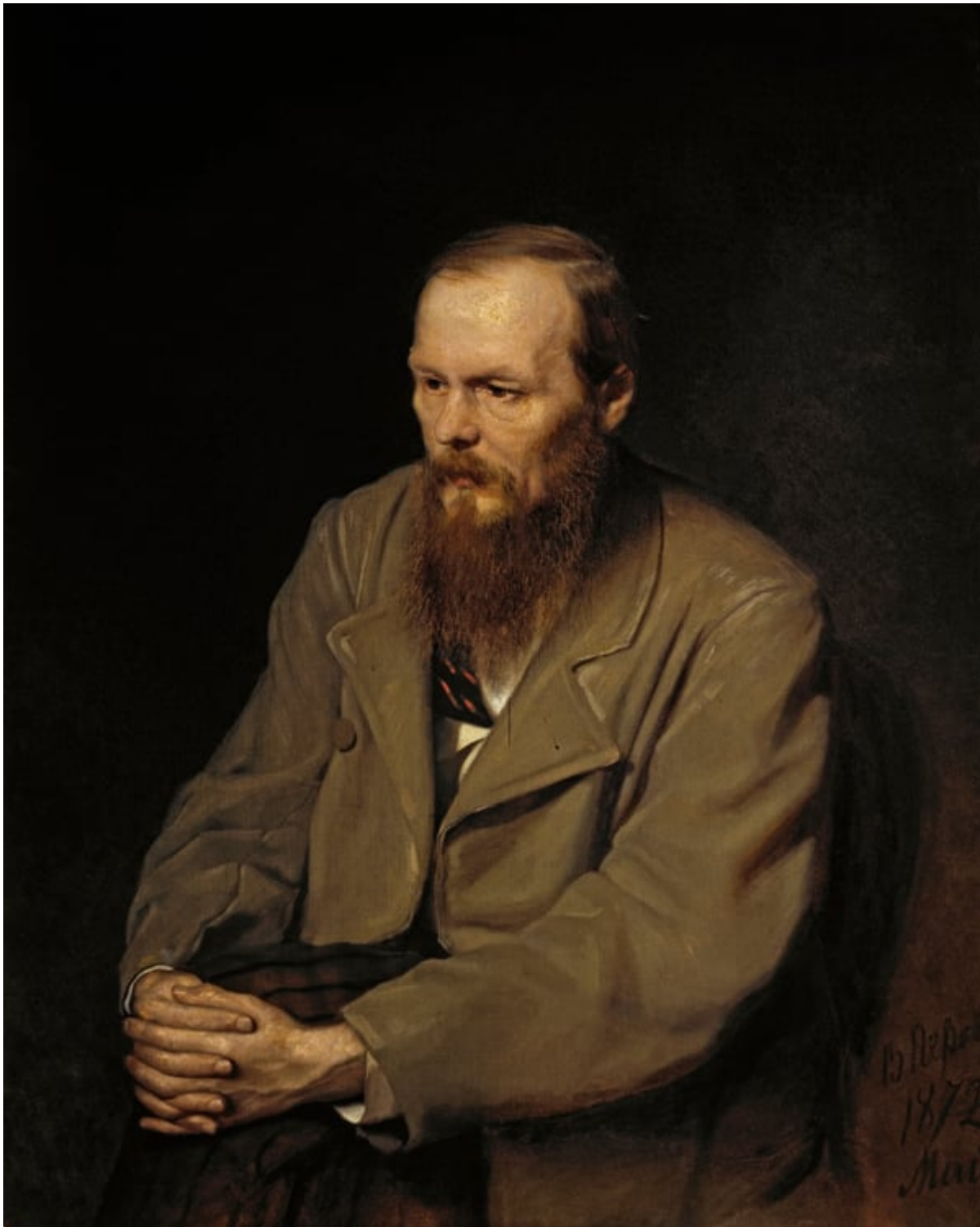


# Dostoevsky

by [Thomas Banks](#) (July 2021)



*Portrait of Fyodor Dostoevsky, Vasily Perov, 1872*

Out of the depths of his uneasy eyes  
Emerged a light, dejected, cold, and clear,  
While all around him rang the assertive noise  
Of golden bourgeois peace that gave no ear

To catch the incantations whispered by  
The sullen ghosts that loitered all around,  
Pedantic nihilists who thought in slogans:  
Voices that muttered threats from underground.

He saw the demons men of broader views  
Believed had finally been put to flight  
By ballots, literacy, and law reforms,  
Hiding beneath a passing world of light.

His strangeness made him easy to dismiss.  
This fitful angel spoke and broke the seal  
To show a smug and slumbering generation  
A century that proved his visions real.

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Thomas Banks has taught literature and Latin for many years in Idaho, Montana, and North Carolina, where he currently lives. Other writings of his have appeared in *First Things* and the *St. Austin Review*.

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