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**Avicennan and Cartesian Doubt**

Abstract: It has often been noticed that Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna, d. 1037) and René Descartes (d. 1650) offered similar arguments for the immateriality of the self or soul. In Ibn Sīnā we have the “flying man argument,” which infers this conclusion from the possibility of grasping one’s own existence without access to the senses; in Descartes we have the dualist implications drawn from the cogito. Not only are the arguments similar, but also objections that have been posed to them: both are thought to suffer from the “masked man” fallacy, because they make an inference similar to thinking that Peter Parker is not Spiderman, because one can be aware of Peter Parker without being aware of Spiderman. But in this paper I will argue that “arguments from doubt” may actually be stronger than they seem. Scholarship on Descartes has already offered useful tools for understanding how Ibn Sīnā wanted the flying man to work, along with other doubt-based arguments in the Avicennan corpus and in later thinkers who respond to him in the Islamic world.