

Alright, I'm going to try replying to all the questions asked so far

Yes, Einstein would be a mage in this universe, and in fact, he probably is. Feel free to create a card for him (I'll post the cards I've made since I've started soon). Magic pretty much works in the way you described. For example, take a glass of water: the water in it contains different potentialities (ice, gas...), its transformation into one of those potentialities depend on objective factors that can be understood. The more you understand those relations, the deeper you push into the identity of the object, the laws which rule it, etc, the more your magic will be accurate, powerful and most of all safe. Magic does have its drawbacks: its a task that needs precision (miscasted spells can be devastating), also making it an exhausting task, you can go mad if you're not careful yadda yadda yadda, classic lovecraftian trope.

One of the other "risks" of magic is directly linked to the god engines. To understand what god engines, we first have to talk about a specific lense through which we can view time: rather than seeing the past as something that has stopped existing like some kind of burnt match you would throw away, the future as an abstract "something" that doesn't yet exist (or even a prefixed point somewhere down the line that is bound to happen, fate) with the present being the only reality, we could think of time as less linear, where past present and future can interact, each one containing at all times some portion of the other: this isn't quite controversial when we're speaking of the past, most of us are familiar with the time travel trope where someone steps on an ant and ends up dramatically changing the future. All our past actions echo in the present, they are the beginning of an ever growing number of causal relations (butterfly effect) while also themselves being the result of something else in the past. This can all seem like rigid determinism that doesn't allow for human agency, but that's where we get into the future.

In what capacity can we say that the future exists in the present, in what way do they interact? First of all, we're not talking about "the future" as one thing (fate), but all the potential futures that may sprout from a particular point in time and space . While the potentialities of reality (everything in existence) is an objective phenomenon that exists outside of human perception, its reality in the present is purely dependant on a subject, a "vessel" that can actualize it (bring it into the present). You may think of it like a chess game: a game of chess (consisting of a chessboard and a set amount of pieces) contains an immense amount of possible games, potentialities, but for them to be actualized, there is a need for human intervention: the players. As such, these potentialities interact with the present through the actions and thoughts of conscious beings, thus adding some sense of locality to time (not extremely important though).

This is all essential to understand what the god engines are. They're not really any of the things you've described but kind of all? Think of it this way: in our daily life, we oftentimes aren't consciously aware of how the future interacts with the present, but we're also used (and understandably so) to view our interactions with the outside world as one sided, unless talking about social relations. Even then, we have an automatic bias which leads us to mostly think of ourselves like actors (if you push this to an extreme, you get solipsism). However, as we've talked before, things aren't that simple. At all times, the actions you may take are determined by context (past) but also potentiality (future).

Let's go back to our chess analogy, and let's say you're one of the players, mid game. The moves you may make at this point are not only determined by the entirety of past moves, but also by what you consider to be the most likely outcome of said action (that's pretty much the premises of strategy). You yourself are trying to actualize a particular potentiality of the game, sweet victory (all these things can also clearly be observed in MTG), and your ability to succeed is determined by your understanding of chess (similar to how casting a spell works in the lore btw). In other words, the more you understand the world, the more you become a subject within the structures you inhabit, capable of acting upon them at some level or another. But in order to become subject, you must first abandon the innate sense of subjectivity we all feel and recognize yourself as an object, a cog within countless machines. The moment you do so, while the initial impression might be one of loss of freedom, the reality of the matter is that you are now a conscious part of the machine, thus able to identify ways in which you can change the machine. If you want to win a game of chess, you first have to accept and understand the context within which you are working and the potential outcomes, same thing goes for pretty much everything else you could think of.

God engines are what happens when you get one step further. Instead of seeing yourself as a unity capable of entering in relation with outside elements, what if we could instead think of the self, but also humanity as a whole not as a separate entity from the reality surrounding it, but rather as a potential mean of expression and self determination of reality? Take our game of chess: while you may play competitively, each player seeing themselves as the determining driver of the game (subject), the game can also be played for itself, with no goal other than playing. Here, the object which is considered as subject, the "main actor" is not one or the other player, but the interaction between both, the game in its total development through time. While we understand that the game of chess is not a material being like the chessboard or the player, it does appear to show signs of what we would call subjectivity, since it is the main driver of it becoming, both players seeming to act as a vessel to its will. On some level, this is also true in the case of a competitive game, and even the least competitive game still needs both players to strive for victory in order to be interesting. God engines are this, but on a much grander scale. In our reality, the closest thing to them are utopias, political ideologies, etc... At some point in history, capitalism itself was somehow a god engine, manifesting itself before it's official emergence notably in the rise of french materialism or the protestant reform, itself being determined by the past developments and accumulated contradictions within feudalism, notably the apparition of the bourgeoisie. As we have come to find out, god engines sometimes turn out to be devil engines...

God engines are a form of synthesis between all elements within a set machine (system, structure), when the machine is able to become a "subject", as talked about earlier. Perfect potentialities of being that are often lying under perceived motives or affects, like some form of field that gives basic structure to your motivations, actions etc... While you are bound to exist on one of these fields, these are all machines you can plug into, gods you can serve. Once again, god engines exist on different scales (they're still supposed to be "big"), so they can be many different things, but we'll stick to one example: Beauty.

I think most people can agree that beauty (and more specifically the search for it) can be a driving force not only for your life as an individual, but also on a much grander scale (or at least it has the potential to become so). We also recognize that while beauty is in some measure subjective, it is still ruled by "rules", to the point that we dedicate an entire section

of philosophy, aesthetics to discovering those rules. Rather than seeing himself as a subject trying to express a form of interior feeling or trying to simply mirror reality, the artist can see himself as a body that beauty (the god engine) can inhabit, no matter their technical prowess (a program won't work very well in a broken computer, doesn't mean it's not in it).

The most advanced of mages consciously serve one god engine or another, and technically speaking, none are better or worse in their finality (which usually differs), although the same thing cannot be said about the process to get there. Some take it way more seriously than others, and there's even instances of mages (usually cults) trying to create a literal construct for their god engine to inhabit (think of it like an avatar). Although these avatars can get close to being an embodies of the god engines, no one has yet managed to successfully create a perfect avatar. And believe or not, we're done, sorry for replying with a whole essay.

(Ps, to give credit where credit is due, while most of these concepts are my own, I drew a lot of inspiration from Hegel, Bergson, Deleuze/Guattari and of course Marx)