The silks made by the new Turkish brand Armaggan Nişantaşı are quite possibly the best luxury fabrics being made in the world today. HALI’s editor unravels the historic thread.

IN A RETAIL PARK on the outskirts of Istanbul, a remarkable project has recently reached fruition thanks to the work of the Turkish Cultural Foundation, the Turkish luxury brand Armaggan Nişantaşı, and Professor Recep Karadag of Marmara University. On entering the premises, one might believe that you have entered a design studio of a fashion house rather than the home of one of the world’s most precious materials made in Ottoman period.

The silks made by the new Turkish brand Armaggan Nişantaşı are quite possibly the best luxury fabrics being made in the world today. Although the processes involved are complex, the sublime beauty of the finished products simply reflect the freedom and exuberance seen in the patterns themselves. These silks are a small part of the products, including jewellery, naturally dyed textiles and homewares, exclusively commissioned by Armaggan Nişantaşı. However these objects are distinct from the material elsewhere in this district in that they are all designed by Turkish designers and handcrafted in the company’s own Turkey-based ateliers employing leading, yet anonymous, Turkish craftsmen. All of the objects reflect the brand’s stated intent to promote and protect traditional Turkish craft skills, but the beauty of the objects is clearly not a secondary value. With this in mind we look forward to seeing the Armaggan Nişantaşı carpet collection.

1 Naturally dyed silk chiffon kaftan, Armaggan Nişantaşı.
2 Silk and gold thread brocade, natural materials. After a 16th century Ottoman Averta in the Topkapı Palace.
3 Silk and gold thread brocade with ascending asymmetric medallions, Jacquard woven, natural materials. After a 17th century Ottoman kemiş fragment in the Abegg-Stiftung, Riggisberg.

The intention is that this unrivalled record of dye analyses will soon appear on a dedicated part of the website, and the laboratory is actively seeking beneficiaries of all of this work. Armaggan Nişantaşı, which is also linked to The KES Armaggan’s textiles are made from silk and wool dyed on site using these historic dye recipes. Indeed the sight of banks of wood and silk being dyed to exact shades of light pink and green in front of one was quite mesmerising.

In the room next door, the silk is spun and prepared on huge wheels for weaving on a handful of huge Jacquard looms slowly clicking through their programmed cards, producing twenty inches per day of these perfectly rendered patterns. Through the expertise of the draughtsman and master weaver Kerim Dagi and the research of Prof Karadag the exact construction, colouring, metal content, weave and patterns of the original complex silks have been analysed and reproduced for this production. The resulting silks are surely among the most remarkable textiles being made anywhere in the world today. Although the processes involved are complex, the sublime beauty of the finished products simply reflect the freedom and exuberance seen in the patterns themselves. These silks are a small part of the products, including jewellery, naturally dyed textiles and homewares, exclusively commissioned by Armaggan Nişantaşı. However these objects are distinct from the material elsewhere in this district in that they are all designed by Turkish designers and handcrafted in the company’s own Turkey-based ateliers employing leading, yet anonymous, Turkish craftsmen. All of the objects reflect the brand’s stated intent to promote and protect traditional Turkish craft skills, but the beauty of the objects is clearly not a secondary value. With this in mind we look forward to seeing the Armaggan Nişantaşı carpet collection.