

WHY THE SOLAR MIRACLE AT FATIMA MAY BE JUST THE SOLAR PHENOMENON

Firstly

The Blessed Virgin Mary allegedly appeared in Fatima, Portugal, in 1917 to three children, Lucia, Jacinta and Francisco. The visions culminated in an alleged solar miracle on October 13, the miracle of the sun. In this miracle, the sun allegedly changed colour and zigzagged around the sky and almost came down on a crowd of people. The miracle was supposedly seen by up to 70,000 people who had gathered to be with the children during their visions. Needless to say this was a vision for the sun did not move.

Lots of odd things happen but you need a force with the influence of propagandists to turn them into miracles. Without the Catholic Church, we would be talking about the solar anomaly/phenomenon. It would not be put into our consciousness as the solar miracle.

A priest said it was natural

The parish priest of Penacova who said he saw nothing is reported to have seen a cloud above the oak where the Virgin appeared which he said was smoke. When the sun was dancing he thought the red colour was down to them wearing red shawls. Mr de Paula told him that could not be for they would not be dressed in the one colour. Then the colour became gold but he still thought there was nothing that amazing. This is the testimony of a man who caused these sights by looking at the sun but who knew what he saw was not supernatural. He emphasised how natural it all was.

The stratospheric dust

Steuart Campbell found that a cloud of stratospheric dust could explain the miracle and change the image of the sun and make it easy to look at (The Miracle of the Sun at Fatima, Journal of Meteorology, UK, Vol 14, no. 142, October, 1989). The sun could still have been strongly bright depending on where one was standing that day meaning that different people could have seen different things. And besides if you see the sun changing you will be caught up in fear and how accurate would your memory be of it? The dust can make the sun easy to look at and make it appear to be different colours even blue and violet. He reported that a similar event happened in China in 1983 where the sun looked blue and red because of the dust.

Catholics dismiss this for they say it doesn't explain how the sun moved across the sky and zig-zagged. Not everybody saw the alleged zig-zagging and if you look at a bright object and look away to the side it may seem to have moved to where your eyes are focused on now. The object may look smaller which can give the impression that it is going back and if you look at the object again it will seem as if the object is coming closer to you for it will look bigger than the illusion.

Education Minister, Antonio Sergio, quoted by G. de Sede declared, "When the sun appeared, there were light clouds that gathered around it and which, under the effect of the storm, were driven by gyratory movements that had nothing astonishing about them." Campbell has some support then from the actual time.

The time

Some say that as heavy rain had just stopped it is possible that it created an atmospheric condition that caused the vision. The objection to that is that not all saw anything. There is no mention of those who looked up and saw nothing nor are those who looked up and thought it was natural ever mentioned either. We don't know if everybody saw something at the same time. What if some only saw something minutes after the others reported their vision? A combination of factors is possible.

FINALLY: Turning Fatima into a miracle is too much. What is wrong with saying it may be a combination of things and we don't really know? We do know the sun did not move but the people reported being made to think it did and do we want to call a lie a miracle?

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