Above: Timbuktu’s Sankore Mosque, built in the 14th century with funding from a woman of the Ag hilal, a religious Tuareg tribe. The Sankore quarter in the northeast of the city became a dwelling place for scholars and teachers. It was in the homes of these scholars that the city’s libraries were first created.

Opposite: The Djingereber (‘Great Mosque’) of Timbuktu was constructed in 1355 under the supervision of the Andalusian poet-architect Abu Ishaq Ibrahim al-Sahili, who accompanied the Malian Emperor Mansa Musa on his return from Mecca.