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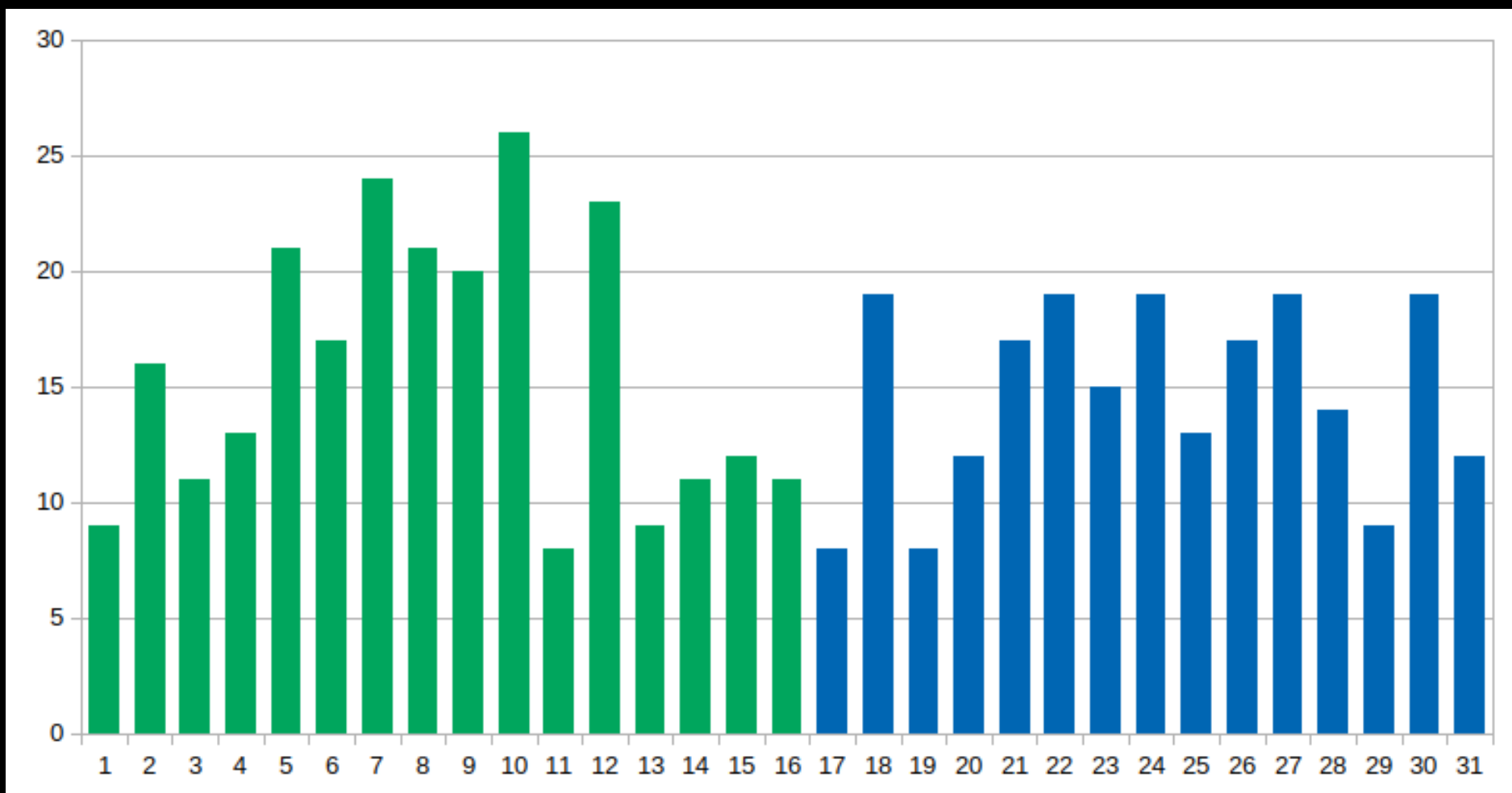


CATEGORY THEORY
FOR PROGRAMMERS



Bartosz Milewski

Category
Theory
for
Programmers
Chapter 16:
The Yoneda Embedding



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↑

$$[C, \text{Set}](C(a, -), F) \cong \underline{F} \underline{a}$$

$$\text{forall } x. (a \rightarrow x) \rightarrow Fx \cong Fa$$

$$\alpha :: (a \rightarrow x) \rightarrow [x] \cong [a] \uparrow$$

$$\alpha f = \text{fmap } f [a_0 \dots a_n]$$



WE'VE SEEN PREVIOUSLY that, when we fix an object a in the category C , the mapping $C(a, -)$ is a (covariant) functor from C to **Set**.

$$x \rightarrow C(a, x)$$

(The codomain is **Set** because the hom-set $C(a, x)$ is a *set*.) We call this mapping a hom-functor — we have previously defined its action on morphisms as well.

Now let's vary a in this mapping. We get a new mapping that assigns the hom-*functor* $C(a, -)$ to any a .

$$a \rightarrow C(a, -)$$

16.1 The Embedding

The (contravariant) functor we have just described, the functor that maps objects in \mathbf{C} to functors in $[\mathbf{C}, \mathbf{Set}]$:

$$a \rightarrow \mathbf{C}(a, -)$$

defines the *Yoneda embedding*. It *embeds* a category \mathbf{C} (strictly speaking, the category \mathbf{C}^{op} , because of contravariance) inside the functor category $[\mathbf{C}, \mathbf{Set}]$. It not only maps objects in \mathbf{C} to functors, but also faithfully preserves all connections between them.

16.2 Application to Haskell

In Haskell, the Yoneda embedding can be represented as the isomorphism between natural transformations amongst reader functors on the one hand, and functions (going in the opposite direction) on the other hand:

$$\text{forall } x. (a \rightarrow x) \rightarrow (b \rightarrow x) \cong b \rightarrow a$$

(Remember, the reader functor is equivalent to $((\rightarrow) a)$.)





Bartosz Milewski

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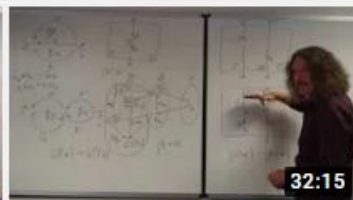
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