Cesare Cremonini was born in Cento, Italy, in 1550 and went into the service of the d’Este princes at Ferrara. From the age of 21 he taught at the University of Ferrara. In 1591 he began teaching in the Second Ordinary Chair of Philosophy at the University of Padua. When Francesco Piccolomini retired from the First Ordinary Chair in 1601, Cremonini succeeded to it. This was the most prestigious Chair at Padua, and Cremonini held it until his death in 1631.

**Reputation**

It is generally thought that Cremonini denied the immortality of the human soul. This reputation was current during his lifetime. Shortly after his death, his pupil Giovanni Imperiali wrote concerning Cremonini:

> Olet enim vero morbosi animi virus, divinos hominum spiritus cum brutis animantibus communes facere, corruptionique reddere obnoxios.¹

Gabriel Naudé (1600-1653), who had talked with Cremonini, also claimed that Cremonini rejected the immortality of the human soul, though he was unwilling to have this publicly known:

> Ce Cremonin étoit grand Personnage ... qui savoit la vérité, mais qu’on n’ose pas dire en Italie. ... Cremonin cachoit finement son jeu en Italie: nihil habebat pietatis, et tamen Pius haberi volebat. Une de ses maximes étoit: intus ut libet; foris ut moris est. Il y en a bien en Italie qui n’en croyent pas plus que Cremonin. Machiavel et lui étoient à deux de jeu, et Epicure, Lucrece, Cardan, Castellanus, Pomponace, Bembe, et tous ceux qui ont écrit de l’Immortalité de l’Ame.²

This attitude towards Cremonini was no doubt strengthened by the statement of Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676) that Cremonini wanted

¹ *Musaeum Historicum et Physicum* (Venice, 1649) 174. That Imperiali was a pupil of Cremonini is stated in N. G. Papadopoli, *Historia Gymnasiæ Patavini*, tomus I (Venice, 1726) 359.

² *Naudeana et Patiniana*, 2nd edit. (Amsterdam, 1703) 55 (first pagination).
inscribed on his tomb a statement that the whole of Cremonini was there: *Caesar Cremoninus hic totus jacet*. Although Voetius later denied the truth of the story, one suspects that it strengthened Cremonini's reputation of heterodoxy. Paulus Freherus (1611-82) said that Cremonini fostered dangerous opinions concerning immortality. Pierre Bayle (1647-1706) repeated Voetius' story and its denial, although he qualified this report by saying that Cremonini probably had not denied immortality but had simply claimed that Aristotle had done so. N. C. Papadopoli claimed that everyone, especially Cremonini's disciples, suspected that he did not accept immortality:

> Si minus compertus impietatis, certe suspectus. Percrebuerat enim apud omnes opinio, praeertim apud discipulos, non bene eum de animarum immortalitate sensisse.

and Jacobus Facciolatus stated that Cremonini, fonder as he was of philosophical liberty than of religion, argued from the ambiguous texts of Aristotle that the human soul is mortal. Jacobus added, however, that Cremonini gave up this position when he was close to death.

This view that Cremonini denied immortality persisted through the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. The *Dictionnaiye Universel* stated boldly that Cremonini believed that the soul was material, capable of corruption, and mortal, like that of brute animals. E. Renan, quoting Naudé, thought that Cremonini denied personal immortality: ... bien qu'il reconnaisse que l'immortalité doit être cherchée dans l'espèce et non dans l'individu. L. Mabilleau, Renan's pupil, claimed that Cremonini, as a philosopher, denied immortality, but that he accepted it because of his Christian faith; and that this doctrine of a double truth was possible for Cremonini because, for Cremonini, faith did not fear contradictions because it came from the heart, not the intellect. The judgment of J.-R. Charbonnel was similar to that of Mabilleau. He accused Cremonini of really denying immortality though giving lip service to it:

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3 *Selectae Disputationes Theologicae*, I (Utrecht, 1648) 206.
4 *Theatrum Vivorum Eruditione Clarorum* (Nuremberg, 1688) 1525.
5 *Dictionary*, vol. 2 (London, 1735). The *Dictionnaire* was first published in 1697.
6 *Historia Gymnasii Patavini*, tomos I (Venice, 1726) 360.