Jesus was a "Patch"?

It has been a long while since I've found myself laying awake in bed worrying about anything so much that I could not easily go to sleep. Believe me, I sleep like a log. I'm asleep before my night-time "comfort movie" (usually Casablanca or Gone With The Wind) gets a few minutes past the opening credits. But here is the deal: A few weeks ago, like many others, I started thinking a lot about Elon Musk's musings on the chances of us not living in "Base Reality". If you don't know what that means go here to read up on it:

http://www.popsci.com/elon-musk-says-we-could-be-simulation

In short, Musk argues that it is likely that everything we know to exist, everything in the world, in our universe - is a simulation - a "matrix-like" existence. It is not a new idea and it has been around for a long time. Musk brought it forward again, into our consciousness. That is NOT what scared me at night. I do believe that he might be right.

A couple of interesting questions pop up when you start to go down that "we are living in a simulation" path: Who or what is running the simulation? If we are

playing with "house money" and this is all just a simulation, does anything we do matter? What is the point of the simulation? Entertainment? Scientific? Is there any way that we can test or prove we are in a simulation? Aside from all of those questions - the whole of it leads me to the realization that the difference between a strict religious philosophy and a firm belief that we are living in a "non-base reality" simulation is… zero.

Let's assume for the fun of discussion that we are in a "matrix" or simulation. We have no idea who or what is running the simulation. But let's say that they are observing it and that we humans are somehow an interesting part of the simulation. Somehow, for pleasure, for some experimental reason, or for whatever reason, all the living things in the simulation that have consciousness (mostly all living things) are worth observing, as a whole. Now let's imagine that the 'observer' is really really intelligent - but not infinitely so. Maybe they or, their brains, are a half order of magnitude more computationally able than ours, but they are not "god-like" or "infinite", and they do not have unlimited ability. They are probably running our simulated universe on some sort of computing device. But even if they are many orders of magnitude more computationally able than us or our computers, and even if they are able to run our current reality as a subdivided

virtual machine inside their own 'mind' - it is not impossible to think that they would have some limitations as to what they could observe at any moment, they are not omnipotent.   However, they would be able to, in real time, know and observe any particular element inside the simulation to whatever degree they pleased.   As I am sitting here typing, they could be 100% aware of every aspect of my whole being at this moment. Every thought, molecule, atom, etc. Much like a software developer in our reality could easily focus in on a subroutine as they troubleshot a whole web application or database. And furthermore, whoever is running our current 'matrix' could likely have extremely full knowledge of larger scopes in the simulation for example, depending the 'observer's' brain power, they could probably have a very high observational knowledge of a small city - what every person is doing, thinking, the placement of every object in that area, all of the physical conditions, etc. But just like a software developer who could not have perfect knowledge of every variable, and detail and logical counter in a very large bit of software, like for instance an OS, the 'observer', however powerful, would have limitations.

It is doubtful that the 'observer' would sit watching our universe like it was a TV show. It would be a noisy, damn boring one. With all that noise, it begs the

question: where are the log files? What gets recorded in them? Much of the simulation would be just noise - the actions and thoughts of six billion people and a trillion animals is a lot of noise - there would likely be 'interesting' events and 'non-interesting' ones. The interesting events would need to stand out somehow. They might be logged and noted by the 'observer'. Alarms and logs would save the 'observer' from having to pay an incredible amount of attention to the simulation. He could just check out the log files. "What's going on in my simulation today?!" they might ask… "oh, Here we are" Looking at the logs and alerts: "Wow - looks like some geophysical events just wiped out 500K 'simulants' (people) - but it appears as though the rest of the simulation is stable, so all is well. I can go back to eating Cheetos."

How many humans doing a single focused act do you think would it take to trigger an 'interesting' logged event? I read something they other day, some guy was arguing that there were ways of testing if we were in a base reality or not and that most ways were rubbish. He suggested we should maybe build an enormous monolith, unimaginably big, to get any 'observer's' attention. I think his idea was: in order to get on the 'observer's' radar and possibly provoke a reaction, we needed to do something very noticeable. (get logged) Here is a ridiculous and

crazy idea, if one hundred million people all, at the exact same moment, offed themselves with shotguns - as horrible as that is to think about - would it 'get noticed' by the 'observer'? Probably more so than a giant mile high slab of rock. One hundred million people killing themselves…. would there be a logfile event from that? An simulation alarm? That would probably not cause any sort of overt response from him (that we noticed) but I imagine 'observer' would pause for a moment and maybe rewind the simulation to find out why one hundred million conscious subroutines just fell out of the simulation and deleted themselves, no?

Let me pause here for just a quick reminder that everything I've said, if you look at it a little sideways and with slightly squinted eyes… looks and feels like it could fit into a purely religious conversation.   Would one hundred million people all praying at the same moment about the same thing get registered into a log file? Would that be noticed by the 'observer'? Would their prayer be heard?   In any traditional religion, I'm sure they would agree, that if every soul in California, Texas, and Florida (around 100 million) all dropped to their knees this instant and fervently prayed for a single thing - it would most assuredly get noticed by the god of any religion. Getting into the logfile of a simulation 'observer' and being heard by God - no difference - no matter what you believe.

If we humans are a simulation that, have up until recently, naturally evolved religions in purely organic ways… if we, for tens of thousands of years have lacked the neural mass… if the metaphorical layer of understanding that was one more layer of neocortex above what we have ever had, is where "God" was born and lived - then it is interesting that we now, very recently, have finally advanced our understanding and technologies so much that we are building a layer of neural understanding over the top of our own God's grave (after all, we are turning away from him in droves) only to discover that He moved one floor up and is now the "observer".   We got more brains - he got more real. What is the old saying? "What comes around goes around."

But that is still not what made we lay awake in bed, scared.

It is also interesting that the 'observer' of our simulated universe has never directly revealed himself. Not that we are aware of anyhow.   It appears as though our little 'matrix' simulation - once set in motion has run its course from big-bang to the present without any heavy handed tweaking of the simulation by the 'observer'. Maybe our simulation is the equivalent of a high school science project.   Maybe

the 'observer's' teacher handed out an assignment: "Starting with the computational framework provided, edit the spacetime fabric such that the cosmological constant, the boson vacuum level, the speed of light, and the gravitational constant are balanced so that the simulation evolves and results in conscious beings creating their own universe simulations." And right now some Harry-Potter-like student is 'observing' our simulation hoping that conscious beings on some planet (maybe us!) in his universe creates their own simulation so that he can get an "A" and graduate. Or maybe our 'observer' is Draco Malfoy! Yeiks! More on that later.

But what if an 'observer' was allowed or able to, for any reason, gently direct the simulation. If they didn't want to let on to the "conscious subroutines" (us people) in his little simulation that he existed - then the direction he could provide would have to appear natural and nearly invisible. To save simulation compute time, could they "Patch" the simulation in min-operation? Software developers in our reality apply patches to their software all the time. Would it be possible to introduce small directed patch elements into the universe simulation that would alter the "simulation reality trajectory"? It is fun to imagine that an astute simulation 'observer' might be able to predict that if they didn't introduce a few

patch alterations to the 'code' that the simulation might not make it to its

successful completion? There might be hundreds of thousands of planets with

civilizations on them in a simulated universe, maybe the 'observer' would very

much want them to evolve successfully to the point where we are now, and perhaps

beyond. Are there ideal conditions or ideal beliefs that need to be introduced at

certain times in order for a struggling civilization to get to an 'Information Age'?

Imagine for a moment that Jesus Christ was a "Patch".   It's all just "fun and

thought-games" I suppose, but that New Testament religious meme might have fit

pretty perfectly into directing a simulation to ends that were useful to the

'observer'. (whatever 'useful' is in their context.)   "For the Observer so Loved the

Simulation that He sent his Only Begotten Patch that Whoever Believeth in It shall

have Eternal Runtime"?

By the way - That also did not keep me up at night.

But if we are not in base reality, if we are "simulants" and our scientists looking

for fundamental laws of nature - chopping away with axes at code we can't fully

see - what can we hope to find? Should we interpret our findings differently if we

believe that when we blast electrons at each other in the Large Hadron Collider

(LHC), we are really blasting clumps of binary data around, hoping that exposes

the subroutines that guide the data? The results of LHC experiments, are they

small memory dumps - SEGFAULTS - filled with simulation noise? Are we

looking for electromagnetic patterns in the noise when we should really be having

cryptologists and linguists look for code fragments?   Are quantum mechanical

black holes and big black holes just large blocks of "zeros" - or protected memory?

This is the most exciting and fertile ground I think. Where the answers to

questions that we seek may actually intersect with what the 'observer' might also

be seeking. If the simulation is perfect enough, if the programing is right, could

there be fundamental properties from ALL realities, ours and the 'observer's',

which we have been set to work finding on his behalf?   Or it is possible that the

'observer' has no interest in the fundamental laws of the universes - and it is just

coincidence that any simulants that have built neural complexity and world

technologies enough to become themselves 'observers' and creators of their own

simulated worlds - would also, at the same time, be on the cusp of understanding

the "Grand Unified Theory" (GUT) dictated by the very simulation algorithm they

inhabit.   Are both of those evolutionary paths converging in our simulation?

Understanding "universe reality" through physics research and "universe

simulation" through computational progress - at nearly the same time would be the

ultimate marriage of the GUT, God, Scientific thought and Religious belief. In a simulated universe $S = GS+GR$. And what appears in the 'observer's' log file if and when those paths meet? Does the simulation end? Is it just halfway through?

And now finally - here is what kept me scared and awake one night: if we are not in base reality, if the odds have it we are in a simulation, and we have NO idea about the motives or intentions of our creator-'Observer', and if there is some chance that he is anywhere south of "good" or, hopefully not close to "evil", then he could be capable and maybe inclined to kill or punish any subroutine (or simulant, or consciousness) in their simulation who did not behave in a way that the 'Observer' was pleased with. Does that not sound a little like the old fashioned religions that we all grew up with? Yes it does. Now if you are in the Elon Musk camp and you believe that we are living in a simulation, then there is no way that you can rule out that an 'almighty' simulation creator (the Observer) could put the bit of "code" that is YOU into a special "hell-like" virtual machine he made special for punishment…. or rather he could just sit and eat potato chips and do nothing. It would not matter. It would be arbitrary for him. Put your subroutine in a "Code Hell" for any reason...or eat ramen noodles. Tough choice for the Observer! If you are not in the Elon Musk camp and you believe this is "base reality" and that

there is an almighty God who loves and cares for you - but nevertheless would allow you to be dragged to hell for wrongdoing - that's not to pleasant also. In either case, simulation and base reality - Heaven and Hell are a very very real possibility. Didn't I mention quite a while ago that there was almost zero difference between a non-base reality and an old time Religion?   The only big difference is that in the latter group - you at least take comfort that you BELIEVE your God is JUST. In the former group - you have zero assurance that the creator is at all fair. Even worse, given no information and not having evolved along with the meme - you have to live with the fear of having no context or story for the creator and you swim in a very COLD pool of logic, which gives zero comfort. What is extremely ironic about this situation is that an Atheist believing we are in base reality is perfectly happy that there is no god. They believe that when they die their bodies are simply worm food - there is no life after death and no fear of Hell. So they are the only ones who are sort of comfortable with the situation, even though they are probably wrong about base reality - and SHOULD indeed be very worried about a wildcard chaotic evil simulation Observer!

So there you have it: Base Reality, Religion, S=GS+GR, Our 'Observer' / simulation programer might be sitting around eating Cheetos and perusing log files

tossing random simulant subroutines into virtual subroutine hell, while in the

simulation we're all playing with house money and should probably thinking moral

relativism looks pretty good about now. Non-base reality for us is pretty sexy and

probably right. Heaven in it might be really nice, but hell there is probably much

worse than we were ever taught in Sunday School that it could be, which is pretty

damn bad - Good night and sleep tight!