

# Monsters, Men and Heroes

## Reading Homer's Cyclops Today

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Wednesday  
20 May 2026 - 6pm

Ágnes-Heller-Haus  
1st Floor SR4



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The specific topic of this talk is the tale of the Cyclops Polyphemus in *Odyssey* 9 and its connections to the story of the poem as a whole, including the hero's account of his travels in his *Apology* in

Books 9–12, and Homer's presentation of Odysseus' return to his home on Ithaca in the second half. The talk will also attempt to situate Polyphemus in a larger social, political and above all else economic framework, arguing that he is a less exceptional figure than Odysseus makes him out to be, and that thinking of him as a generic epic herdsman offers insights into his treatment at the hands of Odysseus and the poet; into the Cyclops society of which he is a part; and into the overall moral structure of the epic.