



HAL
open science

A Hands-on TTK Tutorial for Absolute Beginners

Christoph Garth, Robin G. C. Maack, Mathieu Pont, Julien Tierny

► **To cite this version:**

Christoph Garth, Robin G. C. Maack, Mathieu Pont, Julien Tierny. A Hands-on TTK Tutorial for Absolute Beginners. IEEE VIS Tutorials, Oct 2023, Melbourne, Australia. hal-04155033

HAL Id: hal-04155033

<https://hal.science/hal-04155033>

Submitted on 7 Jul 2023

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

A Hands-on TTK Tutorial for Absolute Beginners

Christoph Garth
RPTU Kaiserslautern-Landau

Robin Maack
RPTU Kaiserslautern-Landau

Mathieu Pont
CNRS, Sorbonne Universite

Julien Tierny
CNRS, Sorbonne Universite

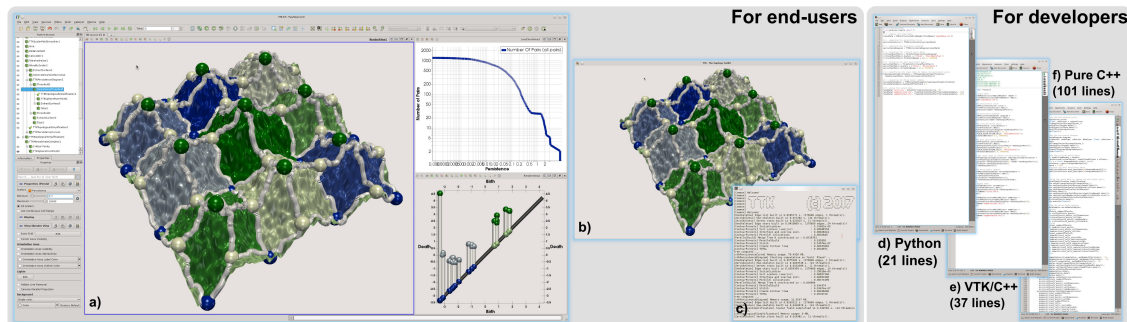


Figure 1: TTK is a software platform for topological data analysis and visualization. It is both easily accessible to end users (ParaView plugins (a), VTK-based generic GUIs (b) or command-line programs (c)) and flexible for developers (Python (d), VTK/C++ (e) or dependence-free C++ (f) bindings). TTK provides an efficient and unified approach to topological data representation and simplification, which enables in this example a Morse-Smale complex (a) to comply to the level of simplification dictated by a persistence diagram (bottom-right linked view, a). Code snippets are provided (d-f) to reproduce this pipeline.

1 LEVEL OF THE TUTORIAL

This tutorial is targeted at a *Beginner* audience.

2 POTENTIAL SCHEDULE CONFLICTS

If possible, we would like to avoid any scheduling overlap with IEEE LDAV 2023 and the IEEE TopoInVis 2023 workshop.

3 ABSTRACT

This tutorial provides a basic, beginner’s introduction to topological data analysis and visualization with the Topology ToolKit (TTK). **While previous editions of the TTK tutorial [12, 13, 15, 17, 18] (2018 to 2022) were organized as mini-symposia (focused on the descriptions of TTK’s latest features), this year, in contrast, we would like to organize a very basic beginner’s hands-on tutorial.** Specifically, the goal of this tutorial is to accompany attendees in the installation of TTK on their laptop as well as in the running of a few basic examples, all in a very beginner-friendly step-by-step description. This decision is motivated by attendee feedback which we collected at previous editions of the TTK tutorial. We address this feedback in this tutorial proposal. Then, for the first time, beginners would be able to come to the tutorial without prior TTK experience, and walk out with TTK installed on their system, capable of running a few examples and ready to go further. We believe this basic hands-on tutorial will facilitate the adoption of TTK and topological techniques to a broader audience.

The tutorial will be organized as follows. The first hands-on exercise will be dedicated to the installation of TTK. The second hands-on exercise will be focused on ParaView’s basic usage. The following three hands-on exercises will be dedicated to the step-by-step replication of three examples extracted from TTK’s online example database [57] (vortex extraction in fluid dynamics, Morse-Smale complex extraction in quantum chemistry and merge tree comparison in ensemble data).

We kindly ask potential attendees to optionally pre-register at the following address, in order for us to reach out to them ahead of the tutorial with information updates (for instance, last minute updates, instructions to download the tutorial material package, etc.): <https://forms.gle/t4xX4a3pJjyiU67D9>

Tutorial web page (data, material, schedule, etc.): <https://topology-tool-kit.github.io/ieeeVisTutorial.html>

4 TUTORIAL ORGANIZATION

Motivations Topological analysis techniques [29,42,51] have shown to be practical solutions in various contexts: isosurface extraction [6,45], feature tracking [48], volume rendering [62], data simplification [35,55] and compression [49], similarity estimation [47,56,58], geometry processing [52,60], data science [8,10] or ensemble analysis [14,31,43,44,58]. They enable the concise and complete capture of the structure of the input data into high-level *topological data representations* such as persistence diagrams [11,24,59], contour trees [5,20–22], Reeb graphs [23,40,41,54], or Morse-Smale complexes [9,26,27]. Successful applications in a variety of fields of science have been documented (combustion [3,25,32], fluid dynamics [4,7,30,37], material sciences [16,28,33], chemistry [1,19,38,39], and astrophysics [46,50]), which further demonstrates the importance of these techniques. While reference textbooks have been published [11], topological methods have not yet been widely adopted as a standard data analysis tool. We believe one of the reasons for this is the lack of open-source software that implements these algorithms in a generic, user-friendly, and efficient way. The Topology ToolKit (TTK) [2,34,53] has been released (BSD license) to fill this gap and 17 institutions have contributed to its development so far. This indicates that a user base exists and that further efforts towards the explanation of TTK’s usage would be beneficial to the community. **Target audience** This tutorial targets beginners (students, practitioners, or researchers) who have no prior experience with TTK or would like help to get started with TTK.

Tutorial goals The goal of this tutorial is to accompany attendees in the installation of TTK on their laptop as well as in the running of a few basic examples, all in a very beginner-friendly step-by-step description. Attendees would be able to come to the tutorial without prior TTK experience, and walk out with TTK installed on their

system, capable of running a few examples and ready to go further. **Hands-on material** The entire tutorial will be dedicated to detailed examples that the participants will be invited to reproduce. We will provide a rich material package, detailing in a step-by-step manner the installation of TTK, ParaView’s basic usage as well as the running of a few basic examples extracted from TTK’s online example database [57].

Optional pre-registration In previous editions, we observed that attendees would benefit from having time before the tutorial to download the tutorial material. If our proposal is accepted, we will use the following on-line form <https://forms.gle/t4xX4a3pJjyiU67D9> to notify attendees about how to download the material and build a mailing list to help form an informal community for the tutorial.

Proposal strengths In contrast to previous tutorials on topological methods [61], we believe this proposal to have a unique concrete and applicative appeal, by its focus on the *usage* of topological methods rather than on their *foundations*. Thus, we expect it to attract a larger audience than the specific subset of IEEE VIS attendees typically found in traditional topology sessions. Moreover, in comparison to the previous editions of this tutorial, this year’s edition will have a special emphasis on basic beginner’s aspects, which we believe will facilitate the adoption of TTK and topological techniques to a broader audience.

Detailed content The tutorial is divided into two main parts (each part being subdivided into modules), for a target duration of approximately 3 hours. We plan for a 30-minute coffee break between the two main parts. However, this can be organized differently to fit any change in the coffee-break organization of IEEE VIS.

The first part of the tutorial (Sec. A, below) will cover the prerequisites for the hands-on exercises (Sec. B). Specifically, Sec. A will cover the core notions of Topological Data Analysis and it will illustrate them with concrete examples of data analysis tasks. A quick tour of ParaView will also be given, since it will be used as the main user interface for the hands-on exercises (Sec. B). Finally, Sec. A will also include (at the beginning) a session where participants will be invited to install TTK on their laptops.

The second part of the tutorial (Sec. B) will be dedicated to representative examples of data analysis pipelines. Specifically, it will cover three typical examples taken from TTK’s online example repository [57]. These examples will illustrate how to: (1) extract points of interest in fluid dynamics (i.e. center of vortices), (2) extract a network of ridge lines in quantum chemistry (to represent molecular features such as carbon cycles or non-covalent interactions) and (3) compare datasets based on their topological description (by computing distances between merge trees).

A detailed outline of the program will be made available to tutorial participants on the tutorial webpage ahead of VIS 2023, but is omitted in this proposal for brevity. After the tutorial concludes, all content will be available on TTK’s website.

A. Preliminaries (65 minutes)

A1. General introduction (5 minutes) This talk will provide an overview of the tutorial.

A2. Installing TTK (20 minutes) This first hands-on session will describe how to install TTK. Several options will be presented. The default option would be via the installation of Kitware’s official ParaView distribution <https://www.paraview.org/download/>. Other options will be presented, such as Ubuntu packages, Anaconda packages or Docker images. At the end of this session, we expect all attendees to have TTK installed and running on their laptop.

A3. An introduction to Topological Data Analysis (20 minutes) This talk will cover the theoretical notions about Topological Data Analysis which are required for the followup step-by-step examples (Sec. B). Specifically, it will introduce: critical points, persistence diagrams, Reeb graphs, and Morse-Smale complexes. Also, it will illustrate how these notions can be used for data analysis.

A4. An introduction to ParaView’s basic usage (20 minutes) This

second hands-on session will describe the basic notions for using ParaView. The notion of pipeline browser will be presented, along with the properties and information panels for each filter of the pipeline. The different views will also be discussed. Screenshot features will be illustrated. Finally, pipeline IO will be presented (PVSM statefile) and Python exports will be illustrated.

B. A few step-by-step examples (85 minutes)

B1. Vortex extraction in fluid dynamics (25 minutes) This hands-on exercise will present the entry *Built-in Example 1* from TTK’s online example database [57]. Then, we will describe to participants how to completely re-create this example from scratch.

B2. Morse-Smale complex computation (25 minutes) This hands-on exercise will present the entry *Persistent Generators AT* from TTK’s online example database [57]. Then, we will describe to participants how to completely re-create this example from scratch.

B3. Merge tree comparison and matching (25 minutes) This hands-on exercise will present the entry *Merge Tree Feature Tracking* from TTK’s online example database [57]. Then, we will describe to participants how to completely re-create this example from scratch.

B4. Concluding remarks (10 minutes) This talk will conclude the tutorial and discuss perspectives and current efforts.

5 BACKGROUND AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Christoph Garth – garth@rptu.de – is a professor of computer science at RPTU Kaiserslautern-Landau, and head of the scientific visualization group there. His research interests encompass the visualization and analysis of large scale data sets using methods from topological analysis, feature extraction, visual analytics, and high-performance computing, among others. In this context, he has employed TTK in teaching, to provide students with an in-depth understanding of topological methods, as well as for his research, as a robust and mature basis to develop novel visualization algorithms.

Robin Maack – maack@rptu.de – is a PhD student at the Scientific Visualization Lab at RPTU Kaiserslautern-Landau. He did his Master Studies in Computer Science at TU Kaiserslautern. His work focuses on algorithms and techniques in scientific visualization and computational topology. Through his work on Morse-Smale complex segmentation [36], he became a contributor for TTK.

Mathieu Pont – mathieu.pont@sorbonne-universite.fr – is a Ph.D. student at Sorbonne Universite. He received a M.S. degree in Computer Science from Paris Descartes University in 2020. His notable contributions to TTK include distances, geodesics, barycenters [43] and principal geodesic analysis [44] of merge trees.

Julien Tierny – julien.tierny@sorbonne-universite.fr – received the Ph.D. degree in Computer Science from the University of Lille in 2008. He is a CNRS senior scientist, affiliated with Sorbonne Universite. Prior to his CNRS tenure, he held a Fulbright fellowship and was a postdoc researcher at the SCI Institute at the University of Utah. His expertise includes topological data analysis and visualization. He is the lead developer of the Topology ToolKit (TTK).

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This work is partially supported by the European Commission grant ERC-2019-COG “TORI” (ref. 863464, <https://erc-tori.github.io/>).

REFERENCES

- [1] H. Bhatia, A. G. Gyulassy, V. Lordi, J. E. Pask, V. Pascucci, and P.-T. Bremer. Topoms: Comprehensive topological exploration for molecular and condensed-matter systems. *J. of Comp. Chem.*, 2018.
- [2] T. Bin Masood, J. Budin, M. Falk, G. Favelier, C. Garth, C. Gueunet, P. Guillou, L. Hofmann, P. Hristov, A. Kamakshidasan, C. Kappe, P. Klacansky, P. Laurin, J. Levine, J. Lukaszczk, D. Sakurai, M. Soler, P. Steneteg, J. Tierny, W. Usher, J. Vidal, and M. Wozniak. An Overview of the Topology Toolkit. In *TopolnVis*, 2019.
- [3] P. Bremer, G. Weber, J. Tierny, V. Pascucci, M. Day, and J. Bell. Interactive exploration and analysis of large scale simulations using topology-based data segmentation. *IEEE TVCG*, 2011.
- [4] T. Bridel-Bertomeu, B. Fovet, and F. V. Julien Tierny. Topological analysis of high velocity turbulent flow. In *IEEE LDAV Posters*, 2019.
- [5] H. Carr, J. Snoeyink, and U. Axen. Computing contour trees in all dimensions. In *Symp. on Dis. Alg.*, 2000.
- [6] H. Carr, J. Snoeyink, and M. van de Panne. Simplifying flexible isosurfaces using local geometric measures. In *IEEE VIS*, 2004.
- [7] F. Chen, H. Obermaier, H. Hagen, B. Hamann, J. Tierny, and V. Pascucci. Topology analysis of time-dependent multi-fluid data using the reeb graph. *Computer Aided Geometric Design*, 2013.
- [8] R. Cotsakis, J. Shaw, J. Tierny, and J. A. Levine. Implementing Persistence-Based Clustering of Point Clouds in the Topology Toolkit. In *TopolnVis Book*, 2020.
- [9] L. De Floriani, U. Fugacci, F. Juricich, and P. Magillo. Morse complexes for shape segmentation and homological analysis: discrete models and algorithms. *CGF*, 2015.
- [10] H. Doraiswamy, J. Tierny, P. J. S. Silva, L. G. Nonato, and C. Silva. TopoMap: A 0-dimensional Homology Preserving Projection of High-Dimensional Data. *IEEE TVCG*, 2020.
- [11] H. Edelsbrunner and J. Harer. *Computational Topology: An Introduction*. American Mathematical Society, 2009.
- [12] M. Falk, C. Garth, C. Gueunet, J. A. Levine, J. Lukaszczk, J. Tierny, W. Usher, and J. Vidal. Topological data analysis made easy with the topology toolkit, a sequel. In *IEEE VIS Tutorials*, 2019.
- [13] M. Falk, C. Garth, C. Gueunet, J. A. Levine, J. Lukaszczk, J. Tierny, and J. Vidal. Topological Data Analysis Made Easy with the Topology Toolkit, What is New? In *Proc. of IEEE VIS Tutorials*, 2020.
- [14] G. Favelier, N. Faraj, B. Summa, and J. Tierny. Persistence Atlas for Critical Point Variability in Ensembles. *IEEE TVCG*, 2018.
- [15] G. Favelier, C. Gueunet, A. Gyulassy, J. Jomier, J. Levine, J. Lukaszczk, D. Sakurai, M. Soler, J. Tierny, W. Usher, and Q. Wu. Topological data analysis made easy with the Topology Toolkit. In *IEEE VIS Tutorials*, 2018.
- [16] G. Favelier, C. Gueunet, and J. Tierny. Visualizing ensembles of viscous fingers. In *IEEE SciVis Context*, 2016.
- [17] C. Garth, C. Gueunet, P. Guillou, L. Hofmann, J. A. Levine, J. Lukaszczk, J. Tierny, J. Vidal, B. Wang, and F. Wetzels. Topological Analysis of Ensemble Scalar Data with TTK. In *Proc. of IEEE VIS Tutorials*, 2021.
- [18] C. Garth, C. Gueunet, P. Guillou, F. Juricich, J. A. Levine, J. Lukaszczk, M. Pont, J. Tierny, J. Vidal, B. Wang, and F. Wetzels. Topological Analysis of Ensemble Scalar Data with TTK, A Sequel. In *Proc. of IEEE VIS Tutorials*, 2022.
- [19] D. Guenther, R. Alvarez-Boto, J. Contreras-Garcia, J.-P. Piquemal, and J. Tierny. Characterizing molecular interactions in chemical systems. *IEEE TVCG*, 2014.
- [20] C. Gueunet, P. Fortin, J. Jomier, and J. Tierny. Contour forests: Fast multi-threaded augmented contour trees. In *IEEE LDAV*, 2016.
- [21] C. Gueunet, P. Fortin, J. Jomier, and J. Tierny. Task-based Augmented Merge Trees with Fibonacci Heaps. In *IEEE LDAV*, 2017.
- [22] C. Gueunet, P. Fortin, J. Jomier, and J. Tierny. Task-based Augmented Contour Trees with Fibonacci heaps. *IEEE TPDS*, 2019.
- [23] C. Gueunet, P. Fortin, J. Jomier, and J. Tierny. Task-based Augmented Reeb Graphs with Dynamic ST-Trees. In *Eurographics Symposium on Parallel Graphics and Visualization*, 2019.
- [24] P. Guillou, J. Vidal, and J. Tierny. Discrete Morse Sandwich: Fast Computation of Persistence Diagrams for Scalar Data – An Algorithm and A Benchmark. *IEEE TVCG*, 2023.
- [25] A. Gyulassy, P. Bremer, R. Grouh, H. Kolla, J. Chen, and V. Pascucci. Stability of dissipation elements: A case study in combustion. *Comp. Graph. For.*, 2014.
- [26] A. Gyulassy, P. T. Bremer, B. Hamann, and V. Pascucci. A practical approach to morse-smale complex computation: Scalability and generality. *IEEE TVCG*, 2008.
- [27] A. Gyulassy, D. Guenther, J. A. Levine, J. Tierny, and V. Pascucci. Conforming morse-smale complexes. *IEEE TVCG*, 2014.
- [28] A. Gyulassy, V. Natarajan, M. Duchaineau, V. Pascucci, E. Bringa, A. Higginbotham, and B. Hamann. Topologically Clean Distance Fields. *IEEE TVCG*, 2007.
- [29] C. Heine, H. Leitte, M. Hlawitschka, F. Juricich, L. De Floriani, G. Scheuermann, H. Hagen, and C. Garth. A survey of topology-based methods in visualization. *CGF*, 2016.
- [30] J. Kasten, J. Reininghaus, I. Hotz, and H. Hege. Two-dimensional time-dependent vortex regions based on the acceleration magnitude. *IEEE TVCG*, 2011.
- [31] M. Kontak, J. Vidal, and J. Tierny. Statistical parameter selection for clustering persistence diagrams. In *SuperComputing Workshop on Urgent HPC*, 2019.
- [32] D. E. Laney, P. Bremer, A. Mascarenhas, P. Miller, and V. Pascucci. Understanding the structure of the turbulent mixing layer in hydrodynamic instabilities. *IEEE TVCG*, 2006.
- [33] J. Lukaszczk, G. Aldrich, M. Steptoe, G. Favelier, C. Gueunet, J. Tierny, R. Maciejewski, B. Hamann, and H. Leitte. Viscous fingering: A topological visual analytic approach. In *PMVMSP*, 2017.
- [34] J. Lukaszczk, J. Beran, W. Engelke, M. Falk, A. Friederici, C. Garth, L. Hofmann, I. Hotz, P. Hristov, W. Köpp, T. B. Masood, M. Olejniczak, P. Rosen, J.-T. Sohn, T. Weinkauff, K. Werner, and J. Tierny. Report of the TopolnVis TTK Hackathon: Experiences, Lessons Learned, and Perspectives. In *TopolnVis*, 2019.
- [35] J. Lukaszczk, C. Garth, R. Maciejewski, and J. Tierny. Localized Topological Simplification of Scalar Data. *IEEE TVCG*, 2020.
- [36] R. Maack, J. Lukaszczk, J. Tierny, H. Hagen, R. Maciejewski, and C. Garth. Parallel Computation of Piecewise Linear Morse-Smale Segmentations. *IEEE TVCG*, 2023.
- [37] F. Nauleau, F. Vivodtzev, T. Bridel-Bertomeu, H. Beaugendre, and J. Tierny. Topological Analysis of Ensembles of Hydrodynamic Turbulent Flows – An Experimental Study. In *IEEE LDAV*, 2022.
- [38] M. Olejniczak, A. S. P. Gomes, and J. Tierny. A Topological Data Analysis Perspective on Non-Covalent Interactions in Relativistic Calculations. *International Journal of Quantum Chemistry*, 2019.
- [39] M. Olejniczak and J. Tierny. Topological Data Analysis of Vortices in the Magnetically-Induced Current Density in LiH Molecule. *Physical Chemistry Chemical Physics*, 2023.
- [40] S. Parsa. A deterministic $(m \log m)$ time algorithm for the reeb graph. In *Symp. on Comp. Geom.*, 2012.
- [41] V. Pascucci, G. Scorzelli, P. T. Bremer, and A. Mascarenhas. Robust on-line computation of Reeb graphs: simplicity and speed. *ACM Trans. on Graph.*, 2007.
- [42] V. Pascucci, X. Tricoche, H. Hagen, and J. Tierny. *Topological Methods in Data Analysis and Visualization: Theory, Algorithms and Applications*. Springer, 2010.
- [43] M. Pont, J. Vidal, J. Delon, and J. Tierny. Wasserstein Distances, Geodesics and Barycenters of Merge Trees. *IEEE TVCG*, 2021.
- [44] M. Pont, J. Vidal, and J. Tierny. Principal Geodesic Analysis of Merge Trees (and Persistence Diagrams). *IEEE TVCG*, 2023.
- [45] E. Santos, J. Tierny, A. Khan, B. Grimm, L. Lins, J. Freire, V. Pascucci, C. Silva, S. Klasky, R. Barreto, and N. Podhorski. Enabling advanced visualization tools in a web-based simulation monitoring system. In *Proc. of IEEE eScience*, 2009.
- [46] N. Shivashankar, P. Pranav, V. Natarajan, R. van de Weygaert, E. P. Bos, and S. Rieder. Felix: A topology based framework for visual exploration of cosmic filaments. *IEEE TVCG*, 2016.
- [47] M. Soler, M. Petitfrere, G. Darce, M. Plainchault, B. Conche, and J. Tierny. Ranking Viscous Finger Simulations to an Acquired Ground Truth with Topology-Aware Matchings. In *IEEE LDAV*, 2019.
- [48] M. Soler, M. Plainchault, B. Conche, and J. Tierny. Lifted wasserstein matcher for fast and robust topology tracking. In *IEEE LDAV*, 2018.
- [49] M. Soler, M. Plainchault, B. Conche, and J. Tierny. Topologically controlled lossy compression. In *IEEE PV*, 2018.
- [50] T. Soubrie. The persistent cosmic web and its filamentary structure: Theory and implementations. *RAS*, 2011.
- [51] J. Tierny. *Topological Data Analysis for Scientific Visualization*. Springer, 2018.
- [52] J. Tierny, J. Daniels, L. G. Nonato, V. Pascucci, and C. Silva. Interactive quadrangulation with Reeb atlases and connectivity textures. *IEEE TVCG*, 2012.
- [53] J. Tierny, G. Favelier, J. A. Levine, C. Gueunet, and M. Michaux. The Topology Toolkit. *IEEE TVCG*, 2017. <https://topology-tool-kit.github.io/>.
- [54] J. Tierny, A. Gyulassy, E. Simon, and V. Pascucci. Loop surgery for volumetric meshes: Reeb graphs reduced to contour trees. *IEEE TVCG*, 2009.
- [55] J. Tierny and V. Pascucci. Generalized topological simplification of scalar fields on surfaces. *IEEE TVCG*, 2012.
- [56] J. Tierny, J.-P. Vandeborre, and M. Daoudi. Partial 3D shape retrieval by reeb pattern unfolding. *CGF*, 2009.
- [57] TTK Contributors. TTK Example Online Database, 2021. <https://topology-tool-kit.github.io/examples>.
- [58] J. Vidal, J. Budin, and J. Tierny. Progressive Wasserstein Barycenters of Persistence Diagrams. *IEEE TVCG*, 2019.
- [59] J. Vidal and J. Tierny. Fast Approximation of Persistence Diagrams with Guarantees. In *IEEE LDAV*, 2021.
- [60] A. Vintescu, P. Dupont, G. Lavoué, P. Memari, and J. Tierny. Conformal factor persistence for fast hierarchical cone extraction. In *Eurographics (short papers)*, 2017.
- [61] G. Weber, P.-T. Bremer, H. Carr, and A. Gyulassy. Scalar topology in visual data analysis. In *IEEE VIS Tutorials*, 2009.
- [62] G. Weber, S. E. Dillard, H. Carr, V. Pascucci, and B. Hamann. Topology-controlled volume rendering. *IEEE TVCG*, 2007.