Although we have some good criterions for the classification of ciliated protozoa, there exists no stable or generally accepted system today. Thus, we must search for new characteristics in order to combine many points of view. Such a new criterion could be the silverline system. It shows a wide range of forms which can be classified into 3 basic types (stripe-like, net-like, and mixed systems) and many sub-types of 1. and 2. order (e.g. vertically and horizontally orientated stripe systems, typical, atypical and specialized mixed systems, fine and wide meshed systems). Two hypotheses are proposed which are derived from the studies of the last 50 years. Thesis 1: The silverline system is much more conservative then the oral and somatic infraciliature. Thesis 2: Natural groups show at least the same sub-type of 1. order at the subordinal level, and the same sub-type of 2. order at the familial level. Many of the orders and suborders in the classification of COYISS (1979) are consistent with these hypotheses, e.g. the Haptoridea, Pleurostomatida, Colpodida, Microthoracidia, Chlamydomonadina, Rynchodida, Suctoria, Tetrahymenina, Ophryoglena, Peniculina, Scuticociliatida, Astomatida, Sessillina, Odontostomatida, and Stichotrichina. Other orders and suborders do not fulfil these theses, e.g. the Karyorelicta, Trichostomatina, Synhymenida, Heterotrichina, Oligotrichina, and Sporadotrichina.

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