

## Chapter II

### History of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha

#### 2.1 The Original History of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.

The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī's history began in the first millennium.<sup>1</sup> At that time, they devoted themselves to the practice of the Dharma, as well as to public service. These commitments would impact their future organization and activities. In the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD,<sup>2</sup> the dynasty of the Trung Sisters<sup>3</sup> (40-43) had female monarchs and famous female generals, such as Princess Phuong Dung, Bat Nan, Thieu Hoa, Chieu Dung, Vinh Huy, Thieu, Huong Thao, Nguyet Thai, Nguyet Do, and others. After participating in the struggle for the country's independence, they became Bhikkhunīs, after having and learned the Buddha's teaching in the temples at Thai Binh, Quang Ninh Provinces.<sup>4</sup> At present, various temples keep the relics of eminent Bhikkhunīs from the first century up to now, a history of over 2000 years.

According to Vietnam's Buddhist history, there was famous Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs such as the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Man

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<sup>1</sup> Thich Nu Nhu Duc, **A Brief History of the Vietnam Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Religious Publication, 2009), p. 162.

<sup>2</sup> Nguyen Lang, **Essays on the History of Vietnam Buddhist**, Vol. III [**Vietnam Phat Giao Su Luan**], (Vietnam: Ha Noi, Literary Publication, 2000), p. 23.

<sup>3</sup> Institute of Social Sciences Vietnam, **Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu**, Vol. III, (Vietnam: Ha Noi, Science Society Publication, 1993), p. 21. **Trung Sisters:** (Hai Ba Trung) mean two women namely Trung Trac and Trung Nhi. In the spring of 40 AD, Trung Sisters take command of thousands troops defeated the Han invaders, Trung Trac came to the throne was proclaimed "Trung Vuong" or "King Trung".

<sup>4</sup> Thich Nu Hue Huong, 11<sup>th</sup> Sakyadhita International Conference on Buddhist Women 'Eminent Buddhist Women', **The Spirit of Dialogue: Bhikkhunī in the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City, 2010), p. 252.

Nuong (ca. 175-255) in the Bac Ninh Province.<sup>5</sup> The King Dinh Tien Hoang dynasty (968-979) there was the Princess Phat Kim<sup>6</sup> became to Bhikkhunī at a temple in the ancient capital of Hoa Lu. Queen Ngo Hoang Thi became to Bhikkhunī at Dam temple in Hoa Lu, Ninh Binh. The Ly dynasty, Princes Ly Ngoc Kieu, known as the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Nhan (1042-1113)<sup>7</sup> sought ordination for the cultivation of Dharma.<sup>8</sup> The Tran dynasty, Princess Huyen Tran, known as the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Huong Trang (1287-1340).<sup>9</sup> Queen Mua (1580 -1647). The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Tue (1615-1680). The Trinh dynasty, there were the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Dang (?–1658), Dieu Tin (?–1687).<sup>10</sup> The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Phu Cu (1720-1761), Hue Co (1725 -1770), Dieu Lien (1726-1798). The King Gia Long dynasty, there was the sister of King, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Van Duong (1802-1820).<sup>11</sup> The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dam Thai (1842-1917), Dien

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<sup>5</sup> Le Manh That, **Vietnamese Buddhist History, Vol. I**, (Vietnam: Thuan Hoa Hue Publication, 1999), p. 149.

<sup>6</sup> **Princess Phat Kim**: According to historical Reports, in 965 (At Suu year), the Princess Phat Kim's third daughter of the King Dinh Tien Hoang. She married with Ngo Nhat Khanh. The Ngo Nhat Khanh was leader An Vuong of the Duong Lam, one of 12 warlords.

<sup>7</sup> The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Nhan (1041-1113) she was daughter of King Phung Can. She emerged as a shining example. While serving as Abbess of Huong Hai Convent in Gia Lam, a district of Ha Noi, she observed the precepts in earnest, practiced meditation diligently, and attained Samadhi. As well as PGS. TS. Tran Thi Bang Thanh said, "The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Nhan was at the first Bhikkhunī in the Vietnam literature and she also has an unflinching attitude, a spiritual optimism, and wisdom that contributed to the literary Zen of the Ly, Tran dynasty."

<sup>8</sup> Le Manh That, **Thien Uyen Tap Anh**, (Vietnam: Saigon, Dai Hoc Van Hanh Publication, 1976), p. 145.

<sup>9</sup> Hoang Quoc Hai, **The Princess Huyen Tran**, (Vietnam: Ha Noi, Woman Publication, 2007), p. 162.

<sup>10</sup> Thich Nu Nhu Duc, Ibid, p. 164.

<sup>11</sup> Le Manh That, Ibid, p. 153.

Truong (1861-1952),<sup>12</sup> Dieu Huong (1884-1971), Dieu Ngoc (1885-1952), Dam Thu (1885-1967), Dam Tin (1899-1982), and so on.

Following this prestigious tradition, over the time our most respected Bhikkhunīs were ordained by Bhikkhunīs over the country and have created a golden era of Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs history. For example, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Khong (1905-1997), Dieu Kim (1906-1976), Giac Nhan (1919-2003), Dieu Tinh (1910-1942), Dieu Tan (1910-1947), Nhu Hoa (1925-2006), Dieu Ninh (1914-1984), Huynh Lien (1923-1987), Bach Lien (1924-1996), was once a well-known shaman. The late the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh (1911-1999)<sup>13</sup>, the abbess of Hue Lam Monastery mobilized Bhikkhunīs, especially at temples in the eastern and western regions of Southern Vietnam, to unite and form a

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<sup>12</sup> The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Province Subcommittee, **The Process of Formation and Development of the Vietnamese Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Thua Thien Hue (XVII-XX)**, (Vietnam: Ha Noi Hong Duc Publication, 2016), p. 15.

<sup>13</sup> Tran Hong Lien, **The 11<sup>th</sup> Sakyadhita International Conference on Buddhist Women in Vietnam** at Ho Chi Minh City, (December 28, 2009-January 3, 2010) (Vol. 1), **The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh with the Formation and Development of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City, 2009), pp. 82-83. Such as in the development history of Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs, which it was always mentioned to the South Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha. It is the first organization of the South Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha. The contribution to the formation of this organization is of the great number Bhikkhunīs. However, the Bhikkhunī have the decisive important role of the formation it was the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī leader Nhu Thanh. See more: Thich Nhat Tu, **The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh: A Bhikkhunī True Cultivation, A Buddhist Poet and A Gifted of the Buddhist Studies**. He noted that the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh's life and her vow has contributed to the lushness of Vietnam's Bodhi tree, for the Vietnamese people to achieve a peaceful life, and for Buddhism and the nation to exist together forever. She uses her wisdom torch to spread the correct Doctrine of the Buddha (Saddhamma) everywhere, to bring the warmth of peace and liberation to Vietnamese people today and in the future. (**The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh: See pictures in the Appendix 2, Section 1, p. 186**).

Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha. She opened a Buddhist institute to provide young Bhikkhunīs with a sound foundation for their activities. She always encouraged Buddhist activities, such as translation work, teaching, and charity. She devoted her whole life to working for the Dharma and nation, contributing greatly to the consolidation of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.

The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, there are many famous Bhikkhunīs, including the Mahāyāna Bhikkhunīs, Mendicant Bhikkhunīs, and Theravāda Bhikkhunīs.

The Mahāyāna Bhikkhunīs, including the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Tue, Dieu Dang, Dieu Tin,<sup>14</sup> Phu Cu, Hue Co, Dieu Lien, Ngoc Cau<sup>15</sup>, Van Duong,<sup>16</sup> Dam Thai, Dien Truong, Hong Nga, Nhu Hien Chi Thien, Dam Thu, Dam Tin, Chon Huong, Dieu Huong, Giac Hai, Nhu Thanh, Dieu Ninh, Nhu Chi, Nhu Huy, Nhu Tri, Nhu Chau, Huyen Hue<sup>17</sup>, Giac Thien, Dieu Kim, Dieu Tinh,<sup>18</sup> Chi Kien, Lieu Tanh, Dieu Tanh, Dieu Tan, Dieu Tri, Dieu Ly, Cat Tuong, Dam Huu, Dam Xuong, Dam Nguyen, Dam Hien, Dam Hao, Dam Nhuong, Dam Nhung, Nhu Hoa, Dieu Huong, Hue Huong, Hue Giac, Dieu Vien, Dieu Y, Vien Minh, Dieu Minh, Hai Trieu Am, Nhu Ly, Nhu Nhan, Giac Nhan, Giac Hanh, Giac Ngoc, Nhu

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<sup>14</sup> The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Tue, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Dang, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Tin in the King Trinh dynasty.

<sup>15</sup> The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Ngoc Cau, she was mother of the King Nguyen Phuc Thuan.

<sup>16</sup> The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Van Duong (1802-1820), she was sister of the King Gia Long.

<sup>17</sup> The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Huyen Hue: Now she was Chairwoman of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Center in Vietnam country.

<sup>18</sup> The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Tinh was the first person who opened a class, called the Internal Buddhist Class for Nuns, at Hai An temple. She devoted herself to research, translation, and teaching activities. Dignified, exemplary in her conduct, and ready to help the younger generations out of immense compassion and sympathy, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Tinh has successfully brought up a considerable number of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs who have been effectively serving in Vietnam's Buddhist Sangha.

Tinh, Nhat Nghia, Nhu Huy, Tinh Thuong, Tinh Hanh, Tinh Thien, Tu hanh, Nhu Hai, Nhu Duc (Zen Monastery), Nhu Duc (Duoc Su temple), Khiet Minh, Nhu Ngoc, Nhu Ngo, Nhu Thuan, Nhu Dinh, Nhu Nhu, Tri Hai and so on. All of the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs were educated leaders who guided thousands of young Bhikkhunīs to follow the Buddha’s teaching.

The Mendicant Bhikkhunīs, there are many Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs who contributed great benefits to society and Buddhism, such as: the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Huynh Lien,<sup>19</sup> Bach Lien, Thanh Lien, Trang Lien, Cho, Lien, Quang Lien, Tang Lien, Tri Lien, Duc Lien, Thien Lien, Bach Lien, Thanh Lien, Kim Lien, Ngan Lien, Chon Lien, Ngoat Lien, To Lien, Lieu Lien, Tan Lien, Minh Lien, Phuc Lien, Nha Lien, Xuan Lien, Vien Lien, Hue Lien, Chung Lien, Tin Lien, Tue Lien, Hang Lien, Nghiem Lien and thousands Bhikkhunīs Mendicant.

The Theravāda Bhikkhunīs,<sup>20</sup> there are the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Lieu Phap, Hue Tin, Lien Ngan, Nhiem Phap, Hue Vy, and many Bhikkhunīs others. There is Buddhist Nuns (Tu nu)<sup>21</sup> as Dieu Dan, Sieu Phap, Dieu Dinh, Lien Nhu, Tam Hue, Dieu Tam, Hanh Bao, Dieu Ngoc, Quang Chanh, Quang Minh, and 358 Buddhist Nuns.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Huynh Lien (1923-1997) and the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Bach Lien (1924-1996) were the founders of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Mendicant Saṅgha. The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Huynh Lien and Bach Lien have contributed a lot of effort to the causes of national reunification, national liberation, social charity works, spreading the correct Doctrine of the Buddha (Saddhamma), and training many Bhikkhunīs.

<sup>20</sup> **Theravāda Bhikkhunīs:** *See pictures in the Appendix 2, Section 4, p. 202.*

<sup>21</sup> “Tu nu” is a Vietnamese word to show a woman has cut hair, is wearing a white robe, (pink robe in Burma), and undertaking the eight precepts in the Theravāda Buddhist tradition. In Vietnamese tradition it is called “Tu nu,” and in Thailand it is called “Maechee”.

<sup>22</sup> Thich Thien Nhon, President of the Executive Council, has statistics quantifying the number of the Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunīs in the Vietnamese Buddhist

All three traditional Bhikkhunīs (1) Mahāyāna Bhikkhunīs, (2) Theravāda Bhikkhunīs, and (3) Theravāda Bhikkhunīs in Vietnam belong to the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.

Generally, in the early centuries, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs were scattered throughout the country. The number of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs increased with time. Before the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were no statistics to count the number of Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs. During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs rapidly developed, leading to the establishment of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.

So, on January 1, 2009, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha has the official organization Ceremony present oneself before the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha. President of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha was the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Thich Nu Huyen Hue,<sup>23</sup> Vice President Thich Nu Tinh Nguyen<sup>24</sup>, 15 Vice Presidents, with 33 Bhikkhunīs of the Permanent Committee and 80 Bhikkhunīs in the Executive Committee another has responsibility leadership total 18.516 Bhikkhunīs in whole the country.

According to the statistics Summary Report of the Buddhist Activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee in 2011, term VI (2007-2012), on October 21, 2011, the increased number of

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Saṅgha, on Jun 26-27, 2015 at the Congress Sangha Affairs Nationwide at the Bai Dinh temple, Ninh Binh province in Vietnam. See more: The Executive Council Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha “The Conference Documents Standing Committee Executive Council Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha”, **A Summary Report of Buddhist Activities of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha in 2015**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Office II Publication, 2016), p. 15.

<sup>23</sup> **The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Thich Nu Huyen Hue:** *See pictures in the Appendix 2, Section 1, p. 186.*

<sup>24</sup> **The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Thich Nu Tinh Nguyen** has become President of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee from in 2015 to now. *See pictures in the Appendix 2, Section 1, p. 186.*

the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs was 20,579 Bhikkhunīs and there are 8,101 temples of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs Saṅgha in the whole country.<sup>25</sup>

At the present, according to the statistics Summary Report of the Buddhist Activities of the Central Standing Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, on January 2, 2017, there are 53,941<sup>26</sup> Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunīs, and 18,466 temples. The Bhikkhunī's numbers there are 26,500 and 9,376 Bhikkhunī's temples in the whole country.

Therefore, it can be said that in the 19<sup>th</sup> - 21<sup>st</sup> century was a prosperous period in Vietnam, in general, and for the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī in particular. This is especially true in regard to the establishment of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha. This event shows that a large number of the Bhikkhunīs in Vietnam were connected during the long period. As His Holiness, the Most Venerable Bhikkhu Thich Tu Nhon<sup>27</sup> said, “Although Vietnam’s Buddhist history has not completely recognized the contribution of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, it was very much alive and coincided with the Bhikkhu Saṅgha for over 2000 years”.<sup>28</sup> This declaration acknowledged the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs and their great contribution.

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<sup>25</sup> The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, **The Summary Report of Buddhist Activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee in 2011**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City, Office VBSCS Publication, 2011), p. 11.

<sup>26</sup> The Central Standing Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, **The Summary Report of Buddhist Activities of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha in 2017**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City, Office II, 2017), p. 15.

<sup>27</sup> Thich Tu Nhon was a Member of the Preventing Council, Vice President of the Permanent of the Executive Council of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha (VBS); Vice Permanent Committee of the Central Executive Bhikkhu Saṅgha of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.

<sup>28</sup> The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, **The Summary Report Present Ceremony of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, Term VI (2007-2012)**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Religious Publication, 2009), p. 5.

According to Vietnamese Buddhist history, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs practiced the Buddhadharma everywhere in the country. Gradually, they organized to propagate the Buddha's teachings. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha had a formal organization system.

The organizational activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha develop significantly from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the present, especially in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It can be said that this is the period of modern Vietnamese Buddhism, in general, and the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, in particular. To further understand the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs Saṅgha, please continue to learn the process of their establishment.

## **2.2 The Establishment Process and Organization of Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.**

The establishment process and organization of Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha occurred through experiencing the following events: In 1956<sup>29</sup>, following the instructions of the Most Venerable Bhikkhu Patriarch Hue Quang of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Thich Nu Nhu Thanh leader of the interim Executive Committee of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, started an organization campaign for all the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs in the Northern, Central, and Southern regions of the country that held a congress of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.

On July 12, 1956, all Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs gathered at Hue Lam Temple to attend the congress of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha. This was the first congress, organized by the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Thich Nu Nhu Thanh, under the acknowledgment of the Bhikkhunī Vietnam's Board of Elders.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Thich Nu Nhu Duc, **A Brief History of the Vietnam Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha**, (Vietnam: HCM City Religious Publication, 2009), p. 229.

<sup>30</sup> Thich Nu Nhu Duc, *Ibid*, p. 231.



In 1961, under the leadership of the Board of Management Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Ninh, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Chi, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Huy, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Tri, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Chau, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Huyen Hue led thousands of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs.

From December 29-31, 1972, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Thich Nu Nhu Thanh summoned a congress of the Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha; it was organized at Tu Nghiem Temple.<sup>31</sup> This was the second large-scale congressional event, aiming to review the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha's activities after sixteen years of growth. The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha had rules (drafted in 1970) based on the South Vietnam Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.

Table 1 (2.2)

<b>The Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha in 1972<sup>32</sup></b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Titles</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Bhikkhunī's numbers	1,345
2	Bhikkhunī's temples	186
3	Buddhist Academy	4 (Tu Nghiem, Duoc Su, Dieu Quang, Dieu Duc)
4	Primary Buddhist Studies	30
5	Kieu Dam Primary School	71
6	Kindergartens	41
7	Orphanages	6

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<sup>31</sup> Thich Nu Nhu Duc, Ibid, p. 241. See more: The Central Committee Buddhist Activities the Subcommittee Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, "The process of formation and development of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha," **The Summary Report Present Ceremony of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, Term VI (2007-2012)**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Religious Publication, 2009), p. 136.

<sup>32</sup> Thich Nu Nhu Duc, Ibid, p. 243

8	Nursing homes for the elderly	1
9	Medical facilities	12
10	Dormitories for girl students	2

According to Table 1 (2.2), the Bhikkhunī's numbers has 1,345 of summary reports of the congress in 1972.

In 1972, *South East Asia Buddhist Review Magazine*, a Taiwanese journal, ran an article with the following assessment: "Hereafter, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha works under a unified administrative system. The Bhikkhunīs in Central Vietnam has established two Buddhist academies, each place having its own Board of Directors, whereas, in the South, there was only one Central Principal Office."<sup>33</sup>

According to the organization of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, on Buddhist activities, social activities are actively participated in, and there is high morale to participate. So, at the sixth congressional event of the National Buddhist Delegates in Ha Noi Capital (2007-2012)<sup>34</sup>, the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha (VBS) agreed to allow the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha to establish the "Central Subcommittee Specially Responsible for the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha" with the participation of all members of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.

On April 11, 2008, the President of the Executive Council of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha signed and issued Decision No. 476 to approve the personnel comprising the Central Subcommittee Responsible for Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha. The President was the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Thich Nu Huyen Hue. On January 1, 2009, "The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee"<sup>35</sup> officials presented themselves

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<sup>33</sup> Thich Nu Nhu Duc, Ibid, p. 236.

<sup>34</sup> Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha National Department of International Buddhist Affairs, **A Brief History of Buddhism in Vietnam**, (Vietnam: Phuong Dong Publish House, 2011), p. 54.

<sup>35</sup> **The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee: See pictures in the Appendix 2, Section 1, pp. 186-193.**

to the public at the Head Office II of the Central Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.<sup>36</sup> In 2013<sup>37</sup>, the “Central Subcommittee Responsible for Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha” deleted “Responsible for” from their title, and now uses the title: “Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee (VBSCS)”.

Table 2 (2.2)

<b>The Establishment &amp; Organization of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha</b>		
<b>Year</b>	<b>Events</b>	<b>Leader</b>
1956	The first congress of the South Vietnam Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.	Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh
1957	The South Vietnam Bhikkhunī Saṅgha’s rules “26 articles”	Bhikkhu Thien Hòa
1961	The Board of Management Vietnam Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.	Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh
1964-1975	The Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.	Bhikkhunī Huyen Hoc
Term I 1964-1968	The Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.	Bhikkhunī Huyen Hoc
Term II 1968-1972	The Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.	Bhikkhunī Lieu Tanh
1970	The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha’s rules “4 chapters 25 articles”	Bhikkhunī Huyen Hue
1972	The congress of the Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.	Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh

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<sup>36</sup> The Central Committee Buddhist Activities the Subcommittee Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Sangha, **The Summary Report Present Ceremony of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Committee, Term VI (2007-2012)**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Religious Publication, 2009), p. 6.

<sup>37</sup> According to Summary Report Buddhist Activities 2014 “the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee(VBSCS) Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.

Term III 1974	The Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.	Bhikkhunī Nhu Chi
2009	The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee.	Bhikkhunī Huyen Hue
2009	The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee has rules “4 chapters 22 articles.”	VBSCS
2013	The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee has rules “4 chapters 24 articles.”	VBSCS
2015	The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee.	Bhikkhunī Tinh Nguyen

According to Table 2 (2.2), in 1956, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs established South Vietnam Bhikkhunī Saṅgha has rules “26 articles”. Up to the present, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee has rules “4 chapters 24 articles.”

The events that led to the establishment, as well as the organization of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, proved that the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha had a strong voice in preserving and promoting the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha tradition. They have trusted members of the great Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha family. Thenceforth, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha have obligations within the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha and in society.

Through the aforementioned establishment and organization of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, it can be said that the organizational activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha endeavored to gradually develop in all fields. However, in the organization and activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, there are achievements and difficulties. What are the achievements, difficulties, and difficulties of the unresolved issues within the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha? This will be discussed in the next section.

### 2.3 The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha's Personnel.

The personnel of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha was created from the establishment of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha in 1956. It can be shown following:

On December 6-7, 1956, the Congress of the South Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha organized at Hue Lam temple.<sup>38</sup> There were 20 members on the Bhikkhunī Saṅgha's Executive Committee: as shown in the table in the below:

Table 3 (2.3)

<b>The South Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha in 1956</b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Bhikkhunī's Name</b>
1	President	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh.
2	Supreme Advisor	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Kim.
3	Vice President	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Chi.
4	Secretary	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Huyen Hue. <sup>39</sup>
5	Vice Secretary	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Vien Huy & Tinh Y.
6	Treasurer	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Duc.

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<sup>38</sup> Thich Nu Nhu Duc, **A Brief History of the Vietnam Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Religious Publication, 2009), p. 231.

<sup>39</sup> In 1956, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Thich Nu Huyen Hue (1924-2016) was Secretary General, incoming 2008 she was President of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee. She has not yet completed her term (2012-2017), passing away on August 28, 2016.

7	Vice Treasurer	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Minh & Nhu Tri.
8	Vinaya Supervision <sup>40</sup>	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Hoa.
9	Ritual Supervision	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Thong Hue.
10	Educational Supervision	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Chi Kien.
11	Organizational Supervision	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dieu Ninh.
12	Transition	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Giac Ngoc.
13	Administrator in Charge of Registration Paperwork	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Giac Nhan.
14	Responsible Standing	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Nghia, Nhu Ly, Dieu Hanh, & Dieu Chon.
15	Responsible Inspection	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Tam Nhan, Nhu Ngo, Tri Thong, & Dieu Dao.

The principal office of the South Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha was initially located at Hue Lam temple. It was then moved to Duoc Su temple at the request of the Buddhist Women's Association. In 1958, the Venerable Bhikkhunī Masters decided to move the office to the Tu Nghiem temple. So, the principal office of the South Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha relocated Tu Nghiem from that time period up to now.

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<sup>40</sup> This Vinaya Supervision communicates Sīla for all the novice nuns (samaneri), novice observers of nuns (sikkamānana) and nuns (Bhikkhunīs) at the Ordination Ceremony and teaching Sīla for them. Especially, this Vinaya Supervision has ability Dharma talk for all the lay men (upāsakas), lay women (upāsikās), and nuns (Bhikkhunīs).

In 1964, the South Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha and the Central Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha were united, resulting in the “Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha”, which represents Mahāyāna Bhikkhunīs from Ca Mau to the Ben Hai. The principal office was also at Tu Nghiem temple, district 10, Ho Chi Minh City. In this period, the personnel composition of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha was divided into the following terms:

Table 4 (2.3)

<b>The Mahāyāna Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha (1964-1975)<sup>41</sup></b>		
<b>Time</b>		<b>Bhikkhunī's Name</b>
Term I (1964-1968)	President	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh.
	Secretary	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Tri
	Other Subcommittee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs and Bhikkhunīs.
Term II <sup>42</sup> (1968-1972)	President	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Lieu Tanh.
	Secretary	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Hoa.
	Other Subcommittee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs and Bhikkhunīs.

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<sup>41</sup> Thich Nu Nhu Duc, op. cit, p. 236.

<sup>42</sup> In 1972, the Congress of the Mahāyāna Bhikkhunī Saṅgha was marked the Saṅgha's maturity. The Bhikkhunī Saṅgha's Executive Committee managed to adjust some of the Bhikkhunīs' activities in time to keep pace with the world outside.

Term III (1974 <sup>43</sup> ... )	President	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Chi.
	Secretary	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Phuoc Hien.
	Other Subcommittee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs & Bhikkhunīs.

On January 1, 2009, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee officials presented themselves, before the public, at Head Office II of the Buddhist Saṅgha Central Vietnam. By this time, the number of Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs had increased, but the composition of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha still had to conform to the particular system.

Therefore, in term VI (2007-2012), the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee presented has 157 personnel (84 officials and 37 alternates) composed of:

Table 5 (2.3)

<b>The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee in 2009<sup>44</sup></b>		
<b>No.</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Bhikkhunī's Name</b>
1	Proving Committee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Tam Hoa & 7 the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs others.

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<sup>43</sup> In 1974, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Thanh was handed over the important function of the Director General to the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Chi.

<sup>44</sup> The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, “The Summary Record Present Ceremony of the Central Subcommittee Responsible Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, Term VI (2007-2012)”, **The Composition Personnel of Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee** (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Religious Publication, 2009), pp. 25-40.



2	Advisory Committee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Ngo & 9 the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs others.
3	Standing Committee	President the Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Huyen Hue & 8 Vice President the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs.
4	Responsible Subcommittee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs & Bhikkhunīs.
5	Official Commissioner	There are 84 the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs & Bhikkhunīs.
6	Alternate Commissioner	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Hoa & 36 Bhikkhunīs others.
7	Commissioner	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Dam Hien & 26 Bhikkhunīs others.

<b>President</b>		<b>Vice President</b>
The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Huyen Hue.		The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Tinh Nguyen
<b>10 Subcommittees</b>		
1	Vinaya Supervision	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Tinh Hanh & 11 Bhikkhunīs.
2	Education Committee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Duc & 11 Bhikkhunīs.
3	Propagative Dharma Committee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Tinh Thuong & 15 Bhikkhunīs.
4	Cultural Committee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Nhu & 11 Bhikkhunīs.
5	Foreign Affairs Committee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Hue Huong & 8 Bhikkhunīs.
6	Ceremonial Committee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Chau & 6 Bhikkhunīs.
7	Social Charity Committee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Hue Giac & 19 Bhikkhunīs.

8	Financial Committee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Thuan & 16 Bhikkhunīs.
9	Control Committee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Ngoc & 7 Bhikkhunīs.
10	Responsible Registration Committee	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Hue & 4 Bhikkhunīs.

Based on the information mentioned above, we know the general composition of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha in Term VI (2007-2012). All 157<sup>45</sup> Bhikkhunīs of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee have responsibilities for all Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs activities in the country and must report results yearly to the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha. That concludes the presentation of the personnel composition of the term VI.

Term VII (2012-2017), the of Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee personnel.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, “The Conference Documents Standing Committee Executive Council Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha”, **The Summary Report of the Buddhist Activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee in 2010**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City, Office VBSCS Publication, 2010), p. 2.

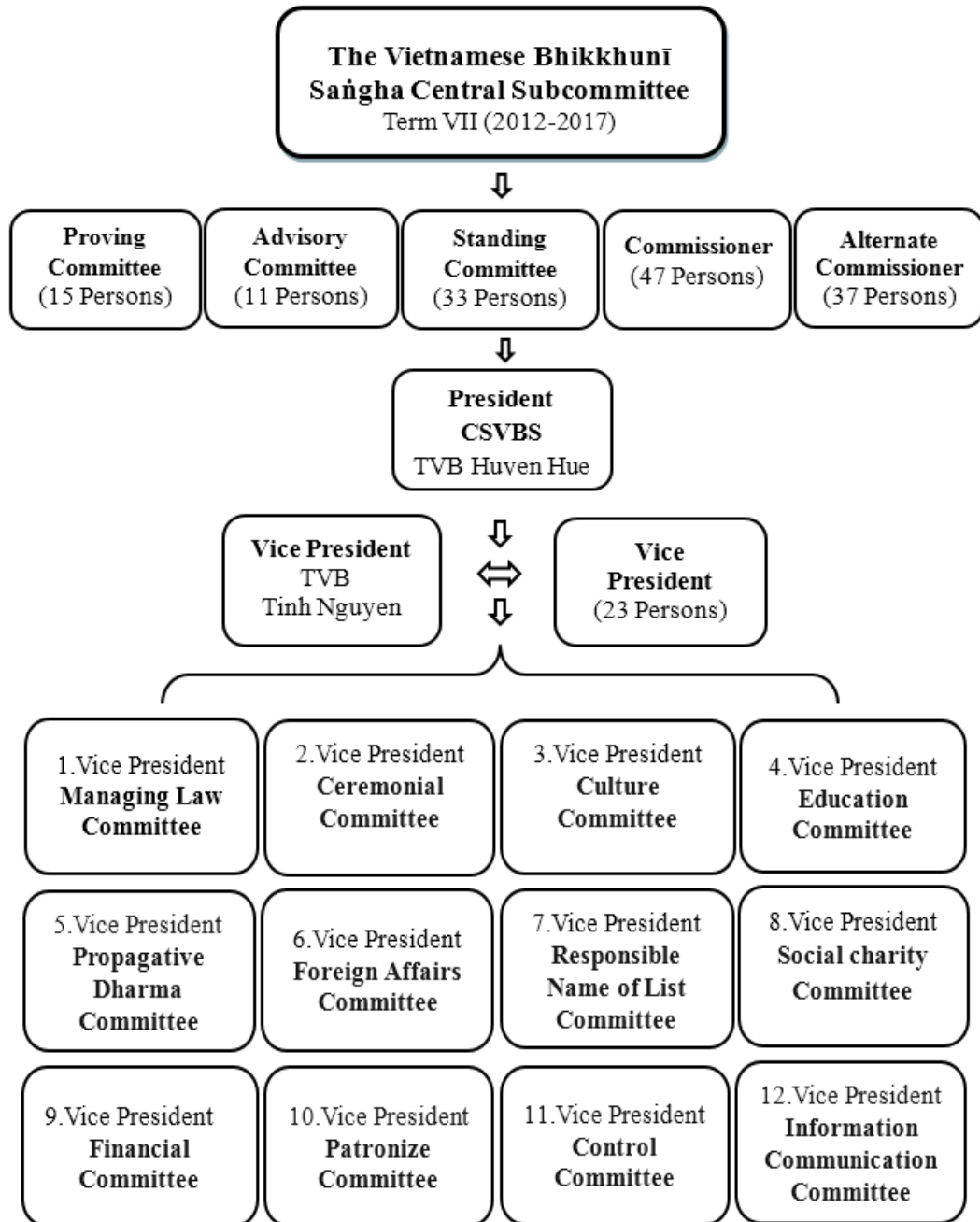
<sup>46</sup> Based on resolution No. 238/2013/QDHDTS dated Junly 15, 2013 the Conference Standing Committee of the Executive Council of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha approved Composition Personnel of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee term VII (2012-2017), at the Office II of the Central Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, Quang Duc Monastery, District 3, Ho Chi Minh City. (**The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee term VII (2012-2017)**): *See pictures in the Appendix 2, Section 1, pp. 187-193.*

Table 6 (2.3)

No.	Personnel of Term VII (2012-2017)
1	Proving Committee: (15 Bhikkhunīs)
2	Advisory Committee: (11 Bhikkhunīs)
3	Standing Committee (33 Bhikkhunīs) 1. President: The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Huyen Hue. 2. Vice President: The Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs Tinh Nguyen & 23 Bhikkhunīs. 3. Secretary: 3 The Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs.
4	Commissioner: (46 Bhikkhunīs)
5	Alternate Commissioner: 37
	Responsible Committee: (10 Committees): 1. Managing Law Committee. 2. Education Committee. 3. Propagative Dharma Committee. 4. Culture Committee. 5. Foreign Affairs Committee. 6. Ceremonial Committee. 7. Social Charity Committee. 8. Financial Committee. 9. Control Committee. 10. Responsible Name of List Committee.

The personnel of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee was made into the figure:

Figure 1 (2.3)



According to Figure 1 (2.3), it illustrates 12 committees with many Bhikkhunī members who belonged to the leader groups and their activities. So, in total there are 200 Bhikkhunīs and other members of the

Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee.<sup>47</sup> This personnel is responsible for about 26,500 Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs across the entire country.

To summarize, the administrative structure of Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha has the official personnel perform activities in conformity with the expectations of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, as well as what is necessary for Vietnam. Additionally, the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha and the Vietnam Government recognized and supported the organization of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha. The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha has systematic organization and activities that must follow stipulations in the rules.

## **2.4 Rules, Regulations, and Forms of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha's Mission.**

### **2.4.1 Rules**

The rules of Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha were approved and ratified by the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha (VBS). According to Article 1: The promulgation laws of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee were activities in term VII (2012-2017), which consists of 4 chapters and 24 articles ratified by the Conference Executive Council Standing Committee, on July 2, 2013.<sup>48</sup> The 24 articles in 4 chapters in term VII (2012-2017).

The rules 24 articles 4 chapters of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee is the standard responsibility of the members of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee.

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<sup>47</sup> At present, in Vietnam, 45 out of 63 provinces have established the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Subcommittee. All the Bhikkhunīs provinces fall under the direction of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee.

<sup>48</sup> The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, the rules of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, Term VII (2012-2017), the Decisions promulgated of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, the Most Venerable Bhikkhu Thich Tri Tinh, who was President of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, signed.

Concomitant, the activities and responsibility of the Leader Committee Bhikkhunī Saṅgha with all of the Bhikkhunīs in the whole country.

Therefore, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha has been approved and supported by the Standing Committee of the Executive Council Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha and the Central Committee Buddhist activities. So, the success and development of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha thanked the great help of the Bhikkhu Saṅgha. Admittedly, today, in Vietnam both the Bhikkhu Saṅgha and Bhikkhunī Saṅgha are capable two hands of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha for all the achievements of the Buddhist activities and social activities.

To summarize the rules 24 articles 4 chapters of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha includes as:

The first chapter:

- Official Name
- Objectives
- Office

There are 3 articles (1-3)

The second chapter:

- Personnel Organization

There are 3 articles (4-6)

The third chapter:

- Duties
- Powers

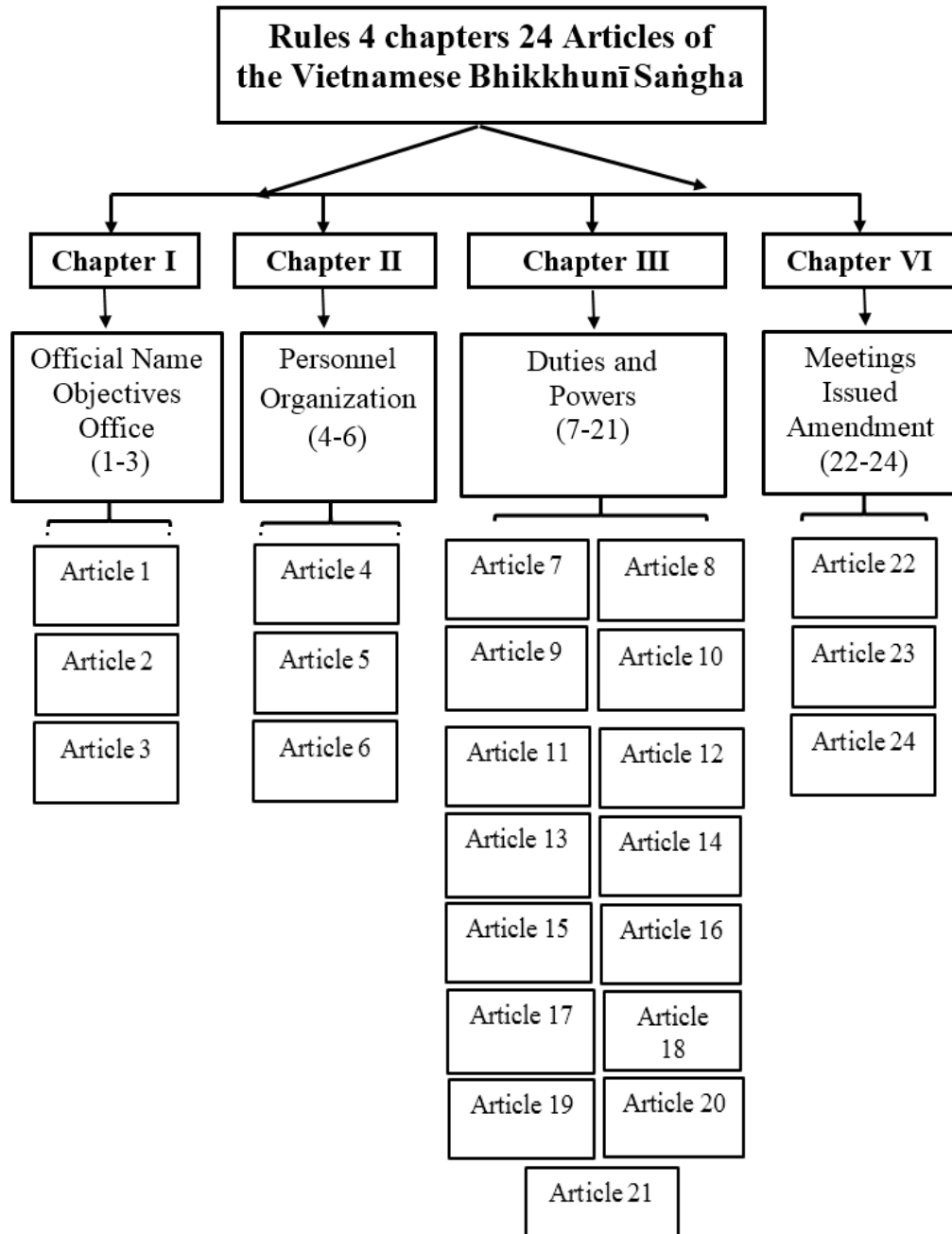
There are 14 articles (7-21)

The fourth chapter:

- Meetings
- Issued
- Amendment

There are 3 articles (22-24).

Figure 2 (4.2.1)



The Figure 2 (4.2.1) above show that the “Duties and Powers” of chapter III there are more articles than chapter I, II, and IV. These rules of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha were defined as standards in the responsibility of the members of the Central and Provinces Subcommittee Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha with all Bhikkhunīs in the whole country.

### 2.4.2 Regulations and Forms.

The regulations and forms of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha's mission in 2016, there are four parts as (1) Characteristics situation, (2) Buddhist activities, (3) Specialized activities concludes ten committees, and (4) Comments and appreciation.

Table 7 (2.4.2)

<b>Regulations &amp; Forms of the Mission of VBSCS in 2016</b>			
<b>R. No.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Position</b>
I	Characteristics Situation		
II	Buddhist Activities	1	Organizational Activities
		2	Participation Activities of the Buddhist Saṅgha
III	Specialized Activities	1	Registration Committee
		2	Supervision Vinaya Committee
		3	Cultural Committee
		4	Social Charity Committee
		5	Educational Committee
		6	Propagative Dharma Committee
		7	Foreign Affairs Committee
		8	Ceremonial Committee
		9	Financial Committee
		10	Control Committee
IV	Comments & appreciation		



(Part I) Characteristics situation:

According to the Buddhist activities program in 2016,<sup>49</sup> the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee and the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Provincials Subcommittee not only participated in the activities of Buddhist Affair Central Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha but also organized many the Buddhist activities, charitable society accord with the situation of the country. That has created good conditions for the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha in the whole country. They have the opportunity to contributions their abilities in the activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha in particular and the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha in general.

Part (II). The Buddhist Activities.

2.1 The Organizational Activities:

The following a circular 073/TT of the Executive Council Buddhist Affair of the Standing Committee Executive Council Buddhist Affair guidance on the establishment of the Provincials Subcommittee Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha belong to the Buddhist Affair Provinces, City the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha. In 2016, the total has 45 out of 63 the Provincials Subcommittee Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha established all of which are operated under the direction of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee.

2.2 The Participation activities of the Buddhist Saṅgha: Conferences and festivals.

- The Buddhist Affairs Nationwide.
- The Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha (VBS).

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<sup>49</sup> The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, “The Conference Documents Standing Committee Executive Council Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha”, **The Summary Report of Buddhist Activities of the Central Subcommittee Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha in 2016**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City, Office CSVBS Publication, 2016), p. 15.

- The National Women's Conference.
- The Sakyadhita International Conference Buddhist Women.
- The VBSCS.
- The VBSPS.
- The summary report of Buddhist activities of the CSVBS & PSVBS.
- The Buddha's Birthday, the Buddha's Enlightenment, the Buddha preached Dharma, the Buddha's Nirvana.
- The Buddha Amitabha's Birthday.
- The Buddha Avalokiteshvara's Birthday.
- The Memorial Saint Patriarch Bhikkhunī Mahāpajāpati Gotami.
- The retreat of the three months (vassa).
- Vu Lan - Ullambana (the gratitude to the ancestor, & parents).
- The great three full moon on 15/1, 15/7 and 15/10 lunar.
- The Buddha - King Tran Nhan Tong on 1/11 lunar.
- The Bodhisattva Thich Quang Duc on 11/6 lunar.

### Part (III). The Specialized Activities.

#### 3.1 The Activities of the List Committee:

The Statistical Bhikkhunī's Numbers and Bhikkhunī's Temples: According to the statistic in 2016 of the report Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Provincials Subcommittee sent to the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee total has 6,127 temples and 15,818 Bhikkhunīs. The number has statistics some provinces as following:

Table 8 (2.4.2) Number of Bhikkhunīs and temples.

No.	The Provinces & Cities	Bhikkhunī's Temples	Bhikkhunī's Numbers
1.	An Giang Province	?	256
2	Provinces in the North	4.000	5.020
3	Can Tho Province	69	279
4	Tien Giang Province	120	564
5	Ben Tre Province	78	216
6	Bac Lieu Province	51	131
7	Tra Vinh Province	54	126
8	Hau Giang Province	29	115

9	Vinh Long Province	75	306
10	Soc Trang Province	27	143
11	Tay Ninh Province	40	117
12	Binh Duong Province	73	325
13	Dong Nai Province	223	2.318
14	Ba Ria Vung Tau Province	422	1.432
15	Binh Phuoc Province	60	175
16	Lam Dong Province	174	1.451
17	Kontum Province	10	34
18	Gia Lai Province	32	220
19	Binh Thuan Province	64	254
20	Khanh Hoa Province	101	395
21	Phu Yen Province	66	146
22	Binh Dinh Province	121	281
23	Quang Nam Province	88	356
24	Quang Ngai Province	?	135
25	Da Nang City	30	223
26	Thua Thien Hue Province	120	700
<b>Total</b>		<b>6.127</b>	<b>15,714</b>

According to the above statistics, the number has not completed. Because, in 2016, there were 45 out of 63 provinces have been established the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Provincial Subcommittee. But this list has only 26 provinces. At the present, there are 26,500 Bhikkhunīs and 9,376 Bhikkhunī's temples in the whole country (according to statistics of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, there are 53,941 Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunīs and 18,466 temples).<sup>50</sup> Because, the VBSPS has not established synchronized, so, the statistic's result of the Bhikkhunī's numbers and Bhikkhunī's temples have not completed too.

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<sup>50</sup> The Executive Council Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, **The Conference Documents Standing Committee Executive Council Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha in 2016**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Office II Publication, 2016), p. 15.

### 3.2. The Managing Law Committee:

The Organizational Great Ordination: The Bhikkhunīs of the Managing Law Committee combined with the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha have the activities as:

- The opening great Ordination Ceremony.
- Propagation precepts for all Bhikkhunīs, Sikkamānanas, Samaneris.
- The Samaneris, Sikkamānanas, and Bhikkhunīs receive precepts.
- Teaching Bhikkhunī pātimokkha 348 precepts.
- Chanting Bhikkhunī pātimokkha every month.
- The teaching Buddhist rituals.
- The teaching rituals in the temple.
- The teaching meditation and chanting in the temple.
- Teaching Sutra, Vinaya, and Abhidhamma for Bhikkhunīs.

The Organizational Vassa: According to the Vietnam Buddhist Culture, yearly in three months vassa from 15/4 to 15/7 lunar,<sup>51</sup> all the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs have been concentrate the retreat of the three months (vassa), to review rules of the temple or monastery, study Sutra, Vinaya, and Abhidhamma, practices meditation, review the charter, the law of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, to cultivate body and mind, Morality (Sīla), Concentration (Samadhi), and Wisdom (Pañña) and so on. In 2016, there is total has 148 residential big temples vassa concentration at many the provinces for the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs and there are 10,240 Bhikkhunīs.

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<sup>51</sup> According to the Vietnam Buddhist Culture, there are two traditions are the Mahāyāna tradition and Theravāda tradition. The Mahāyāna tradition, there are three months vassa from 15/4 to 15/7 lunar and the Theravāda tradition from 15/7 to 15/10 lunar.

### 3.3 The Culture Committee:

The activities of the Bhikkhunī Culture Committee were and doing investigates continuing collections, editing, compilations, printings, storage, preserving the profiles, the images, pictures of the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs predecessors and the publications, the Buddhist culture has the value of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha. The activities of the Buddhist culture as:

- The exhibition pictures of the Buddhist art.
- The painting Viet calligraphy and Buddha images.
- The calligraphy pen fire.
- The vegetarian food fair.
- The traditional song dance offers to the Vesak.
- The decorating float celebrating Vesak.
- The released Buddhist books.
- The released Buddhist CV and DVD.
- The maintain the beauty of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.
- The preserve and maintain the beauty of the temples.
- The pictures of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha's activities.
- The Bhikkhunīs participated to wrote Newspaper Enlightenment, Hoa Dam, Huong Sen, Noi Sang Vassa.
- The writing newspaper Vu Lan, Vesak.

### 3.4 The Social Charity Committee:

The Social Charity Committee combined with the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee and the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Provincials Subcommittee actively carry out the charitable activities. To help money and products to the poverty, orphans, street children, homeless persons, distributed rice charity for the three times in a year, cooked the vegetarian foods to the poor patients in the hospital, diagnoses oriental and western medicine, relief to the natural disasters flood Northern Provinces, building schools, hospitals, charitable house,

bridges, roads, dig wells, creating jobs for the youth, poor adolescents and so on.<sup>52</sup>

In general, the social charity committee of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha activities organization to carry out all the charitable society bring the benefits to the human beings in society.

### 3.5 The Education Committee:

The number 13,250<sup>53</sup> of the Bhikkhunīs's education combined with the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, and the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Provincial Subcommittee teaching at the Primary, Colleges, University School of Buddhist Studies, and the big temples for the Bhikkhunīs and lay Buddhist too. Moreover, they actively carry out the charitable educational activities such as:

The opened parenting centers orphans.

The teaching compassion children class.

The parenting centers handicapped children.

The nursery school for the poor children.

The teaching and giving of scholarships help the student's poverty.

The opening vocational schools free for the youth.

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<sup>52</sup> The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, "The Conference Documents Standing Committee Executive Council Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha", **The Summary Report of Buddhist Activities of the Central Subcommittee Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha in 2016**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City, Office VBSCS Publication, 2016), p. 15. See more: The Central Subcommittee Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, The Summary Record Present Ceremony of the Central Subcommittee Responsible Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, Term VI (2007-2012). Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Religious Publication, 2009.

<sup>53</sup> According to the statistic of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Central Standing Committee, **The Summary Report of Buddhist Activities of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha in 2016**, on Jan 2-3, 2017, at Office Quang Duc Monastery, District 3, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

### 3.6 The Dharma Propagation Committee:

The Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs of the Dharma Propagation Committee have high knowledge of the Buddhist education, the profound of the Buddha's teaching, the realizing Dharma, Sutras, Vinaya, and Abhidhamma, the experience meditation, and cultivation long time etc. They combine with the VBSCS and VBSPS Dharma talk at the big temples for the Bhikkhunīs, lay Buddhists. The great festivals tradition in Vietnam as the Buddha's Birthday, the Buddha Amitabha's Birthday, the Buddha Avalokiteshvara's Birthday, the retreat of the three months (vassa), Vu Lan - Ullambana for the gratitude spirit to the ancestor, grandfather, and parents, the great three months' full moon on 15/1, 15/7, and 15/10 lunar and so on.

In addition, the Dharma Propagation Committee has Dharma talk to the Buddhadharmas Course, Sunday's Course Buddha recitation to the people live deep, remote mountainous, and lay Buddhists.<sup>54</sup> To help them the communication five precepts, practice Uposatha (8 precepts), the practice meditation understand the Buddha's teaching, improving people's mind, to help people with proper understanding about their own lives, to reduce mistakes, evils, and crimes, in order to they to be obtaining peace and reality happiness in their life.

In the spirit for the benefits of people, the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs of the Dharma Propagation Committee contribute actively the Dharma propagation activities bring benefits to the people and social development. So, anywhere, the lay Buddhists to respect the inviting Dharma talk, let's contact with the list the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs of the Dharma Propagation as follows:

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<sup>54</sup> The Central Subcommittee Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, "The Conference Documents Standing Committee Executive Council Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha", **The Summary Report of Buddhist Activities in 2016**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Office II Publication, 2016), p. 155.

Table 9 (2.4.2)

<b>No.</b>	<b>Name of Lecturers</b>	<b>Phone No.</b>
1	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Tinh Thuong	0906967070
2	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī To Lien	Ngoc Phuong Monastery
3	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Ngoc	038 253664
4	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Hue	0916265136
5	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Tinh Nghiem	0913601656
6	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Tin Lien	0906722787
7	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Nhu Thao Phap Vo	0942248865
8	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Tinh Van	0908213952
9	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Hue Lien	0909678498
10	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Huong Nhu	Thien Quang Temple
11	The Most Venerable Bhikkhunī Tu Bi	?

This is the name list of Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs of Dharma Propagation. They are belonging to the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs Saṅgha Central Subcommittee. In addition, there are many Bhikkhunīs members of the Dharma Propagation Committee of the 63 provinces of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunīs Saṅgha Provincials Subcommittee.

### 3.7 The Foreign Affairs Committee:

This committee combines with the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs Foreign Affairs Committee has organized the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs and the young Bhikkhunīs participation Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women as:



Table 10 (2.4.2)

<b>Sakyadhita International Association of Buddhist Women</b>				
<b>No.</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Keynote</b>
1 <sup>st</sup>	1987	Bodhgaya, India	“Buddhist Nuns in Society”	The 14 <sup>th</sup> Dalai Lama
2 <sup>nd</sup>	1991	Bangkok, Thailand	“Buddhist Women in the Modern World”	Chancellor of Thammasat University
3 <sup>rd</sup>	1993	Colombo, Sri Lanka	“Buddhist Women in Modern Society”	Ranasinghe Premadasa, President of Sri Lanka
4 <sup>th</sup>	1995	Ladakh, India	“Women and the Power of Compassion: Survival in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century”	H.M. Rani Sarla, Queen of Ladakh
5 <sup>th</sup>	1997- 1998	Phnom Penh, Cambodia,	“Women in Buddhism: Unity and Diversity”	H.M. Queen Norodom Siranouk, Queen of Cambodia
6 <sup>th</sup>	2000	Lumbini, Nepal	“Women as Peacemakers: Self, Family, Community, World”	Minister of Culture and Sport
7 <sup>th</sup>	2002	Taipei, Taiwan	“Bridging Worlds”	Annette Shu-lien Lu, Vice President of the Republic of China
8 <sup>th</sup>	2004	Seoul, South Korea	“Discipline and Practice of Buddhist Women Past and Present”	Kwangwoo Sunim, Anne Carolyn Klein, Paula Arai

9 <sup>th</sup>	2006	Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia,	“Buddhist Women in a Global Multicultural Community”	Sharon Suh
10 <sup>th</sup>	2008	Ulaanbataar, Mongolia	“Buddhism in Transition: Tradition, Changes, and Challenges”	Shundo Aoyama and Myeong Seong Sunim
11 <sup>th</sup>	2009	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam	“Eminent Buddhist Women”	C. Julia Huang
12 <sup>th</sup>	2011	Bangkok, Thailand	“Leading to Liberation”	Princess Srirasmi of Thailand
13 <sup>th</sup>	2013	Vaishali, India	“Buddhism at the Grassroots”	Thich Nu Khiet Minh
14 <sup>th</sup>	2016	Yogyakarta, Indonesia	“Compassion and Social Justice”	Karma Lekshe Tsomo
15 <sup>th</sup>	2017	The University of Hong Kong	“Contemporary Buddhist Women: Contemplation, Cultural Exchange & Social Action,”	The University’s Centre for Buddhist Studies (CBS).

In addition, the Most Venerable Vietnam Bhikkhunīs and the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs Foreign Affairs Committee organized and participated the conferences, meetings, and exchanges another with the Bhikkhunīs, Buddhist women, lay women, and domestic as well as foreign delegations.

### 3.8 The Ceremonial Committee:

The Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs Ceremonial Committee combined with the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee and the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Provincials Subcommittee actively

carry out the festival's ceremony tradition in the Buddhist activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha as well as the Ritual temples such as:

The Buddha's Birthday, the Buddha's ordination (Pravrajya), the Buddha's enlightenment, the Buddha preached (Dharma) his first sermon, the Buddha's Nirvana, the Buddha Avalokiteshvara's Birthday, the consecration of the Buddha statue, the worshipping to the Buddhas, the worshipping to salute to the Triratna (Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha) the worship Buddhas and repentance, the Memorial Saint Patriarch Bhikkhunī Mahāpajāpati Gotami, the Buddha - King Tran Nhan Tong, the Bodhisattva Thich Quang Duc, the great ordination ceremony, the opening Buddhist ceremony, the inauguration temple ceremony, to set life free ceremony, the health and long life ceremony, the requiem ceremony, the absolution, the forty-nine-day ceremony, the offerings absolution, the absolution of the dead (Ullambana), the great three full moon on 15/1, 15/7, and 15/10 lunar.

Generally, the Ceremonial Committee participated all the activities relate to the festival's ceremony tradition in the Buddhist activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.

### 3.9 The Financial Committee:

The Buddhist activities term VII (2012-2017) of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee (VBSCS), in 2016, the Bhikkhunīs Provincials Subcommittee has to carry out some the activities as:

- 1) The promoting economic and financial activities.
- 2) The campaign finance fundraising for the activities VBSCS.
- 3) The Financial Committee invited the Most Venerable Bhikkhunīs, the young Bhikkhunīs, lay Buddhist, celebrity enterprise experienced in economic participation the activities of the Committee.
- 4) The established charitable funds to the activities of the VBSCS.
- 5) It depends on the financial support and donations to the activities of the VBSCS.
- 6) The participated in the activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha (accompanying report).

7) Financial income and expenses (has a separate report).

For activities of the financial economics achieve good results, the financial economics needs to be the interest and support of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee; the support of government agencies at all levels, the friendship organizations, especially the support of the Most Venerable Bhikkhu Saṅgha, Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, and lay Buddhists.

3.10 The Control Committee:

The implement announcement 156/TB.HDTS on 06/10/2016<sup>55</sup> of the Standing Committee Executive Council, the Control Committee of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee has summaries report of the activities such as:

The Control Committee of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee has notification to the Control Committee of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Provinces and Cities Subcommittee embellishment the Control Committee follow the laws and the activities' law of the Central Subcommittee Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.

The Buddhist activities of the Control Committee of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee in 2016 as follows:

1. The meeting Control Committee of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee.
2. To attend the meeting of the activities handover of the Committees.

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<sup>55</sup> The Executive Council Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, **The Conference Documents Standing Committee Executive Council Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Office II Publication, 2016), p. 127.

3. To attend the activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee visit to the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Provinces, Cities Subcommittee.

4. To attend the meeting activities of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee in 2016.

5. To attend the meeting of the Buddhist Affairs Central Committee in 2016.

6. The opinion contribution to the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee and the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Provinces, Cities Subcommittee.

#### Part (IV). The Review and Evaluation

##### 4.1 Comments and Appreciation

At the present, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha have a remarkable position in society and the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha. It can say that this is a process of their striving efforts for themselves and the supports of the Bhikkhu Saṅgha. Therefore, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha reaffirmed their roles and possibilities on all sides of the development. In the achievement, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha meet with difficulties and defects.<sup>56</sup>

- To participate in the program of activities of the Executive Council and the Buddhist Affairs Central Committee of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha suggest.

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<sup>56</sup> The Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee. **The Summary Record Present Ceremony of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee, Term VI (2007-2012)**, (Vietnam: Ho Chi Minh City Religious Publication, 2009), p. 9.

- Member of the VBSCS and VBSPS had activities in the spirit of harmony and unity.
- The complete mission of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha entrusted.
- Some proposals of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Provincials and Central Subcommittee did not response satisfactory of the result.
- Some Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Provincials Subcommittee reported later the Buddhist activities.

According to regulations and forms of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha's mission there are the four parts: (I) characteristics situation, (II) Buddhist activities, this section includes (1) organizational activities and (2) participation activities of the Buddhist Saṅgha, (III) specialized activities, this section includes (1) registration committee, (2) supervision vinaya committee, (3) culture committee, (4) social charity committee, (5) education committee, (6) propagative dharma committee, (7) foreign affairs committee, (8) ceremonial committee, (9) financial committee, and (10) control committee, and (IV) comments and appreciation.

These regulations of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha were determined the standard and responsibility of the organization committee's members of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha Central Subcommittee with all of the Bhikkhunīs in the whole country.

Therefore, the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha has been approved and supported by the Standing Committee of the Executive Council of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha and the Central Committee of Buddhist activities. So, the development of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha was all did in part to the great help of the Bhikkhu Saṅgha. Admittedly, today, in Vietnam, both the Bhikkhu Saṅgha and Bhikkhunī Saṅgha are the capable two hands of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha for all the achievements of the Buddhist activities and social activities.

To summarize this chapter “History of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha” was discussed in three parts: (1) The original history of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, (2) the establishment process and organization of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha, (3) the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha’s personnel, and (4) the rules, regulations, and forms of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha’s mission. The purpose of this chapter is to gain a general understanding of the history, establishment process, organization, and significant events of the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha.

For more information about the Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha’s activities, let’s discuss the status and roles of Vietnamese Bhikkhunī Saṅgha in social development. This will be further discussed in chapter three.