

# **Pedro Varela – Author, Activist and Prisoner of Conscience – Needs Your Support!**

Pedro Varela is a courageous and idealistic fighter for historical truth and freedom, and an ardent Spanish defender of the European–Western heritage.

For years authorities, both in his home city of Barcelona, as well as outside of Spain, have tried to silence him – in crass betrayal of their claims of support for the principle of free speech and freedom of expression.

Varela is once again behind bars as a result of the latest legal effort to put him down.

In a case that has received wide media attention in Spain, he is charged with having published an unauthorized edition of Mein Kampf, the well-known book by Adolf Hitler.

The prosecuting authority has tried to argue that Varela broke the law by issuing an edition of Hitler's book without permission of the copyright holder, the State of Bavaria. (The legal rights of Mein Kampf were high-handedly transferred to Bavaria by the postwar Allied occupation authorities.) However, Bavaria declines to press any claim against Varela. Moreover, the Mein Kampf copyright has expired on the basis of the widely recognized principle that copyright expires 70 years after the death of the author.

Hitler's Mein Kampf, first published in two volumes in the 1920s, is in part an autobiography, in part a political manifesto, and in part a presentation of the author's worldview and of the outlook and principles of his National Socialist Party. In recent decades "unauthorized" editions of Mein Kampf in a variety of languages have made it a bestseller around the world.

Varela is a Roman Catholic, a vegetarian, an enthusiastic mountaineer, and a knowledgeable specialist of the life, works and legacy of Richard Wagner. He is also an unabashed admirer of Hitler and an adherent of the National Socialist worldview.

In 1992 he spent three months in pre-trial detention in Austria for a speech he had given, but was acquitted.

For years Varela owned and managed the "Librería Europa" bookstore and book service in Barcelona. It distributed a wide range of books and videos that presented an alternative, non-conformist view of the world and modern history. Varela and the bookstore also organized numerous meetings and lectures.

Police raided the store in 1996, seizing some 20,000 books along with numerous periodicals, posters, and audio and video recordings – which were later ordered to be burned.

In July 2016 the bookstore was shut down for good on the pretext that it promoted “hate” and “racial discrimination.”

In 1998 Varela was sentenced to five years in prison for “incitement to racial hatred” and for “denying or justifying genocide” through sale and distribution of items through his bookstore. (To express doubt about, or to play down, the “Holocaust” narrative is a crime in Spain and a number of other European countries.) A higher court later suspended the sentence. Also, the European Court of Human Rights ruled in his favor when the matter came before it on appeal.

In March 2010 Varela was sentenced to two years and nine months in prison for the crime of “disseminating genocidal ideas.” He was released from prison in March 2012.

Among the prominent individuals who have publicly condemned aspects of the campaign against Varela has been Fernando Savater, professor of philosophy at the University of Madrid. Writing in the influential daily paper *El País*, he commented critically on the spate of European laws that threaten free speech, and compared the treatment of Varela to that of a political prisoner.

Pedro Varela deserves your support! Even modest donations are appreciated.

Donations should be made, for “Librería Europa,” to account number **ES64 2100 0856 9801 0175 4099** of the Caixabank Iban.