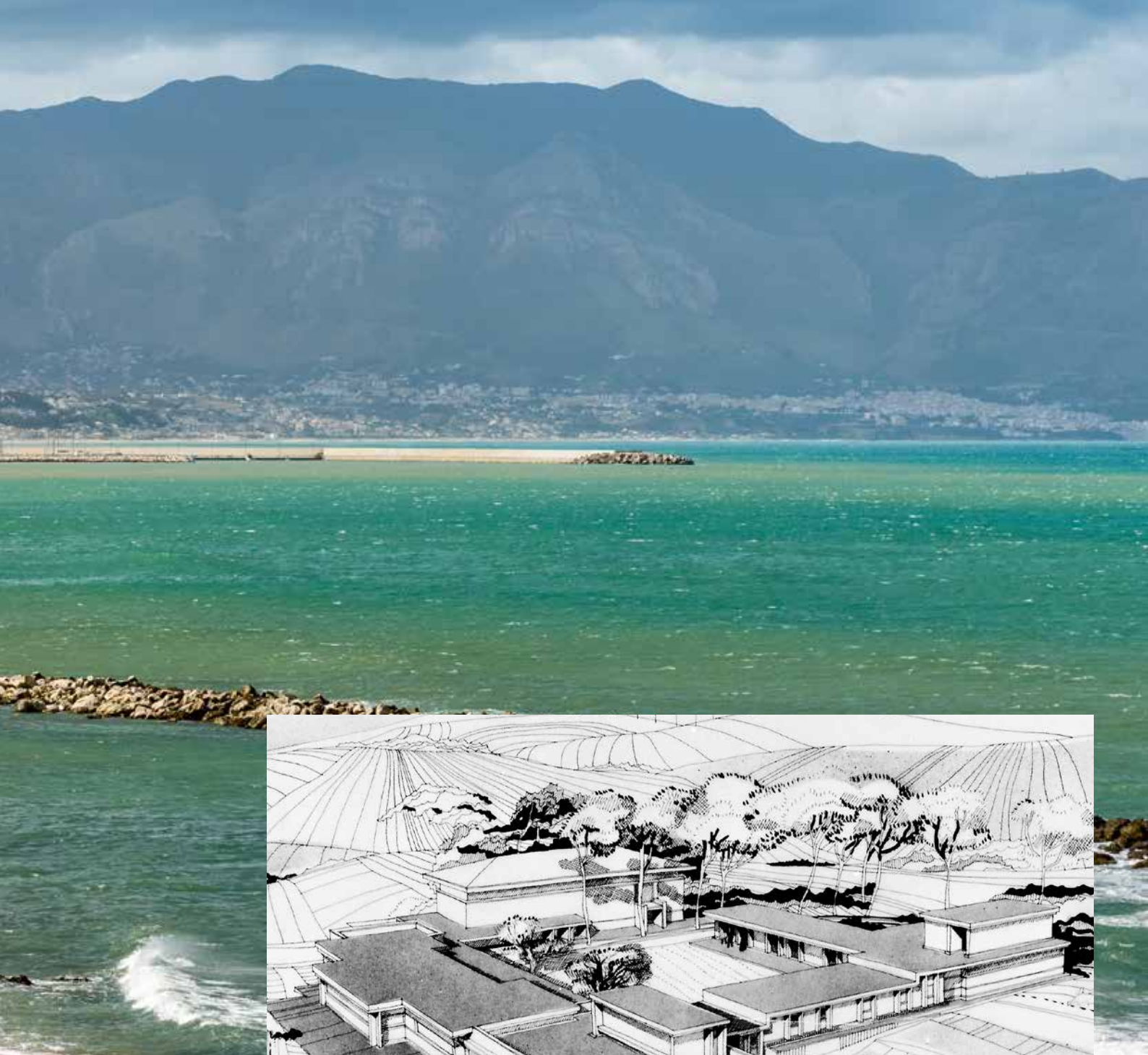




Borgo Danilo Dolci
Centre for Education and Art



Cultural event 2017

The Danilo Dolci Society

The purpose of the Danilo Dolci Society is to restore the building complex “Borgo Danilo Dolci” in Sicily and bring it back to life.

Together with the staff of the “Centro Studi e Iniziative” in Partinico (Palermo), Danilo Dolci built this complex in 1968 as a training centre and subsequently used it for decades as a place of education and further training at an international level.

The Board of the Society:

Daniela Dolci, President
Isabel Prinzing, Communications
Margret Bucher, Treasurer
Fabian Bologna

Honorary members:

Carla Del Ponte, former Attorney General of Switzerland
Giancarlo Caselli, former magistrate and essayist
Don Luigi Ciotti, priest of the anti-Mafia movement
Ueli Mäder, sociologist
Moni Ovadia, actor, singer and author
Roberto Saviano, writer and journalist

We note a demand from academic institutions wishing to use this centre for seminars — for example the University of Teacher Education (Pädagogische Hochschule) or the Institute for Social Planning, Organisational Change and Urban Development of the FHNW. Danilo’s work, writings, theories and methods remain relevant today and are the subject of ongoing research. The maieutic method, which he developed further on a Socratic basis, is also put into practice in many places, including in education.

International youth meeting 2017



The Danilo Dolci Society continues the work that the “Verein zur Förderung des Werkes von Danilo Dolci – CH” carried out for decades in realising numerous projects.

Goals in Switzerland

Lively cooperation and exchange at various levels and in various fields are planned:

- Innovative educational projects in Switzerland and Sicily at school level.
- Study trips offered through seminars at Swiss universities and universities of applied sciences.
- Cooperation with swisspeace on conflict transformation and peace research.

Goals in Sicily

Reconstruction and operation of the Borgo for groups from all over the world; processing and archiving of Danilo Dolci's estate for scholarly purposes.

Following Danilo's work, the Society's main goals are:

- Promotion of peace
- Non-violent action
- Maieutics as the foundation of the pedagogical relationship in schools (educare — from educere — true communication in a reciprocal relationship)
- Environmental education
- Commitment to the democratic use of water. Water is the source of life and of development
- Integration work with refugees

The training centre in Trappeto will be an important place for:

- People committed to realising the goals of the Society.
- Young people from different parts of the world who wish to deepen these goals.
- International seminars with experts of the highest level for the development of the Society's goals.
- Accommodation of seminar participants.



Theatre workshop





Danilo Dolci

Danilo Dolci was an Italian architect, sociologist, social reformer, poet and peace researcher.

He became known for his anti-Mafia initiatives in Sicily and for building a non-violent social movement “from below”. He was also called the “Gandhi of Sicily”. Among those who publicly expressed support for his efforts were Carlo Levi, Erich Fromm, Bertrand Russell, Jean Piaget, Aldous Huxley, Jean-Paul Sartre and Ernst Bloch.

He was nominated twice for the Nobel Peace Prize. Awards: International Lenin Peace Prize (Soviet Union), which he accepted while declaring that he was not a communist, 1957; honorary doctorate in philosophy from the University of Bern, 1968; Antonio Feltrinelli Prize (gold medal), 1969; gold medal of the Accademia dei Lincei for his work in spreading humanitarian and cultural values, 1969; Sonning Prize of the University of Copenhagen “for his contribution to European civilisation”, 1970; Socrates Prize of Stockholm for “his activity in favour of peace and his worldwide contributions in the field of education”, 1970; Etna-Taormina Prize for Poetry, 1975; Viareggio International Poetry Prize, 1979; gold medal for educational work, Municipality of Sesto San Giovanni (MI), 1979; Jamnalal Bajaj International Award (India) — Gandhi International Award for the deepening of non-violent revolutionary values, 1989; honorary doctorate in educational sciences from the University of Bologna, 1996.

Intellectual legacy

In both practical and theoretical terms, Dolci’s central method was maieutics, the “art of midwifery”. Dolci was also deeply inspired by theories of non-violence and peace education. He engaged with the theoretical approaches of thinkers such as Freire, Capitini, Boal, Chomsky, Gandhi and Socrates, among many others, and ultimately developed the Reciprocal Maieutic Approach (RMA). Every act of education is influenced from all sides and is reciprocal. The RMA is a dialectical method of inquiry for building the participatory capaci-

ty of communities and individuals. Based on democratic processes, it is a matter of helping people to help themselves.

Then as now, training in critical thinking towards governments and powerful institutions around the world is of the utmost importance. Putting alternative ideas into practice through peaceful and non-violent dialogue rests on an education towards independent thinking and community action.

Location and context

Sicily has served as a hub of the Mediterranean for more than 2,000 years. It therefore remains geopolitically important today and in the future, as the refugee crisis, for example, demonstrates.

Content and methods

Thanks to the long-standing work of the association “Centro per lo Sviluppo Creativo – Danilo Dolci” in Palermo and regular EU funding, the content and methods of Danilo Dolci’s social work remain relevant and alive. Numerous projects across Europe show how non-violent communication is used to resolve conflicts. The Borgo is to become usable again, on a Europe-wide basis, as a research centre for the diverse questions and issues of today’s society.

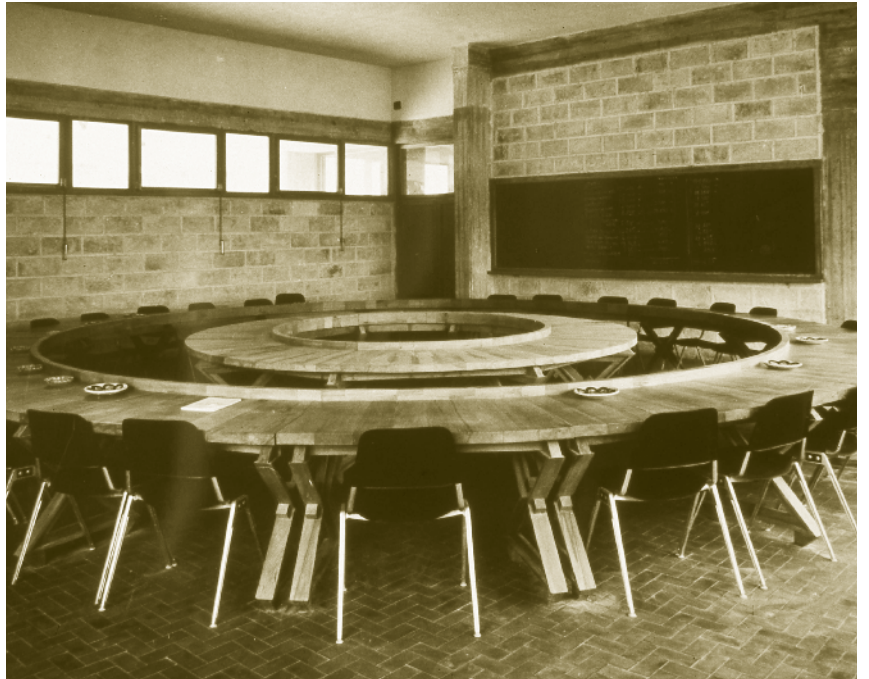
This work also extends to the delivery of corresponding courses, which the “Centro per lo Sviluppo Creativo – Danilo Dolci” has so far offered at other venues and will in future run on the premises of the Borgo di Trappeto.

Past activity of the Borgo

The Borgo was conceived as a centre for courses and seminars in various disciplines, for a holistic education at an international level: territorial development, urban studies, sociology, peace research, philosophy, educational science, literature, music, painting.



International seminar on territorial development after the earthquake, 1969



Refectory and courtyard of the Borgo



Courtyard of the Borgo at night



The Borgo

The Borgo aims once again to be a place for groups from all over the world and for the local population — a place of encounter and learning that meets today's modern standards.

The entire complex must be renovated and adapted to present-day needs and requirements. In particular, seismic protection measures must be carried out and the building physics reviewed. Electrical installations and telecommunications equipment must be brought up to date. One or two rooms with private bathrooms must be provided for older participants.

In 2014, a partial renovation took place thanks to funding from the "Fondazione con il Sud". The bedrooms, sanitary facilities, kitchen, refectory and secretariat were provisionally repaired. In order to start operations at the training centre, the meeting rooms, the studio and the auditorium must be made functional.

The auditorium contains modern murals of artistic and cultural value that need to be restored. Professional asbestos removal in this room is necessary.

The park, with its playground, seating and basketball court, must be renovated.

Danilo's house

On the grounds of the Borgo stands the house where Danilo and his family lived.

It is to be renovated as the "Casa per la Pace" (House for Peace) and converted into an archive, research centre and museum where Danilo's work is documented and his personal belongings are displayed. Cooperation with other archives is planned (Centro per lo Sviluppo Creativo – Danilo Dolci, Palermo; Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, Boston University; Erich Fromm Archive, Tübingen, and others).

To make it habitable, the roof, plumbing, electrics, kitchen and bathroom must be renovated. Heating and air conditioning must also be installed here. The garden requires care.

"Asilo"

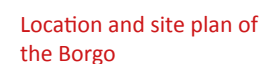
This building also stands on the grounds of the Borgo but belongs to the Municipality of Trappeto. It is available to us on a 99-year loan and is intended to serve in future as the residence of the managing director.

Planned operation

To ensure year-round operation of the Borgo, a management team is needed to establish and maintain contact with cultural institutions and foundations (Fondazione con il Sud, European Union, universities, etc.). These and other institutions are already active as partners in Dolci projects and are interested in further cooperation. In addition, this person or couple will manage the course schedule, act as the on-site contact and run day-to-day operations.

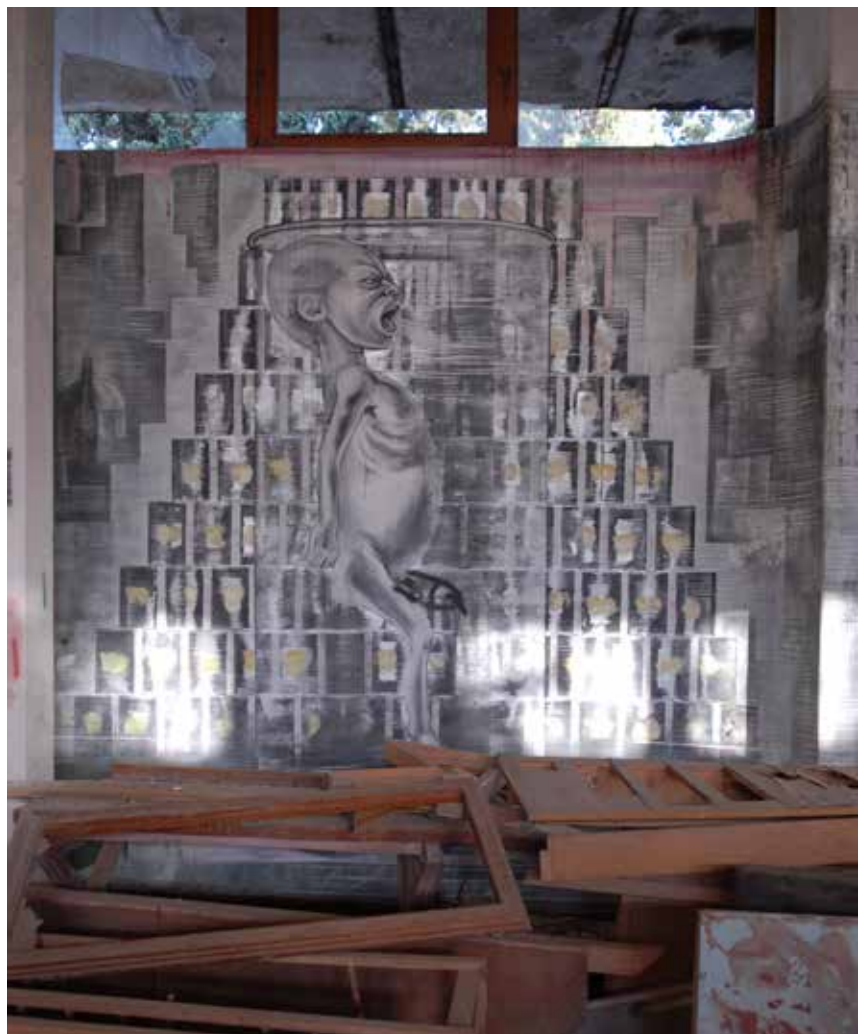
Timeline

Founding of the Society by end of 2022
Renovation and reconstruction by 2028

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Murals at the time of their creation and in their present state

Since Danilo Dolci's death in 1997, the Borgo has been damaged by vandalism and rendered unusable. The murals by Rocco Falciano, Ettore De Conciliis and Enrico Muscetra were also damaged.





Library



Passage to the auditorium



Auditorium



Lounge next to the refectory, partly renovated



Library



Mensa

In 2014, a partial renovation took place thanks to funding from the “Fondazione con il Sud”. The bedrooms, sanitary facilities, kitchen, refectory and secretariat were provisionally repaired.



Laurent Goetschel on Danilo Dolci

“If one did not know that Danilo Dolci’s ideas are around fifty years old, they could just as well come from a present-day handbook on reforming international cooperation. At swisspeace, in every geographical context in which we are active, we follow what we call a ‘light-footprint approach’: we assign the leading role to local actors and conflict parties and concentrate on enabling them to develop and implement solutions.

Through his life and his commitment, Danilo Dolci also embodied the image of an exceptionally active researcher, teacher and activist — a combination I would like to encounter more often in today’s world.”

*Prof. Dr. Laurent Goetschel, Director,
swisspeace — Swiss Peace Foundation,
October 2021*

Arne Engeli on a visit to Danilo Dolci

“The subject was non-violence, peace education, communication, the development of the South. Once, before Danilo began to speak, he passed a strange, melted glass bottle with burn marks along the rows. Then he began: ‘A survivor from Hiroshima brought me this bottle. If we — if the world — are not to end up like this bottle, we must change. Whoever grasps this has grasped it for life.’

The renewed Borgo in Trappeto can once again be a place where such conversations continue. They are more important than ever for the peaceful development of our planet.”

*Arne Engeli, peace activist and sociologist,
October 2021*

Erich Fromm on Danilo Dolci

“Danilo Dolci is the extraordinary example of a man who loves life. He brings to life whatever he comes into contact with — whether organising farmers or educating children. His strength lies in his example and in the overwhelming impression left by a man who does not shrink from danger and risk when it comes to caring for others and transforming them into more active, more courageous people with greater self-confidence.”

Erich Fromm, September 1977

Matthias Drilling on the work of Danilo Dolci

“The work created by Danilo Dolci from the 1950s onwards has woven itself into the core canon of applied social science to this day ...”

“That Danilo Dolci received internationally recognised prizes, was nominated for the Nobel Prize and could count on the support of leading chairs of philosophy points to the potential, the enormous radiance and the vitality of your undertaking.”

*Prof. Dr. Matthias Drilling, School of Social Work, FHNW,
October 2021*

Ueli Mäder on the potential of the Borgo

“The ‘Borgo di Trappeto’ holds very promising potential. Renewing the complex makes great sense from the standpoint of spatial development alone. Added to this is the intended use. Restored and converted, the centre offers a place of innovative reflection — in the spirit of a tradition that unites sound theory and humane practice, addressing relevant issues that attract interest far beyond the region and generate diverse networks and cooperations, for example with universities.”

*Ueli Mäder, sociologist,
Prof. Dr. em., University of
Basel, September 2021*





Reconstruction

The site covers approx. 20,247 m². The buildings have a floor area of approx. 1,488 m². Contemporary renovation: environmentally friendly, sustainable, solar energy.

Architects

Gruppo Vid'A: Gaetano Gulino, Santi Albanese, Luisanna Gulino, Salvatore Gulino. Menfi (TP)

Structural engineering

Ing. Gaspare Francesco Ciaccio (PA)

Building services engineering

Ing. Faro Palazzolo (PA)

Construction company

Cooperativa Edile CELI, S. Ninfa (TP)

Planned cooperation

Università di Enna, Università di Messina, Università di Palermo, Università di Bologna, Università di Firenze, Università di Roma, Università di Trento, Università di Cagliari, University of Basel (swisspeace), University of Bern, and others

Managing director

Ideally a couple with social skills and management experience

Members

Daniela Dolci
Pino Lombardo, Dolci's last collaborator and administrator of the estate
Amico Dolci

Scientific Advisory Board Coordinator

Giuseppe Barone

Finances

Acquisition of funds through patrons and sponsors (private individuals and institutions) in Switzerland, Italy and the EU.

Owners

Associazione Borgo di Dio and the children of Danilo Dolci

Estimated cost of renovation works

EUR 3,500,000

According to initial calculations, annual operating costs amount to around EUR 400,000, offset by projected revenue of EUR 400,000.

Contact and further information

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Impresa sociale
Banca Etica
IT46 T050 1804 6000 0001 7283 656

Address

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Centre for Education and Art
Contrada Piano Trappeto
Borgo di Dio, s.n.c.
90040 Trappeto (PA)
Italy

Getting there, public transport

Trappeto – Palermo
Car: approx. 50 km, 40 minutes
Bus: 1 h 10 min
Train: approx. 2 hours

Basel – Palermo

Flight: approx. 2 hours

