

PREFACE

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Jürgen Herzog was born in December 1941 in Heidelberg, Germany. He grew up in the nearby town of Eberbach, where he graduated from the local gymnasium. Following his army service, he started studying mathematics and physics at Kiel in 1963, but soon returned to his hometown, transferring in 1964 to the University of Heidelberg.

At Heidelberg he became a student of Ernst Kunz. In the sixties, commutative algebra spread quite rapidly, and because of their importance in number theory, field theory, algebraic geometry and complex analysis, the study of modules of differentials and derivations was a hot topic. Volume 38 of the Springer Lecture Notes, *Differentialrechnung in der analytischen Geometrie* (1967) by Berger, Kiehl, Kunz and Nastold reflects this trend.

Under the influence of Abhyankar and Lipman, Purdue University was one of the centers of local algebra and geometry at the time and Kunz, like other German mathematicians, spent a year at Purdue, together with Jürgen who had finished his Diplom thesis in Heidelberg (1967). The year at Purdue was followed by a year at Louisiana State University. In the U.S., Jürgen earned an M.S. from Purdue (1968) and the Ph.D. from Louisiana State (1969).

Jürgen returned to Germany to complete his Diplom examination at Heidelberg, and then became Wissenschaftlicher Assistent at Regensburg, earning his Habilitation in 1974 with the thesis *Komplexe, Auflösungen und Dualität in der lokalen Algebra*. In 1975, he was appointed professor of mathematics at the University of Essen, where he remained until his retirement in March 2009.

Beginning with his graduate studies, Jürgen has worked in commutative algebra with great enthusiasm and endurance. He has left his footprints in almost every subfield that touches homological or combinatorial problems. His tremendous productivity has resulted in over 160 papers and several books.