The Legacy of P.M. de Wolff, Aloysio Janner, *Institute for Theoretical Physics, University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands*. E-mail: alo@sci.kun.nl

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The celebrated 1974 paper of P.M. de Wolff on a 4-dim. description of modulated crystals in terms of atomic worldlines, represents the starting point of the higher-dimensional crystallography applied to aperiodic crystals. The superspace approach, first developed for incommensurate modulated crystals, could eventually be used for intergrowth and quasi crystals as well.

The legacy of P.M. de Wolff finds its expression in Volume C of the International Tables for Crystallography of 1992 and has been consecrated by the Aminoff prize in 1998, the year of his dead.

One finds precursive approaches in Weber's four indices zone notation, in Frank's cubic hexagonal phase and in spacetime crystallography.

De Wolff's ideas underlie the subsequent conceptual developments, like crystallographic scaling, molecular crystallography and integral lattices.