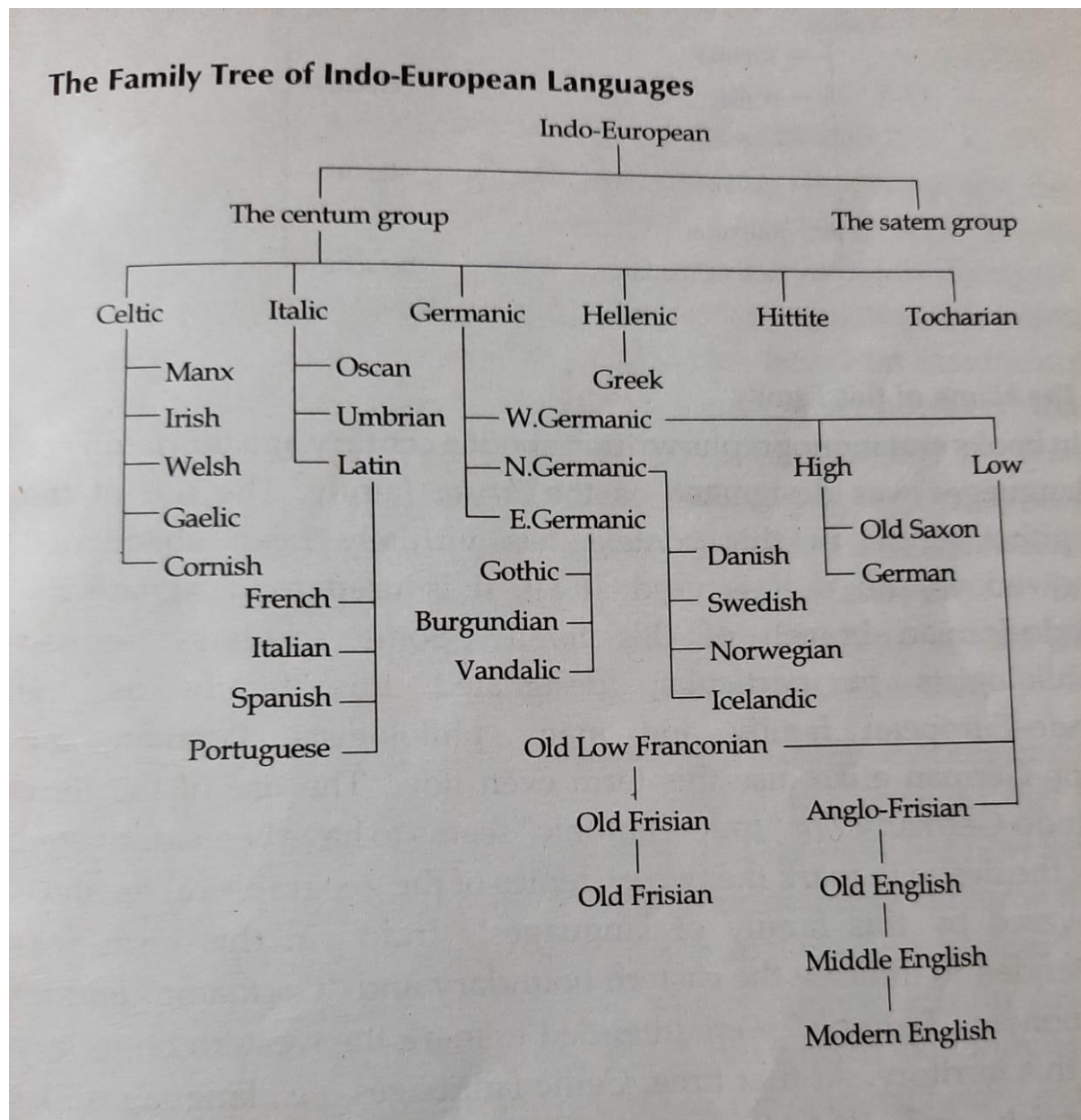


Two groups of languages in the Indo European family





The languages in the Indo European family have been broadly divided into two groups: the centum and the satem group.

This division is relevant to certain aspects of grammar and vocabulary as well but it is based mainly on phonetic feature.

Indo European had a number of palatal consonants which have been traditionally transcribed as k, kh, g and h.

With the passage of time the palatal k changed in two divergent directions.

- In case of some languages, it changed to consonant /k/
- In other language it changed into a sibilant (sounded with a hissing effect) i.e /s/ or /ʃ/ (sh).

The languages in the case of which palatal k changed into velar /k/ were known as *centum* and those languages in the case of which it changed into either of two sibilants were known as *satem* languages.

At one time it could be argued that centum languages were languages of the western part and satem languages were languages of the eastern part of the territory in which the languages derived from Indo European were used.