Summary of “My Wood”

      E. M. Foerster, in his article, “My Wood,” discusses the negative effects that the ownership of property has on a person’s character. His first point is that ownership of property makes one feel heavy. Foerster illustrates this heaviness with a biblical reference to parable of the rich man being too large to pass through the eye of a needle to be woven into the robe of God. Comparatively, a camel, unencumbered by property, passes effortlessly through the eye of the needle. Secondly, property ownership makes one greedy, thereby fostering a desire to acquire more. To illustrate this avarice, he makes classical allusions to King Canute and Alexander the Great. Next, Foerster claims that ownership leads one to embrace pseudo-creativity, which creates a feeling of dissatisfaction with the current start of one’s property. This dissatisfaction leads to an imbalance between twin human desires for materialism and carnality. Finally, he uses an anecdote about blackberries to illustrate the intense selfishness of a property owner who doesn’t want to share blackberries that would likely wither because the owner cannot eat all of them. He concludes his article by restating the four corrupting effects that property ownership has on one’s character.