Prefatory Note

This study is driven by an explicitly political agenda: to counter right-wing discourses aimed at monopolizing the meaning of belonging. The success over the years of such discourses among the Swiss electorate has seriously complicated my affection for the land I call home, and though I write from a position of safety and privilege, my – far from traumatic – memories of growing up gay in a heteronormative society have left me not entirely unfamiliar with the feeling of being out of place. This inquiry into the concepts of home and belonging is thus to some extent a deeply personal matter. Nevertheless, I will refrain from using the first-person singular in the remainder of this study, opting for the ‘inclusive we’ instead. This constitutes an attempt on my part to create a sense of communal endeavor. Should anyone find this stylistic choice alienating or awkward, then this may serve as a salutary reminder of how easily gestures of inclusion can turn into strategies of coercion, even if not intended as such. Fair warning, dear reader? Let us go then, you and I.