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Sommario/riassunto	The category of belief has been severely criticized in the last decades but ideas of having principles based on interior reflections and conscience are as strong as ever across the world. This indicates that the modern idea of conviction - religious or secular - should be understood as a way of relating to the world that has a genealogy of its own that is not identical to religious belief. Modern convictions are based on two forms of ethics: firstly an individualized ethics of sincerity that emerged from the 17th century onwards as an ideal of honest and consistent public conduct.