K remain primarily unexplored area due to experimental challenges. Thus, novel tools based on, most likely, contactless approaches are needed [Fig. 7 (h)].

As follows from theoretical works, local resonances can be an alternative approach for thermal phonon blocking in 2D PnCs. In this concept, PnCs consist of a 2D array of pillars deposited on the membrane. In this structure, the hybridization between localized modes in pillars and propagating modes in the membrane results in sub- and super-wavelength bandgaps that are immune to the PnC lattice's imperfections.<sup>231,232</sup> Besides that, typical phononic effects can appear due to the periodic arrangement of pillars. Consequently, phonon group velocity, DOS, and hence thermal conductivity can be tuned (in addition to lattice spacing) by the characteristic sizes and mass of the pillar. The modification of the dispersion in these structures was confirmed experimentally for GHz phonons employing BLS. However, the importance of coherent effects on the thermal conductivity has been recently questioned based on the experimental results obtained in the 4-300 K range.<sup>223,233</sup>

Recently, Anufrief and Nomura have proposed a concept of ray phononics utilizing ballistic heat transport in porous membranes.<sup>222</sup> Such materials are envisioned for ray-like heat flow management in nanostructures regardless of their surface imperfections and foremost possible at room temperature. The proof-of-concept experiments have proved such features as thermal phonon guiding, emission, and focusing [Fig.

7 (e)].

Needless to say, that wealth of new features resulting from the phonon confinement go hand in hand with technological challenges. Indeed, the progress of miniaturization and electronic devices' performance in the last two decades has encountered a bottleneck related to the efficient removal of the produced heat. Thus, both size-reduced thermal conductivity and volume can lead to overheating and eventually damage of nanoscale components. Porous membranes can be an effective and low-cost solution to this problem, which utilizes passive cooling units via air convection. Simultaneously, the vast majority of previous thermal studies of porous membranes were performed in vacuum conditions. However, convection in porous membranes deserves more attention regarding the real conditions for their operation and possible application in passive cooling. As follows from recent experiments, the heat dissipation via combined convection and conduction can be optimized via the structure surface-to-volume [Fig. 7 (d)] ratio.<sup>205,216</sup>

The enhancement of the heat dissipation in nanostructured membranes (depending on the material) can be seen in less obvious elementary excitations such as surface phonon-polaritons (SPhPs), magnons, or plasmons. Wu et al. have demonstrated that the thermal conductivity of sub-50 nm thick  $\text{Si}_3\text{N}_4$  membranes doubles as the temperature increases from 300 to 800 K due to SPhPs.<sup>234</sup> In perspective, new architectures of PnCs can primarily benefit from a synergetic combination of dielectric or semiconducting membranes with metallic and magnetic layers or nanostructured motives. In particular, the emerging fields of spin caloritronics<sup>235,236</sup> and the intersection between plasmonics and phononics<sup>237</sup> are attractive directions for further developing the nanoscale thermal transport in periodic structures. Another and quite natural step forward can be the fabrication of macroscale 3D PnCs for thermal flow management using self-assembled colloidal crystals<sup>238,239</sup>, metal lattices<sup>224</sup>, or atomic quality hybrid (organic-inorganic) Bragg stacks<sup>21</sup>. Notably, the aim of the latter materials is, contrary to the majority of PnCs, to enhance the thermal conductivity to remove process heat in organic electronics preserving transparency and flexibility.

One of phononics' main ambitions is to use heat as the information carrier and develop thermal analogs of diodes, transistors, and electronics switches.<sup>4,240-242</sup> The fundamental requirements for a thermal diode (or rectifier) can be satisfied by porous membranes. Namely, they offer temperature dependence of the thermal conductivity (non-linearity) and space dependence (spatial asymmetry) of the thermal conductivity. Practical realization of thermal rectification was reported for perforated graphene (26% efficiency at RT)<sup>243</sup> and recently for Si membrane. The latter structure (14% efficiency) is dedicated to operation at high temperatures up to 1000 K and can also be utilized as a thermal switch or optimized convective cooler [Fig. 7 (h)].<sup>216</sup>

Overall, the future of PnCs requires new platforms that can host phononic effects and introduce new physical and chemical features. From this perspective, an excellent opportunity is the wealth of van der Waals materials, and their heterostructures offer unique, highly anisotropic, and

size-dependent electronic, optical, thermal, and mechanical properties.<sup>139,244–246</sup> Nevertheless, this requires a significant advancement in the fabrication of robust large area samples and experimental tools development.

## VI. TOPOLOGICAL PHONONICS

### A. From symmetry to topology

Up to this point, we discussed phononic metamaterials whose properties depend solely on the crystal symmetry and are strongly affected by defects and disorder. The relevant transport phenomena are characterized by losses, left-right symmetry (parity,  $P$ ) and time-reversal symmetry ( $T$ ). This section presents a novel type of metamaterials, termed topological phononics, which offers robustness to disorder, one-way propagation of phonons (broken  $P$  or  $T$  symmetry) and transport without losses. In most cases, the different phases of condensed matter are adequately characterized by distinct symmetries, and a symmetry-related order parameter describes the passage from one phase to another. However, it is possible to observe phases of matter that do not depend on the sample's size, shape, composition, and impurities. The unique identification of such phases requires some topologically invariant property, meaning a property that remains constant under continuous transformations.

Topology has first entered the realm of experimental, condensed matter physics in 1980 with the discovery of the Quantum Hall Effect (QHE) by Von Klitzing et al.<sup>247</sup> The QHE is the quantized Hall conductance of a two-dimensional (2D) electron gas in a strong magnetic field and at low temperature. Subsequent studies revealed several more types of topological phenomena for electrons and spins in crystals. For instance, in the Quantum Spin Hall Effect<sup>248</sup> (QSHE) the spin Hall conductance of 2D crystals is quantized due to spin-orbit coupling without a magnetic field. Another relevant electronic degree of freedom is the valley, i.e., the bands extreme that the electrons occupy, which gives rise to the Quantum Valley Hall Effect<sup>249,250</sup> (QVHE). The observation of topological phenomena in three-dimensional (3D) crystals gave rise to the so-called topological insulators.<sup>251,252</sup> In these materials, the topology of the bulk states is distinct from that of the surrounding vacuum, leading to the creation of unique, conductive surface states. Dirac semimetals are insulating in the 3D bulk and have 2D surface states with Dirac cone dispersion.<sup>252</sup> Weyl semimetals have topologically protected Dirac cones in the 3D bulk, and surface states with unique, arc-shaped dispersion.<sup>253–256</sup> Additionally, Floquet topological insulators have conductive surface states due to external, periodic, temporal perturbations.<sup>257,258</sup> From the perspective of basic science, topological condensed matter systems can be used to perform tabletop experimental studies of exotic particles that remain unobserved in nature, like magnetic monopoles,<sup>259–261</sup> as well as Dirac and Weyl fermions.<sup>252</sup> The first experimental realization of topological phenomena for classical waves and metamaterials occurred in 2009 by Z. Wang et al.<sup>262</sup> who demonstrated a topological photonic

metamaterial operating in GHz frequencies (microwave radiation). The readers can find more information about topological photonics in the review articles of Lu et al.<sup>263</sup> and Ozawa et al.<sup>264</sup> The first topological acoustic metamaterial was realized by Fleury et al.<sup>265</sup> in 2014. This acoustic crystal consisted of ring resonators, where left-handed and right-handed modes were initially degenerate. The degeneracy was then removed with a biasing airflow, leading to one-way transport of sound. Topological phononics have been discussed in a number of previous review articles.<sup>266–268</sup> Here, after a short introduction, we emphasize the novel topics of 1D topological phononics, higher-order topological insulators, and programmable topological phononics. Next, we discuss how the various macroscopic designs can be re-adapted for topological nanophononics in the gigahertz (GHz) frequency range. We conclude this section with a proposal on studying low-dimensional, topological nanophononics in the GHz range, using a recently developed combination of Brillouin spectroscopy and ultrafast photoexcitation.

### B. Topology for condensed matter physics

In the band structure theory of insulators, topology is used to examine if one insulator can be smoothly transformed into another. If this is not the case then a topological phase transition must occur at their interface leading to the creation of spatially confined conductive states. As an example to describe Chern insulators, the starting point for defining the topologically invariant property is the Berry phase<sup>269,270</sup> ( $\gamma$ ), which is used to describe the change of a quantum state with respect to some variable ( $X(t)$ ) of the system's Hamiltonian that changes slowly with time (adiabatically). In condensed matter physics, the  $X$  is the wavenumber  $k$  (of electrons, phonons, or other quasiparticles), and the adiabatic change is a motion in reciprocal space. If this motion follows a closed path, and for a 2D crystal, the Berry phase is given by:

$$\gamma = \oint \mathbf{A}(\mathbf{k}) \cdot d\mathbf{k}. \quad (1)$$

The  $\mathbf{A} = i\langle \phi_{nk} | \nabla_k | \phi_{nk} \rangle$  and it is called the Berry connection or the Berry potential<sup>269–271</sup> (in analogy to the vector potential of electrodynamics). The function  $\phi_{nk}$  is taken from the Bloch theorem:  $\Psi_{nk}(\mathbf{r}) = e^{i\mathbf{k}\cdot\mathbf{r}} \phi_{nk}(\mathbf{r})$ . Next, the Berry phase can be re-written as  $\gamma = 2\pi C$ , where  $C$  is the Chern number,<sup>270</sup> which is the topologically invariant property of the Chern insulators according to the Thouless–Kohmoto–Nightingale–den Nijs (TKNN) theory.<sup>272</sup> Using the Stokes theorem and relationship 1, the Chern number is given by:

$$C = \frac{1}{2\pi} \iint_{BZ} \nabla \times \mathbf{A} d^2\mathbf{k}. \quad (2)$$

The integration is over the entire Brillouin zone (BZ). Due to periodic boundary conditions, the integration area is also called the Brillouin torus.<sup>271</sup> The vector field  $\nabla \times \mathbf{A}$  is called the Berry curvature.<sup>269–271</sup> The integral of relationship 2 is the flux of the Berry curvature field through the Brillouin torus.

To achieve interesting topological properties (e.g. topological surface states, one-way transport and robustness to disorder), the Brillouin torus must contain a source of the Berry curvature field giving a non-zero Chern number. For plane waves or vacuum, the  $\phi_{nk}$  is constant and  $C = 0$ . Thus, if the bulk has insulating states with  $C \neq 0$ , a topological phase transition occurs at the surface with the emergence of gapless surface states. Similarly, confined gapless states appear at the interface between topologically distinct insulators (different Chern numbers). The latter topological phase transitions can be viewed as a band inversion — for instance, see the schematic illustration from Z. Zhang et al.<sup>273</sup> in Fig. 8 (a).

### C. Macroscopic topological phononics in various dimensions

In one-dimensional (1D) phononic crystals, topological edge states are localized oscillations without transport. Topological properties in 1D can arise due to some spatial modulation, e.g., of losses<sup>274</sup> [Fig. 8(b)]. The topological acoustic crystal of Gao et al.<sup>274</sup> [8 (c) left] has a bulk spectrum that is depleted at 2,150 Hz [Fig. 8 (c) center], while the edges' spectrum has a maximum at the same frequency [Fig. 8 (c) right]. Additionally, 1D phononic crystals have been shown to possess interfacial states<sup>275</sup> (states between topologically distinct insulators) and Weyl particle physics.<sup>276</sup>

Since most of the relevant topological physics requires spin-dependent phenomena, several studies of acoustics explored acoustic pseudo-spin,<sup>281–285</sup> acoustic QSHE,<sup>286</sup> and acoustic analogues of spin-multipoles.<sup>287</sup> Pseudo-spin-dependent transport was shown to be robust and to possess transmission without backscattering — see for instance Refs. 285 and 286. Pseudo-spin states can be formed in the presence of double Dirac cones. Double Dirac cones have been introduced in various ways, e.g., with zone-folding in a triangular lattice of rods,<sup>288</sup> or with 2D arrays of Helmholtz resonators,<sup>289</sup> or with local resonance states.<sup>290</sup> Two-fold Dirac point degeneracy appears for graphene-like phononic crystals<sup>291</sup> and more complicated structures, like 2D kagome<sup>292</sup> and Kekulé lattices.<sup>293</sup> In the case of 2D square lattices, the Dirac cones can appear away from the high-symmetry points of the band-structure<sup>294,295</sup> — a phenomenon described as accidental degeneracy. Moreover, 2D sonic crystals have been used to realize acoustic Floquet topological insulators.<sup>281,284</sup> Notably, topological properties in 2D (or quasi-2D) systems can also arise from water surface waves.<sup>296–299</sup>

Regarding 3D systems, He et al.<sup>300</sup> showed that topological valley states can emerge at the interface of two crystals with opposite valley Chern numbers. Other studies using 3D metamaterials have demonstrated acoustic analogues of Weyl and Dirac semimetals,<sup>301</sup> negative refraction,<sup>302</sup> acoustic quadrupole<sup>303</sup> and octupole<sup>304,305</sup> topological insulators, and topological properties in granular metamaterials.<sup>306</sup> Moreover, Peng et al.<sup>307</sup> have demonstrated 3D Floquet insulators, using a periodic, spatio-temporal modulation in a sonic crystal. Very recently, Fu et al.<sup>308</sup> have studied sound vortices in 3D cylindrical waveguides and demonstrated

diffraction of sound that depends on the value of the topological charge. In relevance with sound vortices, helical-acoustic metamaterials can be used for dispersion-free deceleration of sound<sup>309</sup> and can potentially be useful for topological acoustic metamaterials.

A special type of topological materials termed higher-order topological insulators,<sup>277,292,310</sup> support edge states that are two or more dimensions lower than the bulk states. For instance, in a third-order topological insulator, some of the states are confined on the corners (0D) of a 3D crystal.<sup>310</sup> Zhang et al.<sup>277</sup> have demonstrated a second-order, 2D topological insulator, whose structure and properties are illustrated in Figs. 8 (d-i). Its unit cell [8 (e)] consists of four drilled holes; the yellow and the blue parts are the rigid materials and the air, respectively. This 2D crystal is split into two regions with trivial and nontrivial topological properties [Fig. 8 (f)] by varying the ratio of the distance between holes  $R$  over the lattice constant  $a$ . Using finite element method (FEM), the authors have visualized the pressure distributions in the trivial and nontrivial regions and illustrated a band inversion from p- to s-like “conduction” states and from s- to p-like “valence” states [Fig. 8 (g)]. The vibrational density of states [Fig. 8 (h)], which was recorded using a loudspeaker and a microphone, shows 2D bulk states, 1D edge states, and 0D corner states, thus proving the second-order character of this topological acoustic crystal transport.

### D. Programmable topological phononics and applications

Macroscopic metamaterials offer the possibility of real-time and on-demand structural changes. Thus, it is possible to control the topological properties in versatile, uncomplicated ways, and to construct smart devices for sound manipulation. For example, Zhang et al.<sup>277</sup> generated programmable patterns of acoustic fields [Fig. 8 (i)]. Xia et al.<sup>278</sup> have developed honeycomb-lattice sonic crystals that can be reconfigured with air cylinders [Fig. 8 (j) top]. Using this design, the authors managed to control the path followed by the edge states between two topologically distinct phases [Fig. 8 (j) bottom]. Tian et al.<sup>279</sup> have realized a tunable, sonic honeycomb lattice by infiltrating liquid in its holes [Fig. 8 (k) top], which was again used to control the path of edge states [Fig. 8 (k) bottom]. Zhang et al.<sup>273</sup> constructed a hexagonal array of rotatable, three-legged elements [Fig. 8 (l) top] that could be used as a phononic delay line [Fig. 8 (l) bottom]. A prominent application of topological manipulation of sound is the construction of directional loudspeakers and microphones<sup>280,311</sup> [Fig. 8 (m)]. Regarding prospects, another exciting class of devices (which have not been experimentally realized at the moment for phononics) are one-way, topological, beam splitters.<sup>312–315</sup>

Moreover, topological phononics support edge states with one-way transport<sup>281,286,316–318</sup> and, thus, they can be used as phononic diodes<sup>216,319,320</sup> or waveguides<sup>321</sup>. It would then be interesting to use programmable topological phononics in order to construct switches and gates for phonons that

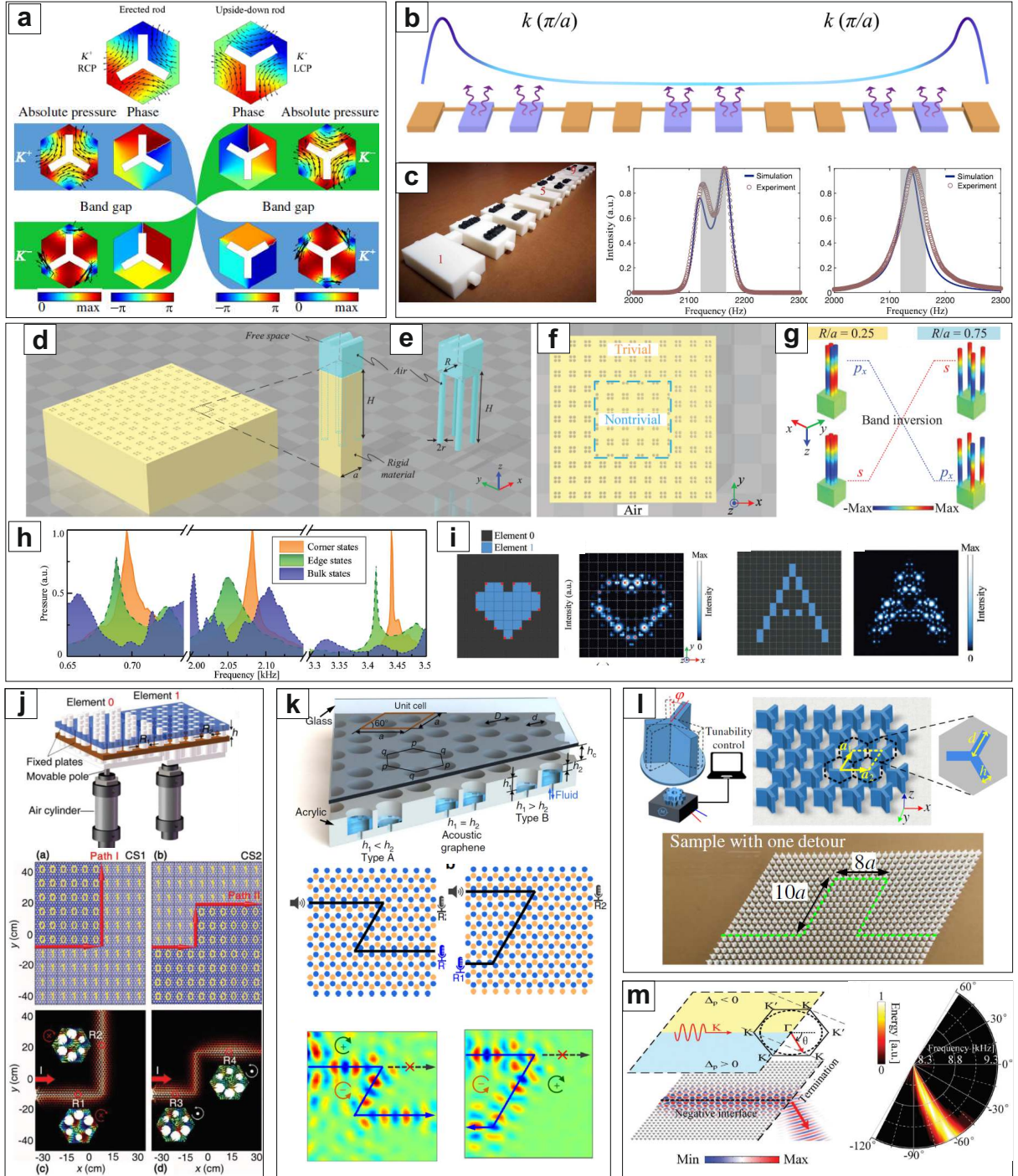


FIG. 8. Topological acoustics in 1D and 2D: (a) Rotatable three-legged-rods used to create spinning acoustic fields (up) and a topological phase transition of these acoustic pseudospin states (down) from Zhang et al.<sup>273</sup> Copyrights obtained from 2018 American Physical Society. (b) Schematic of a 1D acoustic lattice with topological properties arising from spatial modulation of losses. Copyrights obtained from 2020 American Physical Society. (c) Image of the sample (left), acoustic resonances inside (center) and at the edges (right) of a structure studied by Gao et al.<sup>274</sup> (d) Design of a second-order, 2D topological insulator,<sup>277</sup> (e) its unit cell, (f) illustration of the boundaries between trivial and nontrivial topological regions, (g) diagram of the topological phase transition through band inversion, (h) VDOS for corner, edge and bulk states and (i) programmable patterns of acoustic fields. Tunable topological acoustics and applications: (j) Programmable 2D topological acoustic crystal controlled by pressurized air,<sup>278</sup> (k) tunable 2D topological acoustic crystal using liquid infiltration,<sup>279</sup> (l) acoustic delay line based on a tunable topological acoustic crystal,<sup>273</sup> (m) directional emission of sound using topological acoustics.<sup>280</sup> The (a)-(m) are reproduced with permissions from Refs. 273, 274, 277–280 and copyrights obtained from 2018 American Physical Society, 2020 American Physical Society, 2020 Springer Nature.

mimic electronic circuits.<sup>87,88,322</sup> Another interesting way for tuning the properties of topological phononic crystals is to take advantage of the physics of Floquet topological insulators, whose properties can be controlled by external fields, lasers, microwaves or other types of radiation.<sup>323</sup> Finally, tunable topological acoustics can make use of soft, deformable materials.<sup>324</sup>

### E. Topological gigahertz nanophononics

The topological phononic crystals mentioned so far have macroscopic dimensions, resulting in sound waves in the kHz to MHz frequency range. One of the most promising application of phononics is their use in wireless devices, where they mediate signal processing of microwaves. For such applications, the phononic structures need to operate in the GHz range. The growing demand for signal processing at higher operational frequencies (5G wireless networks and beyond), and the vast progress of THz light technologies, will likely require phononic devices with higher operational frequencies. Higher operational frequencies can be achieved by spatial confinement of the phononic structures in the sub- $\mu\text{m}$  to nm lengthscales (nanophononics).

Topological GHz nanophononics can be 1D systems like coupled nanocavity arrays.<sup>325</sup> These 1D systems are GaAs/AlAs superlattices with band-inversion at the interface, while the probing technique can be in frequency- (Raman<sup>326</sup>) or time-domain (ASOPS<sup>327</sup>). Regarding 2D systems, several interesting, macroscopic crystals (e.g., hosting topological acoustic polaritons<sup>328</sup>) can be scaled down to the sub-micrometer scale using lithographic techniques.<sup>8,125,202</sup> Based on several theoretical proposals, experiments, and simulations, a good design for topological nanophononics is pillared phononic crystals.<sup>329–333</sup>

Classical, macroscopic metamaterials can be precisely engineered in terms of their size, shape, and dimensionality. Thus, they can be used to evaluate the various designs and decide which of these can be transferred to the sub-micrometer lengthscale and GHz frequency range. For macroscopic 2D topological acoustics (see the work of Zhang et al.<sup>277</sup>) the experiments require sample-preparation by 3D printing, a loudspeaker to emit sonic waves and a microphone to detect the edge- and corner-states. For nanophononics, the 3D printing technology can be replaced by lithographic techniques.<sup>125</sup> Generation of coherent acoustic phonons can be carried out with ultrashort laser pulses — see for instance Arregui et al.<sup>327</sup> The laser pulses generate coherent acoustic phonons through the thermoelastic effect and the displacement potential mechanism.<sup>334</sup> The probing of topological phonons in 2D PnCs can be potentially performed by micro-BLS, which has the ability to map the vibrational density of states and the band structure<sup>335</sup> as well as the direction of phonons<sup>177</sup> (asymmetric Stokes/anti-Stokes intensities) with micrometer spatial resolution. Finally, a practical way of tuning the crystal properties might come from heterostructures of hard semiconductors and soft, polymeric structures. In such heterostructures, it will

be possible to deform the soft matter part with an externally applied strain, and therefore to tune topological phase transitions at the interface.<sup>324</sup> In this case, the additional usefulness of BLS is that it can measure directly and accurately the local strain, which causes flexural Lamb waves of zero momentum to have non zero frequencies.<sup>336,337</sup>

## VII. SUMMARY

Research on PnCs is a relatively mature field that is more than 20 years old. The transition from research to the industry can be achieved for two types of PnCs: macroscopic sub-GHz PnCs for vibrational isolation and microscopic, hypersonic PnCs for MEMS and telecommunication. The design of PnCs can make use of various computational techniques like finite element methods,<sup>338,339</sup> acoustic transfer matrix calculations,<sup>340</sup> genetic algorithms,<sup>341</sup> topological optimization<sup>342,343</sup> and machine-learning.<sup>60,344</sup> These computational methods provide efficient but complex architectures, which can now be realized with 3D printing technologies, sophisticated machining, molding and casting for macroscopic PnCs, and bottom-up or top-down synthesis for microscopic PnCs – see the review article of Choi et al.<sup>345</sup>

Macroscopic PnCs with band gaps at audible frequencies,<sup>311,341,343,346–353</sup> and various acoustic metamaterials<sup>354–356</sup> can be used for sound insulation of buildings, vehicles and machinery. Moreover, macroscopic PnCs with non-trivial topological properties can be used to construct loudspeakers and microphones that control the direction<sup>280,311</sup> and timing<sup>273</sup> of sonic signals. Additionally, PnCs have promising applications for ultrasonic imaging for biomedical applications (section 2). Research on PnCs can even be useful for civil engineering and urban design. For instance, strategic planting of trees is the ultimate green method for protection against sound pollution<sup>357</sup> and seismic waves.<sup>33–35</sup> Protection from seismic waves can also be achieved with artificial, periodic structures called seismic metamaterials.<sup>28</sup> Similarly to seismic waves, PnCs, and metamaterials that control water waves can be used for coastal engineering<sup>358</sup> and to amplify energy harvesting from ocean waves.<sup>359</sup>

Higher operational frequencies for phononic devices can be achieved through spatial confinement and nanostructuring. Thus, hypersonic PnCs have potential applications for signal processing applications at 5G frequencies and beyond. Apart from higher operational frequencies, PnCs for telecommunications need to maintain high-quality factors (minimize dissipation), which is one of the main advantages of phononic devices compared to electronic circuits.<sup>11</sup> The most critical missing component is a reliable source of coherent phonons that can operate at high frequencies ( $\gg 10$  GHz). Likely, the development of coherent phonon sources at high frequencies can be facilitated by research on optomechanics (section 4). So far, PnCs were mostly based on semi-transparent, insulating materials (e.g.,  $\text{SiO}_2$  and polymers like PS) and well-known semiconductors with 3D crystal structures like Si. The need for further miniaturization of phononic devices

might be covered by novel, low-dimensional, semiconducting nanomaterials (Fig. 5). For instance, ultra-small OD nanoclusters can self-assemble into colloidal crystals, and vdW layered materials can be used to construct ultrathin, crystalline metamaterials (section 3). However, the use of such novel nanomaterials will likely require a deeper understanding of microscopic interactions and dissipation processes for acoustic phonons. For instance, the use of metallic, semiconducting, and magnetic nanomaterials will require studies on the coupling of acoustic phonons with plasmons, excitons, and magnons, respectively. Additionally, metamaterials made of low-dimensional semiconductors can also be interesting in view of thermoelectrics (discussed in section 5). Tunable hypersonic PnCs can result from liquid-solid or organic-inorganic heterostructures (sections 3 and 6), which will be controlled by infiltration or deformation, respectively. The waveguiding of phonons (for instance, in a delay line) can be achieved using PnCs with band gaps and topological edge states (section 6). Thus, we consider that research in topological phononics will gradually move to high-order 2D topological nanophononics at gigahertz frequencies.

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## DATA AVAILABILITY

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analyzed in this study.

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