Robust Target Localization and Segmentation: Application of Kernel-based statistical methods to computer vision

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This work aims to contribute to the area of visual tracking, which is the process of identifying an object of interest through a sequence of successive images. The thesis explores kernel-based statistical methods. Two algorithms are developed for visual tracking that are robust to noise and occlusions. In the first algorithm, a kernel PCA-based eigenspace representation is used. The de-noising and clustering capabilities of the kernel PCA procedure lead to a robust algorithm. In the second method, a robust density comparison framework is developed that is applied to visual tracking, where an object is tracked by minimizing the distance between a model distribution and given candidate distributions. The superior performance of kernel-based algorithms comes at a price of increased storage and computational requirements. A novel method is developed that takes advantage of the universal approximation capabilities of generalized radial basis function neural networks to reduce the computational and storage requirements for kernel-based methods.

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