

Elevation & Azimuth - Fake Fatima Miracle photo



The story of this *fake photo* began with the publication on November 17, 1951, by *L'Osservatore Romano*, of a photograph allegedly taken during the "*Miracle of the Sun*" in Fatima, Portugal, on Saturday, October 13, 1917, at noon (12h30 pm). *L'Osservatore Romano* is the official newspaper of the Vatican. Actually, as stated by *Voz de Fatima*, June, 13, 1952, p. 2, the published photo is a part of a bigger photograph taken by Alfredo J. Mendonça during a pilgrimage on May 13, 1921, between 6:50 and 6:58 near the *Chapel of Our Lady of Lourdes, Torres Nova, Outeiro Grande* (about 16 km from the Cova da Iria, Fatima).



Mendonça took 4 shots of what seems to be some atmospheric effect on the Sun. He numbered the photos and wrote at their back, the time and date. On photo nº 1, he added "*Reprodução interdita*" (*Forbidden reproduction*). Later, the Mendonça family donated original copies to the bishopric of Leiria, where they were kept for about thirty years, before being published in *L'Osservatore Romano* in 1951.

Here is the scanned original 1921 photo (~ 24 x 18 cm, reproduced with a scan precision of 1455x1080 pixels) that corresponds to the fake photo of Fatima (allegedly taken on Oct. 13, 1917).



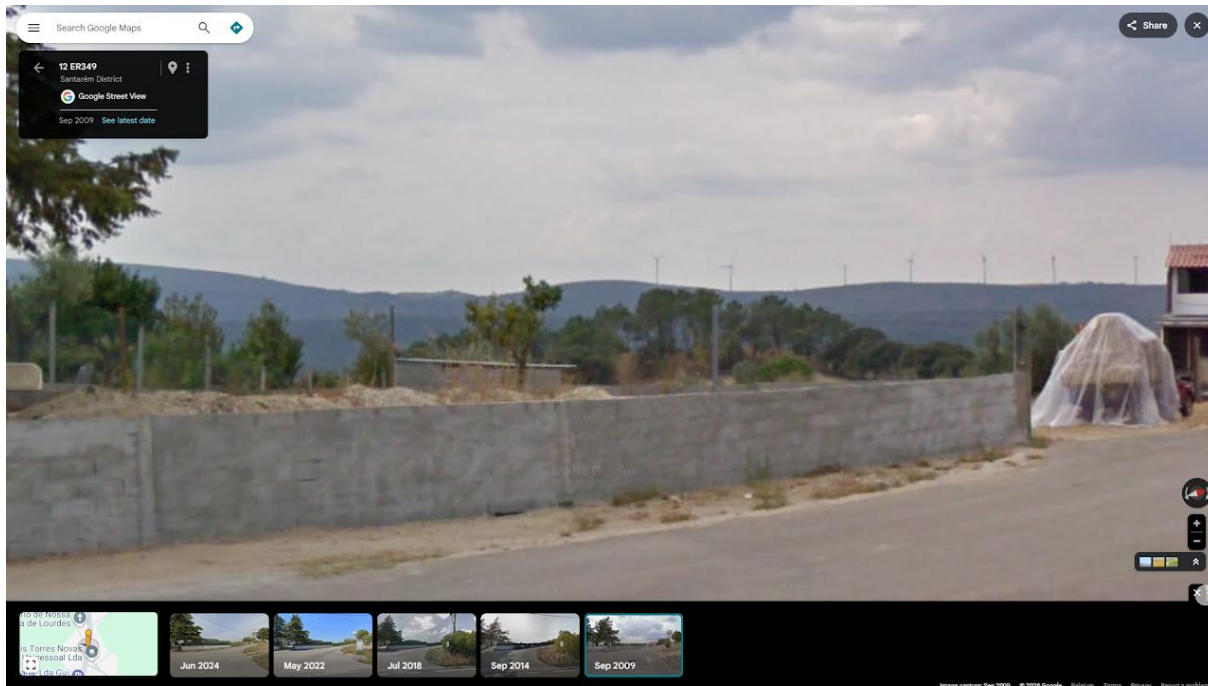
Photo of the Sun near Outeiro Grande, Portugal, by A. J. Mendonça on May 13, 1921, around 7 (am or pm?). It has been falsely published as a photo of the miracle of the sun at Fatima on October 13, 1917.

The photo was falsely attributed by *L'Osservatore Romano*, presumably in good faith, as having been taken during the miracle of the Sun at Fatima on October 13, 1917 at 12:30 pm. The photo was also published by *Life Magazine* on Dec. 3, 1951, p. 45. This Magazine corrected the data on May 12, 1952, p. 20, stating that the photo was taken at sunset.

The image of the sun has an approximate diameter of 19 pixels that corresponds to about 30' of angle or 0.5° . So the photo has a Field of View $FOV \sim 36.95^\circ (= 2 * \text{atan}(1455/19 * \text{atan}(0.5^\circ)/2))$ which corresponds to a focal length $FD \sim 53.87$ mm. The elevation of the sun corresponds to approximately 220...260 pixels or $\phi \sim 5.77^\circ \dots 6.81^\circ$, incompatible to the elevation of the astronomical sun at Fatima on Oct. 13, 1917 at 1:21 pm (elevation of 42.72° and azimuth of 180° (South)).

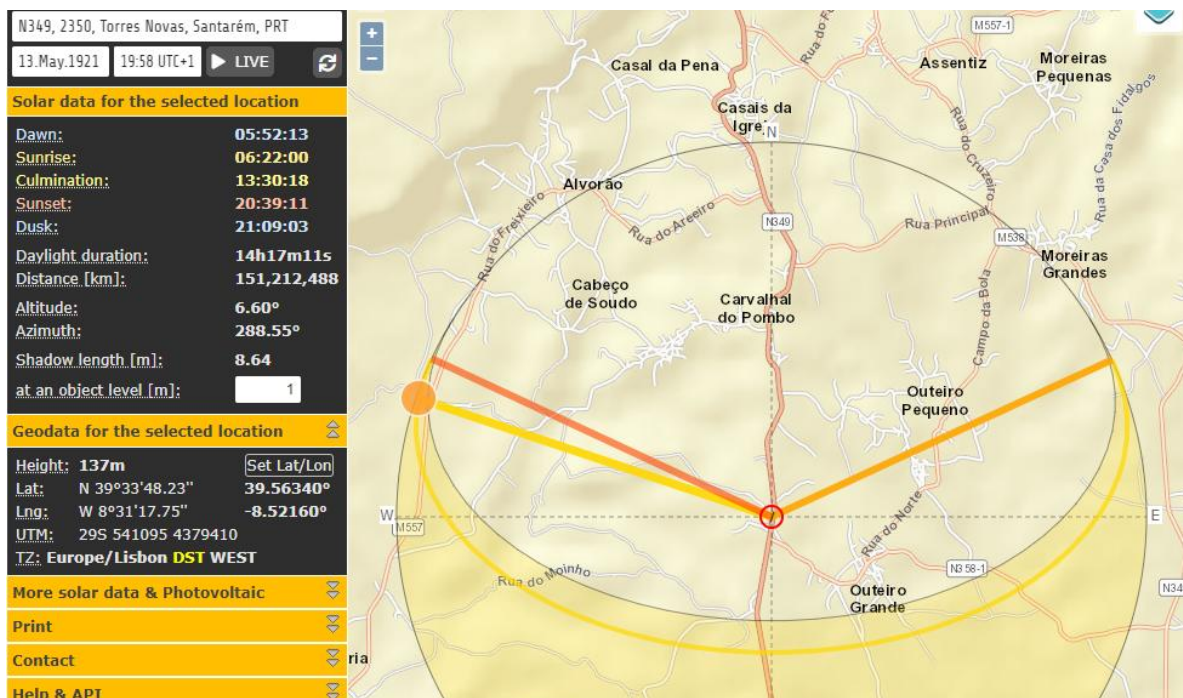
On May 12, 1952, *Life Magazine* reported that the photo was taken at sunset. As reported by *Voz de Fatima* in June 1952, the time given by Alfredo Mendonça was between 6:50 and 6:58. If we calculate the elevation at 6:58 am, we get an elevation of 5.69° . In fact, the hills behind the trees are oriented towards the west. We should therefore see the sunset as indicated by *Life Magazine*, not the sunrise. So the time needs to be interpreted. A. Mendonça probably gave the local in the afternoon. The time to enter in the calculator is therefore 7:58 pm or 19:58 (see https://www.wikiwand.com/en/Time_in_Portugal). We obtain an elevation of the sun of 6.6° , compatible with our estimate. Furthermore, the azimuth of the sun correspond more or less to 290° , which is compatible with the position of the hills (the coordinates of the Torres Novas Chapel 39.5634 North 8.5216 West, correspond perfectly: the shape of the horizon line of

the hills at this location is still almost identical today. For example, see the hill's skyline on Google Maps in 2009: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/fmQ1HhMra1u3cM9g6> - last accessed on 15-01-2024).



See also comments on <https://www.blueblurrylines.com/2013/12/the-miracle-of-fatima-photographic.html> .

See the coordinates of the place where the fake photo was taken in 1921, 4 years after the first apparition at Fatima : <https://www.suncalc.org/#/39.5634,-8.5216,19/1921.05.13/19:58/1/3>



© Ph. Dalleur

[Elevation & Azimuth - Fake Fatima Miracle photo](#)