A000-Afr-Aterian Tanged Points-North Africa-Magreb Region-Middle Stone Age -100-30 kya.



Fig. 1. Aterian Tanged Points-North Africa-Magreb Region-Middle Stone Age -100-30 kya.

**Formal Label:** Aterian Tanged Points-North Africa-Magreb Region-Middle Stone Age -100-30 kya.

**Display Description:**

The Aterian techno-complex extends both time-wise for 70,000 years and aerially for 2,500 km (1,600 mi) from the Maghreb of Morocco (where it is post-Mousterian, ca 100 kya) to the Western Desert of Egypt and the Nile valley (where it is post Levallois, ca 30 kya). It is distinguished by tanged implements designed for hafting with a wooden shaft. This produced a composite tool used for knives and scrapers rather than for projectile points. The Aterian complex extends (Tixier, 1967; Petit-Maire, 1982; Wendorf and Schild, 1992).

**Accession No.:**

**LC Classification:** GN775

**Date or Time Horizon:** 100-30 kya

**Geographical Area:** Maghreb region of North Africa

**Cultural Affiliation:** Aterian

**Medium:** Flint, Silicified sandstone

**Dimensions:** H 1-3 in

**Weight: varies**

**Provenance:** Morocco

**Condition:** Fine

**Discussion:**

Aterian tanged tools were This early invention of hafting occurred in the Maghreb among anatomically modern humans. One question arises: “What occasioned the invention of hafting?” In the Maghreb at ca 100,000 BP, resin–bearing trees became scarce, so hafting with a leather thong around a tang became more feasible than hafting with resin using a non-tanged lithic (see Ferring, 1975). Furthermore, these tanged tools were not used for war or hunting but for agriculture as a spade and wood-working as a chisel. Therefore, the Aterian culture was peaceful and agrarian during the Middle Paleolithic. However, there are few sites during this time-horizon in the Maghreb region of North Africa with a long stratigraphy and reliable C14 dates. One exception is the Rhafas Cave in Eastern Morocco, which has dates spanning the time horizon from >100,000 BP to 80,000 BP, and it is within this framework that the Aterian occurs (Mercier *et alii* 2007).

Sites Age BP Lab. No. Reference

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| Grotte des Contrebandiers | 103±3 ka OOOSL(OSL) |  | Jacobs et al. 2011 |
| Grotte des Contrebandiers | 24,500 ± 600 | Gif-2582 | Delibrias *et al.* (1982) |
| Grotte des Contrebandiers | 23,700 ± 1000 | Gif-2585 | Delibrias *et al.* (1982) |
| Dar es Soltan | >27,000 | UCLA-678B | Ruhlmann (1951) |
| Dar es Soltan | >30,000 | UCLA-878A | Roche (1956) |
| Taforalt (layer 18) | >32,370 +2470/-1890 | Gif-2276 | Debenath (1992) |
| Taforalt (layer 19) | >34,550 +3200/-2280 | Gif-2277 | Debenath (1992) |
| Taforalt (base layer 19) | >40,000 | G if-2588 | Debenath (1992) |
| Taforalt (top layer 19) | >40,000 | Gif-2589 | Debenath (1992) |
| Taforalt (layer 23) | >40,000 | Gif-2279 | Debenath (1992) |
| Bir el Ater | >35,000 | MC-657 | Close (1980) |
| Wadi Saoura | >39,900 | 1-1787 | Chavaillon (1964) |
| Haua Fteah | 47,000 ± 3200 | GrN-2023 | McBurney (1967) |

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Mercier, N, L. Wengler, H. Valladas, J.-L. Joron, L. Froget, J.-L. Reyss. 2007. The Rhafas Cave (Morocco): Chronology of the Mousterian and Aterian archaeological occupations and their implications for Quaternary geochronology based on luminescence (TL/OSL) age determinations, [*Quaternary Geochronology*](http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/18711014), 2:4, 309-313.

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