In 1919, Paul Niggli (1888–1953) published the first compilation of space groups in a form that has been the basis for all later space-group tables, in particular for the first volume of the trilingual series *Internationale Tabellen zur Bestimmung von Kristallstrukturen* (1935), for *International Tables for X-ray Crystallography* Volume I (1952) and for *International Tables for Crystallography* Volume A (1983). The tables in his book *Geometrische Kristallographie des Diskontinuums* (1919) contained the lists of the *Punktlagen*, now known as *Wyckoff positions*. He was a great universal geoscientist, his work covering all fields from crystallography to petrology.

Carl Hermann (1898–1961) published among his seminal works four famous articles in the series *Zur systematischen Strukturtheorie* I to IV in *Z. Kristallogr.* **68** (1928) and **69** (1929). The first article contained the background to the Hermann–Mauguin space-group symbolism. The last article was fundamental to the theory of subgroups of space groups and forms the basis of the maximal-subgroup tables in the present volume. In addition, he was the editor of the first volume of the trilingual series *Internationale Tabellen zur Bestimmung von Kristallstrukturen* (1935) and one of the founders of *n*-dimensional crystallography, $n > 3$.