

University cancels Anglo-Saxon 'to decolonise' the curriculum

*I must thank and credit **Geoffrey Clarfield** for removing my doubts that this was a matter (with all that is happening in the world) of local English interest only. It isn't. From the [Telegraph](#) and [Breitbart](#).*

The term Anglo-Saxon has been removed from a University's module titles to tackle "[nationalist narratives](#)".



The term Anglo-Saxon is being replaced by Early Medieval English | CREDIT: PRISMA ARCHIVO/Alamy

The University of Nottingham offers leading courses in Anglo-Saxon history and literature and is the only university in the country to offer a Viking Studies course.

While the thrust of the "decolonise the curriculum" agenda – which the university pledged to do amid the Black Lives Matter

movement – has typically focussed on attacking British history and identity, the university reportedly said that it will seek to “problematize the term ‘Viking’” as well. *I do not recommend messing with Thor or Odin, btw.*

It follows a similar move in the United States, where academics in particular have campaigned against the term “Anglo-Saxon” because it suggests a distinct, native Englishness. The terminology of “Early mediaeval England” is the preferred replacement for “Anglo-Saxon” by academics concerned that the latter has become a phrase used by racists surrounding white identity.

These have largely been based in the US, where the term has been used to describe those descended from white early settlers.

This isn't the first we have heard of this. [In May](#)

The Cambridge University Press, which is part of the historic institution, said it was “delighted” to reveal its Anglo-Saxon England journal had been given the new name Early Medieval England and its Neighbours during a relaunch announcement on Monday.

The journal has been running since the 1970s, but the university said the change represented the “international, interdisciplinary and rapidly evolving nature of research in this field”

However, Dominic Sandbrook, a prominent author and historian, said the university was pandering to a “handful of mad Americans” with the change. *(only a handful which does not include our readers)*

David Abulafia, Professor Emeritus of Mediterranean History at the University, told The Telegraph: “The journal should glory in its distinguished reputation rather than trying to reinvent itself under a bland new name dictated by a passing fashion

for dropping the term Anglo-Saxon.”

He said more in a [separate article](#)

For a start, the term “Anglo-Saxon” is not a racial label, but a cultural one. Many English people are the product of a fusion between the Angle, Saxon, and Jute settlers, and the native Britons; the invaders coming from a wide arc of coastline stretching from the Netherlands to Jutland. Anglo-Saxon Britain was no apartheid state, but one fundamentally of rapid synthesis.

Indeed, the language we speak today was one noticeable product: just under half of the words we use remain of Anglo-Saxon origin. The Anglo-Saxon interpretation of Christianity, too, lives with us still:

Its legacy has been extremely powerful. For if we dispense with the Anglo-Saxons, what happens to the name of England, the country of the Angles, or Essex and Sussex, territories of the Saxons? *Indeed; will I be expected to change my address to Colchestershire?*

Can we talk any longer of the Anglophone countries? It is telling that even today Russian propaganda mockingly refers to us Britons as Anglosaksy, thinking it a term of derision. Such an insult makes one quite proud.

Any suggestion of broad ethnic or cultural cohesiveness inevitably generates suspicion in an academic world, where the fantasies of Critical Race Theory find racism under every ancient stone. Yet that is to forget that, even at the time, peoples saw each other as distinct cultures, with unique traits and practices.

Cambridge University Press would do well to acknowledge that its headquarters are in East Anglia. Instead of erasing the term “Anglo-Saxon”, it is far better to accept that our forebears oversaw a flourishing and fascinating period of this

island's history. It deserves a proper name, and it already has one.

Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past