

# Metaprogramming with Macros

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# Macros

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Macros realize the notion of textual abstraction.

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Textual abstraction:

- ▶ Recognize pieces of text that match a specification
- ▶ Replace them according to a procedure

## Example

```
(let (x 42) (print x))
```

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```
(let (x 42) (print x))
```

```
((lambda (x) (print x)) 42)
```

## Step 1. Recognize pieces of text

```
(let (x 42) (print x))
```

```
(defmacro let args
```

```
((lambda (x) (print x)) 42)
```

## Step 1. Recognize pieces of text

```
(let (x 42) (print x))
```

```
(defmacro let args
```

```
((lambda (x) (print x)) 42)
```



## Step 2. Replace them according to a procedure

```
(let (x 42) (print x))
```

```
(defmacro let args  
  (cons  
    (cons 'lambda  
          (cons (list (caar args))  
                  (cdr args))))  
    (cdar args)))
```

```
((lambda (x) (print x)) 42)
```

## Step 2. Replace them according to a procedure

```
(let (x 42) (print x))
```

```
(defmacro let args  
  (cons  
    (cons 'lambda  
          (cons (list (caar args))  
                  (cdr args)))  
    (cdar args)))
```

```
((lambda (x) (print x)) 42)
```

# The essence of macros

- ▶ Recognize pieces of text that match a specification
- ▶ Replace them according to a procedure

# Why macros?

- ▶ Deeply embedded DSLs (database access, testing)
- ▶ Optimization (programmable inlining, fusion)
- ▶ Analysis (integrated proof-checker)
- ▶ Effects (effect containment and propagation)
- ▶ ...

# Today's talk

Macrology is vast:

- ▶ Notation
- ▶ Variable capture
- ▶ Typechecking meta-programs
- ▶ Syntax extensibility
- ▶ ...

Surveyed papers are versatile as well.

# Today's talk

Going into all the details would be a genuine pleasure.

But instead let me tell you a story.

# Outline

The prelude of macros

The tale of bindings

The trilogy of tongues

The vision of the days to come

## Anaphoric if

```
(aif (calculate)
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute"))
```



## Anaphoric if

```
(aif (calculate)
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute"))
```

```
(let* ((temp (calculate))
        (it temp))
      (if temp
          (print it)
          (error "does not compute")))
```

## The aif macro

```
(aif (calculate)
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute"))
```

```
(defmacro aif args
```

```
(let* ((temp (calculate))
        (it temp))
  (if temp
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute"))))
```

## Start with a notation

```
(aif (calculate)
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute"))
```

```
(defmacro aif args
  (let* ((temp (car args))
         (it temp))
    (if temp
        (cadr args)
        (caddr args))))
```

```
(let* ((temp (calculate))
       (it temp))
  (if temp
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute")))
```

## Surround it with parentheses

```
(aif (calculate)
  (print it)
  (error "does not compute"))

(defmacro aif args
  (list 'let* (list (list 'temp (car args))
                    (list 'it 'temp))
        (list 'if 'temp
                (cadr args)
                (caddr args))))

(let* ((temp (calculate))
      (it temp))
  (if temp
    (print it)
    (error "does not compute")))
```

## Quasiquote

```
(aif (calculate)
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute"))
```

```
(defmacro aif args
  (let* ((temp .....))
    (it temp))
  (if temp
      .....
      .....)))
```

```
(let* ((temp (calculate))
      (it temp))
  (if temp
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute")))
```

## Quasiquote

```
(aif (calculate)
  (print it)
  (error "does not compute"))
```

```
(defmacro aif args
  '(let* ((temp .....))
    (it temp))
  (if temp
    .....
    .....)))
```

```
(let* ((temp (calculate))
  (it temp))
  (if temp
    (print it)
    (error "does not compute")))
```

## Unquote

```
(aif (calculate)
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute"))
```

```
(defmacro aif args
  '(let* ((temp ,(car args))
           (it temp))
    (if temp
        ,(cadr args)
        ,(caddr args))))
```

```
(let* ((temp (calculate))
        (it temp))
  (if temp
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute")))
```

## Unquote

```
(aif (calculate)
  (print it)
  (error "does not compute"))

(defmacro aif args

  '(let* ((temp ,(car args))
          (it temp))
    (if temp
      ,(cadr args)
      ,(caddr args))))

(let* ((temp (calculate))
      (it temp))
  (if temp
    (print it)
    (error "does not compute")))
```



## Macro by example (MBE)

```
(aif (calculate)
  (print it)
  (error "does not compute"))

(defmacro+ aif
  (aif cond then else)
  (let* ((temp cond)
        (it temp))
    (if temp
        then
        else)))

(let* ((temp (calculate))
      (it temp))
  (if temp
    (print it)
    (error "does not compute")))
```

# Interlude

- ▶ Macros are regular functions that happen to work with syntax objects
- ▶ Quasiquotes = static templates + dynamic holes

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## Anaphoric if

```
(defmacro+ aif
  (aif cond then else)
  (let* ((temp cond)
        (it temp))
    (if temp then else)))
```

- ▶ So far macros are simple: define a function, recognize pieces of text and replace them with a template
- ▶ This is so immediately useful, that we could wrap up right now

But actually

The aif macro has two bugs

## What's wrong?

```
(defmacro+ aif
  (aif cond then else)
  (let* ((temp cond)
         (it temp))
    (if temp then else)))
```

## What's wrong?

```
(aif (calculate)
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute"))
```

```
(defmacro+ aif
  (aif cond then else)
  (let* ((temp cond)
         (it temp))
    (if temp then else)))
```

## What's wrong?

```
(aif (calculate)
      (print it)
      (error "does not compute"))
```

```
(defmacro+ aif
  (aif cond then else)
  (let* ((temp cond)
         (it temp))
    (if temp then else)))
```



## What's wrong?

```
(aif (calculate)
  (print it)
  (error "does not compute"))

(defmacro+ aif
  (aif cond then else)
  (let* ((temp cond)
        (it temp))
    (if temp then else)))

(let* ((temp (calculate))
      (it temp))
  (if temp
    (print it)
    (error "does not compute")))
```

## Bug #1: Violation of hygiene

```
(let ((temp 451°F))  
  (aif (calculate)  
    (print it)  
    (print temp)))
```

```
(defmacro+ aif  
  (aif cond then else)  
  (let* ((temp cond)  
    (it temp))  
    (if temp then else)))
```

```
(let ((temp 451°F))  
  (let* ((temp (calculate))  
    (it temp))  
    (if temp  
      (print it)  
      (print temp))))
```

## Bug #2: Violation of referential transparency

```
(let ((if hijacked))  
  (aif (calculate)  
    (print it)  
    (error "does not compute"))))
```

```
(defmacro+ aif  
  (aif cond then else)  
  (let* ((temp cond)  
    (it temp))  
    (if temp then else)))
```

```
(let ((if hijacked))  
  (let* ((temp (calculate))  
    (it temp))  
    (if temp  
      (print it)  
      (error "does not compute")))))
```

## Old school

```
(defmacro+ aif
  (aif cond then else)

  (let* ((temp cond)
        (it temp))
    (if temp then else)))
```

## Old school

```
(defmacro+ aif
  (aif cond then else)
  (let ((temp (gensym)))
    (let* ((temp cond)
           (it temp))
      (if temp then else))))
```

And please don't rename core forms

# Interlude

- ▶ Cross-pollination of scopes can lead to inadvertent variable capture
- ▶ Violation of hygiene = def site harms call site
- ▶ Violation of referential transparency = call site harms def site

# Outline

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The trilogy of tongues

The vision of the days to come

# Template Haskell

```
aif :: Q Exp -> Q Exp -> Q Exp -> Q Exp
aif cond then' else' =
  [| let temp = $cond
      it = temp
      in if temp /= 0 then $then' else $else' |]
```



## Template Haskell

```
$(aif [| calculate |]  
    [| putStrLn (show it) |]  
    [| error "does not compute" |])
```

```
aif :: Q Exp -> Q Exp -> Q Exp -> Q Exp
```

```
aif cond then' else' =
```

```
    [| let temp = $cond
```

```
        it = temp
```

```
        in if temp /= 0 then $then' else $else' |]
```

## Template Haskell

```
$(aif [| calculate |]  
    [| putStrLn (show it) |]  
    [| error "does not compute" |])
```

```
aif :: Q Exp -> Q Exp -> Q Exp -> Q Exp
```

```
aif cond then' else' =
```

```
    [| let temp = $cond
```

```
        it = temp
```

```
        in if temp /= 0 then $then' else $else' |]
```

```
let temp_almx = calculate
```

```
    it_almy = temp_almx
```

```
in if (temp_almx /= 0)
```

```
    then putStrLn (show it)
```

```
    else error "does not compute"
```

Not in scope: 'it'

## The Q monad

```
aif cond then' else' =  
  [| let temp = $cond  
      it = temp  
      in if temp /= 0 then $then' else $else' |]
```

## The Q monad

```
aif cond then' else' =  
  [| let temp = $cond  
      it = temp  
      in if temp /= 0 then $then' else $else' |]
```

```
aif :: Q Exp -> Q Exp -> Q Exp -> Q Exp  
aif cond' then'' else'' =  
  do { temp <- newName "temp"  
      ; it <- newName "it"  
      ; cond <- cond'  
      ; then' <- then''  
      ; else' <- else''  
      ; let notEq = mkNameG_v "ghc-prim" "GHC.Classes" "/="   
      in return  
      (LetE [ValD (VarP temp) (NormalB cond) [],  
             ValD (VarP it) (NormalB (VarE temp)) []]  
        (Conde (... (VarE notEq) ...) then' else'))  
  }
```

## Perils of hygiene

```
$(aif [| calculate |]  
  [| putStrLn (show $(dyn "it")) |]  
  [| error "does not compute" |])
```

```
aif :: Q Exp -> Q Exp -> Q Exp -> Q Exp
```

```
aif cond then' else' =
```

```
  [| let temp = $cond
```

```
    it = temp
```

```
    in if temp /= 0 then $then' else $else' |]
```

## Summary: Template Haskell

- ▶ Quasiquotes in Template Haskell are automatically hygienic and referentially transparent
- ▶ That's because they are translated into Q monad, which takes care of gensymming and fully qualified names
- ▶ When hygiene fails, we are forced to drop to low level

# Nemerle

```
macro aif(cond, then, else_) {  
  <[  
    def temp = $cond;  
    def it = temp;  
    if (temp != 0) $then else $else_  
  ]>  
}
```

## Nemerle

```
aif(calculate,  
    WriteLine(it),  
    throw Exception("does not compute"))
```

```
macro aif(cond, then, else_) {  
  <[  
    def temp = $cond;  
    def it = temp;  
    if (temp != 0) $then else $else_  
  ]>  
}
```



## Nemerle

```
aif(calculate,  
    WriteLine(it),  
    throw Exception("does not compute"))
```

```
macro aif(cond, then, else_) {  
  <[  
    def temp = $cond;  
    def it = temp;  
    if (temp != 0) $then else $else_  
  ]>  
}
```

```
def calculate = 42;  
def temp_1087 = calculate;  
def it_1088 = temp_1087;  
if (temp_1087 != 0) WriteLine(it) else throw Exception("...")
```

error: unbound name 'it'

## Coloring algorithm

```
def calculate = 42;
aif(calculate,
    WriteLine(it),
    throw Exception("does not compute"))
```

```
macro aif(cond, then, else_) {
  <[
    def temp = $cond;
    def it = temp;
    if (temp != 0) $then else $else_
  ]>
}
```

```
def calculate = 42;
def temp = calculate;
def it = temp;
if (temp != 0) WriteLine(it) else throw Exception("...")
```

## Coloring algorithm: normal code gets a vanilla color

```
def calculate = 42;                                // vanilla color
aif(calculate,
    WriteLine(it),
    throw Exception("does not compute"))

macro aif(cond, then, else_) {
  <[
    def temp = $cond;
    def it = temp;
    if (temp != 0) $then else $else_
  ]>
}

def calculate = 42;
def temp = calculate;
def it = temp;
if (temp != 0) WriteLine(it) else throw Exception("...")
```

## Coloring algorithm: each expansion gets unique colors

```
def calculate = 42;                                // vanilla color
aif(calculate,
  WriteLine(it),
  throw Exception("does not compute"))

macro aif(cond, then, else_) {                      // expansion color
  <[
    def temp = $cond;
    def it = temp;
    if (temp != 0) $then else $else_
  ]>
}

def calculate = 42;
def temp = calculate;
def it = temp;
if (temp != 0) WriteLine(it) else throw Exception("...")
```

## Coloring algorithm: at the end of the day

```
def calculate = 42;                                // vanilla color
```

```
aif(calculate,  
    WriteLine(it),  
    throw Exception("does not compute"))
```

```
macro aif(cond, then, else_) {                      // expansion color  
  <[  
    def temp = $cond;  
    def it = temp;  
    if (temp != 0) $then else $else_  
  ]>  
}
```

```
def calculate = 42;                                // bind using colors  
def temp = calculate;  
def it = temp;  
if (temp != 0) WriteLine(it) else throw Exception("...")
```

## Coloring algorithm: inherit use site

```
def calculate = 42;                                // vanilla color
aif(calculate,
    WriteLine(it),
    throw Exception("does not compute"))

macro aif(cond, then, else_) {                      // expansion color
    <[
        def temp = $cond;
        def $("it": usesite) = temp;
        if (temp != 0) $then else $else_
    ]>
}

def calculate = 42;                                // bind using colors
def temp = calculate;
def it = temp;
if (temp != 0) WriteLine(it) else throw Exception("...")
```

## Coloring algorithm: polychromatic

```
def calculate = 42;                                // vanilla color
aif(calculate,
    WriteLine(it),
    throw Exception("does not compute"))

macro aif(cond, then, else_) {                      // expansion color
    <[
        def temp = $cond;
        def $("it": dyn) = temp;
        if (temp != 0) $then else $else_
    ]>
}

def calculate = 42;                                // bind using colors
def temp = calculate;
def it = temp;
if (temp != 0) WriteLine(it) else throw Exception("...")
```

## Summary: Nemerle

- ▶ Nemerle takes care of hygiene with a coloring algorithm of impressive simplicity and power
- ▶ No complex translation algorithms are necessary
- ▶ As another bonus programmer can fine-tune colors with `MacroColors`
- ▶ Referential transparency works as well



# Racket

A Lisp, descendent from Scheme

25 years of hygienic macros, a bunch of macro systems

Language features written using macros (classes, modules, etc)

Q: "How to turn macros into proper abstractions?"

# Racket

```
(define-syntax (aif stx)
  (syntax-case stx ()
    ((aif cond then else)

      #'(let ((temp cond)
              (it temp)))
        (if temp then else))))
```

## Racket

```
(aif (calculate)
  (print it)
  (error "does not compute"))

(define-syntax (aif stx)
  (syntax-case stx ()
    ((aif cond then else)

      #'(let ((temp cond)
              (it temp)))
        (if temp then else))))
```

# Racket

```
(aif (calculate)
  (print it)
  (error "does not compute"))

(define-syntax (aif stx)
  (syntax-case stx ()
    ((aif cond then else)

      #'(let ((temp cond)
              (it temp)))
      (if temp then else))))

(let* ((temp (calculate))
      (it temp))
  (if temp
    (print it)
    (error "does not compute")))
```

# Racket

```
(aif (calculate)
  (print it)
  (error "does not compute"))

(define-syntax (aif stx)
  (syntax-case stx ()
    ((aif cond then else)
     (with-syntax ((it (datum->syntax #'aif 'it)))
       #'(let ((temp cond)
                (it temp)))
           (if temp then else))))))

(let* ((temp (calculate))
      (it temp))
  (if temp
    (print it)
    (error "does not compute")))
```

## Doesn't scale

```
(define-syntax (aunless stx)
  (syntax-case stx ()
    ((aunless cond then else)
     #'(aif (not cond) then else))))
```

## Doesn't scale

```
(aunless (not (calculate))  
  (print it)  
  (error "does not compute"))
```

```
(define-syntax (aunless stx)  
  (syntax-case stx ()  
    ((aunless cond then else)  
     #'(aif (not cond) then else))))
```

## Doesn't scale

```
(unless (not (calculate))
  (print it)
  (error "does not compute"))

(define-syntax (unless stx)
  (syntax-case stx ()
    ((unless cond then else)
     #'(aif (not cond) then else))))

(let* ((temp (not (not (calculate))))
      (it temp))
  (if temp
    (print it)
    (error "does not compute")))
```



## Doesn't scale

```
(unless (not (calculate))  
  (print it)  
  (error "does not compute"))
```

```
(define-syntax (unless stx)  
  (syntax-case stx ()  
    ((unless cond then else)  
     #'(aif (not cond) then else))))
```

```
(let* ((temp (not (not (calculate))))  
      (it temp))  
  (if temp  
    (print it)  
    (error "does not compute")))
```

## Doesn't scale

```
(aunless (not (calculate))  
  (print it)  
  (error "does not compute"))
```

```
(define-syntax (aunless stx)  
  (syntax-case stx ()  
    ((aunless cond then else)  
     #'(aif (not cond) then else))))
```

```
(let* ((temp (not (not (calculate))))  
      (it temp))  
  (if temp  
    (print it)  
    (error "does not compute")))
```

## Solution: dynamic variables

```
(define-syntax (aif stx)
  (syntax-case stx ()
    ((aif cond then else)
     #'(let ((temp cond)
             (it temp))
         (if temp then else))))))
```

## Solution: dynamic variables

```
(define-syntax-parameter it (syntax-rules ()))
```

```
(define-syntax (aif stx)
  (syntax-case stx ()
    ((aif cond then else)
     #'(let ((temp cond))
         (syntax-parameterize
          ((it (syntax-rules () ((_ temp))))
           (if temp then else))))))
```

## Summary: overall

- ▶ There are algorithms that take care of hygiene and referential transparency
- ▶ These algorithms can work in automatic mode, but are flexible enough to give the programmer full control
- ▶ Like a silver bullet
- ▶ Nevertheless sometimes even better solutions come from integration with language features

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