

What has happened to Australia's former well-deserved reputation as a liberal democracy open to the free discussion of ideas? What happens to an established Australian non-fiction author whose literary work strays outside Noam Chomsky's spectrum of permitted issues for public discussion?

Tony Kevin's challenging new book offers a vivid account of how he was 'de-platformed', that is to say, effectively excluded from the public marketplace in ideas, during the two years following publication of his controversial fifth book, *Return to Moscow* (UWA Publishing, 2017).

His new book poses the question, how free actually is Australia's publishing and mainstream media world, when it becomes so difficult for a writer to challenge established anti-Russian false public narratives, without suffering covert retaliation and silent exclusion ?

In reviewing major events and issues in Russia-West relations over the past two tumultuous years, Tony Kevin explores how deliberate Western disinformation campaigns – on issues like the war in Ukraine, Syria, the Skripals Affair, and Russiagate – are now at the centre of Western policy efforts to try to demoralise and weaken the great nation which they have chosen to frame as their existential adversary.

Possibilities for East-West dialogue and relaxation of tensions are being rejected, in the interests of maintaining a Western perception of Russia as an enemy state. In Australia at least, such disinformation efforts have borne poisonous fruit – as Tony Kevin's troubling experience as a writer increasingly excluded from the public space shows.

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