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# Royal tombs and ritual stones in Tonga

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## Résumé

The royal tombs of the ruling Tu'i Tonga lineage (CE 1200-1800) of Tonga are imposing structures that individually epitomize the power of the paramount and as a collective manifest the stability of chiefly rule. The tiered royal tombs of Tonga were built from quarried slabs of carbonate rock were the venues for elaborate ceremonies involving large numbers of people. This paper examines the architectural elaboration of tombs that included the addition of decorated carved slabs and volcanic pebbles to mark chiefly graves. The geochemistry of grave pebbles and slab designs throw light on the antiquity of funerary behaviour and the different roles of men and women in constructing and decorating tombs. The mortuary activities also illustrate the chiefly networks that underpinned the Tongan state.

**Mots-Clés:** Pacific, tomb, monumentality, Tonga

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