

# A Comparative Analysis of SIFT, SURF, KAZE, AKAZE, ORB, and BRISK

Shaharyar Ahmed Khan Tareen

National University of Sciences and Technology (NUST)  
Islamabad, Pakistan  
sakts@live.com

Zahra Saleem

Fatima Jinnah Women University (FJWU)  
Rawalpindi, Pakistan  
zahse@outlook.com

**Abstract**—Image registration is the process of matching, aligning and overlaying two or more images of a scene, which are captured from different viewpoints. It is extensively used in numerous vision based applications. Image registration has five main stages: Feature Detection and Description; Feature Matching; Outlier Rejection; Derivation of Transformation Function; and Image Reconstruction. Timing and accuracy of feature-based Image Registration mainly depend on computational efficiency and robustness of the selected feature-detector-descriptor, respectively. Therefore, choice of feature-detector-descriptor is a critical decision in feature-matching applications. This article presents a comprehensive comparison of SIFT, SURF, KAZE, AKAZE, ORB, and BRISK algorithms. It also elucidates a critical dilemma: Which algorithm is more invariant to scale, rotation and viewpoint changes? To investigate this problem, image matching has been performed with these features to match the scaled versions (5% to 500%), rotated versions (0° to 360°), and perspective-transformed versions of standard images with the original ones. Experiments have been conducted on diverse images taken from benchmark datasets: University of OXFORD, MATLAB, VLFeat, and OpenCV. Nearest-Neighbor-Distance-Ratio has been used as the feature-matching strategy while RANSAC has been applied for rejecting outliers and fitting the transformation models. Results are presented in terms of quantitative comparison, feature-detection-description time, feature-matching time, time of outlier-rejection and model fitting, repeatability, and error in recovered results as compared to the ground-truths. SIFT and BRISK are found to be the most accurate algorithms while ORB and BRISK are most efficient. The article comprises rich information that will be very useful for making important decisions in vision based applications and main aim of this work is to set a benchmark for researchers, regardless of any particular area.

**Keywords**—SIFT; SURF; KAZE; AKAZE; ORB; BRISK; RANSAC; nearest neighbor distance ratio; feature detection; feature matching; image registration; scale invariance; rotation invariance; affine invariance; image matching; mosaicing

## I. INTRODUCTION

Image matching is the cornerstone of many *computer and machine vision* applications specially: Robot Navigation, Pose Estimation [1], Visual Odometry [2], [3]; Visual Simultaneous Localization and Mapping [4], [5]; Object Detection, Object Tracking, Augmented Reality [6], Image Mosaicing, and Panorama Stitching [7]. Pose estimation is performed by deriving the perspective transform for the image captured at final pose with respect to the image captured at initial pose.

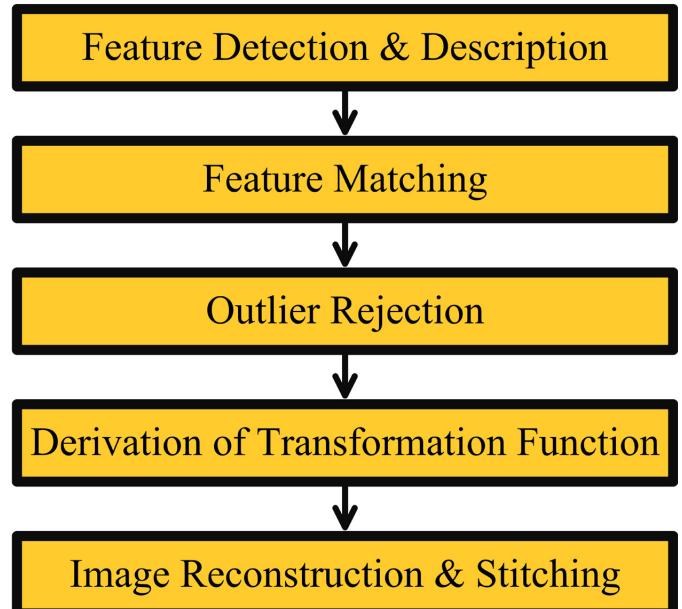


Fig. 1. Generic phases of image registration.

Visual odometry is the measurement of distance covered by a mobile system on the basis of visual information. Vision based Simultaneous Localization and Mapping deals with localizing a mobile agent in an environment while mapping its surroundings simultaneously. Object detection and tracking is based on detection and matching of common features between object's image and the scene. Image stitching or mosaicing is the process of generating a large-scale consolidated image from multiple small-scale overlapping images. It is widely applied in aerial, marine and satellite imagery to yield a continuous single picture of subject environments. Panorama generation software provided in mobile phones and digital cameras is another major application of mosaicing. All these applications require presence of some overlapping region (typically more than 30%) between any two successive images for matching.

Five main stages of image registration are: *Feature Detection and Description*; *Feature Matching*; *Outlier Rejection*; *Derivation of Transformation Function*; and *Image Reconstruction*. A *feature-detector* is an algorithm that detects *feature-points* (also called *interest-points* or *key-points*) in an image [8]. Features are generally detected in the form of

*corners, blobs, edges, junctions, lines etc.* The detected features are subsequently described in logically different ways on the basis of unique patterns possessed by their neighboring pixels. This process is called *feature description* as it describes each feature by assigning it a distinctive identity which enables their effective recognition for matching. Some feature-detectors are readily available with their designated feature description algorithm while others exist individually. However the individual feature-detectors can be paired with several types of pertinent feature-descriptors. SIFT, SURF, KAZE, AKAZE, ORB, and BRISK are among the fundamental *scale, rotation and affine invariant* feature-detectors, each having a designated feature-descriptor and possessing its own merits and demerits. Therefore, the term “*feature-detector-descriptor*” will be used for these algorithms in this paper.

After feature-detection-description, *feature-matching* is performed by using *L1-norm* or *L2-norm* for string based descriptors (SIFT, SURF, KAZE etc.) and *Hamming distance* for binary descriptors (AKAZE, ORB, BRISK etc.). Different matching strategies can be adopted for matching features like *Threshold based matching; Nearest Neighbor; Nearest Neighbor Distance Ratio etc.* each having its own strengths and weaknesses [9]. Incorrect matches (or *outliers*) cannot be completely avoided in the *feature-matching* stage, thus another phase of *outlier-rejection* is mandatory for accurate fitting of transformation model. *Random Sample Consensus (RANSAC)* [10], *M-estimator Sample Consensus (MSAC)* [11], and *Progressive Sample Consensus (PROSAC)* [12] are some of the robust probabilistic methods used for removing the outliers from matched features and fitting the transformation function (in terms of *homography matrix*). This matrix provides the perspective transform of second image with respect to the first (*reference image*). Image reconstruction is then performed on the basis of the derived transformation function to align the second image with respect to the first. The reconstructed version of second image is then overlaid in front of the reference image until all matched feature-points are overlapped. This large consolidated version of smaller images is called a *mosaic* or *stitched image*. Fig. 1 shows the generic process of feature based image registration.

In this article, SIFT (*blobs*) [13], SURF (*blobs*) [14], KAZE (*blobs*) [15], AKAZE (*blobs*) [16], ORB (*corners*) [17], and BRISK (*corners*) [18] algorithms are compared for image matching and registration. The performance of feature-detector-descriptors is further evaluated to investigate: **Which is more invariant to scale, rotation and affine changes?** To inspect this problem, image matching has been done with these feature-detector-descriptors to match the synthetically **scaled versions (5% to 500%)** and synthetically **rotated versions (0° to 360°)** of different images with their original versions. To investigate viewpoint or affine invariance, image matching has been performed for the *Graffiti sequence* and *Wall sequence*. Experiments have been conducted on diverse images taken from the well-known datasets of University of OXFORD [19], MATLAB, VLFeat, and OpenCV. *Nearest Neighbor Distance Ratio* has been applied as the feature-matching strategy with *Brute-force search algorithm* while

*RANSAC* has been applied for fitting the image transformation models (in the form of homography matrices) and for rejecting the outliers. The experimental results are presented in the form of *quantitative comparison, feature-detection-description time, feature-matching time, outlier-rejection and model fitting time, repeatability, and error* in recovered results as compared to the ground-truth values. This article will act as a stepping stone in the selection of most suitable feature-detector-descriptor with required strengths for feature based applications in the domain of *computer vision* and *machine vision*. As far as our knowledge is concerned, there exists no such research that so exhaustively evaluates these fundamental feature-detector-descriptors over a diverse set of images for the discussed problems.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. Performance Evaluations of Detectors & Descriptors

Literature review for this article is based on many high quality research articles that provide comparison results of various types of feature-detectors and feature-descriptors. *K. Mikolajczyk and C. Schmid* evaluated the performance of local feature-descriptors (SIFT, PCA-SIFT, Steerable Filters, Complex Filters, GLOH etc.) over a diverse dataset for different image transformations (*rotation, rotation combined with zoom, viewpoint changes, image blur, JPEG compression, and light changes*) [9]. However, scale changes that have been evaluated in this article lie only in the range of **200% to 250%**. *S. Urban and M. Weinmann* compared different feature-detector-descriptor combinations (like SIFT, SURF, ORB, SURF-BinBoost, and AKAZE-MSURF) for registration of point clouds obtained through terrestrial laser scanning in [20]. In [21], *S. Gauglitz et al.* evaluated different feature-detectors (*Harris Corner Detector, Difference of Gaussians, Good Features to Track, Fast Hessian, FAST, CenSurE*) and feature-descriptors (*Image patch, SIFT, SURF, Randomized Trees, and Ferns*) for visual tracking but no quantitative comparison and no evaluation of rotation and scale invariance property is performed. *Z. Pusztai and L. Hajder* provide a quantitative comparison of various feature-detectors available in OpenCV 3.0 (*BRISK, FAST, GFTT, KAZE, MSER, ORB, SIFT, STAR, SURF, AGAST, and AKAZE*) for viewpoint changes on *four* image data sequences in [22] but no comparison of computational timings is present. *H. J. Chien et al.* compare SIFT, SURF, ORB, and AKAZE features for monocular visual odometry by using the *KITTI benchmark dataset* in [23], however there is no explicit in-depth comparison for rotation, scale and affine invariance property of the feature-detectors. *N. Y. Khan et al.* evaluated the performance of SIFT and SURF against various types of image deformations using *threshold based feature-matching* [24]. However, no quantitative comparison is performed and evaluation of in-depth scale invariance property is missing.

### B. SIFT

*D. G. Lowe* introduced *Scale Invariant Feature Transform (SIFT)* in 2004 [13], which is the most renowned feature-detection-description algorithm. SIFT detector is based on *Difference-of-Gaussians (DoG)* operator which is an

approximation of *Laplacian-of-Gaussian* (*LoG*). Feature-points are detected by searching local maxima using *DoG* at various scales of the subject images. The description method extracts a 16x16 neighborhood around each detected feature and further segments the region into sub-blocks, rendering a total of 128 bin values. SIFT is robustly invariant to image rotations, scale, and limited affine variations but its main drawback is high computational cost. Equation (1) shows the convolution of difference of two Gaussians (computed at different scales) with image " $I(x,y)$ ".

$$D(x, y, \sigma) = (G(x, y, k\sigma) - G(x, y, \sigma)) * I(x, y) \quad (1)$$

Where "G" represents the Gaussian function.

### C. SURF

H. Bay et al. presented *Speeded Up Robust Features* (*SURF*) in 2008 [14], which also relies on Gaussian scale space analysis of images. SURF detector is based on *determinant of Hessian Matrix* and it exploits integral images to improve feature-detection speed. The 64 bin descriptor of SURF describes each detected feature with a distribution of *Haar wavelet responses* within certain neighborhood. SURF features are invariant to rotation and scale but they have little affine invariance. However, the descriptor can be extended to 128 bin values in order to deal with larger viewpoint changes. The main advantage of SURF over SIFT is its low computational cost. Equation (2) represents the Hessian Matrix in point " $x = (x, y)$ " at scale " $\sigma$ ".

$$\mathcal{H}(x, \sigma) = \begin{bmatrix} L_{xx}(x, \sigma) & L_{xy}(x, \sigma) \\ L_{xy}(x, \sigma) & L_{yy}(x, \sigma) \end{bmatrix} \quad (2)$$

Where " $L_{xx}(x, \sigma)$ " is the convolution of Gaussian second order derivative with the image " $I$ " in point " $x$ ", and similarly for " $L_{xy}(x, \sigma)$ " and " $L_{yy}(x, \sigma)$ ".

### D. KAZE

P. F. Alcantarilla et al. put forward KAZE features in 2012 that exploit non-linear scale space through non-linear diffusion filtering [15]. This makes blurring in images locally adaptive to feature-points, thus reducing noise and simultaneously retaining the boundaries of regions in subject images. KAZE detector is based on *scale normalized determinant of Hessian Matrix* which is computed at multiple scale levels. The maxima of detector response are picked up as feature-points using a moving window. Feature description introduces the property of rotation invariance by finding dominant orientation in a circular neighborhood around each detected feature. KAZE features are invariant to rotation, scale, limited affine and have more distinctiveness at varying scales with the cost of moderate increase in computational time. Equation (3) shows the standard *nonlinear diffusion formula*.

$$\frac{\partial L}{\partial t} = \text{div}(c(x, y, t) \cdot \nabla L) \quad (3)$$

Where " $c$ " is *conductivity* function, "*div*" is divergence, " $\nabla$ " is gradient operator and " $L$ " is image luminance.

### E. AKAZE

P. F. Alcantarilla et al. presented *Accelerated-KAZE* (*AKAZE*) algorithm in 2013 [16], which is also based on non-linear diffusion filtering like KAZE but its non-linear scale spaces are constructed using a computationally efficient framework called *Fast Explicit Diffusion* (*FED*). The AKAZE detector is based on the *determinant of Hessian Matrix*. Rotation invariance quality is improved using *Scharr filters*. Maxima of the detector responses in spatial locations are picked up as feature-points. Descriptor of AKAZE is based on *Modified Local Difference Binary* (*MLDB*) algorithm which is also highly efficient. AKAZE features are invariant to scale, rotation, limited affine and have more distinctiveness at varying scales because of nonlinear scale spaces.

### F. ORB

E. Rublee et al. introduced *Oriented FAST and Rotated BRIEF* (*ORB*) in 2011 [17]. ORB algorithm is a blend of modified *FAST* (*Features from Accelerated Segment Test*) [25] detection and direction-normalized *BRIEF* (*Binary Robust Independent Elementary Features*) [26] description methods. FAST corners are detected in each layer of the scale pyramid and cornerness of detected points is evaluated using *Harris Corner score* to filter out top quality points. As BRIEF description method is highly unstable with rotation, thus a modified version of BRIEF descriptor has been employed. ORB features are invariant to scale, rotation and limited affine changes.

### G. BRISK

S. Leutenegger et al. put forward *Binary Robust Invariant Scalable Keypoints* (*BRISK*) in 2011 [18], which detects corners using AGAST algorithm and filters them with *FAST Corner score* while searching for maxima in the scale space pyramid. BRISK description is based on identifying the characteristic direction of each feature for achieving rotation invariance. To cater illumination invariance results of simple brightness tests are also concatenated and the descriptor is constructed as a binary string. BRISK features are invariant to scale, rotation, and limited affine changes.

## III. EXPERIMENTS & RESULTS

### A. Experimental Setup

*MATLAB-2017a* with *OpenCV 3.3* has been used for performing the experiments presented in this article. Specifications of the computer system used are: *Intel(R) Core(TM) i5-4670 CPU @ 3.40 GHz*, 6 MB Cache and 8.00 GB RAM. SURF(64D), SURF(128D), ORB(1000), and BRISK(1000) represent SURF with 64-Floats descriptor, extended SURF with 128-Floats descriptor, bounded ORB and BRISK detectors with an upper bound to detect only up to best 1000 feature-points, respectively. Table I shows *OpenCV's* objects used for the feature-detector-descriptors. All remaining parameters are used as *OpenCV's default*.

### B. Datasets

Two datasets have been used for this research. *Dataset-A* (see Fig. 2) is prepared by selecting 6 image pairs of diverse

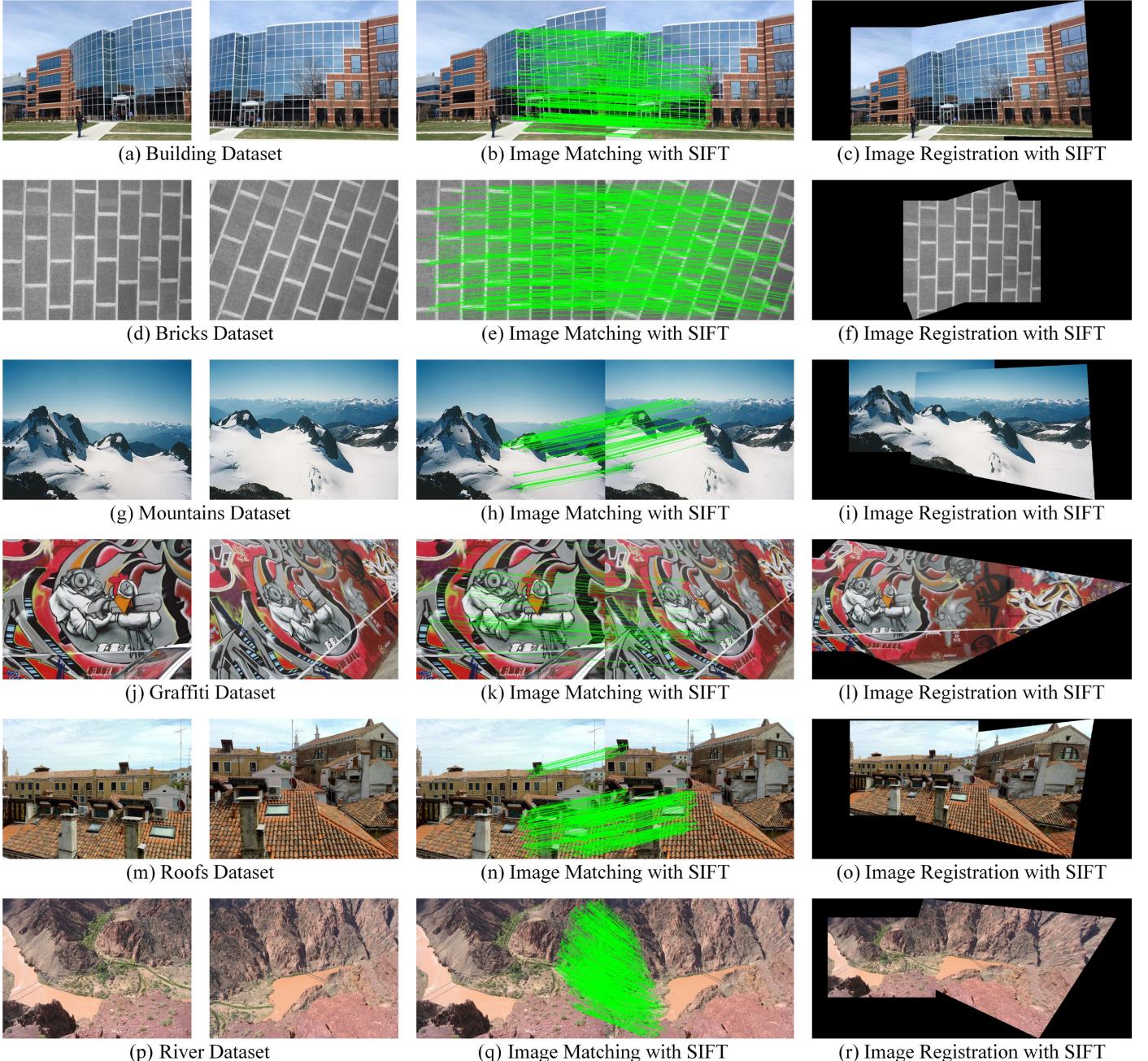


Fig. 2. *Dataset-A*: Image pairs selected from different benchmark datasets. Image registration and mosaicing has been performed using SIFT algorithm.

scenes from different benchmark datasets. *Building* and *Bricks* images shown in Fig. 2(a) and Fig. 2(d), respectively, are selected from the *vision toolbox* of MATLAB. The image pair of *Mountains* shown in Fig. 2(g) is taken from the *test* data of OpenCV. *Graffiti-1* and *Graffiti-4* shown in Fig. 2(j) are picked from University of OXFORD's *Affine Covariant Regions Datasets* [19]. Image pairs of *Roofs* and *River* shown in Fig. 2(m) and Fig. 2(p), respectively, are taken from the *data* of VLFeat library. *Dataset-B* (see Fig. 3) is based on 5 images chosen from University of OXFORD's *Affine Covariant Regions Datasets*. *Dataset-A* has been used to compare different aspects of feature-detector-descriptors for image registration process while *Dataset-B* has been used to

investigate scale, and rotation invariance capability of the feature-detector-descriptors. Furthermore, to investigate affine invariance, *Graffiti sequence* and *Wall sequence* from the *Affine Covariant Regions Datasets* have been exploited.

### C. Ground-truths

Ground-truth values for image transformations have been used to calculate and demonstrate error in the recovered results with each feature-detector-descriptor. For evaluating scale and rotation invariance, ground-truths have been *synthetically* generated for each image in *Dataset-B* by resizing and rotating it to known values of **scale (5% to 500%)** and **rotation (0° to 360°)**. *Bicubic interpolation* has been adopted for scaling and



Fig. 3. *Dataset-B*: Images selected from *Affine Covariant Regions Datasets* for evaluation of scale and rotation invariance of the feature-detector-descriptors.

rotating images since it is the most accurate interpolation method which retains image quality in the transformation process. To investigate affine invariance the benchmark ground-truths provided in *Affine Covariant Regions Datasets* for *Graffiti* and *Wall* sequences have been used.

#### D. Matching Strategy

The feature-matching strategy adopted for experiments is based on *Nearest Neighbor Distance Ratio (NNDR)* which was used by *D.G. Lowe* for matching SIFT features in [13] and by *K. Mikolajczyk* in [9]. In this matching scheme, the *nearest neighbor* and the *second nearest neighbor* for each feature-descriptor (from the first feature set) are searched (in the second feature set). Subsequently, ratio of *nearest neighbor* to the *second nearest neighbor* is calculated for each feature-descriptor and a certain *threshold ratio* is set to filter out the preferred matches. This **threshold ratio** is kept as **0.7** for the experimental results presented in this article. *L1-norm* (also called *Least Absolute Deviations*) has been used for matching the descriptors of SIFT, SURF, and KAZE while *Hamming distance* has been used for matching the descriptors of AKAZE, ORB, and BRISK.

#### E. Outlier Rejection & Homography Calculation

RANSAC algorithm with **2000 iterations** and **99.5% confidence** has been applied to reject the outliers and to find the *Homography Matrix*. It is a **3x3** matrix that represents a set of equations which satisfy the transformation function from the first image to the second.

#### F. Repeatability

Repeatability of a feature-detector is the percentage of detected features that survive *photometric* or *geometric* transformations in an image [27]. Repeatability is not related with the descriptors and only depends on performance of the feature-detection part of feature-detection-description

algorithms. It is calculated on the basis of the overlapping (intersecting) region in the subject image pair. A feature-detector with higher repeatability for a particular transformation is considered robust than others, particularly for that type of transformation.

#### G. Demonstration of Results

Table II shows the results of quantitative comparison and computational costs of the feature-detector-descriptors for image matching. Each *timing* value presented in the table is the average of **100 measurements** (to minimize errors which arise because of processing glitches). The *synthetically* generated scale / rotation transformations for the images of *Dataset-B* and the readily available ground-truth affine transformations for *Graffiti* / *Wall* sequences are recovered by performing image matching with each feature-detector-descriptor. *Average repeatabilities* of each feature-detector (for 5 images of *Dataset-B*) to investigate the trend of their strengths / weaknesses are presented in Fig. 6(a) and Fig. 6(b) for scale and rotation changes, respectively. Fig. 6(c) and Fig. 6(d) show the repeatability of feature-detectors for viewpoint changes using benchmark datasets. Fig. 6(e) and Fig. 6(f) exhibit the error in recovered scales and rotations for all the feature-detector-descriptors in terms of *percentage* and *degree*, respectively. To compute errors in affine transformations, the images of *Graffiti* and *Wall* sequences were first warped according to the *ground-truth homographies* as well as the *recovered homographies*. Afterwards, *Euclidean distance* has been calculated individually for each corner point of the *recovered image* with respect to its corresponding corner point (in the *ground-truth image*). Fig. 6(g) and Fig. 6(h) illustrate the projection error in recovered affine transformations as the sum of **4 Euclidean distances** for *Graffiti* and *Wall* sequences, respectively. The error is represented in terms of *pixels*. Equation (4) shows the Euclidean distance " $D(P,Q)$ " between two corresponding corners " $P(x_p,y_p)$ " and " $Q(x_q,y_q)$ ".

$$D(P, Q) = \sqrt{(x_p - x_q)^2 + (y_p - y_q)^2} \quad (4)$$

## IV. IMPORTANT FINDINGS

### A. Quantitative Comparison:

- ORB detects the highest number of features (see Table II).
- BRISK is the runner-up as it detects more number of features than SIFT, SURF, KAZE, and AKAZE.
- SURF detects more features than SIFT.
- AKAZE generally detects more features than KAZE.

TABLE I. OPENCV SETTINGS AND DESCRIPTOR SIZES OF THE FEATURE-DETECTOR-DESCRIPTORS USED

Algorithm	OpenCV Object	Descriptor Size
SIFT	cv.SIFT('ContrastThreshold',0.04,'Sigma',1.6)	128 Bytes
SURF(128D)	cv.SURF('Extended',true,'HessianThreshold',100)	128 Floats
SURF(64D)	cv.SURF('HessianThreshold',100)	64 Floats
KAZE	cv.KAZE('NOctaveLayers',3,'Extended',true)	128 Floats
AKAZE	cv.AKAZE('NOctaveLayers',3)	61 Bytes
ORB	cv.ORB('MaxFeatures',100000)	32 Bytes
ORB(1000)	cv.ORB('MaxFeatures',1000)	32 Bytes
BRISK	cv.BRISK()	64 Bytes
BRISK(1000)	cv.BRISK(); cv.KeyPointsFilter,retainBest(features,1000)	64 Bytes

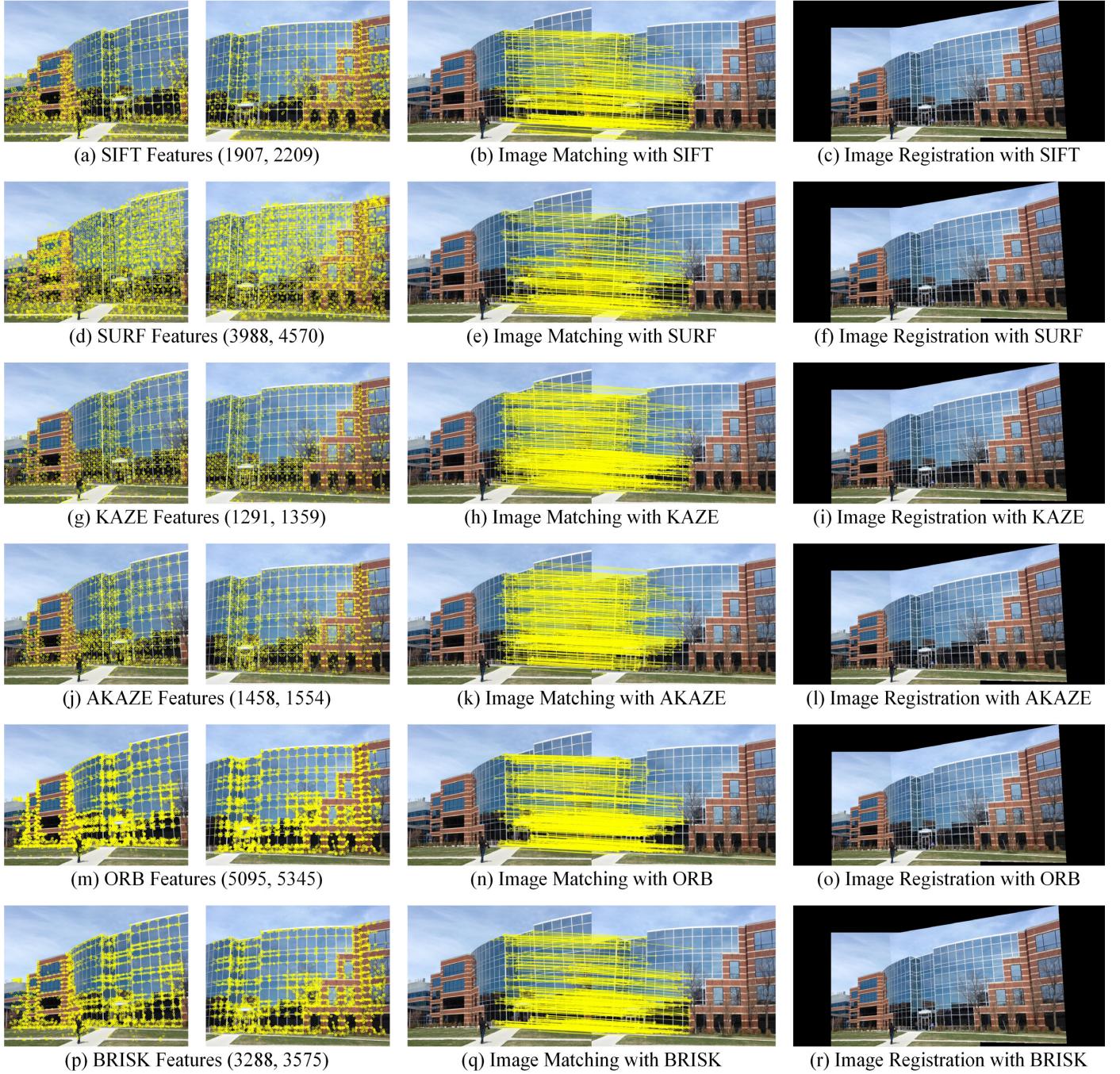


Fig. 4. Feature-detection, matching, and mosaicing with SIFT, SURF, KAZE, AKAZE, ORB, and BRISK.

- KAZE detected least number of feature-points.
- For SURF(64D), more features are matched as compared to SURF(128D).
- SIFT and SURF features are detected in a scattered form generally all over the image and SURF features are denser than SIFT. ORB and BRISK features are more concentrated on corners.

#### B. Feature-Detection-Description Time:

- KAZE has the highest computational cost for feature-detection-description (see Table III).

- Computational cost of SIFT is even less than *half* the cost of KAZE.
- ORB is the most efficient feature-detector-descriptor with least computational cost.
- BRISK is also computationally efficient but it is slightly expensive than ORB.
- SURF(128D) and SURF(64D) both are computationally efficient than SIFT(128D) (see Table III).
- AKAZE is computationally efficient than SIFT, SURF(128D), SURF(64D), and KAZE but expensive than ORB and BRISK.

TABLE II. QUANTITATIVE COMPARISON AND COMPUTATIONAL COSTS OF DIFFERENT FEATURE-DETECTOR-DESCRIPTORS

Algorithm	Features Detected in the Image Pairs		Features Matched	Outliers Rejected	Feature Detection & Description Time (s)		Feature Matching Time (s)	Outlier Rejection & Homography Calculation Time (s)	Total Image Matching Time (s)
	1 <sup>st</sup> Image	2 <sup>nd</sup> Image			1 <sup>st</sup> Image	2 <sup>nd</sup> Image			
<b>Building Dataset (Image Pair # 1)</b>									
SIFT	1907	2209	384	51	0.1812	0.1980	0.1337	0.0057	0.5186
SURF(128D)	3988	4570	319	58	0.1657	0.1786	0.5439	0.0058	0.8940
SURF(64D)	3988	4570	612	73	0.1625	0.1734	0.2956	0.0052	0.6367
KAZE	1291	1359	465	26	0.2145	0.2113	0.0613	0.0053	0.4924
AKAZE	1458	1554	475	36	0.0695	0.0715	0.0307	0.0055	0.1772
ORB	5095	5345	854	149	0.0213	0.0220	0.1586	0.0067	0.2086
ORB(1000)	1000	1000	237	21	0.0103	0.0101	0.0138	0.0049	0.0391
BRISK	3288	3575	481	47	0.0533	0.0565	0.1236	0.0056	0.2390
BRISK(1000)	1000	1000	190	33	0.0188	0.0191	0.0158	0.0049	0.0586
<b>Bricks Dataset (Image Pair # 2)</b>									
SIFT	1404	1405	427	16	0.1571	0.1585	0.0680	0.0053	0.3889
SURF(128D)	2855	2332	140	34	0.1337	0.1191	0.2066	0.0051	0.4645
SURF(64D)	2855	2332	327	63	0.1307	0.1137	0.1173	0.0055	0.3672
KAZE	366	705	88	6	0.1930	0.1988	0.0105	0.0047	0.4070
AKAZE	278	289	153	9	0.0541	0.0536	0.0037	0.0049	0.1163
ORB	978	942	323	17	0.0075	0.0079	0.0124	0.0049	0.0327
ORB(1000)	731	734	240	32	0.0067	0.0073	0.0088	0.0050	0.0278
BRISK	796	752	285	18	0.0146	0.0144	0.0119	0.0049	0.0458
BRISK(1000)	796	752	285	18	0.0146	0.0144	0.0119	0.0049	0.0458
<b>Mountain Dataset (Image Pair # 3)</b>									
SIFT	1867	2033	170	45	0.1943	0.2017	0.1197	0.0047	0.5204
SURF(128D)	1890	2006	175	33	0.0979	0.1130	0.1208	0.0051	0.3368
SURF(64D)	1890	2006	227	62	0.0978	0.1113	0.0689	0.0053	0.2833
KAZE	972	971	131	20	0.2787	0.2826	0.0343	0.0050	0.6006
AKAZE	960	986	187	16	0.0841	0.0842	0.0151	0.0050	0.1884
ORB	4791	5006	340	78	0.0228	0.0236	0.1397	0.0052	0.1913
ORB(1000)	1000	1000	113	29	0.0118	0.0118	0.0117	0.0049	0.0402
BRISK	3153	3382	287	22	0.0520	0.0555	0.1083	0.0052	0.2210
BRISK(1000)	1000	1000	143	7	0.0201	0.0213	0.0160	0.0046	0.0620
<b>Graffiti Dataset (Image Pair # 4)</b>									
SIFT	2654	3698	99	51	0.2858	0.3382	0.2940	0.0073	0.9253
SURF(128D)	4802	5259	44	31	0.2166	0.2184	0.7399	0.0222	1.1971
SURF(64D)	4802	5259	62	42	0.2072	0.2142	0.3951	0.0169	0.8334
KAZE	2322	2302	30	9	0.3311	0.3337	0.1594	0.0052	0.8294
AKAZE	2064	2205	23	13	0.1158	0.1185	0.0491	0.0081	0.2915
ORB	5527	7517	38	22	0.0277	0.0341	0.2129	0.0083	0.2830
ORB(1000)	1000	1000	16	7	0.0146	0.0157	0.0114	0.0059	0.0476
BRISK	3507	5191	54	22	0.0669	0.0953	0.1687	0.0077	0.3386
BRISK(1000)	1000	1000	18	10	0.0227	0.0239	0.0143	0.0073	0.0682
<b>Roofs Dataset (Image Pair # 5)</b>									
SIFT	2303	3550	423	154	0.1983	0.2665	0.2475	0.0063	0.7186
SURF(128D)	2938	3830	171	95	0.1173	0.1523	0.3349	0.0084	0.6129
SURF(64D)	2938	3830	247	143	0.1165	0.1504	0.1847	0.0090	0.4606
KAZE	1260	1736	172	85	0.2119	0.2265	0.0710	0.0068	0.5162
AKAZE	1287	1987	175	59	0.0686	0.0806	0.0294	0.0053	0.1839
ORB	7660	11040	498	157	0.0296	0.0407	0.4131	0.0065	0.4899
ORB(1000)	1000	1000	91	32	0.0106	0.0113	0.0111	0.0055	0.0385
BRISK	5323	7683	436	207	0.0899	0.1260	0.3672	0.0074	0.5905
BRISK(1000)	1000	1000	90	44	0.0189	0.0199	0.0156	0.0069	0.0613
<b>River Dataset (Image Pair # 6)</b>									
SIFT	8619	9082	1322	192	0.6795	0.7083	2.2582	0.0092	3.6552
SURF(128D)	9434	10471	223	63	0.3768	0.4205	2.8521	0.0055	3.6549
SURF(64D)	9434	10471	386	66	0.3686	0.4091	1.4905	0.0049	2.2731
KAZE	2984	2891	391	78	0.5119	0.5115	0.2669	0.0059	1.2962
AKAZE	3751	3635	376	65	0.2048	0.1991	0.1341	0.0056	0.5436
ORB	34645	35118	2400	553	0.1219	0.1276	5.3813	0.0092	5.6400
ORB(1000)	1000	1000	40	6	0.0235	0.0235	0.0109	0.0046	0.0625
BRISK	23607	24278	1725	366	0.3813	0.4040	4.8117	0.0089	5.6059
BRISK(1000)	1000	1000	39	8	0.0251	0.0248	0.0155	0.0040	0.0694
<b>Mean Values for All Image Pairs</b>									
SIFT	3125.7	3662.8	470.8	84.8	0.2827	0.3119	0.5202	0.0064	1.1212
SURF(128D)	4317.8	4744.7	178.7	52.3	0.1847	0.2003	0.7997	0.0087	1.1934
SURF(64D)	4317.8	4744.7	310.2	74.8	0.1806	0.1954	0.4254	0.0078	0.8092
KAZE	1517.5	1660.7	212.8	37.3	0.2902	0.2941	0.1006	0.0055	0.6904
AKAZE	1633.0	1776.0	231.5	33.0	0.0995	0.1013	0.0437	0.0057	0.2502
ORB	9782.7	10828.0	742.2	162.7	0.0385	0.0427	1.0530	0.0068	1.1410
ORB(1000)	955.2	955.7	122.8	21.2	0.0129	0.0133	0.0113	0.0051	0.0426
BRISK	6612.3	7476.8	544.7	113.7	0.1097	0.1253	0.9319	0.0066	1.1735
BRISK(1000)	966.0	958.7	127.5	20.0	0.0200	0.0206	0.0149	0.0054	0.0609

### C. Feature Matching Time:

- SURF(128D) has the highest computational cost for feature-matching while SIFT comes at the second place.
- SURF(64D) has less feature-matching cost as compared to SIFT. Which means that the feature-matching time for SURF(64D) is less than that of SIFT(128D) but the feature-matching time of SURF(128D) is more than that of SIFT(128D).
- ORB and BRISK in unbounded state detect a large quantity of features due to which their feature-matching cost gets drastically increased. Table II shows that the feature-matching cost can be reduced by using their detectors in a bounded state i.e. ORB(1000) and BRISK(1000).
- ORB(1000) has the least feature-matching cost.
- Although KAZE has the highest cost for feature-detection-description, the computational cost of matching KAZE feature-descriptors is surprisingly lower than SIFT, SURF(128D), SURF(64D), ORB, and BRISK.
- The feature-matching cost of AKAZE is less than KAZE.

### D. Outlier Rejection and Homography Fitting Time:

- The outlier-rejection and homography fitting time for all feature-detector-descriptors is more or less the same, though ORB(1000) and BRISK(1000) have taken least time.

TABLE III. COMPUTATIONAL COST PER FEATURE POINT BASED ON MEAN VALUES FOR ALL IMAGE PAIRS OF DATASET-A

Algorithm	Mean Feature-Detection-Description Time per Point (μs)		Mean Feature Matching Time per Point (μs)
	1 <sup>st</sup> Images	2 <sup>nd</sup> Images	
SIFT	90.44	85.15	142.02
SURF(128D)	42.78	42.22	168.55
SURF(64D)	41.83	41.18	89.66
KAZE	191.24	177.09	60.58
AKAZE	60.93	57.04	24.61
ORB	3.94	3.94	97.25
ORB(1000)	13.51	13.92	11.82
BRISK	16.59	16.76	124.64
BRISK(1000)	20.70	21.49	15.42

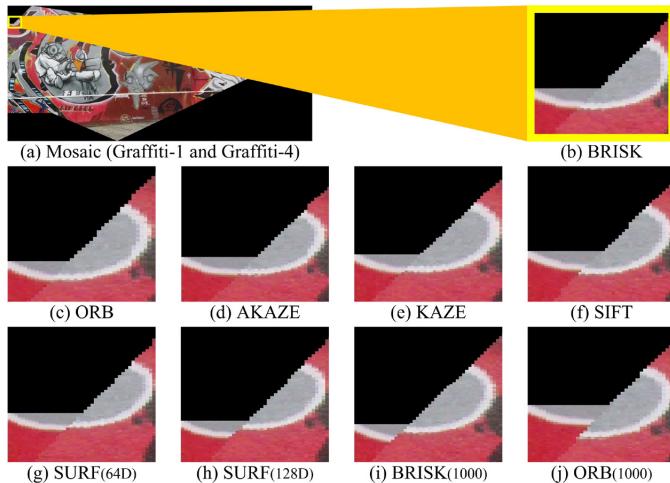


Fig. 5. Illustration of image registration error using the feature-detector-descriptors for Graffiti image pair (1,4). On the basis of observation, BRISK provides best accuracy particularly for this image set. Notice that the accuracy of ORB(1000) and BRISK(1000) is less than ORB and BRISK, respectively.

### E. Total Image Matching Time:

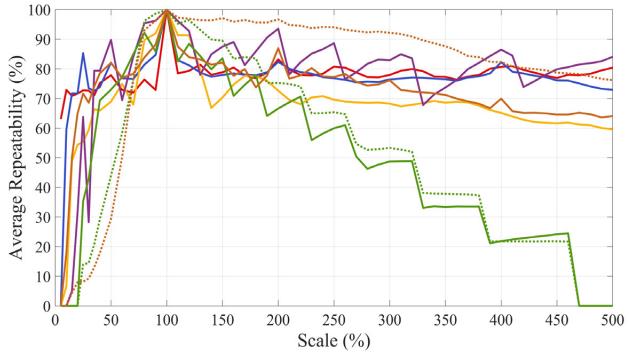
- ORB(1000) and BRISK(1000) provide fastest image matching.
- It is a general perception that SURF is computationally efficient than SIFT, but the experiments revealed that SURF(128D) algorithm takes more time than SIFT(128D) for the overall image matching process (see Table II).
- SURF(64D), on the contrary, takes less time than SIFT(128D) for image matching.
- Image matching time taken by KAZE is surprisingly less than SIFT, SURF(128D), and even SURF(64D) (see Table II). This is due to the lower feature-matching cost of KAZE.
- The computational cost of feature-detection-description for ORB and BRISK (in unbounded state) is considerably low but the increased time for matching this large quantity of features lengthens their overall image matching time.

### F. Repeatability:

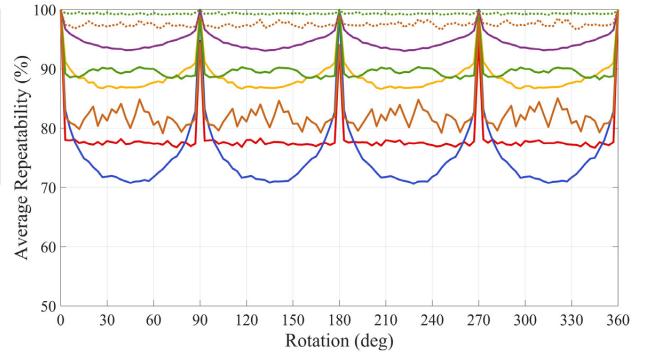
- Repeatability of ORB for matching images remains stable and high as long as the scale of *test image* remains in the range of **60% to 150%** with respect to the *reference image* but beyond this range, its repeatability drops considerably.
- ORB(1000) and BRISK(1000) have higher repeatability than ORB and BRISK for image rotations and up scaling. However, the case is reverse for down scaling (see Fig. 6(a)).
- Repeatability of SIFT, SURF, KAZE, AKAZE, and BRISK remains high for up scaling of images while in the case of down scaling, the repeatability of KAZE, AKAZE, and BRISK drops significantly. Repeatability of SIFT and SURF remains steady for scale variations but SURF's plummets around **10%** scale. SIFT's repeatability has remained stable for down scaling to as low as **3%** while the repeatabilities of others approach zero even at a scale of **15%**.
- For image rotations, ORB(1000), BRISK(1000), AKAZE, ORB, and KAZE have higher repeatabilities than SIFT and SURF.
- For affine changes, repeatabilities of ORB and BRISK are generally higher than others (see Fig. 6(c) and Fig. 6(d)).

### G. Accuracy of Image Matching:

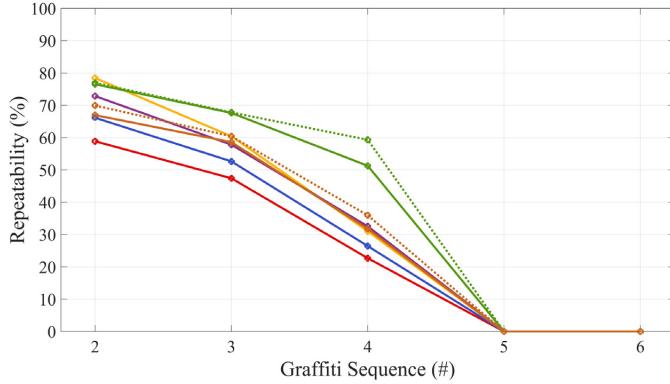
- SIFT is found to be the most accurate feature-detector-descriptor for scale, rotation and affine variations (overall).
- BRISK is at second position with respect to the accuracy for scale and rotation changes.
- AKAZE's accuracy is comparable to BRISK for image rotations and scale variations in the range of **40% to 400%**. Beyond this range its accuracy decreases.
- ORB(1000) is less accurate than BRISK(1000) for scale and rotation changes but both are comparable for affine changes.
- ORB(1000) and BRISK(1000) are less accurate than ORB and BRISK (see Fig. 5 and Fig. 6). These algorithms have a trade-off between quantity of features, feature-matching cost and the required accuracy of results.
- AKAZE is more accurate than KAZE for scale and affine variations. However, for rotation changes KAZE is more accurate than AKAZE.



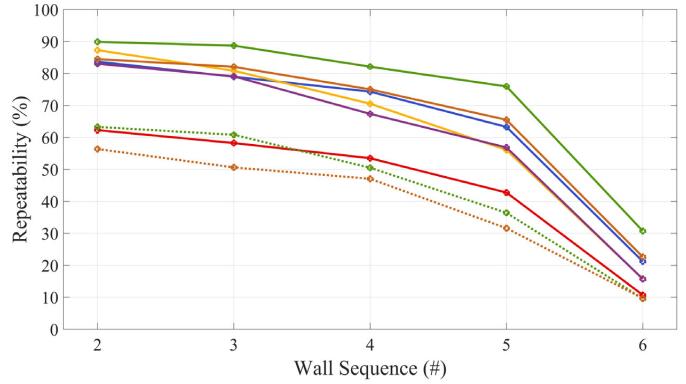
(a) Average repeatability of feature detectors for five images (*Dataset-B*) w.r.t synthetic scale changes.



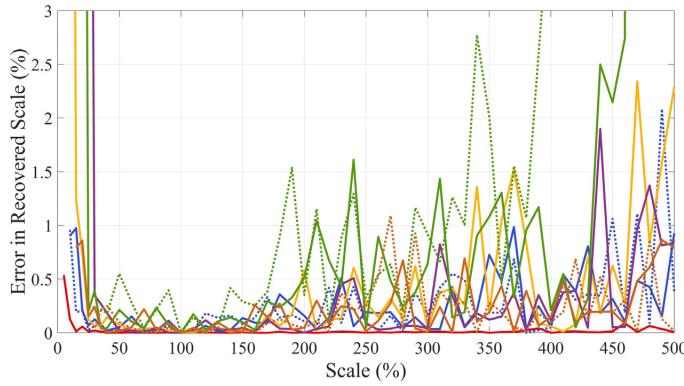
(b) Average repeatability of feature detectors for five images (*Dataset-B*) w.r.t synthetic rotations.



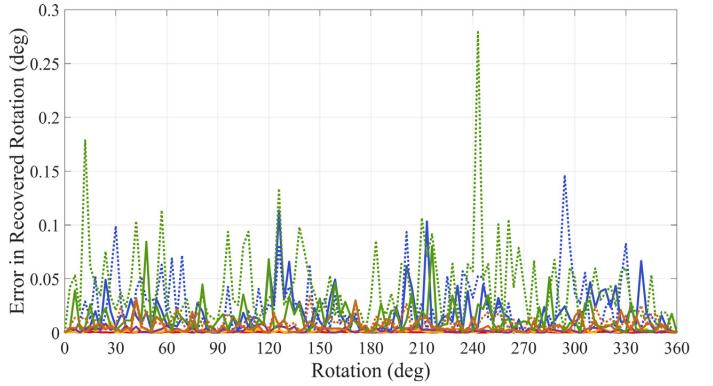
(c) Repeatability of feature detectors for complete *Graffiti sequence* (viewpoint changes).



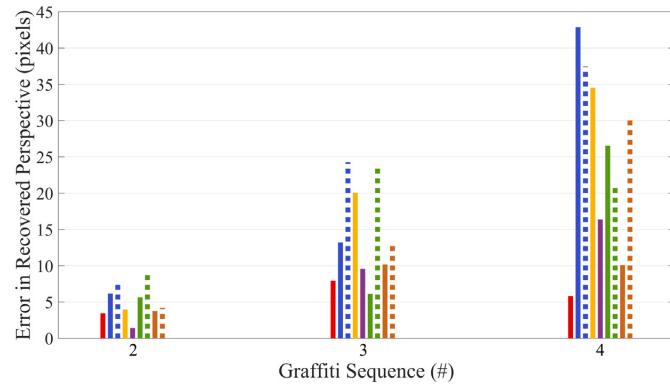
(d) Repeatability of feature detectors for complete *Wall sequence* (viewpoint changes).



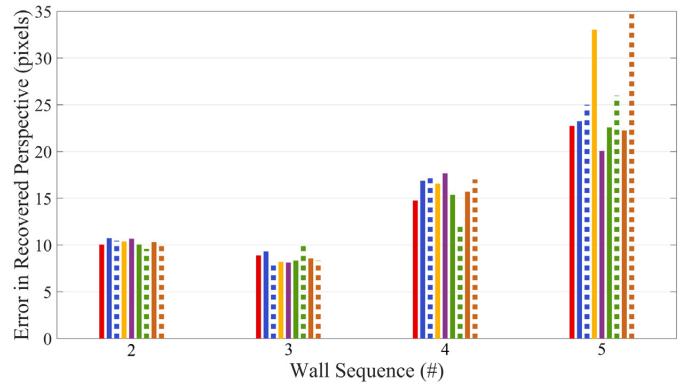
(e) Illustration of error in recovered scales w.r.t synthetic scale changes of the image “*Trees-I*”.



(f) Illustration of error in recovered rotations w.r.t synthetic rotations of the image “*Trees-I*”.



(g) Total Euclidean distance (error) between the corner points of recovered perspectives and the ground truths for *Graffiti sequence*.



(h) Total Euclidean distance (error) between the corner points of recovered perspectives and the ground truths for *Wall sequence*.

Fig. 6. Repeatability of feature-detector-descriptors and error in image registration for scale, rotation and viewpoint changes.

## CONCLUSION

This article presents an exhaustive comparison of SIFT, SURF, KAZE, AKAZE, ORB, and BRISK feature-detector-descriptors. The experimental results provide rich information and various new insights that are valuable for making critical decisions in vision based applications. SIFT, SURF, and BRISK are found to be the most scale invariant feature detectors (on the basis of repeatability) that have survived wide spread scale variations. ORB is found to be least scale invariant. ORB(1000), BRISK(1000), and AKAZE are more rotation invariant than others. ORB and BRISK are generally more invariant to affine changes as compared to others. SIFT, KAZE, AKAZE, and BRISK have higher accuracy for image rotations as compared to the rest. Although, ORB and BRISK are the most efficient algorithms that can detect a huge amount of features, the matching time for such a large number of features prolongs the *total image matching time*. On the contrary, ORB(1000) and BRISK(1000) perform fastest image matching but their accuracy gets compromised. The overall accuracy of SIFT and BRISK is found to be highest for all types of geometric transformations and SIFT is concluded as the most accurate algorithm.

The quantitative comparison has shown that the generic order of feature-detector-descriptors for their ability to detect high quantity of features is:

**ORB>BRISK>SURF>SIFT>AKAZE>KAZE**

The sequence of algorithms for computational efficiency of feature-detection-description per feature-point is:

**ORB>ORB(1000)>BRISK>BRISK(1000)>SURF(64D)  
>SURF(128D)>AKAZE>SIFT>KAZE**

The order of efficient feature-matching per feature-point is:

**ORB(1000)>BRISK(1000)>AKAZE>KAZE>SURF(64D)  
>ORB>BRISK>SIFT>SURF(128D)**

The feature-detector-descriptors can be rated for the speed of total image matching as:

**ORB(1000)>BRISK(1000)>AKAZE>KAZE>SURF(64D)  
>SIFT>ORB>BRISK>SURF(128D)**

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