Damascius on the One's causality as all things (*ta panta*)

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Jonathan Greig

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1 Introduction

In a 1996 article on the first principle's causality in late Neoplatonism, Cristina D'Ancona highlights an essential difference in the One's causality between Plotinus and Proclus.¹ In Plotinus, she sees the One functioning in a directly analogous way to the model of formal, or eidetic, causality: (1) as the cause of the property of unity found in each of the Forms, and (2) as the cause of distinction for the Forms altogether. For the latter premise, D'Ancona cites *Ennead* V.3 [49], 15, which claims that the One is the principle of 'all things' (*panta*) by possessing 'all things' before distinction arises after the One.² In Proclus, D'Ancona thinks that this second premise is removed: the One's production of plurality is delegated to intermediary principles, like the henads and the Limit and Unlimited, while the One itself is responsible for the unity of each thing as 'one-only' (ἐν μόνον) and only mediately the principle of plurality.³ Proclus thus departs from Plotinus by emphasizing the One as unparticipated and 'one-only'.

In this paper, I wish to follow in D'Ancona's footsteps and show that Damascius takes the same route with the One, except *backwards* from Proclus towards Plotinus, and in so doing offers a kind of *via media* between the two. In Damascius, this step is taken when he problematizes the nature of the first principle: responding to Proclus, Damascius claims that the notion of a principle implies coordination and relation to those things of which it is a principle, but that being a *first* principle also implies transcendence and absolutely no coordination with the effects. Until Damascius, nearly all Neoplatonists⁴ would assume that these two premises are held together in the One, even at times when the tension becomes more apparent.⁵ Damascius exploits this tension with two moves: he concludes

¹See D'Ancona Costa (1996).

²Quoted below, [T4].

³D'Ancona Costa (1996) 375: 'What Plotinus had forbidden—to insert supplementary hypostases between the One and the Intellect, and in turn between the Intellect and the Soul—comes to be the rule in later developments of this current of thought, and in particular in Athenian Neoplatonism. As a result of this process, in the final picture of the Neoplatonic universe the First Principle does not give rise immediately to the intelligible multiplicity of the true beings, but to other principles which are responsible for their status as simple, but at the same time different, realities. ... Proclus maintained that the One is indeed the principle of multiplicity, but at the same time he found unsatisfactory, at least to a certain extent, the Plotinian conception of this point.'

⁴A theoretical exception is Iamblichus, with his theory of a primary, transcendent 'One' and a secondary, causal 'One'. However [*need to verify*], even he relies on the notion of unity to characterize the first 'One'. Damascius makes a clear break from this by denying unity to the absolute first principle.

⁵For instance, Proclus is straightforward when he makes the One the first principle in *Elements of Theology* (here onward *ET*) Prop. 5 (esp. Dodds 6,6–21, discussed further below) and 11. Compare with *Platonic Theology* III.8, 32,11–13ff. (Westerink-Saffrey ed.), where Proclus says that the first principle is beyond the 'apparent One', so that the 'One' in *ET* Prop's. 4–5 is ineffable in this context. Gersh (2014) 89–90 attempts to read these two consistently and asserts that *ET* Prop's. 1–6 are about the Limit, the first principle below the 'One', since the Limit is the first, participated cause of unity for all beings. I disagree with this interpretation—instead, I would maintain the ambiguity between these two

that the One's unity is not completely asymmetrical with respect to its effect of 'all things' (*ta panta*), but is rather co-referential with 'all things'; and that the real first principle must be instead the Ineffable, placed before the One, which has no causal relation or connotation with 'all things'. With this distinction, I believe Damascius is making a qualified return to a Plotinian view of the One's causality as being 'all things' before they are produced, but he factors in Proclus' criticism that the Plotinian view implies plurality. In so doing, Damascius offers an account of the One wherein one can say that the One causes all things, and is therefore causally synonymous with 'all things' without endangering the One's unity.

I will focus on how Damascius conceives the One's causality in response to Proclus, and see how he also deals with Proclus' criticism of the 'Plotinian'⁶ view of the One. I will address these points in two main sections: the first section of this paper will deal with *De Principiis* I, 1–4,⁷ where Damascius first elaborates his notion of the One's coordination with its effects. The second section will address how Damascius considers 'all things' in the One: in the first (3.1) I will look at Proclus' objection to a 'Plotinian' model of the One's causality in *Parmenides Commentary* VI (1107,8–1108,11), which mirrors Damascius' own model, and the second part (3.2) will consider *De Princ.* I, 92–94, where Damascius implicitly responds to Proclus' objection and argues that the One cannot be just 'one-only' but also 'all things'.

2 The One's coordination with 'all things' (*ta panta*) in Damascius

2.1 *DP* I, 1–2: Aporia on the first principle, and the One as coordinated

Damascius introduces his notion of the One's causality as he raises the problem of the first principle at the beginning of the *De Principiis*. In the first section (I, 1–2), Damascius indicates two aspects required for being a first principle: (1) that causality implies conjunction with the effects, and (2) that the principle's priority implies transcendence over the effects. Damascius ultimately makes an aporia out of these two aspects by considering them as opposites which are mutually exclusive: choosing (1) negates (2) and *vice versa*. The difficulty ultimately results in an impasse, but it provides Damascius the opportunity to elucidate what each aspect implies for him. We may review this in the beginning aporia in *DP* I, 1–2:

[T1] Is that which is called the single first principle of all things (*tôn pantôn*)⁸ beyond all things (b) or something belonging to all things (a)—as it were, the summit of those things which proceed from it? And do we say that all things are (a*) together with it, or (b*) after it and from it?

[1,8] (b*) If someone were to say the latter, how would something be outside of all things? (1) For 'all things' (*panta*) in the absolute sense are those from which nothing is lacking. But the principle is lacking, therefore all things are not absolutely after the principle, but with the principle. (2) 'All things' yet wish to be many things having been limited, since the unlimited would not be completely all things.

descriptions for the first principle—but that is beyond the scope of this paper.

⁶For now I call this position 'Plotinian', with the concession that Iamblichus could also be in view in the critiques from Proclus that I will focus on.

⁷Referring to Westerink–Combès' ed.'s page numbering throughout this paper.

⁸This and all further occurrences of τὰ πάντα in Damascius I choose to translate as 'all things'.

Nothing therefore appears outside of all things:⁹ for totality (*pantotês*) is a certain boundary and already an encompassment, in which the principle is, on the one hand, the upward limit, while the extreme of what is from the principle is the downward limit. Therefore all things are with the limits. (3) And yet the principle is coordinated with the things which are from [it]: for it is and is called the principle of those things. Both the cause then [is coordinated] with its effects, and the first with those things after the first. But we call these ‘all things’ which are a single coordination of those which are many, such that the principle is in all things. (4) And generally we say ‘all things’ in an absolute way so much as we conceive them in whatever way—but we also conceive the principle. Accordingly, we are even accustomed to call a ruler (*archonta*) and those ruled (*archomenous*) the entire city (*pasan polin*), and both begetter (*genêtora*) and those begotten (*gennêthentas*) the entire family (*pan gennos*).

[2,9] (a*) If ‘all things’ are with the first principle, the principle is not something among all things, since [otherwise]¹⁰ even it has been taken together in all things. Therefore, the single **coordination** of all things, which [itself] we call ‘all things’, is without a principle (*anarchos*) and without cause (*anaitios*), so that we do not go up upon the unlimited. But it is necessary that everything is either a principle or from a principle;¹¹ therefore all things are also either a principle or from a principle. However if the latter, the principle will not be with all things, but outside all things, because the principle is of those things from it; but if the former, what would proceed from all things, just as from the principle, and outside of all things toward the things downward as the full completion of all things? For even this is in all things, since the notion of ‘all things’ leaves aside absolutely nothing. Therefore, all things are neither a principle nor from a principle.¹² (DP I, 1,4–2,20)¹³

[1,4] πότερον ἐπέκεινα τῶν πάντων ἐστὶν ἡ μία τῶν πάντων ἀρχὴ λεγομένη, ἢ τὶ τῶν πάντων, οἷον κορυφὴ τῶν ἀπ’ αὐτῆς προϊόντων; καὶ τὰ πάντα σὺν αὐτῇ λέγομεν εἶναι, ἢ μετ’ αὐτὴν καὶ ἀπ’ αὐτῆς;

[1,8] (b*) εἰ μὲν γὰρ τοῦτο φαίη τις, πῶς ἂν εἴη τι τῶν πάντων ἐκτός; ὧν γὰρ μὴδ’ ὅτιοῦν ἄπεστι, ταῦτα πάντα ἀπλῶς. [10] ἄπεστι δὲ ἡ ἀρχή· οὐκ ἄρα πάντα ἀπλῶς τὰ μετὰ τὴν ἀρχήν, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν ἀρχήν. ἔτι δὲ τὰ πάντα πολλὰ βούλεται εἶναι πεπερασμένα· τὰ γὰρ ἄπειρα οὐκ ἂν εἴη πάντα ἀπαρτί. οὐδὲν ἄρ’ ἔξω φανέται τῶν πάντων· ὅρος γάρ τις ἡ παντότης καὶ ἤδη περίληψις, ἐν ᾗ ἡ μὲν ἀρχὴ [15] πέρας τὸ ἄνω τὸ δ’ ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς ἔσχατον πέρας τὸ κάτω· πάντα ἄρα μετὰ τῶν περάτων. ἔτι δὲ ἡ ἀρχὴ συντέτακται [2,1] τοῖς ἀπὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς· ἐκείνων γὰρ ἀρχὴ λέγεται τε καὶ ἔστι· καὶ τὸ αἴτιον δὴ τοῖς αἰτιατοῖς, καὶ τὸ πρῶτον τοῖς μετὰ τὸ πρῶτον. ὧν δὲ μία σύνταξις πολλῶν ὄντων, ταῦτα πάντα λέγομεν· ὥστε ἐν τοῖς πᾶσι καὶ ἡ ἀρχή. καὶ ὅλως [5] πάντα λέγομεν ἀπλῶς ὅσα καὶ ὁπωσοῦν ἐννοοῦμεν, ἐννοοῦμεν δὲ καὶ τὴν ἀρχήν. καὶ τοίνυν εἰδοθαμεν πᾶσαν λέγειν πόλιν ἄρχοντα καὶ ἀρχομένους, καὶ πᾶν γένος τὸν τε γενήτορα καὶ τοὺς γεννηθέντας.

[2,9] (a*) εἰ δὲ πάντα μετὰ τῆς ἀρχῆς, οὐκ ἂν εἴη τι ἡ ἀρχὴ [10] πάντων, συνειλημμένης ἐν τοῖς πᾶσι καὶ τῆς ἀρχῆς· ἡ ἄρα μία τῶν πάντων σύνταξις, ἣν πάντα φασί, ἀναρχός ἐστι καὶ ἀναίτιος, ἵνα μὴ ἐπ’ ἄπειρον ἀνίωμεν.¹⁴ ἀλλὰ μὴν δεῖ γε πᾶν ἡ ἀρχὴν εἶναι ἢ ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς· καὶ τὰ πάντα ἄρα ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐστὶν ἢ ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς. ἀλλ’ εἰ μὲν τοῦτο, οὐκ ἂν εἴη [15] σὺν τοῖς πᾶσιν ἡ ἀρχή, ἀλλ’ ἔξω τῶν πάντων, ὡς ἡ ἀρχὴ τῶν ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς· εἰ δ’ ἐκείνο, τί ἂν εἴη ἀπὸ τῶν πάντων προϊόν ὡς ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς καὶ ἔξω τῶν πάντων ἐπὶ τὰ κάτω ὡς τῶν πάντων ἀποτελεσμα; καὶ τοῦτο γὰρ ἐν τοῖς πᾶσιν· οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀφίησιν ἡ τῶν πάντων ἀπλῶς ἐννοία· τὰ ἄρα [20] πάντα οὔτε ἀρχὴ οὔτε ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς.

⁹Westerink-Combès (hereafter ‘W-C’) (DP I, 1, n. 2) reference Aristotle’s *Metaph.* K.10, 1067a20–23, where Aristotle demonstrates that the notion merely of ‘all’, in relation to places, excludes by definition infinity or unlimitedness.

¹⁰Following W-C’s suggested insertion.

¹¹Damascius directly cites Aristotle, *Physics* III.4, 203b6; see also Caluori (Forthcoming) 5. In that context, Aristotle denies that there is a principle of the infinite, and thus he cites this premise. Note also Damascius appears to employ the same reasoning from the impossibility of the infinite, so in this respect may be borrowing from Aristotle.

¹²One can see in this passage multiple uses of Aristotelian language, both in the construction of the aporia, as one would see from *Metaph.* B, the technical constructions of definitions, and so on. [To be elaborated...]

¹³All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

¹⁴The sub-clause ἵνα...ἀνίωμεν is somewhat unclear to me. One theory is it appears to be an infinite regress argument, ala ‘Third Man Argument’ (thanks to Antonio Vargas for pointing this out). However the negative μὴ is then very strange: if all things are *anarchos/anaitios*, then another principle would need to be posited, *ad infinitum*, so we *should* go to infinity. But that seems exactly denied by the μὴ.

Another idea would be this: with the previous point (2), second parag., the idea could be that we don’t get to something ‘outside’ the group of limited things if there is no prior principle, *anarchos/etc.*—in other words, this is definitionally impossible. However the point seems to be rather cryptic here, if so.

In the first paragraph (1,4–7) Damascius presents two opposed choices for the nature of the first principle, where either choice mutually cancels the other and establishes the aporetic impasse.¹⁵ One curiosity is the way Damascius begins the problem by asking not one but rather two questions inversely of each other: ‘Is the first principle with (a), or beyond (b), all things?’; and, ‘Are all things with (a*), or after (b*), the first principle?’ Damascius ends up addressing only the second set, (a*)–(b*), with the relation of ‘all things’ toward the first principle. This latter move, to answer the question from the side of ‘all things’, may result from Damascius’ adherence to the principle of arguing from what is more known to us to what is more known by nature, from the beginning of Aristotle’s *Physics*.¹⁶ As Damascius later shows and keeps referring back to, ‘all things’ are more manifest to us in plurality than in unity, within the One,¹⁷ and in that respect our inquiries must start from that level.

A second factor behind the repeated question for both (a)–(b) and (a*)–(b*) may result from Damascius reading ‘principle’ (*archê*) as an opposed relative term to ‘all things’:¹⁸ that is, instead of the *archê* as an asymmetrical, axiomatic starting point, here the *archê* is understood in the sense that it cannot be referred to by itself without also referring to its correlating term. This would bring to mind the subcategory of relative opposition in Aristotle’s *Categories* 10, where, for any given pair of relatively opposed terms, each term exists only in relation to the other:

[T2] Things opposed as relatives are called just what they are, of their opposites or in some other way in relation to them. For example, the double is called just what it is (double) of the half. Again, knowledge and the knowable are opposed as relatives, and knowledge is called just what it is, of the knowable, and the knowable too is called just what it is, in relation to its opposite, knowledge; for the knowable is called knowable by something—by knowledge. Thus things opposed as relatives are called just what they are, of their opposites or in some other way in relation to one another. (11b24–33; trans. Akrill)

Ὅσα μὲν οὖν ὥς τὰ πρὸς τι ἀντίκειται αὐτὰ ἅπερ ἐστὶ [25] τῶν ἀντικειμένων λέγεται ἢ ὅπως οὖν ἄλλως πρὸς αὐτά· οἷον τὸ διπλάσιον τοῦ ἡμίσεος αὐτὸ ὅπερ ἐστὶ διπλάσιον λέγεται· καὶ ἡ ἐπιστήμη δὲ τῷ ἐπιστητῷ ὥς τὰ πρὸς τι ἀντίκειται, καὶ λέγεται γε ἡ ἐπιστήμη αὐτὸ ὅπερ ἐστὶ τοῦ ἐπιστητοῦ· καὶ τὸ ἐπιστητὸν δὲ αὐτὸ ὅπερ ἐστὶ πρὸς τὸ [30] ἀντικείμενον λέγεται τὴν ἐπιστήμην· τὸ γὰρ ἐπιστητὸν τινὶ λέγεται ἐπιστητὸν τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ.

For Aristotle here, an opposed relative exists only in relation to its correlating term, unlike the other kinds of opposites¹⁹—e.g., good does not exist in virtue of the bad, blindness in relation to sight, and so on, while the double only exists in virtue of the half, the knowable in virtue of the half, and so on. For Damascius with the first principle and ‘all things’ here, the example of the knowable (*epistêton*) and knowledge (*epistêmê*) is likely more relevant, where just as the knowable informs the content of knowledge, so the first principle provides the content for ‘all things’. Although the terms co-exist with each other, insofar as the knowable also refers to its counterpart, knowledge

¹⁵Compare the strategy for employing aporiai with Aristotle’s *Metaph.* B. [*Elaborate at some point.*]

¹⁶Aristotle, *Physics* I.1, 184a17–21: ‘The natural way of doing this [i.e. to determine nature’s principles] is to start from the things which are more knowable and clear to us and proceed towards those which are clearer and more knowable by nature; for the same things are not knowable relatively to us and knowable without qualification. So we must follow this method and advance from what is more obscure by nature, but clearer to us, towards what is more clear and more knowable by nature’ (trans. Hardie/Gaye).

¹⁷*DP* I, 2,21–22.

¹⁸Special thanks to Laura Castelli for pointing out this crucial suggestion.

¹⁹Cf. Simplicius, *On Categories* 382,17–19: ‘Aristotle defined the opposition in respect of the relative before the others because, it seems to me, it has a particular distinguishing mark lacked by the others, namely that things opposed in this way coexist with one another (*to sunuparxein allêlois*)’ (trans. Gaskin). (Πρώτην δὲ Ἀριστοτέλης ὥρισαν τῶν ἄλλων τὴν κατὰ τὸ πρὸς τι ἀντίθεσιν, διότι οἱμα ἴδιον ἔχει τι αὐτὴ παρὰ τὰς ἄλλας, τὸ συνυπάρχειν ἀλλήλοις τὰ οὕτως ἀντικείμενα.)

(and *vice versa*, knowledge to the knowable), the knowable object may also exist before knowledge comes to be.²⁰ Damascius seems to have this type of non-reciprocal co-existence in mind for the first principle and ‘all things’, initially here and especially later when he elaborates the relation between ‘all things’ and the One. Thus Damascius’ repetition of the question, and in turn the way he refers to the two terms of ‘principle’ and ‘all things’ as relatives, suggests that he is considering the two within this frame. Already this way of framing the question implies how Damascius will proceed with the question of the first principle and the One.²¹

Paragraph #2 (1,8–2,8) presents reasons against saying that all things are ‘after’ the first principle, while paragraph #3 (2,9–20) presents reasons against saying that all things are ‘with’ the first principle. The conclusion in paragraph #3 ultimately leads to the Ineffable (*DP* I, 4,13ff.), where ‘all things’ are shown to be neither from a principle nor themselves a principle. This conclusion, however, is supported only after Damascius denies that the first principle is uncoordinated and ‘before’ all things in paragraph #2. Instead, the assertion that the principle is ‘with’ all things is implicitly supported.

That the principle is ‘with’ all things, rather than before, presents a basic problem coming from previous Neoplatonists: why suppose the first principle to be ‘with’ all things? In Proclus, this option would be suspect: the first principle, in the form of the One, does not imply any coordination or conjunction with that which it causes. Yet Damascius presents four distinct arguments in paragraph #2 (1,8–2,8) against this position:

1. Nothing is lacking in the notion of ‘all things’; implicitly, the principle is not lacking either; therefore it is not left out of ‘all things’. (1,9–11);
2. ‘all things’ means²² a multitude which is defined/limited, so that there is nothing that is not limited; therefore the principle is at the ‘uppermost’ extreme of the limits (1,12–16);
3. the principle is coordinated (*συντέτακται*) with what is from it, all things; the principle is then ordered in relation to, and therefore belongs with, that which it causes. (1,16–2,4); and,
4. ‘all things’ indicates anything that we conceive (*ἐννοοῦμεν*); the principle is also conceived; therefore the principle is included in ‘all things’. (2,4–2,8)

Of the arguments, points (1)–(3) make claims about the ontological status or causal relation of ‘all things’ with the first principle, while point (4) confirms the former three as a dialectical argument from how we conceive things. For the moment, the first three are the most relevant for the causal issue at stake. Points (1) and (2) complement each other insofar as both imply that ‘all things’ is exhaustive: neither lack nor anything outside that limit can be indicated. Given this, a Proclean could dispute point (1): if, for instance, ‘all things’ below the One are characterized by unity and plurality, and plurality without unity implies an infinite regress and an ontological impossibility, then it

²⁰Cf. Simplicius, *On Categories* 383,20–30, where he quotes Ps.-Archytas from the latter’s ‘On Opposites’: ‘Of the relatives some reciprocate towards one another from both sides, as for example the larger and the smaller, the sibling and the similar. Others do indeed possess reciprocation, but not from both parts [of the relation]. For knowledge is said of the knowable and perception of the perceivable, but not, contrariwise, the knowable of knowledge and the perceivable of perception. The reason for this is that what is judged can exist without the judger, as for instance the perceivable [can exist] without perception and the knowable without knowledge, but it is impossible for the judger to exist without the judged, such as the perception without the perceivable and the knowledge without the knowable’ (trans. Gaskin).

²¹[March 15, 2017 at 11:41 AM] This part was just added; need to return to this theme later in the paper/chapter, so thus the brief mention here.

²²The language is, ‘wishes to be’, which is typical in Aristotelian passages where a term, the definiendum, is equated with its definiens. Thus, ‘X “wishes to be” Y’, or ‘X means Y’...

seems *some* lack must follow.²³ This objection could be met if ‘all things’ is simply the collection of items, altogether, and not just one or a subset with that group. In that respect, the set of items together simply means nothing is excluded—leaving aside the question of ontological lack for members within that set.

Point (2) strengthens the claim of (1), insofar as anything that is not limited is explicitly ruled out—and in that respect, no lack is implied. A Proclean could again respond and say that ‘all things’, since they have the character of being limited, fall under the principle of the Limit—one of the pair of principles, Limit and Unlimited, below the One. Since the Limit is the direct cause of limitedness in all beings, the One is left exempt from the direct causation of beings—that is, the One, *qua* first principle, has no coordination with ‘all things’. But this objection may ultimately be met by point (3), that the principle is coordinated with ‘all things’.

Damascius argues point (3) by stating that the principle is called such in relation to its subsequent items, ‘all things’. This is supported by his statement, ‘the cause then [is coordinated] with its effects, and the first with those things after the first.’ In that sense, Damascius appears to imply that the cause is ordered in relation to its effects generated, no matter the kind that the effect is. Again, a Proclean might object that this fails to account for distinguishing between unparticipated and participated causes, which are supposed to account for this issue: participated causes belong specifically to their respective participants, by directly producing the effect in their participants; unparticipated causes, on the other hand, belong to none of the participants, since they produce their effect for all participants.²⁴ Unparticipated causes in one sense might be said to be ‘coordinated’ with their effects, insofar as they are the primary source of a given property (e.g. intelligibility (for intellects), self-motion (for souls), and so on), and in that respect they belong to the same order (τάξις).²⁵ On the other hand, unparticipated causes also transcend their effects, exactly because they are unparticipated by the participants. If causation is understood this way, Damascius’ construal seems to leave out a subtle but crucial distinction that puts into question his argument in paragraph #2.

2.2 DP I, 2–4: Unraveling the One’s causal relation to ‘all things’

This brings us to the next section, DP I, 2–4. Point (3) in the previous section (DP I, 1–2), provided the initial claim that to be a principle implies relation and co-ordination with the effect, but no argument was given for the claim. DP I, 2–4, gives us some reasons to see how coordination is involved, when Damascius elucidates the different levels that compose the group of ‘all things’:

[T3] Yet ‘all things’ are seen in some way (*pô*s) together in plurality and a certain distinction, since we do not conceive (*ennooûmen*) totality (*to pan*) without these characteristics. How, then, do particular distinction and plurality become straightaway manifested? We respond that ‘all things’ do not exist in

²³Cf. Proclus, *ET* Prop. 1 (‘Every plurality participates in unity in some way.’; *πᾶν πλῆθος μετέχει πῃ τοῦ ἐνός*); Prop. 4 (‘All that is united is other than the One-itself.’; *πᾶν τὸ ἡνωμένον ἕτερόν ἐστι τοῦ αὐτοενός*).

²⁴See Proclus, *ET*, Prop. 23: ‘All that is unparticipated brings to existence participated entities from itself; and all participated existences (*hupastaseis*) are raised toward unparticipated subsistences (*huparxeis*) (*πᾶν τὸ ἀμέθεκτον ὑφίστησιν ἀφ’ ἑαυτοῦ τὰ μετεχόμενα, καὶ πᾶσαι αἱ μετεχόμεναι ὑποστάσεις εἰς ἀμεθέκτους ὑπάρξεις ἀνατείνονται*); see esp. Dodds 26,30–34; 28,5–7.

²⁵See *ET* Prop. 21; see also *ET* Prop. 124, Dodds 110,7–8, where Proclus uses *σύνταξις* in a counter-conditional case: ‘...for there is no coordination of entities that are entirely dissimilar’ (*οὐ γὰρ ἔστι σύνταξις τῶν πάντη ἀνομοίων*); cf. *ET* Prop. 29, which proves procession happens acc. to likeness.

every respect in distinction and plurality, but the One as summit of many things (*tôn pollôn*), the unified as monad of those things which have been distinguished, while the One is yet more simple than the monad. But first, the monad is the entire number, even if it is yet compressed together (*suneptugmenos*);²⁶ in this way the monad is ‘all things.’²⁷ Second, the One is not something among the many things (*ta polla*): for if it even were, it would be something making up the many, as each of the others.²⁸ But as many as are the many things according to a certain division, that One is also so many things before division, in the mode of the entirely partless.²⁹ For the One is not like a minimum, as Speusippus seemed to say, but ‘One’ as absorbing all things; by its simplicity it has resolved all things, and it has made all things. Wherefore all things are from it, so that it is ‘all things’ before all things. (2,21–3,12)

[2,21] ἔτι δὲ τὰ πάντα ὁμοῦ ἐν πλήθει πως ὁράται καὶ τινι δικρίσει· καὶ γὰρ τὸ πᾶν οὐκ ἄνευ τούτων ἐννοοῦμεν· πῶς οὖν εὐθὺς διάκρισις τις καὶ πλήθος ἐξεφάνη; ἢ οὐ πανταχῇ τὰ πάντα ἐν διακρίσει καὶ πλήθει, ἀλλὰ κορυφῇ [3,1] μὲν τῶν πολλῶν τὸ ἓν, τῶν δὲ διακεκριμένων τὸ ἡνωμένον μονὰς καὶ τὸ ἓν ἔτι τῆς μονάδος ἀπλούστερον. ἀλλὰ πρῶτον μὲν καὶ ἡ μονὰς ἅπας ὁ ἀριθμός, εἰ καὶ ἔτι συνεπτυγμένος· πάντα ἄρα οὕτως καὶ ἡ μονὰς. ἔπειτα [5] δὲ καὶ τὸ ἓν οὐ τῶν πολλῶν τί ἐστίν· ἢ γὰρ ἂν καὶ συνεπλήρου τὰ πολλά, καθάπερ τῶν ἄλλων ἕκαστον· ἀλλ’ ὅσαπέρ ἐστι τὰ πολλά κατὰ δὴ τινα μερισμόν, τοσαῦτα καὶ τὸ ἓν ἐκείνῳ πρὸ τοῦ μερισμοῦ κατὰ τὸ πάντῃ ἡμέρες. οὐ γὰρ ἓν ὡς ἐλάχιστον, καθάπερ ὁ Σπεῦσιππος ἔδοξε [10] λέγειν, ἀλλ’ ἓν ὡς πάντα καταπιόν· τῇ γὰρ ἑαυτοῦ ἀπλότητι πάντα συνανέλυσεν, καὶ ἐν τὰ πάντα ἐποίησεν. διὸ καὶ πάντα ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ, ὅτι πάντα καὶ αὐτὸ πρὸ τῶν πάντων.

The basic three-fold schema in this passage between the One, the ‘unified’/‘monad’, and differentiated plurality, is similar to that given in Proclus’ *ET*, Prop. 5–6. There, Proclus initially distinguishes between (a) unified entities, which receive unity as an effect; (b) participated causes of that unity, which he terms the ‘henads’ in Prop. 6; and (c) the One-itself, before the henads and unified entities. Damascius roughly follows this structure, implying that his ‘Unified’ falls into an analogous position to Proclus’ henads (b). One difference is that Proclus posits multiple, distinct henads in the middle rung, (b), while Damascius only discusses one entity, the ‘monad’, which is an implicit plurality, as a compressed ‘number’, brought together in one entity. Another potential difference is that Proclus specifies the henads as being ‘one’ by subsistence (ὑπάρξις) and plural by participation (μεθέξις) through entities directly unified by them.³⁰ Damascius by contrast refers to this middle category ‘monad’ as unified, rather than the third category (a) of distinct, plural things in Proclus. Damascius’ description of the monad as ‘entire number...compressed together’ (ἡ μονὰς ἅπας ὁ ἀριθμός, εἰ καὶ ἔτι συνεπτυγμένος) blurs the distinction between being ‘one’ by substance and ‘plural’ by participation: rather the monad not only brings unity into the group of all differentiated entities, but it also ‘unfolds’ the entities out of itself in the process—as both one and multiple. The difference from Proclus here appears to be that Damascius affirms the existence of multitude, or plurality, in the ‘unified’, in a way that is not

²⁶One can see the sense of συνεπτυγμένος commonly in Plotinus: e.g. *Enn.* VI.8,18, where the circle and radii are said to be a kind of expression of the center, and ‘expansion’ of the center outward (see esp. lines 17–27). In this respect, the language represents a return toward Plotinus. Special thanks to Bethany Somma for pointing this out.

²⁷Compare with Proclus, *In Parm.* 1105,15[?]-23[?]'s distinction between ‘monad’ and unity, or the One: ‘Similarly the monad, because it is not made up of distinct parts as is every number derived from it, <is partless>; but because it is comprised of certain elements which make it a monad and make it differ from a point, one would not be wrong in calling these components of the definition of the monad “parts”; for those things that make up the definition of each form are assuredly parts of it, and it is made up of them as parts, and it is a whole experiencing oneness only as an attribute, but not being the One itself, whereas only that which is simply One is composed neither of continuous parts nor of distinct ones nor of component ones being solely One and simply One, not something unified’ (trans. Dillon/Morrow).

²⁸The Greek is tricky in this clause, especially the sense of συνεπλήρου for the One. Compare with W-C’s translation: ‘...sinon, il entrerait aussi dans la constitution des plusieurs, comme chacun des autres [uns].’

²⁹Compare to the language of ‘all things’ in the One before distinction in Plotinus, *Enn.* V.3 [49], 15,27–32 (cited above). [There may also be a relation to Aristotle’s definition of unity in *Metaph.* I; need to check again.]

³⁰Although in other passages, the henads are implicitly ‘plural’ according to their causality (κατ’ αἰτίαν); see *ET* Prop. 118, which establishes the henads pre-containing their attributes in the manner of a cause (κατ’ αἰτίαν). [Need to verify if Proclus actually calls the henads ‘plural’ explicitly.]

directly implied in Proclus' henads. This would mark one causal shift from Proclus.

The description of the One, however, implies more of a difference from Proclus. Damascius describes the One as the 'summit' of all things, and in this regard as 'all things itself before all things' (ὅτι πάντα καὶ αὐτὸ πρὸ τῶν πάντων). Damascius distinguishes this sense of the One as 'all things' from the monad, which implies initial differentiation although it is still predominantly 'one' in its subsistence. The One, by comparison, is 'all things' by being entirely partless (*kata to pantê ameres*). In this respect, the One has no relation to differentiation, unlike the monad—that is, the monad stands directly over differentiated entities, whereas the One is twice removed from the differentiated group, like the unparticipated in Proclus.

Given this, Damascius' characterization of the One as being all things, since it produces all things, recalls Plotinus' own characterization from *Ennead* V.3.15, which we may briefly review:

[T4] What then are 'all things'? Those things of which that One is the principle. But how is that One the principle of all things (*tôn pantôn*)? Is it because as one it preserves them, making each of them to be? Yes, and because it brought them into existence. But how did it do so? By possessing them beforehand (*proteron*). But it has been said that in this way it will be a plurality. But it had them in such a way as not to be distinct: they are distinguished on the second level by rational account (*tô logô*). For this is already actuality (*energeia*), but the One is the power of all things (*dunamis pantôn*). (27–33; trans. Armstrong, modified)

τίνα οὖν πάντα; ἢ ὧν ἀρχὴ ἐκεῖνο. ὅπως δὲ ἐκεῖνο ἀρχὴ τῶν πάντων; ἄρα, ὅτι αὐτὰ σῶζει ἐν ἑκάστων αὐτῶν ποιήσασα εἶναι; ἢ καὶ ὅτι ὑπέστησεν αὐτά. πῶς δὲ; ἢ τῷ πρότερον ἔχειν αὐτά. ἀλλ' εἴρηται, ὅτι πλῆθος οὕτως ἔσται. ἀλλ' ἄρα οὕτως εἶχεν ὡς μὴ διακεκριμένα· τὰ δ' ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ διεκέκριτο τῷ λόγῳ. ἐνέργεια γὰρ ἦδη· τὸ δὲ δύναμις πάντων.

Plotinus' phrase of the One being the 'power' of all things results from his attempt to show how the One, being a cause of all things, pre-contains them at the same time that it is absolutely 'one'. His solution is to say that the One has 'all things' without distinction (*mê diakekrimena*), where their production in actuality (*energeia*) after the One results in plurality. Damascius' One, at this point, follows this description rather closely, insofar as he also describes the One as having all things 'by the entirely partless' (*kata to pantê ameres*). Whereas Plotinus just calls the One the 'power of all things', without making an identity claim, Damascius takes this further step for the One as 'all things before all things'. Damascius' Plotinian characterization is something we will revisit in the next section.

We should also note, Damascius' notion of the One lies in some clear contrast to Proclus' One, which is 'one-only' and produces only in virtue of its unity rather than as a power for all things.³¹ In *ET* Prop. 5, which proves that the One is prior to all things, Proclus says that the One must have the character of unity only in its causal activity. As part of the proof, Proclus gives a hypothetical case where the One is prior to a given plurality, while it is yet still participated by that plurality.³² In this scenario, participation however implies implicit plurality in the participated

³¹As in Plotinus, where the One is the 'power of all things' (δύναμις πάντων)—see *Enn.* V.3 [49] [15,33ff.?).

³²Proclus, *ET* Prop. 5, Dodds 6,7–16: 'If on the other hand the One in like manner participates plurality, being indeed one in substance, but by participation not-one, then the One will be pluralized because of the manifold as the manifold is unified because of the One. Thus the One communicates in the manifold and the manifold in the One. But things which come together and communicate in each other, if they are brought together by a third principle, have that principle as their prior; if on the contrary they bring themselves together, they are not opposites (for opposites do not tend towards opposites). Now on the supposition that the One and the manifold are contradistinguished, and the manifold qua manifold is not one, and the One qua one is not manifold, neither arising within the other, they will be at once one (by participation) and two (in substance)' (trans. Dodds). (εἰ δὲ καὶ τὸ ἐν μετέχει πλῆθους, κατὰ μὲν τὴν ὑπαρξιν ὡς ἐν ὑφεστός, κατὰ δὲ τὴν μέθεξιν οὐχ ἐν, πεπληθυσμένον ἔσται τὸ ἐν, ὥσπερ τὸ πλῆθος ἡνωμένον διὰ τὸ ἐν. κοινοῦνται ἄρα τὸ τε ἐν τῷ πλῆθει καὶ τὸ πλῆθος τῷ ἐνί· τὰ δὲ συνιόντα καὶ κοινοῦντά

‘One’, which implies that another, *unparticipated* One is required:

[T5] [6,16] But if there will be something before [the participated ‘One’ and the plurality] which brings them together, it is either ‘one’ or ‘not-one’; if not-one, then many or nothing. But neither can it be many, otherwise there would be a plurality before the ‘one’; nor is it nothing, for how will nothing bring [the ‘one’ and plurality] together? Therefore it is one-only (*hen monon*). For this ‘one’ is not many, otherwise it would lead to an infinite regress. Therefore it is the One-itself (*to autoen*), and every plurality is from the One-itself. (*ET Prop. 5*, Dodds 6,16–21)

[6,16] ἀλλὰ μὴν εἰ ἔσται τι πρὸ αὐτῶν τὸ συνάγον, ἢ ἔν ἐστιν ἢ οὐχ ἔν. ἀλλ’ εἰ οὐχ ἔν, ἢ πολλὰ ἢ οὐδέν. οὔτε δὲ πολλὰ, ἵνα μὴ πληθος ἢ πρὸ ἐνός· οὔτε οὐδέν· πῶς γὰρ συνάξει τὸ οὐδέν; ἔν ἄρα μόνον· οὐ γὰρ δὴ καὶ τοῦτο τὸ ἐν πολλὰ, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ἄπειρον. ἔστιν ἄρα τὸ αὐτοέν· καὶ πᾶν πληθος ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοενός.

Here Proclus emphasizes the One’s pure unity as the cause of the ‘coming-together’ (συνάγον) for the participated ‘one’ and the plurality. If the One is anything other than pure unity, then another ‘one’ would need to be posited above the One, and again *ad infinitum* if the same. One important observation here is that Proclus does not talk about positive production from the unparticipated ‘One’, but instead its unifying activity. Positive production is instead reserved for the participated ‘one’ which acts on the plurality. This implies that Proclus envisions the One’s causality in a way that denies direct causal relation with plurality, since this is reserved for the participated ‘one’, or the henads as he shows in *ET Prop. 6*.³³ One can see this as an application of Proclus’ principle of unparticipated causes, which produce their effect for all participants by not being directly related to any one of them. In the same way, the One causes unity by not being directly related to the participants, being pluralities, which receive unity.

The difference should already be apparent compared to Damascius on the One. Damascius characterizes the One as being primarily ‘one’ in itself, but unlike Proclus, the One is ‘all things’ in addition to being ‘one’ in terms of its causality—as *DP I*, 3–4, later spells out:

[T6] For if someone were to say that it is One, if it is both all things in whichever way, but namely also one before all things of this sort, it is rather one than ‘all things’ (for it is ‘one’ by itself, but ‘all things’ as cause of all and according to its coordination towards all things, and to speak simply in a secondary way, the One is at any rate primarily ‘one’). But if someone were also to say this, duality will be primarily placed in it. (3,25–4,6)

εἰ γὰρ λέγοι [4,1] τις ὅτι τὸ ἔν, εἰ καὶ πάντα ἐστὶν ὁπωσοῦν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν πρὸ τῶν οὕτω γε πάντων, καὶ μᾶλλον ἐν ἢ πάντα ἐστίν (ἐν μὲν γὰρ καθ’ ἑαυτὸ, πάντα δὲ ὡς αἴτιον πάντων καὶ κατὰ τὴν πρὸς πάντα σύνταξιν, καὶ ἀπλῶς εἰπεῖν δευτέρως, ἐν [5] δὲ πρώτως τὸ γε ἔν), ἀλλ’ εἰ καὶ τοῦτο λέγοι τις, πρῶτον μὲν διπλόην ἐν αὐτῷ θήσεται.

In the first few lines up to 4,3, Damascius concedes that the One is primarily ‘one’ in itself, when considered as prior to ‘all things’ from it. If this were Proclus, the analysis would stay the same for the One considered in its causality, and it would just be ‘one’ regardless. However Damascius next shows that there are two ways to consider

πη ἀλλήλοις εἰ μὲν ὑπ’ ἄλλου συνάγεται, ἐκεῖνο πρὸ αὐτῶν ἐστίν, εἰ δὲ αὐτὰ συνάγει ἑαυτά, οὐκ ἀντίκειται ἀλλήλοις· ἀντικείμενα γὰρ οὐ σπεύδει εἰς ἀλληλα. εἰ οὖν τὸ ἐν καὶ τὸ πληθος ἀντιδιήρηται, καὶ τὸ πληθος ἢ πληθος οὐχ ἔν, καὶ τὸ ἐν ἢ ἐν οὐ πληθος, οὐδέτερον ἐν θατέρῳ γενόμενον, ἐν ἅμα καὶ δύο ἔσται.)

³³One should compare this with Van Riel (2010)’s statement on Proclus, in comparison to Damascius: ‘According to Proclus, the One is the cause that contains everything, while at the same time transcending all things’. Here Van Riel cites Proclus, *In Parm.* 1108.19–29 (Steel); 517,43 (Steel) (= 68.10–11 Klibansky–Labowsky), and *Platonic Theology* 2.5, 37,24–5; however as far as I see, these texts do not explicitly say what Van Riel claims. It might be better said that *unity* contains everything, and the henads would be the candidates for this, but Proclus is trying to avoid this very statement. See the following section.

the One, marked out especially by the *μὲν...δὲ* construction in line 4,3: if considered in itself, *without* considering its causality, then the One is simply ‘one’ (ἐν μὲν γὰρ καθ’ ἑαυτό); if considered both as a cause and in its ‘coordination’ (σύνταξις), however, then it is ‘all things’ (πάντα δὲ ὡς αἴτιον πάντων). Even though the One is ‘primarily’ just ‘one’, its causality necessitates that it is also ‘all things’, as are its effects. In this, Damascius appears to affirm a stronger principle of causal synonymy, one that accounts for, not just unity as an attribute, but the generation of ‘all things’ as they come to be in plurality. In other words, Damascius appears to hold the following: if A causes B, and B causes C, then A causes both B *and* C; therefore A is causally synonymous with B *and* C.³⁴ Proclus by contrast emphasizes that only A is causally synonymous with B, while B’s causation of C detaches causal relation of C to A. In this respect the difference from Proclus is apparent:³⁵ in Damascius, the One is not productive simply of unity by itself, like Proclus’ One of the henads, but also the plurality of characters that emerge after the One, as with the One’s production of the Unified’s plurality. At the same time, Damascius also emphasizes that the ‘real being’ of the distinct characters found below the One is fully realized within the One, which explains why Damascius calls the One ‘all things itself before all things’ (πάντα καὶ αὐτὸ πρὸ τῶν πάντων).

Ultimately we are then left with the notion that unity and ‘all things’ are co-relative terms, and thus ‘unity’ is not a concept one can refer to by itself, as is the case for Proclus’ One, but also directly refers to its effect, ‘all things’. This would confirm our initial observation that Damascius employs Aristotle’s category of opposed relatives, where relatives like knowledge must refer to the knowable, and *vice versa*. In turn, the One’s causality must account for the opposed term, even while respecting the distinct mode of existence that pertains to the One. Because the two concepts, ‘one’ and ‘all things’, pertain to the One as the cause, we can see why in the final line 4,6, Damascius concludes that ‘duality’ (διπλόην) is found in the One. Yet the way that Damascius concludes the passage with duality is also contingent: *if* the One is spoken of *as* ‘one’, then that duality immediately results by the relation of unity with ‘all things’. By speaking this way we are already introduced to the concept of the Ineffable, insofar as expressing the One implies the relation. Damascius makes this idea explicit after line 4,6 (T6) when he asserts that the principle (*archê*) (i.e. the Ineffable) must be beyond both the One and ‘all things.’³⁶ The move results, however, only when a causal relation is affirmed, which confirms that Damascius thinks of the *archê* in a un-coordinated, detached way, in a way contrasted with ‘cause’. If priority is held for the *archê*, then one cannot hold it as an opposed relative to the ‘effects’ or the items that follow on it.

³⁴[Refer back to the use of principle-transitivity from Gerson(?); h/t Jan Opsomer.]

³⁵Although cf. Proclus, *ET Prop.* 56: ‘All that is produced by secondary beings is in a greater measure produced from those prior and more determinative principles from which the secondary were themselves derived’ (trans. Dodds). (Special thanks to Jan Opsomer for pointing this out.) However this should be understood within Proclus’ context of causally synonymous terms: the One, for instance is more causative of particular intellects than monadic Intellect, acc. to *Prop.* 56, but only because of the property of unity found in both monadic Intellect and the particular intellects. Unity is more causative as a property than intellection, because the former has a wider range of effects than the latter (*ET Prop.* 60). So ultimately transitivity is limited only by the same term applying between A and C—that is, A is causally synonymous with C *qua* possessing an A-property.

³⁶*DP I*, 4,6–12: ‘But the ones who are dividing are ourselves, and it is ourselves who are doubled concerning its simplicity, and who are yet multiplied, for by being one, it is all things in the most simple mode. Yet if someone were also to say this, it is necessary that the first principle of all things is that which has transcended all things themselves, and the simplest totality, and the simplicity which absorbs all things, which is that of the One.’ (ἡμεῖς δὲ οἱ μερίζοντες καὶ περὶ τὴν ἐκείνου ἀπλότητα διπλασιαζόμενοι καὶ ἔτι πολλαπλασιαζόμενοι, ἐκεῖνο γὰρ τῷ ἐν εἶναι πάντα ἐστὶ τὸν ἀπλοῦστατον τρόπον· εἰ δὲ καὶ τοῦτο λέγοι τις, ὅμως ἐξηρημένην δεῖ εἶναι τὴν τῶν πάντων ἀρχὴν αὐτῶν τῶν πάντων καὶ τῆς ἀπλουστάτης παντότητος καὶ τῆς πάντα καταπιούσης ἀπλότητος, οἷα ἢ τοῦ ἐνός.)

This finally brings us back to point (3) from the previous section in *DP* I, 1–2 [T1]. We can now see somewhat better how Damascius considers the One as ‘coordinated’ with ‘all things’, as seen in its causal identity with the effects. The kind of coordination he implies, however, is not found in Proclus’ causal framework for the One, but instead follows from essential changes made in the One’s causal model.

To conclude this section, so far we have seen that Damascius employs a different way of describing the One’s causality that contrasts especially with Proclus’ One. In the following section, I will raise a potential problem for Damascius’ characterization by referring to Proclus’ critique of a Plotinian conception of the One, as pre-containing ‘all things’. We have already seen the parallels from *Ennead* V.3.15, but we have not yet seen how Damascius can claim that the One is ‘all things’ without also being a plurality. As we will see next, Damascius picks up on Proclus’ critique of a Plotinian One in *DP* I, 92–94 and gives an implicit response to Proclus while justifying his position of the One as ‘all things’.

3 Addressing Proclus’ concern with a ‘Plotinian’ One in Damascius

3.1 *Parm. Comm.* 1107–1108: Proclus’ critique of the One as pre-containing its effects

As mentioned in the introduction, Proclus’ view is informed as a response against a Plotinian model of the One’s causality. We already saw Proclus’ view that the One causes as ‘one-only’ in Prop. 5 from the *Elements of Theology* (T5), yet we haven’t seen what motivates the idea that participation, or direct causality, implies plurality on the side of the participated cause. *Parmenides Commentary* 1107,8–1108,11 gives us one main context for this. In this part of the work, Proclus is commenting on Plato’s *Parmenides* 137c–d, where the One is demonstrated as neither being a whole nor having parts. Proclus then notes certain commentators—either Iamblichus or, likely in addition, Plotinus and Porphyry³⁷—who propose an alternate view of the One’s causality as *containing* wholes constitutive of parts, but not itself being such a whole:

[T7] Other commentators³⁸ have accordingly said that the cause of all things, being set up as the first beyond life, beyond intellect, and beyond being itself, has in some way the causes of all these things in an unutterable and inconceivable way, in the most unitary way, and unknowable in relation to us but knowable in relation to itself.³⁹ The hidden causes of wholes are in it as paradigms of paradigms (*paradeigmata paradeigmatōn*), the first whole-itself before wholes, not being in need of parts:⁴⁰ for the

³⁷See the next note.

³⁸Dillon/Morrow and Steel refer to Iamblichus for this position, with Steel referencing Iambl., *In Parm.* fr. 6 in Dillon (1973). Steel appears to have in mind 214,6–9, and 216,31; for the former, Iamblichus is cited as saying that the principle of ‘all things are in all’ has no limit; in the latter, the ‘Once Beyond’ (likely Iamblichus’ second, causal ‘One’) is the ‘first duality’. D’Ancona (1991) 285–7 argues more strongly for Porphyry and ultimately Plotinus as the target behind this view, citing Porphyry, *Sent.* 10, where the principle, ‘all things are in all’, is ascribed explicitly to the One; Plotinus, *Enn.* V.3 [49], 17,1–3, VI.7 [38], 17,11; V.3 [49], 11,28; I.7 [54], 1,19–20 (cf. p. 286, n. 40, 41). For the latter, D’Ancona relies on linguistic parallels to the passage’s description of the One as ὑπὲρ ζώην, ὑπὲρ νοῦν, ὑπὲρ αὐτὸ τὸ ὄν. D’Ancona also cites V.3 [49], 15,31–33, mentioning the One as the δύναμις πάντων, which implies differentiation that results at the stage of ἐνέργεια in Intellect; this in turn suggests that the One pre-contains the contents of Intellect in a simplified, unitary mode. I would ultimately agree with D’Ancona’s conclusion, although this need not negate that Iamblichus is in the line of fire, insofar as the latter also assumes Porphyry/Plotinus’ language.

³⁹The notion, ἐαυτῷ γνωστῶς, could imply either self-thinking or a property, knowability. The latter, which Proclus seems to imply here, is confirmed by the previous phrase, ἡμῖν ἀγνωστῶς, specifying the property in relation ‘to us’. (Thanks to J. Opsomer and A. Vargas for pointing this out.)

⁴⁰This is reminiscent of language of the Living Animal from Plato’s *Timaeus*, which precontains the Forms within itself. [Include citation.] Special thanks to Antonio Vargas for pointing this out.

whole before parts is in need of the parts in some way, and this being the very thing Plato confutes,⁴¹ while the whole before wholes is in no way in need of parts. (Steel 1107,8–22)

Ἄλλοι τοίνυν εἰρήκασιν ὅτι πάντων αἴτιον ὃν τὸ πρῶτον ὑπὲρ ζωῆν, [10] ὑπὲρ νοῦν, ὑπὲρ αὐτὸ τὸ ὄν ἰδρυμένον, ἔχει πως τὰς τούτων αἰτίας ἀπάντων ἀφράστως καὶ ἀνεπινοήτως καὶ τὸν ἐνικώτατον τρόπον καὶ ἡμῖν μὲν ἀγνώστως, ἐαυτῷ δὲ γνωστῶς· καὶ ἔστι τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ κρύφια τῶν ὅλων αἴτια παραδείγματα παραδειγμάτων, [15] καὶ τὸ πρῶτον αὐτοόλον πρὸ ὅλων, οὐ δεηθὲν μερῶν· τὸ μὲν γὰρ πρὸ τῶν μερῶν ὅλον δεῖσθαι πως τῶν μερῶν καὶ τοῦτο εἶναι ὅπερ ἀνείλεν ὁ Πλάτων· τὸ δὲ ὅλον πρὸ τῶν ὅλων οὐδὲν δεῖσθαι μερῶν.

The implicit view in this passage is that the One produces the causes of all things, like Being, Life, and Intellect, by pre-containing them within itself according to its unity—in other words, they would not exist distinctly within the One as they do in themselves, which could suggest that the One is not affected by their plurality. The passage comes a few lines after Proclus mentions a group of commentators, likely including the one(s) behind this passage, who are afraid that, by only ascribing negations to the One, there is ‘nothing to grasp onto’ for the imagination, and that some nature must be ascribed to it.⁴² In light of this, the motivation for this causal model would be that the One cannot produce the different causes without also pre-containing them. This would be in contrast to saying, as Proclus does, that the One produces the causes without pre-containing them in any sense (as we will see). Thus, one way around the problem is to say that the One is like a ‘whole of wholes’, and that it contains ‘paradigms of paradigms’, which would not imply dependence on the parts or on the participants, respectively. Both characterizations might also deny the kind of plurality which exists in a whole without literal plurality in it, while its pre-dominant mode of unity suffices.⁴³

Yet Proclus responds that this still implies plurality in the One:

[T8] But if we place the unknowable causes of all things in the One, ascending not only from Intellect, Life, and Being, but also from each of the real beings, such as Beauty, Virtue, Justice, and each of the others, the One will be as many things in plurality as Intellect; and it would in no way yet be one, and thus we would have inadvertently ended by doubling the [totality of] beings; for there will be the beings themselves and their causes subsisting in the One, and in the case of these we would enquire how, being many, they become unified, and will necessarily postulate that there is a One prior to these, and either we will preserve it as One in the proper sense and remove all things from it, or once again we will place all things in it, and we will be tripling the [totality of] beings, and thus proceed to infinity without ever making a stand anywhere, holding that the One also contains the range [of beings].⁴⁴ (Steel 1107,29–1108,11)

Εἰ δὲ καὶ μὴ μόνον ἀπὸ νοῦ καὶ ζωῆς καὶ ὄντος ἀνιόντες πάντων τὰς ἀγνώστους αἰτίας [1108,1] ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ θήσομεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀφ’ ἐκάστου τῶν ὄντων, οἷον κάλλους, ἀρετῆς, δικαίου, τῶν ἄλλων ἐκάστου,

⁴¹See Steel’s citation, *Parmenides* 137c4–d3.

⁴²Proclus, *In Parm.* 1105,25–1106,2.

⁴³On the relation of wholes to parts, see Proclus, *ET Prop.*’s. 66–69, where Proclus distinguishes between: the whole-before-parts, the-whole-of-parts, and the whole-in-parts. (In Proclus’ corpus, I have not found a reference to ‘whole of wholes’. Given the parallels Steel/Dillon note in Iamblichus, the distinction could come from Iamblichus.) In the previous Prop. 65, Proclus distinguishes three modes of existence for entities: as according to cause (κατ’ αἰτίαν), according to subsistence (καθ’ ὑπαρξιν), and according to participation (κατὰ μέθεξιν). It would seem that existence by causality, κατ’ αἰτίαν, applies for the whole-before-parts. Returning to the passage at *In Parm.* 1107,8–22, the idea behind positing a ‘whole-before-wholes’ would then be to diffuse the kind of plurality that otherwise exists in a whole-before-parts. Also, the degree to which the whole-before-parts is ‘in need of’ the parts should be qualified, since in *ET Prop.* 69 Proclus specifies an ontological independence of the whole-before-parts in relation to the whole-of-parts. However, insofar as the whole-before-parts contains the parts as a cause (κατ’ αἰτίαν), Proclus’ statement that the former depends on the parts ‘in some way’ (πως) would apply.

⁴⁴The Cousin edition originally had πλήθους, while Steel reverts to the AΣg group for πλάτος. [*I still admit the reason for Steel’s change isn’t clear to me, beyond MSS evidence.*] Cousin’s version implies that plurality is the issue, not just the ‘plane’ or ‘range’ of beings, although the latter implies the former.

τοσαῦτα ἔσται τῷ πλήθει τὸ ἐν ὅποσα καὶ ὁ νοῦς, καὶ οὐκ ἂν ἔτι εἴη οὐδαμῶς ἐν, καὶ οὕτω λάθοιμεν [5] ἂν διπλασιάσαντες τὰ ὄντα· αὐτὰ τε γὰρ ἔσται καὶ τὰ αἷτια αὐτῶν τὰ ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ ὑπάρχοντα, καὶ περὶ τούτων ζητήσομεν πῶς πολλὰ ὄντα ἦνῶται, καὶ ἀναγκάσομεν εἶναι καὶ πρὸ τούτων ἐν, καὶ ἡ κυρίως ἐν αὐτὸ φυλάττοντες πάντα ἀφαιρήσομεν, ἢ πάλιν ἐν ἐκείνῳ πάντα θησόμεθα, καὶ τριπλασιάσομεν τὰ ὄντα καὶ οὕτως ἐπ' ἄπειρον [10] ἀνιόντες οὐκέτι που στησόμεθα καὶ ἡμεῖς λέγοντες πλάτος ἔχειν καὶ τὸ ἐν.

Proclus' objection here suggests that, if the One is the direct cause of Being, Life, and Intellect in themselves, then if it pre-contains them, like 'paradigms of paradigms', plurality still results internally in the One. Even if the One pre-contains the causes according to its unity, this is not to deny that a kind of differentiation still exists in the One's being. Recalling *ET* Prop. 5 (T5), this appears to be an application of his view that directly participated causes imply a kind of plurality, even if their mode of existence is a unity. Thus, Proclus places an intermediary principle, like the henads, between the One in itself and the pluralities that result, as with Being, Life, Intellect, and so on. This reinforces Proclus' position from *ET* Prop. 5 that the One must be 'one-only' (τὸ μόνον ἐν). We should also especially note the emphasis on 'all things' being removed from the One (*panta afairêsomen*) in line 1108,7–8, as the key condition for maintaining the One's unity. Proclus appears to assume that the term 'all things' (πάντα) correlates to the 'causes' he is denying, so that it appears always to connote 'plurality'. We can then see why he says 'all things' should be simply removed from the One.

Given this, one may suspect that Damascius' conception of the One falls prey to the same issue: if the One is identical with 'all things', how is plurality not entailed in it? As we saw in the last section's comparisons to Plotinus, so here certain parallels stand out in the language between Damascius and the Plotinian position in Proclus: the One as 'all things itself before all things' (*panta auto pro tôn pantôn*) (*DP* I, 3,12), which is similar to the One being the 'whole-itself before wholes' (*autoolon pro holôn*), and to a lesser extent, containing 'paradigms of paradigms' (*paradeigmata paradeigmatôn*). And notably Proclus says that 'all things' (*panta*) should be removed absolutely from the One, which seems to be the very opposite of what Damascius does by ascribing 'all things' (*ta panta*) to the One.

3.2 *DP* I, 92–94: Damascius' response to Proclus, and justifying the One as 'all things'

Damascius appears to be well aware of this critique at different points in the *De Principiis*. However specifically in *DP* I,92–94, I believe he directly refers back to Proclus' objection in the *Parmenides Commentary* and applies it to his conception of the One as 'all things'. Damascius initially asks why the One is 'all things' and why it cannot simply be 'one-only' (μόνον ἐν), as in Proclus:

[T9] How is the One all things (*ta panta*)? For perhaps it is not possible for the One even to be all things, and further what use is there for it to be all things? It suffices for it to be solely 'one' with respect to the cause of all things. But if it is also the cause of all things, it can not be [itself] all things. And if 'all things' are also many (*polla*), the One can certainly not be many. (92,17–21)

πόθεν ὅτι πάντα; μήποτε γὰρ οὐδὲ οἶόν τε τὸ ἐν πάντα εἶναι· τίς δὲ καὶ ἡ χρεία τοῦ πάντα εἶναι; ἀρκεῖ γὰρ καὶ τὸ μόνον ἐν πρὸς τὸ πάντων αἷτιον· εἰ δὲ καὶ πάντων αἷτιον, οὐκ ἂν εἴη πάντα· εἰ δὲ καὶ πολλὰ τὰ πάντα, τό γε ἐν οὐκ ἂν εἴη πολλά.

Here Damascius directly recognizes Proclus' difficulty: if the One is identified with 'all things', and if 'all things' entails the plurality manifested on the effects level, then the One cannot be 'all things' simply speaking. In this respect, Damascius affirms that anything implying plurality cannot be ascribed to the One. This leads to a second issue: why posit that the One is anything more than one-only (μόνον ἓν) as a cause? By implication, if the One is a cause of 'all things', it should be prior to its effect, and in that respect it seems it should just be 'one-only'. Thus we can see that Damascius follows the same line of thought as Proclus by denying identity between the cause and effect, construed as plurality, and affirm that the One causes by being 'one-only' (μόνον ἓν)—so it would appear.

In the next passage, Damascius then considers in what sense 'all things' are denied of the One, which becomes the first step towards his answer:

[T10] But if the principle (*archê*) is not the anticipation (*prolēpsis*) of those things which are from it (for the producer itself is not the causes which are in it, but it is rather productive of the causes which are in it), the principle would then be more than the totality (*to pan*). If we say these things as true, the One would not be all things in truth, but it would be all things after the One. And we do not put aside causes of all things in the One, since at any rate it would be all things by this, according to the entirety of causes. In no way is the One thus <all things> to speak in a real way (*ontôs*), but rather we do not conceive it as the smallest thing, but as the most all-encompassing of all things and the greatest—neither [do we conceive] this as the universe (*kosmon*), but as the simplest of all things; nor [do we conceive] this as by something among those things according to the universe, like the highest border of the fixed stars, but as of all things having been dissolved (*anachuthentôn*) into the simplicity of the One and no longer wishing to be 'all things'. (93,8–21)

εἰ δὲ μὴ ἡ ἀρχὴ ἐστὶν ἡ πρόληψις τῶν ἀπ' αὐτῆς (οὐδὲ γὰρ τὰ ἐν τῷ παράγοντι αἰτία αὐτό ἐστι τὸ [10] παράγον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ τῶν ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίων παρακτικόν), εἴη ἂν ἡ ἀρχὴ πλεον ἢ τὸ πᾶν. εἰ δὲ ἀληθῆ ταῦτά φαμεν, οὐκ ἂν εἴη κατὰ ἀλήθειαν τὸ ἐν τὰ πάντα, ἀλλὰ τὰ πάντα μετὰ τὸ ἐν· καὶ γὰρ οὐδὲ αἰτίας τῶν πάντων ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποτίθεμεν, ἵνα ταύτῃ γοῦν εἴη πάντα, κατὰ τὴν παντότητα τῶν αἰτίων. οὐδαμῶς ἄρα <πάντα>⁴⁵ τὸ ἐν, ὡς ὄντως εἰπεῖν, [15] ἀλλ' ἵνα μὴ τὸ ἐλάχιστον ἐννοῶμεν, τὸ δὲ πάντων περιεκτικώτατον καὶ μέγιστον, οὐδὲ τοῦτο ὡς τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλὰ τὸ πᾶντων ἀπλούστατον, οὐδὲ τοῦτο ὡς κατὰ τι τῶν κατὰ τὸν κόσμον, οἷον τὴν ἐσχάτην ἴτυν τῆς ἀπλανοῦς, ἀλλ' ὡς εἰς τὴν ἀπλότητα αὐτοῦ πάντων ἀναχυθέντων καὶ [20] οὐκέτι πάντων εἶναι βουλομένων.

In this passage, I take it that Damascius denies the plurality of causes in the One, agreeing with Proclus, but his denial still leaves a way to say that the One pre-contains 'all things' without the notion implying plurality. In the first three lines, 93,8–10, Damascius addresses Proclus' problem over ascribing causes hiddenly, when he denies the identity of the One with the causes in it: rather the One is *productive* of the causes in it. This subtle but crucial distinction would appear to agree with Proclus' response in [T8] that the One is productive of the 'causes' below it by not being identical with any one (or all) of them.⁴⁶ However Damascius still maintains that the causes are 'in' the One, though not identical with it, which brings back Proclus' worry. The concern might be put to rest with the following lines 93,13–15, when Damascius denies that the One is all things through the 'entirety of the causes' (κατὰ τὴν παντότητα τῶν αἰτίων). Damascius also likely has this in mind at the last line (93,20–21) with the enigmatic statement of all things 'no longer wishing to be "all things"' (οὐκέτι πάντων εἶναι βουλομένων) within the One's simplicity. By using language like the One 'dissolving' (ἀναχυθέντων) and 'encompassing' (περιεκτικώτατον) all

⁴⁵Tentatively agreeing with W-C's addition, however the sentence's object may also refer to the latter 'entirety of causes' (τὴν παντότητα τῶν αἰτίων), so that the One is 'in no way the entirety of causes'—or with this sense, 'all things *qua* entirety of causes'.

⁴⁶Proclus, *In Parm.* [x].

things in its simplicity, Damascius appears to deny the kind of internal differentiation that Proclus also denies with the One pre-containing causes. Yet whereas Proclus says that negation is the proper response (e.g. the One, as cause of Intellect, is *not* Intellect, etc.), Damascius relies on the notion of ‘dissolving’ and the One’s simplicity (e.g. the One, as cause of Intellect, dissolves the plurality of Intellect, and other entities).⁴⁷

As we see in the next passage, the way that Damascius describes the One as beyond plurality is a crucial factor in his affirmation of the One as ‘all things’: because the One is the cause of unity, and its generation of all things comes directly from itself, the One must hold a causal identity with ‘all things’, the effect it produces. With the concession of the previous passage, Damascius thus affirms the One as ‘all things’:

[T11] Since these things are also well said, we respond that it is right to proclaim⁴⁸ that [the One] as all things. For the unified is an aggregate (*sunairema*) of each plurality; <if the Unified then> is an undifferentiated ‘all’ (*pan*), just like plurality which has been differentiated, the One is everywhere that before the Unified; as many things as the One is, so much is the Unified. For the One is as many things since it proceeds towards such things; the One does not go down towards a ‘one’, but towards the Unified, and the Unified does not go down toward a ‘Unified’, but toward the ‘all’ (*pan*) having been distinguished (*diakrimenon*), such this way that we also clearly conceive ‘all things’ (*ta panta*). But just as in the center the circle has been packed together (*suneptuktai*), and all things [or ‘radii’] from the center, such even is the entire plurality of differentiation (*diakriseôs*) in the Unified; and the same analogy holds for both the center itself in the One and the things that have been compressed (*supeptugmena*) in the center, and similarly all things are simplified. And in this way we say that all things are one (*hen*), and that the One is all things, and yet more, that it is all things according to unity (*kata to hen*). And all things are not entirely ‘one’, but that One is entirely ‘all things’. (93,21–94,12)

[93,21] ἡ καὶ τούτων εὖ λεγομένων, ὁρθῶς ἔχει καὶ ἐκεῖνο πάντα ἀνυμνεῖν· ἐκάστου γὰρ πλήθους τὸ ἡνωμένον συναίρεμα. *** πᾶν ἐστὶν ἀδιάκριτον, οἷον τὸ πληθος διακεκριμένον, [25] πρὸ δὲ τοῦ ἡνωμένου ἐκασταχοῦ τὸ ἐν ἑκάστων, [94,1] τοσαῦτα τὸ ἐν, ὅσα τὸ ἡνωμένον. ἔστι γὰρ τοσαῦτα, ὅτι προήλθεν εἰς τοσαῦτα· οὐ γὰρ εἰς ἓν ὑπέβη τὸ ἐν, ἀλλ’ εἰς ἡνωμένον, οὐδὲ τὸ ἡνωμένον εἰς ἡνωμένον, ἀλλ’ εἰς πᾶν διακεκριμένον, ὅπου καὶ σαφῶς τὰ πάντα νοοῦμεν. ἀλλ’ [5] ὥσπερ ἐν τῷ κέντρῳ συνέπτυκται ὁ κύκλος καὶ πᾶσαι αἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ κέντρου, οὕτω καὶ ἐν τῷ ἡνωμένῳ τὸ πᾶν τῆς διακρίσεως πλήθος· ἀνὰ δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν λόγον ἐν τῷ ἐνὶ τῷ τε κέντρῳ αὐτὸ καὶ τὰ ἐν τῷ κέντρῳ συνεπτυγμένα καὶ πάντα ὁμοίως ἀπλοῖζεται. καὶ οὕτως ἐν τὰ πάντα λέγομεν, [10] καὶ τὸ ἐν πάντα καὶ ἔτι πλέον, ὅτι κατὰ τὸ ἐν τὰ πάντα· καὶ τὰ μὲν πάντα οὐ πάντως ἐν, τὸ δὲ ἐν ἐκεῖνο πάντως τὰ πάντα.

Damascius’ general response in this passage is a re-affirmation of causal synonymy: the One, as the cause of ‘all things’, must itself be ‘all things’ in a higher, superior way. One can see this in the construction of the last lines, 94,11–12, ‘all things are not entirely “one”, but that One is entirely “all things”’, reflecting the cause’s superiority toward its effects while yet being causally identical to them.⁴⁹ Damascius appears to argue for the One as ‘all things’ in three steps, 1.a–c, followed by the common circle-center example (#2) used by Proclus and other Neoplatonists:

1. The One proceeds into ‘all things’, therefore it is ‘all things’ itself. (93,21–94,4)

⁴⁷Another important point is how Damascius says we should conceive (ἐννοῶμεν) the One. Where Proclus says that other commentators raise the issue of how one can conceive the One, Damascius may be returning to this and affirming the concern that, where conceptualization is unavoidable, there is a need to have a fitting notion, even if ultimately the notion fails to capture the One’s nature. Thus the notion of the One containing ‘all things’, however in its simplicity, without differentiation, and so on.

⁴⁸For ἀνυμνεῖν, Damascius is likely borrowing the root term from Proclus; see [van den Berg’s book on Proclus’ *Hymns, to be cited*].

⁴⁹Cf. Proclus, *ET Prop. 7*: ‘Every entity that is productive of another is greater than the nature of the produced.’ (πᾶν τὸ παρακτικὸν ἄλλου κρείττον ἐστὶ τῆς τοῦ παραγομένου φύσεως.) The reciprocation between ‘all things’ and ‘one’/‘that One’ again recalls *DP I*, 1,4–7 with the question repeated inversely. It may reflect, even here in this case, some form of essential predication involving co-extensive terms (as mentioned earlier). [Must look more into this.]

- a. Wherever the Unified (as we saw from *DP* I.2) lies behind any given group of differentiated things, so also unity/the One also lies behind each ‘unified’ entity;
 - b. the One’s causality does not involve the same kind of entity produced, but something similar—the Unified; thus,
 - c. the One’s effects (the Unified, and ‘all things’ in distinction) match its own internal character, thus it is ‘all things’ in their fullest realization.
2. The analogy of the circle, radii, and the center applies for the One—just as the point generates the lines, and the lines go into the center, so the same for the One generating ‘all things’ from itself. (94,4–9)

Point (1a) implicitly brings back the structure of the One, Unified, and distinguished plurality we saw from *DP* I.2. In this case the One is the cause of unity for the Unified being an ‘aggregate’ (συναίρεμα) of all things, implying initial differentiation but still being united together. Point (1b) brings to mind Prop. 28 from Proclus’ *Elements of Theology*, which establishes that every cause produces what is like itself instead of what is unlike.⁵⁰ Under Proclus’ model, the One then produces henads, which are ‘one’ also by their own subsistence (*huparxis*), and rather *not* plurality which emerges after the henads. By contrast, as seen in lines 94,2–3, Damascius emphasizes that the product after the One is not ‘one’, but rather the ‘Unified’ which already starts to manifest differentiation. In other words, this appears to be a modification of Proclus’ position, since Damascius’ view implies that the henad’s (or Unified’s) subsistence (*huparxis*) is not just ‘one’ only but also plurality together. At the same time, Damascius still preserves Proclus’ principle of causal synonymy by calling the One ‘all things’ because it produces ‘all things’—that is, the identity of ‘all things’ is preserved in the Unified after the One, and again on the effects level in distinction. This leads to point (1c), where the One’s procession into all things in the Unified, and ultimately in distinction—where we clearly ‘conceive clearly’ all things—implies that it must be those things in its unity. Damascius’ example of the circle being ‘packed together’ (συνεπτυγμένα) into the center appears to illustrate how the identity holds between the One and the effects distributed in distinction, where the same property is maintained from unity into distinction.

To sum up then, how does Damascius’ response in points 1.a–c answer the initial objection against the One as ‘all things’? In *DP* I,92–93 [T8], Damascius denies that the One contains ‘all things’ in terms of their distinct causes—which I take as an agreement with Proclus from *Parm. Comm.* 1107–1108. Carrying this over to the response, Damascius argues that the same ‘content’ underlying ‘all things’ is still preserved between the three levels of One, Unified, and differentiated effects, which presupposes that ‘all things’ as a notion need not entail plurality. If so, then the claim that the One is ‘all things’, on Damascius’ understanding, gets around the problem that Proclus poses. This also ties in with Proclus’ strong emphasis on causal synonymy, where the One does not explain only unity but also the emergence of the group, ‘all things’, as it manifests in plurality. The key difference from Proclus, then, is that the notion, ‘all things’, is not always co-extensive with plurality.

⁵⁰ *ET* Prop. 28: ‘Everything which is productive brings to existence entities similar in relation to itself, rather than (*pro*) entities unlike itself.’ (πάν τὸ παράγον τὰ ὅμοια πρὸς ἑαυτὸ πρὸ τῶν ἀνομοίων ὑφίστησιν) See Opsomer (2015), which argues against a false reading of πρὸ τῶν ἀνομοίων suggesting that causes produce (1) like entities, and then (2) unlike entities. His reading helps show how Damascius is directly responding to this.

4 Conclusion: Assessing the One's causal identity as *ta panta*

I now wish to summarize the two main sections of this paper. In the first section I show how Damascius has moved away from Proclus' model of the One's causality by asserting the One's causal identity with 'all things', its effect. This move first happens in the aporia of *DP* I,1–2, where Damascius uses the notion of opposed relatives from the *Categories* to analyze the relation between the first principle and 'all things'. Although this fails for the concept of the *archê*—one reason that Damascius later posits the Ineffable, I believe—Damascius carries this over to the One in *DP* I,2–4. In doing so, Damascius partially resuscitates a Plotinian characterization of the One as having 'all things', since it produces them, which is a shift away from Proclus' model that denies this. In the second section, I raise Proclus' objection to a model of the One pre-containing 'all things'—an issue D'Ancona points out, as I briefly mentioned in the introduction. I then show how Damascius directly addresses this issue in *DP* I, 92–94, and in so doing articulates a notion of 'all things' that does not entail plurality. This ultimately justifies Damascius' claim that the One should be 'all things' as well as 'one' in itself: in one sense, Damascius preserves Proclus' critique of Plotinus and Porphyry, that the One cannot pre-contain the causes of all being; on the other hand, Damascius affirms the necessity to make an identity claim between the ultimate cause and effect, where Proclus does not do so.

The conclusion we may draw from Damascius is that, while the One no longer retains the absolute transcendence of the first principle, it provides a stronger causal account for the emergence of 'all things' in terms of their source in the One. The One can be spoken of as pre-containing all things in a straightforward way than is found in Proclus. In particular, one area where Proclus' causal account does not do so well is in explaining how the henads derive from the One. Under Damascius' model, the class, 'all things', would also account for the henads, and in that way one can say the henads do 'pre-exist' within the One, without implying differentiation. Thus, insofar as such language of the One pre-containing 'all things' also appears in Plotinus, Damascius' position represents a partial return to Plotinus' model for the One, while it also preserves Proclus' account by distinguishing 'all things' from the distinct causes that appear below the One. In this respect, Damascius represents a *via media* between the Plotinian and Proclean models.

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