

## The Moscow linguistic circle (not to be confused with the Prague linguistic circle)

who would have thought if i had not  
had i thought it  
if i had not taken part  
in the mystery of his poetics were his  
name Roman Jakobson  
but it is not and he is not  
a poet but a knot in our throats  
so that when we speak his name  
the poet dies and he is not Roman Jakobson  
but a penguin who suffers the torments  
of guessing what meaning is meant and  
if this is poetry surely  
we are all doomed but  
when we call her Roman Jakobson  
she dives into the ice and others dive with her  
and Roman Jakobson is lost  
because our eyes cannot distinguish one  
penguin from another and when they come  
to the surface they are the tide  
which brings us a new poetics  
more critical than we previously imagined  
and so we continue  
but differently  
calling everyone Roman Jakobson  
and when they turn they look at us  
like penguins they are confused  
and they do not dive but ask why  
Roman Jakobson is not yet alive  
since we imagine only the name and  
we repeat the name again  
and again when we're confused  
because the poem is a mystery  
and we begin by calling out "Roman

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Jakobson! Where is your poem?"  
and the world takes one last breath  
before exercising the demonstration  
that is language and wrests it from  
the current belief system and  
when aquarium volunteers look at its throat  
they find the knot that is Roman  
Jakobson who hid from the world  
when we spoke his name but if  
we had not taken part in the ritual if  
Roman Jakobson suddenly  
revealed itself as the ground of being  
and this was the light of being  
if Roman Jakobson took part  
in our destiny we would have  
had souls we would have  
made progress we would have  
written poetry and called it Grigory Vinokur