

Born in Shandong, China, in 1927, Zhe-Xian Wan graduated from Tsinghua University, Beijing, in 1948 and became a teacher at the same university. In 1950 he joined the Chinese Academy of Sciences, and in 1978 he was appointed Research Professor at the Academy. He is also a member of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Professor Wan's main research interests are algebra (pure and applied), combinatorics and coding theory. In addition to nearly 130 papers, he has published 18 books in these areas, including *Classical Groups* (jointly with L K Hua), *Lie Algebras*, *Algebra and Coding*, *Introduction to Kac-Moody Algebras*, *Geometry of Classical Groups over Finite Fields*, *Geometry of Matrices* and *Quaternary Codes*.