

Important Events in the Life of Chen Ning Yang (CNY)

First published in Chinese in “*Yang Chen Ning*” 《人情物理楊振寧》 (ed. by Yip Chung-man, The Chinese University Press, 2002). Amended by CNY in 2010.

1922	CNY was born on October 1 in Hefei, Anhui, China. His father was Yang Wu-zhi (楊武之) and his mother Luo Meng-hua (羅孟華). He is the eldest son of the family and was nicknamed “Da Ning-zi” (大寧子).
1923	When CNY was not one year old, his father left for the US to pursue graduate studies and CNY lived with his mother in Hefei.
1926	His mother taught him how to read.
1928	CNY's father came back from the US. Went with his parents to Xiamen. Enrolled in primary school grade two. His father taught him English, arithmetic and Tang poetry at home.
1929	CNY's family moved to Beijing and lived in No. 19 (later changed to No. 11), Xi-yuan, of Tsinghua Yuan. He enrolled in grade three of Chengzhi Primary School where he showed great talents in mathematics. His classmates called him "Big Head", "Science Head". Hsiung Ping-ming (熊秉明), who later became an artist in France, and Zheng Shi-cheng (鄭士成, who later changed his name to 鄭師拙) were his childhood friends.
1930	Brother Chen-ping (振平) was born.
1931	Japanese troops occupied Manchuria. CNY's teacher, Mr. Han, detailed to the class Japanese brutality.
1932	Brother Zhen-han (振漢) was born.
1933	After graduating from Chengzhi primary school, CNY boarded at Chongde Middle School.
1934	CNY in grade eight. Was especially interested in articles about popular science. Started to read popular books about the New Physics. His father hired a tutor to teach him Mencius. Sister Chen-yu (振玉) was born.
1935	After reading a popular science book, “ <i>The Mysterious Universe</i> ” (《神秘的宇宙》), CNY told his parents that he will receive the Nobel Prize when he grows up. His father wrote on the back of CNY's photo ‘Chen-ning seems to be especially gifted’.
1937	Marco Polo Bridge Incident broke out. The whole family went back to Hefei, which was bombed in December. Brother Zhen-fu (振復) was born.
1938	Yang's family fled through Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Hanoi to arrive at Kunming. Tsinghua University, Peking University and Nankai University merged into National Southwest Associated University (聯大). CNY enrolled in grade eleven in Kunhua Middle School. Then in the autumn, CNY was admitted into 聯大, initially majoring in chemistry, later switched to physics.
1939	CNY's teachers in 聯大 included C.Y. Chao (趙忠堯), Y.H. Woo (吳有

	訓), Zhou Pei-yuan (周培源), Wu Ta-you (吳大猷), J.S. Wang (王竹溪), etc.. Took a freshman course in Chinese Language & Literature with Wen Yi-duo (聞一多), Zhu Zi-qing (朱自清), Wang Li (王力), etc.
1940	The courtyard of CNY's rented home in Kunming was hit in Japanese air raid. The family moved to Longyuan Village in the northwestern suburb of Kunming.
1942	Graduated from 聯大. Undergraduate thesis "Group Theory and the Vibration of Polyatomic Molecules" under the supervision of Professor Wu Ta-you. In the same year, enrolled in the Graduate School of Tsinghua University.
1943	Took Tsinghua's "Sixth Tsinghua Examination for Fellowship in the US" (第六屆清華留美考試).
1944	Master degree thesis, under Professor J.S. Wang, was on statistical mechanics. Won the Tsinghua Fellowship.
1945	Flew to Calcutta. After waiting there for two months, took a US troopship to the US. Enrolled at the University of Chicago graduate school in late December.
1946	Tried to write experimental thesis under Professor S.K. Allison. Failed.
1948	Professor Edward Teller supervised his Ph.D. thesis on angular distributions. Appointed Instructor at University of Chicago.
1949	Recommended by Fermi and Teller, CNY became a "member" of the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) at Princeton. A year later, was reappointed for five years. Met in Princeton Miss Tu Chih-li (杜致禮), whose father was the Kuomintang general, Tu Yu-ming (杜聿明).
1950	Married Tu Chih-li in Princeton on August 26.
1951	Eldest son was born, whose Chinese name, 光諾, was given by Grandfather. English name is Franklin.
1952	Was promoted to permanent member at the IAS.
1954	Published with R.L. Mills a paper on gauge theory, which later became very important. Hideki Yukawa left Columbia University to return to Japan. Columbia University invited CNY to be his successor. CNY declined.
1955	Was promoted to professor at the IAS. In the autumn, University of Chicago offered CNY a professorship as Fermi's successor, with a high salary. CNY declined.
1956	Was invited to present the concluding report about high energy physics at the Rochester International Conference. Discussed, among other topics, the dominant problem of the time: the θ - τ puzzle. In the fall, CNY and T.D. Lee published their paper on the possibility of parity nonconservation.
1957	C.S. Wu and collaborators proved experimentally that indeed in β decay parity was not conserved.

	<p>That summer, CNY with his wife and son met with his father Yang Wu-zhi in Geneva, Switzerland for six weeks, an emotional reunion.</p> <p>On December 10, awarded the Nobel Prize together with T.D. Lee. In his speech at the Nobel Banquet, CNY said, <i>“I am heavy with an awareness of the fact that I am in more than one sense a product of both the Chinese and Western cultures, in harmony and in conflict. I should like to say that I am as proud of my Chinese heritage and background as I am devoted to modern science, a part of human civilization of Western origin, to which I have dedicated and I shall continue to dedicate my work.”</i></p>
1958	Second son, Gilbert, was born.
1960	CNY, with his wife, his second son Gilbert and Brother Chen-ping, reunited with his parents in Geneva again.
1961	Daughter, Eulee, was born.
1962	Ended collaboration with Lee. In summer, CNY with Brother Chen-ping and son Gilbert, met parents for the third time in Geneva.
1964	<p>After living in the US for nineteen years, CNY became a US citizen.</p> <p>CNY was invited by Chinese University to give a lecture at the Hong Kong City Hall, which caused great excitement in the city. Spent a wonderful time with parents, Zhen-han and Chen-yu in Hong Kong.</p>
1965	Was elected a member of the US National Academy of Sciences.
1966	Accepted offer by President John Toll and Department Chair Alex Pond to be Albert Einstein Professor of Physics at the State University of New York at Stony Brook (SUNY). Was also appointed Director of the newly established Institute for Theoretical Physics. The appointment was front page news in the New York Times on November 12, 1965.
1967	<p>Found a key equation to solve a many-body problem in one-dimension. Baxter found a similar equation in 1972. Later, this equation was named “Yang-Baxter Equation” and was widely applied in physics and mathematics.</p> <p>The Great Cultural Revolution broke out in China. Yang Wu-zhi was criticized and denounced. CNY lost contact with his father and could only know his father was still alive by seeing his signatures on cheques of their joint bank account in Switzerland.</p>
1970	CNY was invited to give a lecture in Hong Kong by the Chinese University of Hong Kong. He met his mother and brother Zhen-han in Hong Kong, but his father could not come because of illness.
1971	<p>Ping-pong diplomacy showed that relation between China and the US was showing signs of thaw. CNY proposed to visit China in a letter to his father. This was approved by Premier Chou En-lai (周恩來).</p> <p>On July 20, CNY arrived in Shanghai by Air France. It had been 26 years since he left for the US. His father was ill abed in Hua-shan Hospital and was thrilled by the return of the son.</p> <p>Premier Chou En-lai met and feasted CNY at The Great Hall of the</p>

	<p>People, Beijing. CNY met his friend Deng Jia-xian (鄧稼先), a key contributor to the Chinese atomic and hydrogen bombs, and was deeply moved to learn that China had produced atomic bombs on her own.</p> <p>Visited home town, Hefei. After returning to the US, was invited by many universities to talk about the New China. Had great influence on scholars of Chinese descent. Zhou Pei-yuan later praised CNY as the first person to build up academic exchange programs between China and the US.</p> <p>CNY was questioned by FBI after he returned to the US.</p>
1972	<p>Visited China for the second time. Proposed to Premier Chou En-lai that China should put more emphasis on basic science research. Premier Chou agreed with his proposal and ordered Zhou Pei-yuan to implement the idea. Zhou Pei-yuan published a long article on this matter on October 6 in Guang Ming Daily. (周恩來年譜, 下卷, 1972年7月至10月).</p>
1973	<p>CNY's father Yang Wu-zhi passed away at the age of seventy-seven on May 12 in Shanghai. In a memorial speech, CNY recounted his father's contribution to mathematics education in China and his patriotic stand.</p> <p>In July, CNY visited China for the fourth time and was received by Chairman Mao (毛澤東) in Zhongnanhai.</p>
1975	<p>CNY learned from his colleague, Jim Simons (Chairman of Mathematics Department, SUNY), fiber bundle concepts in geometry. Later CNY and T.T. Wu published an article in Physical Review D on fiber bundles and gauge fields, in which they introduced a “dictionary” relating gauge theory terminology to bundle terminology. This dictionary aroused the attention of the international mathematical community and was a key factor in instigating the subsequent close collaboration between mathematics and theoretical physics.</p>
1977	<p>Elected the first President of the National Association of Chinese-Americans (NACA). The main aim of the Association was to promote immediate normalization of diplomatic relations between China and the US.</p>
1979	<p>CNY hosted on January 30 a welcoming banquet for Deng Xiao-ping (鄧小平) in Washington, and made a speech “The responsibility to help build a bridge of friendship”, stating that the establishment of Chinese-American diplomatic relations is beneficial to people of both countries. Further emphasized that there is only one China and all Chinese should work together towards a united China.</p>
1980	<p>Attended a conference on particle physics held by Chinese Academy of Science in Conghua, Guangdong.</p> <p>Set up CEEC (Committee on Educational Exchange with China) in Stony Brook. This committee solicited donations from the US and from Hong Kong to support scholars from China to do research at Stony Brook. Donors included Ying Xing-jiu (應行久), Mrs. Moore, Lee Hysan Foundation (利希慎基金), Young Chi-wan (楊志雲), Fong Yun-wah (方</p>

	潤華), Lee Quo-wei (利國偉), Ho Sin-hang (何善衡), Ho Tim (何添) and Leung Kau-kui (梁鈺琚), etc. For more than a decade, about one hundred scholars visited Stony Brook supported by CEEC, including Yang Fu-jia (楊福家), Gu Chao-hao (谷超豪), Chen Jia-er (陳佳洱), Xian Ding-Chang (冼鼎昌), Ge Mo-lin (葛墨林), Zhang Yong-feng (張永峰), Zeng Shan-qing (曾善慶), Yang Yan-ping (楊燕屏), Shen Jing (沈津), and Li Hua-zhong (李華鍾), etc.
1982	CNY sent a letter to leaders of the Chinese government, emphasizing needed directions for China's scientific research.
1983	Published " <i>Selected Papers (1945-1980), with Commentary</i> " in the US in May. Together with Li Hua-zhong (李華鍾), Y.W. Chan (陳耀華), and Sin Wai-kin (冼為堅), established the Foundation of Zhongshan University Advanced Research Centre in Hong Kong (ZARC). Was elected its Chairman. The goal of the foundation is to support basic research in Zhongshan University in selected areas. [In year 2007, ZARC was terminated. All the moneys, property and research building were donated to Zhongshan University, which includes RMB \$11 million, HK\$360,000, a 4,000 square meter research building, and equipments.]
1985	Published " <i>Forty Years as a Student and a Teacher</i> " 《讀書教學四十年》, Joint Publishing Co. Ltd. Moved mother to Hong Kong. Brother Zhen-fu passed away on October 2.
1986	Was appointed Distinguished Professor-at-Large at CUHK. Visited Taiwan for the first time for the birthday celebration of Prof. Wu Ta-you. Also attended the 17th Academian's meeting of Academia Sinica. Was awarded National Medal of Science of the US.
1987	CNY's mother, Luo Meng-hua,, passed away at age ninety-one at the Prince of Wales Hospital in Hong Kong on September 12. Ashes of his parents and Brother Zhen-fu were later entombed at the Dongshan cemetery in Suzhou.
1992	National Tsinghua University, Hsinchu, Taiwan, organized an international symposium in honour of CNY's 70th birthday. " <i>Chen Ning Yang - A Great Physicist of the Twentieth Century</i> ", ed. by C.S. Liu and S.T. Yau, International Press (1995) and its Chinese version 《楊振寧 — 二十世紀一位物理大師及其心路歷程》, 丘成桐編輯, 台灣國立交通大學出版社(2001年) were published after the symposium. Was elected a foreign member of the Royal Society of London.
1993	Was awarded Benjamin Franklin Medal. Published an article about Deng Jia-xian in the June issue of " <i>Twenty-First Century</i> " 《二十一世紀》. The article later became famous and was much reprinted.

1994	<p>Helped Mr. and Mrs. C.M. Cha to establish Qiu Shi Science and Technologies Foundation in Hong Kong. Helped Mr. Ho Sin-hang, Mr. Leung Kau-kui, Mr. Ho Tim and Mr. Lee Quo-wei to establish Ho Leung Ho Lee Foundation (HLHL).</p> <p>Was elected a foreign member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.</p> <p>Was elected a foreign member of the Russian Academy of Sciences.</p>
1995	<p>In an interview by RTHK (香港電台) on January 28, said “My greatest contribution is to have helped the Chinese people to overcome a widespread inferiority complex.”</p> <p>Visited Shantou University with Tu Chih-li. A first year student, Weng Fan (翁帆), was appointed by the host university as their guide.</p> <p>“<i>Again Ten Years</i>” 《讀書教學再十年》 was published by China Times Publishing Co.</p>
1997	<p>Tsinghua University established the Center for Advanced Study and Nieh Hua-tung (聶華桐) was appointed as Director. CNY was appointed as Honorary Director and was responsible for fund-raising. Set up two foundations for Tsinghua. Planned to raise at least US\$15 million for the foundations.</p> <p>Attended the handover ceremony of Hong Kong and the formal establishment of the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, a momentous event in Hong Kong’s history.</p> <p>Was awarded an honorary doctoral degree by CUHK.</p> <p>Underwent successful coronary bypass surgery in the US.</p>
1998	<p>“<i>Collected Papers of Chen Ning Yang</i>” 《楊振寧文集》, Vol. 1 and 2, ed. by Zhang Dian-zhou (張奠宙), East China Normal University Press, was published.</p>
1999	<p>Decided to donate his articles, letters, manuscripts, and medals to CUHK, including the Nobel Prize. The C.N. Yang Archive was established by CUHK.</p> <p>Was awarded an honorary degree from State University of New York at Stony Brook (SUNY).</p> <p>A retirement symposium was organized by SUNY for CNY. Institute for Theoretical Physics was renamed CNY Institute for Theoretical Physics (YITP).</p> <p>“<i>Symmetry & Modern Physics</i>” Yang Retirement Symposium, SUNY, Stony Brook, May 21-22, 1999, ed. by A. Goldhaber, et al, World Scientific, was published in 2003.</p>
2001	<p>Was awarded King Faisal International Prize.</p>
2002	<p>An International Symposium on Frontiers of Science was organized by</p>

	<p>Tsinghua University to celebrate Yang's 80th birthday. "<i>Proceedings of the International Symposium on Frontier of Science</i>" in celebration of the 80th Birthday of C.N. Yang, 2002, Beijing, ed. by H.T. Nieh, World Scientific (2003), was published after the symposium. CUHK also organized activities to celebrate CNY's birthday. The C.N. Yang Archive opened in September.</p> <p>"<i>Biography of Yang Chen-ning</i>" 《規範與對稱之美 — 楊振寧傳》, ed. by Chiang Tsai-chien (江才健) was published by 台灣天下遠見出版社.</p> <p>Was invited to help establish the Shaw Prizes. Appointed Chairman of its Board of Adjudicators.</p>
2003	<p>After long illness, Tu Chih-li passed away in the US on October 19. CNY moved back to Tsinghua Yuan. Wrote poem "歸根".</p>
2004	<p>The first Shaw Prizes were presented in September.</p> <p>Married Weng Fan on December 24.</p>
2005	<p>"<i>50 Years of Yang-Mills Theory</i>", ed. by Gerardus 'tHooft was published by World Scientific Publishing Co.</p>
2007	<p>A symposium was organized by Nanyang Technological University and National University of Singapore to celebrate Yang's birthday. "<i>Proceedings of the Conference in Honor of C.N. Yang's 85th Birthday</i>", ed. by M.L. Ge, C.H. Oh and K.K. Phua, World Scientific, 2008, was published after the symposium.</p>
2008	<p>"<i>Shu Guang Ji</i>" 《曙光集》 was published.</p>
2010	<p>Published an article "關於季承的《李政道傳》及《宇稱不守恆發現之爭論解謎》" in 《中華讀書報》(3月17日) and "<i>Twenty-First Century</i>" 《二十一世紀》(2010年4月).</p> <p>Was elected an honorary member of the Japanese Academy of Sciences.</p> <p>Solved one-dimensional many component Bosons problems. Published articles in Chinese Physics Letters.</p>