Many philosophical influences are evident in Virgil’s *Aeneid* VI.¹ However, it has often been suggested that the narrative expresses a predominantly Stoic message.² Virgil’s Stoicism is most readily apparent in the concluding speech of Anchises (VI.724-859).³ This speech is arguably the focal point of *Aeneid* VI, and in this speech Virgil addresses immortality in a markedly Stoic fashion while also making it clear to the reader that immortality is also a distinctly political topic.⁴

Stoicism accepted immortality of the soul, as well as the Platonic definition of death as a process by which the soul departs the body.⁵ Anchises discusses the doctrine of souls in a distinctly Stoic way, employing the Stoic elements, ‘ventos’ (VI.741), ‘gurgite’ (VI.741) and ‘igni’ (VI.742), in the purification of souls; furthermore, ‘spiritus intus’ (VI.726), and ‘igneus [...] vigor’ (VI.730) are also specifically stoic aspects of Anchises speech.⁶ This Stoic immortality espoused by Anchises, however, contains elements not necessarily compatible with the Stoic philosophical system.

This natural purification suggests that Stoic immortality of the soul may be achieved through its assimilation into the aether.⁷ However, souls in Elysium do not accomplish this automatically: ‘has omnis’ (VI.748) must be reincarnated, whereas ‘pauci’ (VI.744) will achieve immortality through elemental purification. The differentiating factor between ‘has omnis’ and ‘pauci’ appears to be memory by others, a valued Roman quality.⁸ Virgil’s Stoic message through Anchises speech in *Aeneid* VI promises Romans that memory by others will guarantee immortality in both name and spirit. In this way, Virgil explores the topic of immortality from both a philosophical and political perspective, albeit through an overall Stoic lens.

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⁴ Braund, 1997; Burke, 1979.
⁵ Jefferies, 1934; Ju, 2009; Walsh, 1928.
⁷ Habinek, 1989; Ju, 2009; Walsh, 1928.
⁸ Habinek,1989; Jefferies, 1934.
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