## Strongly correlated crystalline higher-order topological phases in two-dimensional systems: A coupled-wire study

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Coupled-wire constructions have been widely applied to quantum Hall systems and symmetry-protected topological (SPT) phases. In this Letter, we use the coupled one-dimensional nonchiral Luttinger liquids with domain-wall structured mass terms as quantum wires to construct crystalline higher-order topological superconductors (HOTSCs) in two-dimensional (2D) interacting fermionic systems by two representative examples: a  $D_4$ -symmetric class-D HOTSC and a  $C_4$ -symmetric class-BDI HOTSC, with Majorana corner modes on the edge. Furthermore, based on the coupled-wire constructions, the quantum phase transitions between different phases of 2D HOTSCs by tuning the interwire coupling are investigated in a straightforward way.

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Introduction. Topological phases of quantum matter have become one of the greatest triumphs of condensed matter physics since the discovery of the fractional quantum Hall effect [1,2]. Topological order defined by patterns of long-range entanglement provides a systematic way of understanding the topological phases of quantum matter [3]. Furthermore, the interplay between symmetry and topology plays a central role in the topological phases of quantum matter. In particular, symmetry-protected topological (SPT) phases have been systematically constructed and classified in short-range entangled systems [4-26]. An elegant example of SPT phases is a topological insulator, protected by time-reversal and charge-conservation symmetry [27,28]. Recently, crystalline SPT phases have been intensively studied [29-60], with great opportunities for experimental realizations [61-64]. In particular, different from internal SPT phases, the boundaries of two-dimensional (2D) crystalline SPT phases are almost gapped but with protected 0D corner zero modes. These types of topological phases are called higher-order topological phases [65–76].

The study of higher-order topological phases mainly focuses on free-fermion systems, because interactions and crystalline symmetries restrict the analytical study of the lattice model, and only the numerics on a finite-size lattice can give some insights. On the other hand, a clear and powerful tool for studying the topological phases of quantum matter is the coupled-wire construction [77–88]. One decomposes a higher-dimensional system into an assembly of 1D quantum wires, and topological properties then arise from the suitable couplings of them. A unique advantage of coupled-wire construction is that, different from the higher-dimensional quantum field theory, the powerful bosonization technique of one-dimensional subsystems can be used to challenge the strong interaction effects. Different phases are manifested by patterns of coupled wires and the quantum phase transition of different phases is controlled by tuning interwire couplings directly. Therefore, an important open question arises: Can strongly correlated higher-order topological phases can be constructed from a coupled-wire perspective?

In this Letter, we systematically construct a crystalline higher-order topological superconductor (HOTSC) in twodimensional interacting fermionic systems by coupling the circular 1D nonchiral Luttinger liquids with domain-wall structured mass terms as quantum wires, via two typical intriguing interacting examples, a  $D_4$ -symmetric class-D HOTSC and a C<sub>4</sub>-symmetric class-BDI HOTSC, whose higher-order edge modes are Majorana zero modes (MZMs) [45,46]. By suitable interwire tunnelings/interactions, several 1D quantum wires are assembled and fully gapped, leaving a few dangling quantum wires at the edge or near the center of the systems. Near the center, the dangling quantum wires are fully gapped by intrawire interactions; on the edge, the dangling quantum wires explicitly manifest the higher-order topological edge modes of 2D HOTSCs by their domain-wall structure. Different 2D HOTSCs are characterized by different patterns of coupled wires. Lattice translation symmetry can also be imposed straightforwardly. Furthermore, with a concrete coupled-wire construction of a 2D HOTSC, we directly investigate the quantum phase transitions by tuning different coupling constants of interwire interactions. We stress that our arguments are not sensitive to a specific geometry of quantum wires: The calculations are applicable to any geometry respecting the specific crystalline symmetry, so we choose circular geometry for calculational convenience.

 $D_4$ -symmetric class-D HOTSC. For 2D  $D_4$ -symmetric systems with spinless fermions, there is an intriguing interacting 2D HOTSC with protected Majorana corner modes  $\xi_k$  and  $\xi'_k$  (k = 1, 2, 3, 4) that can be reformulated to complex fermions  $c_k^{\dagger} = (\xi_k + i\xi'_k)/\sqrt{2}$  (see Fig. 1). In this section we construct this phase by "almost free" coupled wires, with a necessary interaction only defined near the  $D_4$  center. These Majorana

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FIG. 1. Coupled-wire construction of 2D fermionic crystalline higher-order topological phases. Right panel: Dangling gapless modes of  $D_4$ -symmetric class-D or  $C_4$ -symmetric class-BDI HOTSCs. Dashed lines are reflection axes.

corner modes are also reformulated in terms of domain walls of 1D nonchiral Luttinger liquids [89]. Consider 2n decoupled 1D quantum wires with circular geometry (see Fig. 1), then the Lagrangian of the *j*th quantum wire is

$$\mathcal{L}_{0}^{j} = \frac{K_{IJ}^{j}}{4\pi} \big(\partial_{\theta}\phi_{I}^{j}\big) \big(\partial_{t}\phi_{J}^{j}\big) + \frac{V_{IJ}^{j}}{8\pi} \big(\partial_{\theta}\phi_{I}^{j}\big) \big(\partial_{\theta}\phi_{J}^{j}\big), \qquad (1)$$

where  $\phi^j = (\phi_1^j, \phi_2^j)^T$  is the two-component bosonic field of the *j*th quantum wire and  $K^j = \sigma^z$  is the *K* matrix of the topological term [90]. The total Lagrangian of decoupled wires is  $\mathcal{L}_0 = \sum_{j=1}^{2n} \mathcal{L}_0^j$ . The  $D_4$  symmetry properties of these bosonic fields are ( $\mathbf{R} \in C_4/\mathbf{M}_1 \in \mathbb{Z}_2^M$  is the rotation/reflection generator of  $D_4 = C_4 \rtimes \mathbb{Z}_2^M$  symmetry)

$$\boldsymbol{R} : \begin{cases} \phi_1^j(\theta) \mapsto -\phi_1^j(\theta + \pi/2), \\ \phi_2^j(\theta) \mapsto -\phi_2^j(\theta + \pi/2) + \pi, \end{cases}$$
$$\boldsymbol{M}_1 : \begin{cases} \phi_1^j(\theta) \mapsto -\phi_2^j(2\pi - \theta) + \pi/2, \\ \phi_2^j(\theta) \mapsto -\phi_1^j(2\pi - \theta) + \pi/2. \end{cases}$$
(2)

To figure out the Majorana corner modes of a  $D_4$ -symmetric HOTSC, we should further introduce the mass term with a domain-wall structure of each quantum wire,

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{wall}}^{j} = m \sin(2\theta) \cos\left[\phi_{1}^{j}(\theta) + \phi_{2}^{j}(\theta)\right], \qquad (3)$$

where  $\mathcal{L}_{wall}^{j}$  is symmetric under Eq. (2), and  $\mathcal{L}_{wall} = \sum_{j=1}^{2n} \mathcal{L}_{wall}^{j}$ . For each quantum wire with a domain-wall structured mass term, there are four complex fermion zero modes at the poles  $c_{1,2,3,4}^{\dagger}$  of the circle, with  $\theta = 0, \pi/2, \pi, 3\pi/2$  because of the vanishing mass term, which are equivalent to eight MZMs. These dangling 0D gapless modes cannot be gapped in a  $D_4$ -symmetric way.

Subsequently we define two types of  $D_4$ -symmetric Eq. (2) interwire tunnelings that couple the (2j - 2 + k)th and (2j - 1 + k)th quantum wires  $(m_1, m_2 < m, k = 1, 2)$ ,

$$\mathcal{L}_{ck}^{j} = m_k \sum_{\alpha=1}^{2} \cos\left[\phi_{\alpha}^{2j-2+k}(\theta) - \phi_{\alpha}^{2j-1+k}(\theta)\right], \qquad (4)$$

and  $\mathcal{L}_{ck} = \sum_{j=1}^{n} \mathcal{L}_{ck}^{j}$ . There are two extreme cases:  $m_1 \neq 0$ ,  $m_2 = 0/m_1 = 0$ ,  $m_2 \neq 0$  correspond to the phase where

 $\mathcal{L}_{c1}/\mathcal{L}_{c2}$  dominates the interwire physics. For the  $\mathcal{L}_{c1}$ -dominant phase, the (2j - 1)th and 2jth wires are paired up and gapped, hence the corresponding system is fully gapped on a open circle and is topologically trivial.

For the  $\mathcal{L}_{c2}$ -dominant phase, the 2*j*th and (2j + 1)th wires are paired up and gapped, hence all 1D wires except the first and 2*n*th are gapped. The first wire on the edge of the system presents four complex fermions/eight MZMs at the poles of the circle, which are exactly the second-order topological surface modes of a 2D  $D_4$ -symmetric class-D HOTSC. Near the  $D_4$  center, there are also gapless modes on the 2*n*th quantum wire. Distinct from quantum wires away from the  $D_4$  center, the bosonic field  $\phi^{2n}$  of the 2*n*th quantum wires with different polar angles can tunnel to/interact with the field at other places. Consider two interacting terms of the 2*n*th quantum wire near the  $D_4$  center,

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{int}} = m' \sum_{\beta=1}^{2} \cos\left(\sum_{\alpha=1}^{2} \left[\phi_{\alpha}^{2n}(\theta) - \phi_{\alpha}^{2n}(\beta\pi - \theta)\right]\right), \quad (5)$$

i.e., the intrawire couplings of the 2*n*th wire lead to fully gapped bulks. Equivalently, a nontrivial 2D class-D  $D_4$ -symmetric HOTSC is described by 1D coupled wires with Lagrangian  $\mathcal{L}_{D_4}^D = \mathcal{L}_0 + \mathcal{L}_{wall} + \mathcal{L}_{c2} + \mathcal{L}_{int}$ . The intriguing interacting nature of this HOTSC is reflected by  $\mathcal{L}_{int}$  near the  $D_4$  center. On the other hand, the physics away from the  $D_4$  center is well understood on a noninteracting level. The classification of a 2D class-D HOTSC is  $\mathbb{Z}_2$ , composed by phases dominated by interwire coupling  $\mathcal{L}_{c1}$  and  $\mathcal{L}_{c2}$  (see Fig. 5).

*C*<sub>4</sub>-symmetric class-BDI HOTSC. For 2D BDI-class systems with *C*<sub>4</sub> symmetry, there is another type of intriguing interacting 2D HOTSC [45]. We construct these phases by "interacting" coupled wires in this section. Consider 4*n* 1D circular quantum wires, where each wire is described by Lagrangian Eq. (1) with  $\phi^j = (\phi_1^j, \phi_2^j, \phi_3^j, \phi_4^j)^T$  as the four-component bosonic field of the *j*th quantum wire,  $K^j = \sigma^z \oplus \sigma^z$  as the topological *K* matrix, and the total Lagrangian of all 4*n* 1D quantum wires is  $\mathcal{L}_0 = \sum_{j=1}^{4n} \mathcal{L}_0^j$ . The  $(C_4 \times \mathbb{Z}_2^T)$ -symmetry properties are defined as [90]

$$\boldsymbol{R}: \begin{cases} \phi_{1}^{j} \mapsto \phi_{1}^{j} + \phi_{3}^{j} - \phi_{4}^{j} - \pi/2, \\ \phi_{2}^{j} \mapsto \phi_{2}^{j} - \phi_{3}^{j} + \phi_{4}^{j} + \pi/2, \\ \phi_{3}^{j} \mapsto \phi_{1}^{j} + \phi_{2}^{j} - \phi_{3}^{j} + \pi/2, \\ \phi_{4}^{j} \mapsto \phi_{1}^{j} + \phi_{2}^{j} - \phi_{4}^{j} + \pi/2, \\ \phi_{4}^{j} \mapsto \phi_{1}^{j} + \phi_{2}^{j} - \phi_{4}^{j} + \pi/2, \\ f_{1}^{j}(\theta) \mapsto \phi_{2}^{j}(\theta) - \phi_{3}^{j}(\theta) + \phi_{4}^{j}(\theta), \\ \phi_{2}^{j}(\theta) \mapsto \phi_{1}^{j}(\theta) + \phi_{3}^{j}(\theta) - \phi_{4}^{j}(\theta) + \pi, \\ \phi_{3}^{j}(\theta) \mapsto \phi_{1}^{j}(\theta) + \phi_{2}^{j}(\theta) - \phi_{4}^{j}(\theta) + \pi, \\ \phi_{4}^{j}(\theta) \mapsto \phi_{1}^{j}(\theta) + \phi_{2}^{j}(\theta) - \phi_{3}^{j}(\theta). \end{cases}$$
(6)

Then we repeatedly figure out the Majorana corner modes by backscattering terms with a domain-wall structure: For each quantum wire, we introduce a symmetric [cf. Eqs. (6) and (7)] mass term

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{wall}}^{j} = m \sum_{\alpha=1}^{2} \cos\left(\theta - \frac{\alpha\pi}{2}\right) \cos\left[\phi_{\alpha}^{j}(\theta) - \phi_{5-\alpha}^{j}(\theta)\right], \quad (8)$$

and  $\mathcal{L}_{\text{wall}} = \sum_{j=1}^{4n} \mathcal{L}_{\text{wall}}^j$ . For each quantum wire, there are four gapless complex fermions  $c_k^{\dagger}$  (eight MZMs  $\xi_k$  and  $\xi'_k$ ) at the poles of the circle, where two of them at the north and south poles are from the first term of Eq. (8) and other two at the east and west poles are from the second term of Eq. (8). These dangling gapless modes cannot be gapped in a  $(C_4 \times \mathbb{Z}_2^T)$ -symmetric way.

Subsequently we consider  $(C_4 \times \mathbb{Z}_2^T)$ -symmetric [cf. Eqs. (6) and (7)] interwire interactions including four 1D quantum wires (k = 1, 2, 3, 4) [90],

$$\mathcal{L}_{ck}^{j} = m_{k} \sum_{\alpha=1}^{2} \cos \left[ \phi_{\alpha}^{4j-4+k} - \phi_{5-\alpha}^{4j-4+k} + \phi_{\alpha}^{4j-3+k} - \phi_{5-\alpha}^{4j-3+k} \right] + \cos \left[ \phi_{\alpha}^{4j-4+k} - \phi_{5-\alpha}^{4j-4+k} + \phi_{\alpha}^{4j-2+k} - \phi_{5-\alpha}^{4j-2+k} \right] + \cos \left[ \phi_{\alpha}^{4j-2+k} - \phi_{5-\alpha}^{4j-2+k} + \phi_{\alpha}^{4j-1+k} - \phi_{5-\alpha}^{4j-1+k} \right] + \cos \left[ \phi_{\alpha}^{4j-3+k} - \phi_{5-\alpha}^{4j-3+k} + \phi_{\alpha}^{4j-1+k} - \phi_{5-\alpha}^{4j-1+k} \right],$$
(9)

and the total Lagrangian of the interwire couplings is  $\mathcal{L}_{ck} = \sum_{j=1}^{n-1} \mathcal{L}_{ck}^{j}$ . There are four extreme cases:  $m_k \neq 0$  (k = 1, 2, 3, 4) as the only nonzero index in  $m_{1,2,3,4}$ , which corresponds to the phase that  $\mathcal{L}_{ck}$  that dominates the interwire physics. For the  $\mathcal{L}_{c1}$ -dominant phase, the (4j - k)th (k = 0, 1, 2, 3) quantum wires are assembled and gapped, hence the spectrum is fully gapped on a 2D open circle, and the corresponding phase is topologically trivial.

For the  $\mathcal{L}_{c4}$ -dominant phase with  $m_4 \neq 0$  and  $m_{1,2,3} = 0$ , by applying  $\mathcal{L}_{wall}$  and  $\mathcal{L}_{c4}$ , the (4j + 3 - k)th quantum wires are assembled and gapped, and there are only four quantum wires remaining gapless: the first, second, third on the edge, and 4nth near the  $C_4$  center. On the edge, the first, second, and third quantum wires with dangling gapless modes are treated as the higher-order edge state of the 2D  $C_4$ -symmetric class-BDI HOTSC; near the  $C_4$  center, in order to obtain a HOTSC, we should further add some intrawire interactions to fully gap the 4nth quantum wire in order to get a fully gapped bulk state. Consider the four-body interacting terms of a 4nth quantum wire, composed of the backscatterings of bosonic fields  $\phi_{1,2,3,4}^{4n}$  with different polar angles [90],

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{int}} = m' \sum_{\alpha,\beta=1}^{2} \cos\left[\phi_{\alpha}^{4n}(\theta) - \phi_{5-\alpha}^{4n}(\theta) + \phi_{\alpha}^{4n}(\theta + \beta\pi/2) - \phi_{5-\alpha}^{4n}(\theta + \beta\pi/2)\right], \tag{10}$$

i.e., the intrawire interactions of the 4*n*th quantum wire lead to a fully gapped bulk, and a nontrivial 2D ( $C_4 \times \mathbb{Z}_2^T$ )-symmetric HOTSC with spinless fermions is described by 1D coupled quantum wires with Lagrangian  $\mathcal{L}_{C_4}^{\text{BDI}} = \mathcal{L}_0 + \mathcal{L}_{\text{wall}} + \mathcal{L}_{c4} + \mathcal{L}_{\text{int}}$ . Similar for the  $\mathcal{L}_{c2}$ - and  $\mathcal{L}_{c3}$ -dominant phases, there are four topologically distinct phases for a 2D BDI-class ( $C_4 \times \mathbb{Z}_2^T$ )-symmetric system (see Fig. 2). The interacting nature of these topological phases is reflected by interwire interactions  $\mathcal{L}_{ck}$  and intrawire interactions near the  $C_4$  center,  $\mathcal{L}_{\text{int}}$ . The classification of a 2D class-BDI HOTSC is  $\mathbb{Z}_4$ , composed of phases dominated by interwire couplings  $\mathcal{L}_{ck}$  (k = 1, 2, 3, 4).

The coupled-wire construction is not limited to superconductors, but it is also applicable to topological insulators: the

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FIG. 2. Four distinct phases of a 2D BDI-class  $(C_4 \times \mathbb{Z}_2^T)$ -symmetric system. Each of the four 1D wires with narrower intervals can be gapped by interwire interactions  $\mathcal{L}_{ck}$ , and the 1D wire near the  $C_4$  center can be gapped by intrawire interactions  $\mathcal{L}_{int}$ .

only difference is that the Luttinger liquid Eq. (1) should respect the U(1) charge conservation.

Imposition of lattice translation. With point group symmetric cases, using a  $D_4$ -symmetric class-D example, we demonstrate that the imposition of lattice translation symmetry is straightforward: We impose the lattice translation to  $D_4$  leads to the *p4mm* wallpaper group. We arrange eight quantum wires near each  $D_4$  center (four vertical and four horizontal—see Fig. 3), where different topological phases are also controlled by patterns of interwire couplings: The topologically trivial phase is dominated by  $\mathcal{L}_{c1}$  (black double arrows in Fig. 3), and the nontrivial phase is dominated by  $\mathcal{L}_{c2}$  (red double arrows in Fig. 3) and  $\mathcal{L}_{int}$  at each  $D_4$  center in order to the fully gapped bulk.

Quantum phase transition of HOTSC. The coupled-wire picture serves as a unique platform for investigating the quantum phase transition (QPT) of 2D HOTSCs because of its clear formulations. In this section, we elucidate the QPT of a 2D intriguing interacting  $D_4$ -symmetric HOTSC as a representative example. Consider the  $D_4$ -symmetric Lagrangian  $\mathcal{L}_0 + \mathcal{L}_{c1} + \mathcal{L}_{c2} + \mathcal{L}_{int}$ , where above we have discussed two extreme cases with  $m_1 = 0/m_2 = 0$ , derived two distinct phases characterized by the appearance of Majorana corner modes on the edge (first quantum wire). Now we suppose  $m = 10m_1$  and set both  $m_1$  and  $m_2$  finite and study the possible QPT by tuning their ratio  $m_2/m_1$ . As summarized in Fig. 4, when we turn on  $m_2$  in the  $m_2 < m_1$  regime, the system remains fully gapped with a narrower gap; at  $m_1 = m_2$ , the gap



FIG. 3. Coupled wires of a 2D *p4mm*-symmetric class-D HOTSC. Each " $\bigotimes$ " symbol depicts a center of  $D_4$ , each line (horizontal or vertical) depicts a quantum wire, and each dot depicts a domain wall described by  $\mathcal{L}^j_{wall}$ . Red and black double arrows depict different interwire couplings  $\mathcal{L}_{c1}$  and  $\mathcal{L}_{c2}$ .

closes and the system becomes critical; as we keep increasing  $m_2$  toward the  $m_2 > m_1$  regime, the system reopens a *bulk* gap but leaves several gapless modes on the edge, which are exactly the Majorana domain walls of a 1D quantum wire on the edge. Therefore, we conclude that there is a clear quantum phase transition from a trivial state to a 2D  $D_4$ -symmetric HOTSC at the  $m_1 = m_2$  point. Equivalently, this quantum phase transition is characterized by different interwire entanglement patterns of 1D quantum wires, as illustrated in Fig. 5.

For a 2D C<sub>4</sub>-symmetric class-BDI system, the quantum phase transitions can be described in a similar way with little complications. For this case, there are four distinct phases controlled by four different parameters  $m_{1,2,3,4}$  (see Fig. 2). As an example, for the quantum phase transition between phase 2 and phase 3, we set  $m_1 = m_4 = 0$  and investigate the bulk gap by tuning the ratio  $m_2/m_3$ . Heuristically, we see that the system will be critical for  $m_2 = m_3$ , hence there will be a quantum phase transition at this point [90]. As a matter of fact, distinct phases of 2D HOTSC are controlled by different patterns of interwire entanglements, and their quantum phase transitions can be manipulated by tuning the intensities of different types of interwire couplings. In other words, a coupled-wire construction provides a straightforward way of comprehending the quantum phase transitions of 2D HOTSCs, by tuning the interwire couplings to control the







FIG. 5. Quantum phase transition of a 2D  $D_4$ -symmetric HOTSC, with respect to  $m_2 - m_1$ . Each pair of quantum wires with narrower intervals is coupled.

patterns of interwire entanglement. Different phases are manifested by different numbers of Majorana zero modes at each pole of the outermost quantum wire.

*Experimental implications*. In this Letter, the explicit manifestations of second-order modes on the edges of the systems by domain-wall structured quantum wires serve as a direct opportunity for observing the higher-order topological phases by tunneling spectroscopic measurements. Recently, the coupled-wire picture was straightforwardly manifested in two-dimensional moiré superlattices [91,92]. In particular, in Ref. [92], one-dimensional Luttinger liquid behavior has been explicitly observed in a 2D bilayer WTe<sub>2</sub> moiré superlattice by direct transport measurements. Hence our approach can be applied directly to moiré superlattices.

Conclusion and discussion. The coupled-wire construction is a celebrated aspect in topological phases of quantum matter, for both long-range and short-range entangled systems. In this Letter, we establish the coupled-wire construction of a 2D intriguing interacting fermionic crystalline HOTSC, with two representative examples: 2D D<sub>4</sub>-symmetric class-D and C<sub>4</sub>-symmetric class-BDI HOTSC phases. An indispensable advantage of the coupled-wire construction is that the powerful bosonization technique can be utilized, and the interwire couplings can be straightforwardly involved by many-body backscattering terms in the Lagrangian. With this advantage, we use a 1D nonchiral Luttinger liquid with a domain-wall structured mass term as an "almost gapped" 1D quantum wire. Based on these quantum wires, we introduce some suitable interwire couplings in order to gap out the bulk by assemblies of quantum wires. The remaining ungapped quantum wires on the edge are treated as the edge theory of 2D HOTSCs. Near the center of the point group, the ungapped quantum wires are gapped by interactions of bosonic fields at different places. The lattice translation symmetry can be straightforwardly imposed. Distinct HOTSCs are manifested by different patterns of interwire entanglement. Furthermore, the concrete coupled-wire constructions serve as a straightforward way to comprehend the quantum phase transitions of 2D HOTSCs, by directly tuning the interwire couplings to control the interwire entanglement patterns. The coupled-wire construction can also be generalized to the systems with arbitrary crystalline symmetry SG and internal symmetry  $G_0$  in arbitrary

dimensions, and especially in 2D moiré superlattices, with more complicated interwire entanglement patterns, and their quantum phase transitions should also be controlled by the interwire entanglement patterns of the quantum wires. Furthermore, with explicit corner modes, the 2D HOTSC may be directly justified by tunneling spectroscopic measurements on the edge.

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