Non-Conceptual Negativity: Damaged Reflections on Turkey

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It’s the mid-1970s and I am in Izmir, Turkey. As part of the weekly fun-rituals for kids, mom is taking us to Kemeraltı: döner kebab, ice-cream puddings, rice puddings, caramel puddings, and moreover Vimpi (predecessor of the hamburger, made of meatballs, egg and cheese). There is POP, a music magazine in German which I buy every month with my savings because the glam kings THE SWEET are my favorite band, and each issue features their posters and pics; I order platform shoes from different dealers, BAY CITY ROLLERS-type checkered trousers, and fall in love with the Sean Connery of ZARDOZ and the Jane Fonda of BARBARELLA. There are some streets around the Namazgah exit of Kemeraltı and whenever we go there to shop for fabrics, buttons, or threads I am scared to death as there are some utterly ugly, stumpy shop owners with short-cropped moustaches whom I usually don’t see in daily life. Their breath smells of mosque, berlingots, sherbet, and ashure and I am disgusted with their desiring gaze directed to my mom as well as to us and I want to run away from their shops as soon as I can. Now, as the years have passed, their lust has grown into a monument and hijacked our desire.