Philip Mansel is a historian of France and the Middle East. He has lived in Paris, Beirut and Istanbul, and has frequently visited Aleppo. In 2012 he won the London Library Life in Literature award, and in 2013 became a Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres. His most recent publication is The Eagle in Splendour: Inside the Court of Napoleon (2015). Aleppo Rise and Fall of a Syria's Great Merchant City is his third book on cosmopolitan cities of the Middle East, after Constantinople: City of the World's Desire (1993), on Istanbul, and Levant: Splendour and Catastrophe on the Mediterranean (2010), on Smyrna, Alexandria and Beirut.

‘Philip Mansel, our greatest authority on the civilisation of the Levant, has written a concise and elegant elegy for one of the oldest, grandest and most cosmopolitan cities of the region. As tragic as it is timely, this book succeeds magnificently in showing why we should mourn the fall of Aleppo.’
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