



Christmas 2020

11 December 2020

Dear Family, Friends, Colleagues, Acquaintances, ...

This letter was composed by Dines

- **We Wish You All a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**
- **This year, 2020**, brought Kari and I many happy and memorable moments. We “suffer” the ailments of “old age” – but feel blessed. The Covid-19 brought havoc. Kari had a right hip replacement at Gentofte Hospital Sunday, October 4, and had two facial small tumours removed Monday, December 7, by Dr. Krzysztof Drzewiecki.
- **Charlotte's Family** [Ellesvinget 147, DK-2950 Vedbæk, Denmark] is doing well. They live 9 kms. from us. **Charlotte** is the stable center of the family. **WeiWei** had to remain in Denmark for more than half a year. Now he is back in China playing in the *The Yellow Storm* from the Chinese author **Lao She's** novels (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Yellow_Storm). **Camilla** came home from Vancouver. The Covid-19 put a temporary stop to her studies at Amsterdam. She passed, however, her B.Sc. in economics and math. in April. During her time in Vancouver, and now, also here, she has become quite a [Chinese/English] rap “star”, also performing on Danish Radio's P3. **Caroline** got caught in the Covid-19. Hopes to be able to take up studies early next year. Due to the Covid-19 we have seen the family very little this year, but WeiWei has helped us tremendously, practical things that we cannot do much of these days: sorting out stuff: some to be thrown away, some to go to the cellar, etc.



Dines plans to “rescan” old paper photos from 1954 onwards next year. Here is a sample: 2*Saratoga, Calif., 1972; Lunz am See, Austria, 1974; Copenhagen 1976.

- **Nikolaj's Family** [13337 NE 186th Ave., Woodinville, 98073-6309 Washington, USA] is also doing well. **Nikolaj** has been working from home since the start of the Covid-19. Several

times he has “officiated”, over the Internet/Zoom/etc., in PhD defenses, in the US and in Europe. **Bodil** and Nikolaj have, for the first time in 23 or so years, spent almost 3 months alone, their three children now away: **Marianne** graduate-studies computer sciences at Univ. of Wisconsin, Madison – and has her own cute house, see below left; **Katrine** undergraduate studies at NYU, New York Univ., also econ./math.; and **Jakob** undergraduate studies at Georgia Tech., Atlanta.



- Kari and Dines were on **one European trip** this year. Three trips were cancelled.
 - **Cancelled: The US West Coast:** Nikolaj and Bodil invited us to his 50th anniversary, 28 March – but the Covid-19 made that impossible.
 - **München and South Tyrol:** That trip, those 12 days, with overnight stays at pleasant Hotel Platzl in München, “down” and “up”, and at Hotel Latemar in Oberbozen/Soprabolzano, for the 37th time in 40 years, became, due to the Covid-19, this years “salvation”. This fall, Kari and I have since reminisced about the warm days, in Bolzano it was 29-30 degrees Celcius, the spectacular views: valleys and mountains, and sitting down for lunch and dinners at hospitable tables, “downtown” in Bolzano, and “across” the Ritten/Renon mountain and at Hotel Latemar. On this trip we met Uta Weber, Jorge Cuellar, the Rusinows, Ulla and Mike Reed, and Margit, Hans and Renate Verdorfer.



- **Cancelled: Russia: Moscow and Orjol:** An invitation by the Russian Academy of Sciences was also cancelled to to The Covid-19.
- **Cancelled: Athens and Rhodes:** And a warm, swimming pools-centered visit to 5 star hotels in Athens and Rhodes and a conference event in honour of Dines’ dear colleague, Klaus Havelund, was likewise Covid-19 cancelled.

At www.imm.dtu.dk/~dibj/2020/year2020 You can follow plans, see photos, - etc. - for the above trips.

- **Dines’ “Grand Day”:** Over the last years, since his retirement, at 70 in 2007, Dines has published around 10 papers. Five of them in “strictly” refereed journals, five at less so referred

conferences. In the summer of 2019 I edited several of these into a more than 200 page document which I submitted, in September 2019, to The Technical University of Denmark, DTU, as a so-called Dr.techn. thesis. Yes, I do have a doctoral, a PhD, degree (1969). In Denmark, as now in most countries, a PhD degree follows a PhD study, of typically three years, after one's MSc, and is a "proof" that one can be put to do research. A Danish Dr.techn. degree is a proof that one has done, as the Dr.techn. degree statute expresses it, significant and notable research. Early September 2020 I then received notification that an international evaluation committee has approved the thesis for defense. That defense was held on December 1st. Two evaluation committee members, Prof. Andrzej Tarlecki from Warsaw University and Prof. Patrick Blackburn from The University of Roskilde, were the official opponents. (Prof. Flemming Riis Nielson was committee chair.) I presented an half hour introduction. The opponents then discussed and debated with me, in this case for 60 mins. each, the possible merits and questionable points. The whole thing took three hours. And the defense was accepted! Why had I not written up this thesis long time ago? For two reasons. First, I did not have neither time nor, I thought, significantly "earth-quake"-revealing papers among my 120+ published ones! With retirement I had all the time to really reflect, "go deep", question, doubt, etc. And I had meanwhile studied Kai Sørlander's Philosophy. What a revelation!



Afterwards: Dines, Dines & Kari, and Charlotte, Henrik Søre, Camilla & Caroline & Julie (Søre).

- Dines' Book Reading:** Dines continues his serious, and not so serious, book reading: *History of Malaysia* by Barbara Watson Andaya and Leonard Y. Andaya (2016); *The Annotated Malay Archipelago* by Alfred Russell Wallace (1869), edited/annotated by John Van Wyhe (2015); *H.E. Bates: The Nature of Love*, three short stories; *Ueda Akinari: Ugetsu Monogatari*; *Okai Mori: Not a Song Like Any Other: An Anthology of Writings*; *Okai Mori: The Wild Geese*; *Selma Lagerlöf: Christ Legends and Other Stories* (read in Swedish); *Peter Handke: Wunchloses Unglück: Erzählung*, in German; *Selma Lagerlöf: Jerusalem* (read in Swedish); *Carlos Fuentes: Old Gringo*; *Lev Tolstoy: War and Peace* in a new Danish translation by Marie Tetslaff; *Ivan Turgenev: Fathers and Sons* in Danish; *Feodor Dostoyevski: Brothers Karamassov* in a new Danish translation by Marie Tetslaff; *Lee Child: Blue Moon, The Sentinel*; *Ian Rankin: A Song for the Dark Times*; *John Conolly: The Dirty South*; *Len Deighton: Hope, Charity, London Match, Berlin Game, Mexico Set*; *Jonathan Israel: The Enlightenment That Failed*; and *Isaiah Berlin: The Hedgehog and the Fox, An Essay on Tolstoy's View of History*.
- House & Garden:** We enjoy our garden, and our house.



Our local gardeners, the Nørgaards, come around 3–4 times a year, updates and keeps it neat.



Dines finally got his study organised and sits there 2-3 times a day editing his book, et cetera.



- **Kari's Days:** Besides taking good care of her husband for the 56th year, Kari is working every day on one or another patchwork. See www.imm.dtu.dk/~dibj/Kari/web/ for most of her works. The arthritis pains are gone, but she still trains at a local, wonderful rehabilitation center 2+ kms. from here, twice a week. She misses her *Holte Patchwork & Quilts* meeting with 10 ladies every other Tuesday, due to her hip; but soon !



- **Reminiscing:** We have enjoyed many a good meal this year.



Laurin, Bolzano, 30 July 2020; Pfoshof 3 August 2020; Cafe Schluff, Maria Himmelfahrt 5 August 2020; Rist. da Piero Antico, Gries/Bolzano, 7 August 2020.



Ulla and Mike Reed, Restaurant Rue des Halles, München, 8 August 2020; Reitschule, München, 9 August 2020; Lumskebugten, Copenhagen, 8 December 2020.

- **Pandemia:** Dines is amazed of the noise made by *social constructivists*, the *identity* “crisis” alarmists, *meToo*–criers, and the *social-democratists* who considers you and me as mere biological species, with no spiritual qualities. It all came together, here in Denmark, when our current government issued orders – decrees – with no foundation in law. Fitness centers could be open, churches had to close. 16 million minks were slaughtered, sizable numbers by police and the military – despite it being against the law. Good we have public debaters like Marianne Stidsen, Hans Bonde and others.

- **Today is our 55th Anniversary:**

We Wish You All a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year !

Kari ♥

Kari ♥ Dines Bjørner

Fredsvej 11
DK-2840 Holte
Danmark

kari.skallerud.bjorner@gmail.com, bjorner@gmail.com

+45-40 12 35 17, +45-40 12 38 04

<http://www.imm.dtu.dk/~dibj>

Prof. Emeritus, Dr.techn., Dr.h.c., PhD, MAE, MRANS [AB], ACM Fellow, IEEE Fellow