



**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE BUDDHIST  
SANGHA ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEM BETWEEN  
THAILAND AND VIETNAM IN THE MODERN TIME**

**Ven. Nguyen Anh Tuan  
(Thich Thong Dao)**

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of  
The Requirements for the Degree of  
Master of Arts  
(Buddhist Studies)

Graduate School  
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University  
C.E. 2017



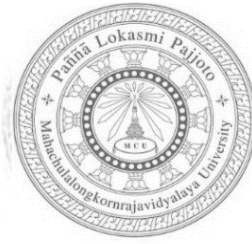
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The Graduate School of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University has approved this thesis entitled “A Comparative Study of Buddhist Saṅgha Administrative System Between Thailand and Vietnam in the Modern Time” as part of education according to its curriculum of the Master of Arts in Buddhist Studies.

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### **Abstract**

This qualitative research had three objectives, namely: 1) to study the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Thailand in the modern time, 2) to study the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Vietnam in the modern time, and 3) to compare the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system between Thailand and Vietnam in the modern time.

Thai Saṅgha administrative system was established very early around 13<sup>th</sup> century under the dynasty of Sukhothai Kingdom. Vietnam Saṅgha Administrative system had been found under the reign of Tran dynasty round 13<sup>th</sup> century. In both two countries, at the first beginning, the Saṅgha administrative system was leaded by the King himself with the assistance of the Senior Order who was the head of the Saṅgha Affair office. By the time, with the requirement of the legal foundation as the administrative texts to approve and manage the Saṅgha administrative system in every country, there was the birth of Saṅgha Act in Thai and the Saṅgha Charter in Vietnam. Finally, by the different historical background of the establishment, the policies of the different government

and the Saṅgha Act or Saṅgha administrative regulation, etc... make the differences and similarities on the Saṅgha administrative system between Thailand and Vietnam.

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Ven. Nguyen Anh Tuan

November 18, 2017

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### **List of Abbreviations**

A.D	:Anno Domini
B.C.E	:Before Christ Era
B.E	:Buddhist Era
C.E	:Christ Era
Dept.	:Department
etc.	:et cetera/ and others
Ed.	:Edited by
Eccl.	:Ecclesiastical
M.A	:Master of Art
MCU	:Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Universiy
Op.cit	:opera citato/ as referred
P(s)	:page(s)
Th.	:Thai language
USA	:United States of America
V.	:Vietnamese language
Vol.	:Volume(s)
VBS	:Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha
Ibid.	:The same author and source

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## Chapter I

### Introduction

#### 1.1 Background and Significance of the Problems

Thailand is known as the Theravāda Buddhist country with 94.6% of population are the Buddhist and by 2014s,<sup>1</sup> there are more than 21,000 temples in the country. Thailand now is becoming the center of Buddhist culture, education and the common Buddhist research center. The main cause that undelined those great results is the solid administration and the way of guiding Thai Buddhist Saṅgha. The role of Thai Buddhist Saṅgha Administrative system is very important to cause those successes. The head of the Saṅgha administration in Thailand is the Supreme Patriarch, the *Somdech Phra Saṅgharāja*, who is appointed by the King after consultation with the Order. The Supreme Patriarch is chosen on the basis of rank and ability, and ordinarily he remains in office until his death<sup>2</sup>. That is the method of chosing a Thai Buddhist Saṅgharaja and other rank's members in the whole structure. There was a Saṅgha administration that started from the period of Sukhothai Kingdom but there were many information about the Saṅgha administrative system that mentioned clearly in the historical development of Thai Buddhism. In the modern time, since the first Saṅgharāja<sup>3</sup> of Ratanakosin period,

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<sup>1</sup>Bureau of Statistic Forecast, **The 2014 Survey on Conditions of Society Culture and Mental Health (Thai Happiness)**. (Bangkok: Thai National Statistic Office, 2014).p. 3.

<sup>2</sup>Kenneth E, Wells, **Thai Buddhism-It Rites and Activities**. (Thailand: The Police Printing Press, 1960.), pp. 7-8.

<sup>3</sup>Saṅgharāja (Pāli: Saṅgha is religious community + raja is ruler, king, or prince) is the title given in many Theravada Buddhist countries to a senior monk who is the titular head either of a monastic fraternity (nikāya), or of

Somdet Phra Ariyavongsāṅgaṇa was appointed in 1782 A.D. by the King Rama I and Thai Saṅgha Act had been changed for several times, then Thai Saṅgha administrative system also was changed into the new way of management. Thai Saṅgharāja lineage still has continued with the nineteenth Saṅgharāja-Somdet Phra Ñāṇasamvara. As the highest Thai Buddhist leader and the head of Thai Buddhist Saṅgha administration, the Saṅgharāja and other ranks in the system have their own duties and requirement from the Saṅgha in order to protect and develop Thai Buddhist Saṅgha and Thai Buddhism as well.

In Thailand, the Buddhist Saṅgha administration has an important position in protect and develop the Theravāda Buddhism within many great contributions. The establishment of Mahamakutraja vidyalai<sup>4</sup> and Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya university<sup>5</sup> which became the two famous center of Buddhist studies nowadays and had provided the best education for many generations of not only monks but also for the lay followers. Thai Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system also has very large effects in the development of global Buddhism. Some of them became the founder and had many important positions of global Buddhist organizations. They also celebrated many Buddhist conferences, congresses and meeting that in order to solve present Buddhist problems and even find the way to protect global peace like the celebration of United Nations day of Vesak.

Different from Thailand, Vietnam is not a Buddhist country with the less number of the Buddhist followers among the large population, even Buddhism had existed in Vietnam very early. However, Mahāyāna Buddhism is the main school that most of the Buddhist followers are practicing now in Vietnam. The first Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Administrative system had been established under the reign of Tran dynasty, around 13<sup>th</sup> century. The establishment of the Vietnam Buddhist

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the Saṅgha throughout the country. This term is often rendered in English as 'Patriarch' or 'Supreme Patriarch'.

<sup>4</sup>**The Act of Parliament of Mahamakutraja vidyalai University B.E 2540**, on 1st October 1997 / B.E 2540.

<sup>5</sup>**The Act of Parliament of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University B.E. 2540 (1997)**, on the 21st of September 1997/ B.E. 2540.

Saṅgha<sup>6</sup> as we known nowadays is the great result of contributions from many generations of Buddhist leaders who had re-develop Vietnam Buddhism from the weakness for many previous centuries. The congress was held in Hanoi to establish Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha within the participation of Buddhist monks, nuns and lay Buddhist followers from nine Buddhist organizations<sup>7</sup> which were existed at that time. The president of the Saṅgha Council in the first tenure was Venerable Superior Thich Duc Nhuan, and the president of Executive committee in the first tenure was Venerable Superior Thich Tri Thu<sup>8</sup>. The president of those two departments of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha were selected by the electing from the members of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha and the agreement of all the members of the congress. Until now, the method of organize and the selection the members of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system also follow as the same with the way that happened in the first congress of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha. By the time, the name, the number, and the duties of every rank in the system also have changed for several generations, but all of them have the same main duties of overcoming all the challenges in order to protect Vietnamese Buddhism and cooperate with other organizations, other religions for the purpose of building a developed country in peace.

By the time Vietnam wars happened, the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system's members had a large contribution to the task of protecting the country. Thirty years after the establishment of the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, by the guiding of several generations of Saṅgha leaders, Vietnamese Buddhism had gotten many successes. In

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<sup>6</sup>In 1981, there was a congress between nine Buddhist organizations at Quan Su temple, Ha Noi. The new Buddhist organization was established named Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha. Nguyen Cao Thanh, **An outline of Buddhism in Viet Nam**. (Ha Noi: the religious publishing house, 2008.), p. 190.

<sup>7</sup>Nine Buddhist organizations: (1) The unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation, (2) The Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Association, (3) Vietnamese Traditional Buddhist Congregation, (4) Ho Chi Minh city Buddhism Liaison Committee, (5) Vietnamese Theravada Saṅgha Congregation, (6) Western South Viet Nam Association for Solidarity of Patriotic Monastics, (7) Vietnamese Medicant Saṅgha Congregation, (8) Thien Thai teaching and Meditation Sect, (9) Vietnamese Buddhist Studies Association. **Ibid.**, p. 191.

<sup>8</sup>**Ibid.**, p. 191.

Buddhist education, there are four Buddhist universities, thirty-one intermediate Buddhist schools, and hundreds of primary Buddhist schools in the country.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, by following to the good qualities of Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system, there are not only many Buddhist monks and nuns even lay Buddhist followers are practicing very well.

There are so many reasons to prove that the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Thai Buddhism somehow is different from Vietnam. Here, the administrative system is not only in one aspect of administration, but it also exists in Buddhist education, Buddhist ethic, and connects to the life society. The differences may from the way of administration or its structure or even different from the opinion about a Buddhist leader, the general structure, the way of arrange the positions which are based on the real situation of Buddhism in each country. Finally, the method of selecting a Buddhist member of Saṅgha administration of those two countries are different between each other. In Thai Buddhism there is only one highest position of Saṅgharāja who may control all the aspects of the Saṅgha. There are two main departments the Saṅgha Council and the Executive committee in Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha administration and each of them has an own header. There are also other significations of differences about the administrative system between those two countries that may discover by comparing them. By knowing and understanding about those differences, we may get more knowledge in order to efficiently solve our problem in Buddhism and get many new methods from another country to build a strong and solid Saṅgha for the aim of propagating the Gautama Buddha's teachings and bringing happiness for the mankind.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Research**

1.2.1 To study the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Thailand in the modern time.

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<sup>9</sup>**Result Report Ensure and Promote The Right of Religious Freedom in Vietnam Through The Actual Actions of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.** Hanoi: Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha-Executive Council, 2013.

1.2.2 To study the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Vietnam in the modern time

1.2.3 To compare the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system between Thailand and Vietnam in the modern time.

### **1.3 Statements of the Problems Desired to Know**

1.3.1 What is the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Thai Buddhism in the modern time?

1.3.2 What is the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Vietnamese Buddhism in the modern time?

1.3.3 What are the differences and similarities of the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system between Thailand and Vietnam in the modern time?

### **1.4 Scope of the Research**

#### **1.4.1 Scope of Source of Data**

This research focusses on studying the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system that appeared in the primary source of Theravāda and Mahāyāna Tipitaka, Buddhist scriptures were written by various scholars, commentaries, the Saṅgha Act, Saṅgha Charter of those two countries. Furthermore, the data come from the secondary source by well-known Buddhist scholars, the report and some journals on Buddhism during various congresses and conferences of both Vietnam and Thai Buddhist Saṅgha through the internet, or ebook, etc... which have written in three main languages of Vietnamese, Thai and English. However, the data will be from the resolution, institution, or report of the Saṅgha congress, Saṅgha meeting among those two countries.

#### **1.4.2 Scope of the Content:**

The content of the research consists of following information:

- Describe the study on “Thai Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in the modern time” from the Sukhothai period (13<sup>th</sup> century) to the present era.

- Describe the study on “Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in the modern time” from the Tran Dynasty (13<sup>th</sup> century) to the present era.

The research focuses on the concepts of Saṅgha administrative system of those two countries by considering in various aspects as followings: the introduction or historical background, the general structural system, the method of selection member and the duties of the Saṅgha administration in both two countries.

Lastly, the research will focus on the analysis of the similarities and differences of the concept of Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Thailand and Vietnam in the modern time.

## **1.5 Definition of the Terms Used in the Research**

1.5.1 **Comparative Study** refers to the similarities and the differences of the concept of the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system between Vietnam and Thailand.

1.5.2 **Modern Time** means the present century of 21<sup>st</sup> century, but this research started from the historical establishment of Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in those two countries since 13<sup>th</sup> century.

1.5.3 **Buddhist Saṅgha Administrative system** refers to the general structure, the ranks, the methods of selecting the members, and the duties of the members of the Saṅgha administration in both two countries of Vietnam and Thailand. It’s significations related to the Saṅgha’s administration in each country which the main elements in protecting and maintaining the Buddhism in those two country.

1.5.4 **Thailand** refers to Theravāda Buddhism is the main Buddhist sect from the Sukhothai (13<sup>th</sup> century) period up to the modern time with the Saṅgharāja as the head leader of Thai Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system.

1.5.5 **Vietnam** refers to the three traditional sects of Buddhism, as following: Mahāyāna, Theravāda and Khat Si Buddhism (mixed type between Mahāyāna and Theravāda tradition) from Tran dynasty (13<sup>th</sup> century) to the modern era.

## 1.6 Review of Related Literature and Research Works

1.6.1 Lang, Nguyen, **Essays on The History of Vietnamese Buddhism vol I, II, III**. Ha Noi: Literature Publishing House, 2000.<sup>10</sup>

This book mentions about the history of Vietnamese Buddhism that had started from the early Buddhism in Vietnam to the Buddhism in the twentieth century. This book had mentioned all the significations of Vietnamese Buddhism at many period of time. All Vietnamese Buddhist traditions and schools also had been written clearly by the author. The author had also explained about the others opinions and question about Vietnamese Buddhism. There are various information about the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha administration and Buddhist leader had been mentioned in this book. This book also showed many famous Vietnam Buddhist leaders and the concept of Vietnamese Buddhist leader in various periods of time. Specially, under the reign of Tran dynasty, Vinh Nghiem temple at Luong Giang region was appointed to be the central office of Buddhist Saṅgha where they kept all the documents of all Buddhist monks of the country. In 1313, Venerable Phap Loa worked at this temple as the Buddhist leader to appoint all the positions of Buddhist Saṅgha administration at that time.

1.6.2 Kenneth E, Wells, **Thai Buddhism-It Rites and Activities**. Thailand: The Police Printing Press, 1960.<sup>11</sup>

This book mentioned about all the general characteristics of Thai Buddhism, such as: Administration, Education, Buddhist festival, rites and duties of Thai monk,..so on. This book also mentioned about the influences of Thai Buddhism into the Thai people's lifestyle. There were

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<sup>10</sup> Lang, Nguyen, **Essays on The History of Vietnamese Buddhism vol I, II, III**. (Ha Noi: Literature Publishing House, 2000), p. 323.

<sup>11</sup> Kenneth E, Wells, **Op.cit.**, p. 9.

a strong connection and a support from the Thai royal Kingdom to Buddhism as the book mentioned: “the King, although protector of all religions, must be a Buddhist, and he is the ultimate reference in administrative matters pertaining to the Buddhist Monastic Order”. There are many names of Thai King who had been as monks and they also had influenced to the Thai Buddhist leader and the development of Thai Buddhism, too.

1.6.3 Phra Dhammakosajam, Pro. Dr., **Regulations of Saṅgha Administration**. Ayutthaya: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalay University, 2552.<sup>12</sup>

This book focused on the Thai Saṅgha administration explained the new changes and the difference started from the Sukhothai Period until the present period of Ratanakosin. Based on the Saṅgha Act B.E.2505 and the Saṅgha Act (No.2) B.E. 2535, all the characteristics of Saṅgha Administration, such as: structure or organization system, duties, the relationship with the royal kingdom or government, etc...were analysed clearly. This book stated that: “In the Saṅgha Act (No.2) of B.E. 2535, the provisions of the Supreme Patriarch establishment and the authorities and the roles of the Saṅgha Supreme Council. In case, the rank of Supreme Patriarch has been vacant, the King shall very kindly establish Somdech Phrarajagana who is the most senior by Ecclesiastical honorific rank as the Supreme Patriarch. The term “Somdech Phrarajagana who is the most senior by Ecclesiastical honorific rank” stands for any of the highest dignitaries in the hierarchy of the Thai Saṅgha.

1.6.4 Nguyen Cao Thanh, **An outline of Buddhism in Viet Nam**. Ha Noi: the religious publishing house, 2008.<sup>13</sup>

There is a brief introduction about history of Vietnamese Buddhism which started from the early time of Buddhism in Vietnam to

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<sup>12</sup>Phra Dhammakosajam, Pro.Dr. **Regulations of Saṅgha Administration**. (Ayutthaya: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalay University, 2552), p. 71.

<sup>13</sup>Nguyen Cao Thanh, **An outline of Buddhism in Viet Nam**. (Ha Noi: the religious publishing house, 2008), pp. 197-198.



the present Buddhism through many historical changes. All the characteristics of the Saṅgha Administration were proved in the Vietnam Buddhism Congregation's Charter which had been established by several congregation of the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha. According to this book stated that: "At the central, there is the Saṅgha Council and the Executive council. The Saṅgha Council included venerable superiors of different Buddhist associations and denominations and sects in Vietnam" and "the Executive Council has a maximum of 147 members including venerable superiors, superior monks, the most virtuous monks, monks, nuns, and lay people who are recommended by the previous Standing committee of the Executive Council and nominated by the congress."

1.6.5 P.A. Payutto. **Thai Buddhism in The Buddhist World**. Bangkok, Chandrapen Publishing House, B.E.2555<sup>14</sup>.

This book mentioned about the development of Thai Buddhism within the development other's Buddhist countries around the world. There is a overview of several Thai Buddhist Saṅgha leaders in the present day which with thier impacts to not only Thai society even it effects to western society. The book also discribed about the present Buddhism in other countries, such as: Vietnam, Japan, Cambodia, Myanmar, China,etc,... The author also gave the real situation of Buddhism in present-day Thailand which has a connection with the government. "The Department of Religious Affairs has been established in the Ministry of Education to achieve close cooperation between the Order and the Government and to provide a channel through which the Saṅgha can communicate with the government authorities and through which the Sate can promote the well-being of the Saṅgha." On an other hand, the author also mentioned about the monastic life of Thai Buddhist monks in the present time.

## 1.7 Research Methodology

This research is a documentary research. It methodology can be divided into three ways as follows:

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<sup>14</sup>P.A. Payutto. **Thai Buddhism in The Buddhist World**. (Bangkok, Chandrapen Publishing House, B.E.2555.), p. 15.

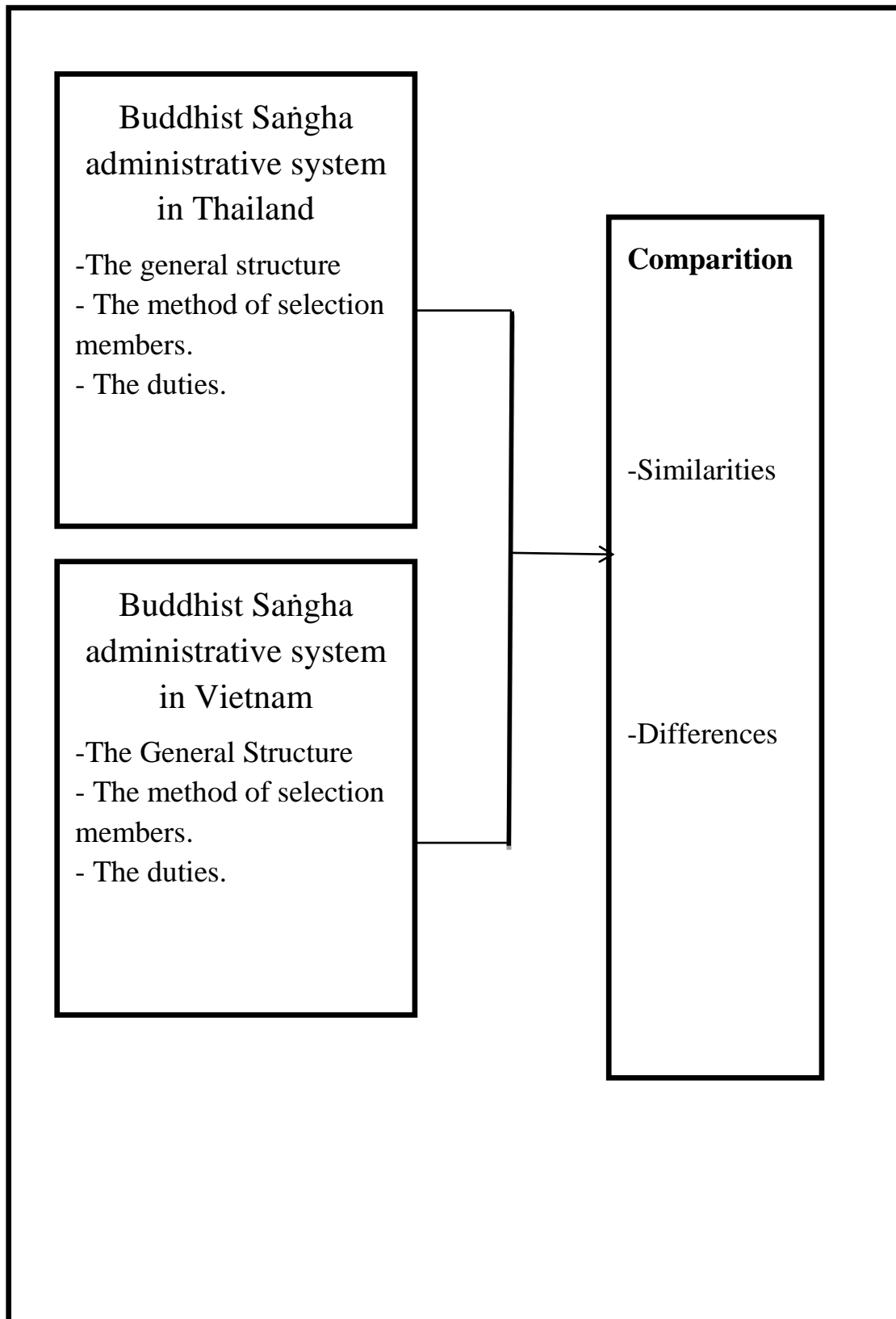
1.7.1 Collecting data from Primary sources by the both Mahāyāna and Theravāda Tipitaka, Buddhist historical book, the Saṅgha Act. On other hand, the data also from the secondary source of several congresses and conferences of both Vietnam and Thai Buddhist Saṅgha, textbook, research works, Buddhist congregations, newspapers, Buddhist journals and other Buddhist books and scripture.

1.7.2 Sytematizing the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Thai and Vietnam.

1.7.3 Conclusion about the differences and similarities of the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in both Vietnam and Thailand.

1.7.4 Suggestion about further studies.

## 1.8 Conceptual Framework



## **1.9 Advantages Expected to Obtain from the Research**

After doing the research, the following advantages and results may be obtained:

1.9.1 Obtaining knowledge about the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Thailand.

1.9.2 Obtaining knowledge about the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Vietnam.

1.9.3 Obtaining knowledge about the similarities and differences between the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system in Thailand and Vietnam.

## **Chapter II**

### **The Buddhist Saṅgha Administrative System in Thailand**

In this chapter, Thai Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system focuses on three main aspects: 1) the structure of Thai Saṅgha administration, 2) the methods of selecting the Thai Buddhist Saṅgha administration's members and 3) duties of Thai Buddhist Saṅgha administration's members.

#### **2.1 The Structure of Thai Buddhist Saṅgha Administration**

Thai Buddhism has developed for the long period of time which along with every establishment and development Thai nations since the first Thai kingdom of Dvaravati until now. However, the structure of Thai Thai Saṅgha administration can be divided into two main stages: Thai Saṅgha administration prior to Ratanakosin period and Thai Saṅgha administration during Ratanakosin period.

##### **2.1.1 Thai Saṅgha Administration Prior to Ratanakosin Period**

Before the establishment of the Ratanakosin period, there were three kingdoms which are related to the development of the Thai Buddhism. Therefore, Thai Saṅgha administration prior to Ratanakosin Period was again divided into three periods, which are: 1) Sukhothai period, 2) Ayutthaya period and 3) Thonburi period.

### a. In Sukhothai Period

The Sukhothai was the first independent Thai kingdom with the accession of Indrāditya in the throne of Sukhothai (1256 A.D.),<sup>15</sup> which also was the first turning point in the history of Theravada Buddhism in Thailand. Buddhist concepts more strongly applied using the Dhamma as the supreme code of honor for developing social order and a moral guide for government during the reign of the third King of Sukhothai—RamKhamhaeng the great. King RamKhamhaeng was known as the first great Buddhist King in Thailand who was the good example for the later Thai Buddhist kings in the way of applying Buddha's teachings and disciplines for regulating the country.

By the reputation of Lankāvaṃsa monastic orders, King Ramkhamheang invited the Elder Mahāsāmi from Nakhon Sri Thammarat to become the Saṅgharaja and to propagate the practice of this Buddhist tradition in Sukhothai Kingdom.<sup>16</sup> With the former tradition that had already appeared at the reign of king Indaradit and the later Lankāvaṃsa tradition, there were two schools of monasticism in the kingdom. Later on, according to oral tradition states that the older monastic-order gave up and joined together with the later Lankāvaṃsa tradition during the reign of king Ramkhamheang. Hence, Thai Buddhism at Sukhothai Kingdom was known with the famous development of Lankāvaṃsa tradition.<sup>17</sup>

King Ramkhamheang had made many convenient conditions for the development of Thai Buddhism by many meaningful activities from himself and the laity of Sukhothai. The King also gave the full patronization to upheld Theravada Buddhism in his Kingdom. Kings and Saṅgha negotiated the relative roles of spiritual and political leaderships. In return, rulers might demand administrative power over the Saṅgha and all the monastic approval of their rule. By this way, Sukhothai became

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<sup>15</sup>Kanai Lal Hazra, Thailand: **Political History and Buddhist Culture Influences Vol. 1**, (New Delhi: Decent Books, 2000), p. 15.

<sup>16</sup>Suthorn Na-Rangsi, Administration of Thai Sangha: Past, Present and Future, **The Chulalongkorn Journal of Buddhist Studies**. Vol. 1, No. 2 (2002): 59.

<sup>17</sup>David K. Wyatt, **Thailand A Short History, Second Edition**, (USA: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 43.

very powerful under his intelligent polity, whether political aspect or spiritual aspect.

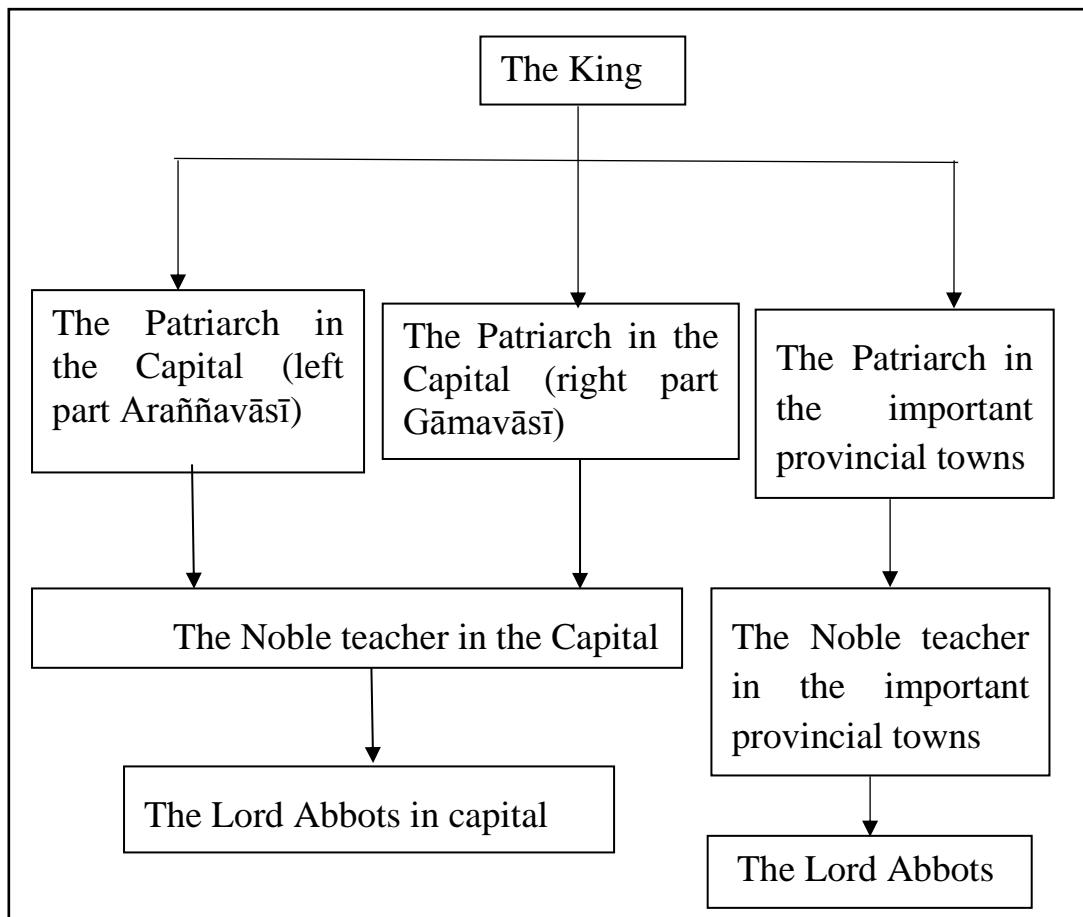
Sukhothai was also the first period of Thai Buddhism that the lineage of Saṅgharāja and the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system had been mentioned clearly. The Buddhist Saṅgha at Sukhothai was divided into two main groups: (1) the Gālavāsī and (2) Arañṇavāsī. “One was called the “city-dwellers” (Gālavāsī), which stressed the study of books and scriptures (Gantha Dhura). The other was called the “forest-dwellers” (Arañṇavāsī), which focused on meditation practices (Vipassanā Dhura)”.<sup>18</sup> Each group was headed by a senior monk who had been elected by the Council of the Elders but had been appointed by the King. All temples in the Kingdom, regardless of whether they were Gālavāsī or Arañṇavāsī, were also objective to the administration of the Supreme Patriarch (Saṅgharāja) appointed by the King.

Like what have mentioned above, the Monastic Order in Sukhothai period was divided into 2 sections: Gālavāsī as the right part and Arañṇavāsī as the left part in the structure of Saṅgha administration. The administrations of both parties were separated freely from each other, with the individual chief monk in the administration ruling and ordering with the power of his own high authority. Hence in Sukhothai period, Thai Saṅgha administration had two Supreme Patriarchs: The Patriarch of the Gālavāsī section and the Patriarch of the Arañṇavāsī section. For the regional Saṅgha administration, each provincial was appointed by the King that ruled and ordered the monks who were under his administrative authority as the noble teacher (Phragru) and Lord Abbot of the monasteries.

Thai Saṅgha administrative system in Sukhothai period may be described as the follows chart:

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<sup>18</sup> Ame Kislenko, **Culture and Customs of Thailand**, (London: Green Wood Publishing Group, 2004), p. 28. The names derived from where monks of both camps went to pursue their focus: Gālavāsī to urban centers with access to libraries and other collections, and Arañṇavāsī to seclusion in rural areas where they could meditate without distraction.



**Table 1: The Saṅgha Administration in Sukhothai Period**

### **b. In Ayutthaya Period**

“In 1350 (B.E 1893) another Thai Kingdom called Sri Ayutthaya was founded in central Thailand by King Uthong of the Chiengrai dynasty”.<sup>19</sup> By the middle of the fourteenth century, Ayutthaya was established as the second ancient kingdom of Thai at the central mainland of Southeast Asia. Ayutthaya quickly became powerful, politically and economically, little by little Ayutthaya had been one of the great port cities of Asia and a holy city in Southeast Asia. Under the royal patronage Buddhism flourished and Ayutthaya became an important

<sup>19</sup>P.A. Payutto, **Op.cit.**, p. 27.



Buddhist center. Ayutthaya inherited Buddhism of Sinhalese School from Sukhothai.

*Like whatever had happened in Kingdom of Sukhothai, most of the kings in the period of Ayutthaya also contributed by many aspects to develop their state religion of Buddhism. It was started from the reign of King Boromoraja I, was an important period in the history of kingdom of Ayutthaya which became the famous center of Siam both from the political as well as from the religious point of view. There are many others king who ascended the throne of Ayutthaya, and they are also kept doing many things like the previous reigns for the purpose of propagating Buddhist teachings in at Ayutthaya region. This period of Ayutthaya's history is marked with continuous warfare between the Siamese kings and the Cambodian rulers. Such a political situation in Ayutthaya evidently did not give the rulers an opportunity to work for the progress of the religion. Practically they were not free to work for the religion. Therefore, we do not hear much about the progress of Buddhism during this period. But from the religious history of the country it is quite clear that the rulers were followers of Buddhism.<sup>20</sup>*

There was a good administration in the Saṅgha and the Saṅgharāja (Supreme Patriarch) was its head, the monks followed the rules of the Buddhist discipline faithfully. At the end of the study of the whole Tipiṭaka they used to get the title of Traipitaka. In the earlier period of Ayutthaya, Araññavāsī Section which was the successive tradition from Lanka-vamsa monks was more prosperous than Gālavāsī Section which was the successive tradition from Old Sectarian Saṅgha of Sukhothai. It was obvious that the number of monks in Gālavāsī Section decreased surprisingly. In 1422 A.D. a group of monks of this section from Chaingmai and Cambodia lead a lot of monks to Lanka and got new

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<sup>20</sup>Kanai Lal Hzra, **History of Theravada Buddhism in South-East Asia, Op.cit.**, p. 154.

ordination and were adapted to be in Singhala Nikāya by the great monk named Ven. Wanaratana who was the spiritual teacher in 1424 A.D. Then, they studied the doctrines and the disciplines in Lanka for several years. When they came back to Ayutthaya, they invited to Lankan senior monks named Ven. Mahavikramabahu and Ven. Utamapanya to come together and propagated the Buddha's teaching in Thailand. After arriving in Ayutthaya, they separated to spread the Buddha's teaching until there were a lot of people who believed and had the faith in Buddhism, came to beg for the ordination and became monks. Finally, those monks separated themselves to set up a new Saṅgha named "Pakeaw Monastery Section" and because the spiritual teacher, the Lanka monk of this section was named "Wanaratana", which means "the glass forest".<sup>21</sup> The different monasteries where those monks lived usually got the names ending in "Ganapakeaw" such as Wat Trai Bhum Ganapakeaw (Traibhumi Monastery) and Wat Khian Ganapakeaw (Khian Monastery). In conclusion, the Thai Saṅgha administration in Ayutthaya period was classified into 3 sections, namely:

1) Left Gāmvāsī Section: means the Saṅgha of old Nikāya existing since the establishment of SukhoThai.

2) Araññavāsī Section which means the section to be of successive tradition, Lankavangse in SukhoThai of which period.

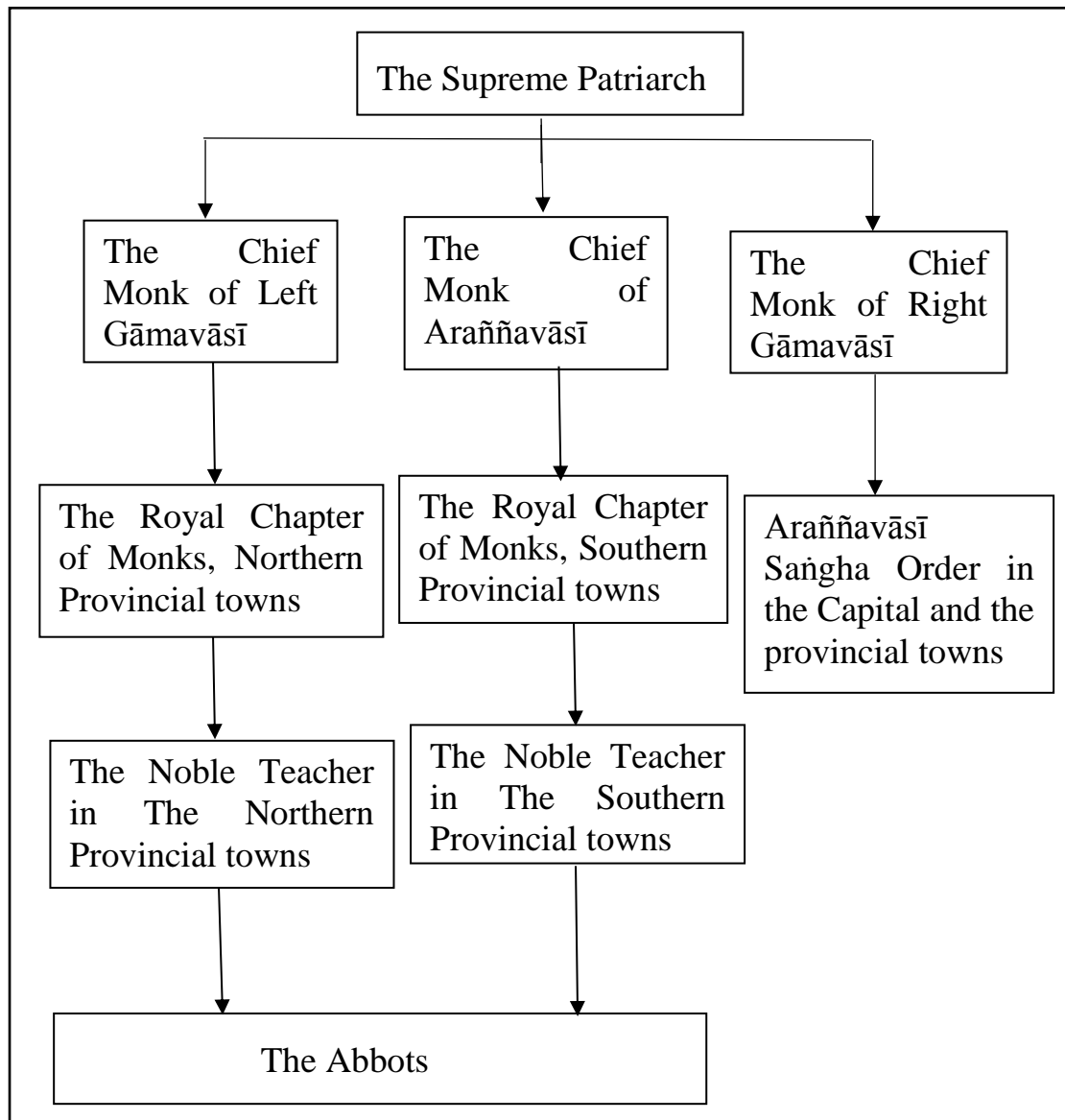
3) Right Gāmvāsī Section which means the Saṅgha of old Nikāya adapted in Lanka in Ayutthaya Period and then came back to set up a new section known as "Ganapakeaw" by the common people".<sup>22</sup>

Thai Saṅgha administrative system in Ayutthaya period may be described as the follows chart:

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<sup>21</sup>Promsuk Jerm Savatdi, **Thai Art With Indian Influences**, (Bhiha: The University of Magadh, 1977), pp. 35-36.

<sup>22</sup>Prof. Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, **Op.cit.**, p. 13.



**Table 2: Thai Saṅgha administrative system in Ayutthaya Period<sup>23</sup>**

Thai Saṅgha administration in Ayutthaya period was built based on the former Saṅgha administrative system that had been created in Sukhothai period. In this system, start from the provincial Saṅgha to each monastery, it is really the same structure which the Sukhothai Kingdom. There were three superior monk leaders: a chief monk of Left Gāravāsī sect, a chief monk of Right Gāravāsī sect, a chief monk of Arañṇavāsī

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., p. 17.

sect. They all were the Saṅgha leader who directly governed and ordered monks of their own section. Here, under the reign of various Ayutthaya's King, a difference in the Saṅgha administration was the Chief Superintendent and the Supreme Patriarch on the position of the Ecclesiastical President of Saṅgha over the Kingdom, who would have his own power to govern all the member of Thai Saṅgha. There was a new section that had been create as "Pakeaw Monastery section" which had an important role in the development of Buddhism at that time.

### **c. Thonburi Period**

In 1767 A.D., after dominating Southeast Asia for almost 400 years, the Kingdom of Ayutthaya was destroyed. The destruction of Ayutthaya kingdom was a devastating effect on Buddhism and it caused Thai Buddhism to become less prosperous. Phraya Taksin was a Chinese descent who came to Ayutthaya in order to help defend the capital for liberation against Burma and restored Thai freedom. In 1768 A.D., he was crowned king.<sup>24</sup> After getting freedom for war, King Taksin paid a great deal of attention to politics, administration, economy, and the welfare of the country. He also tried to restore and rebuild Thai Buddhism from the war. Apart from restoring and renovating temples, the king attempted to revive literature, and various branches of the arts such as drama, painting, architecture and handicrafts. He also issued regulations for the collection and arrangement of various texts to promote education and religious studies.

Before Thonburi, Thai Buddhism was lack of support, had suffered the most during the years of the war. Most of the temples and the Buddha statues at that time were destroyed by war and there were a lot of difficulties of living as an ascetic. In the early of establishment of the Kingdom of Thonburi, Thai Buddhism was very weak and still having many troubles among the Saṅgha. In the Kingdom, there are a group of monk who organized themselves in army style in the Northern capital of Pitsanulok. They led their lives as if they were laymen, they did not

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<sup>24</sup>Kanai Lal Hazra, Thailand: **Political History and Buddhist Culture Influences Vol. 1, Op.cit.**, pp. 45-46.

observe any Vinaya. For the Southern of kingdom, there were another group of dissidents led by the ruler of Nakhon Sithammarat. The most serious requirement for the Saṅgha leader was unifying the Saṅgha and develop the Buddhist Saṅgha in a systematic way. Later on, Thai Buddhism was rebuilt by the help of King Taksin and the unify of the great orders around the kingdom.<sup>25</sup>

*In 1769 A.D, Taksin invited a monk from Nakhon Si Thammarat to be the Supreme Patriarch in the new capital at Thonburi. At the same time, he transported an edition of the Tipiṭaka from Nakhon to Bangkok where it was copied and gilded before being returned to south.*<sup>26</sup>

The structure of the Thai Saṅgha administration in Thonburi kingdom was organized under the same traditions of the Ayutthaya period. Hence, there was also a position of Saṅgharāja who the supreme chief monk of the Thai Buddhist community at that time. The three positions of a chief monk of Left Gāmvāsī sect, a chief monk of Right Gāmvāsī sect, a chief monk of Araññavāsīsect were still remained under the most important position of Saṅgharāja in the structure of administration. The abbots of different monasteries were the lowest position in the structure who were ruled and directed the Saṅgha's works by the noble teachers in the provincial towns.

For thousands years started from the first ancient Thai kingdom of Sukhothai to Thonburi, Thai Saṅgha administration was developed and little by little it became a completed and solid structure which ruled start from the important positions to particular abbot of the monasteries.

### **2.1.2 Thai Saṅgha Administration during Ratanakosin Period**

Because of the political change from the 5<sup>th</sup> reign and it is also based on the similarities and differences between each reign of

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<sup>25</sup>Rev. Ratan Jyoti Barua, **A Comparative Study of Saṅgha Administration in Thailand and Bangladesh**, (M. A Thesis: Mahachulalongkronrajavidyalaya University, Bangkok. 2012), p. 28.

<sup>26</sup>Craig James Reynold, **The Buddhist Monkhood in Nineteenth Century Thailand**, (A Ph. D Thesis, Cornell University, Sydney. 1972), p. 34.

Ratanakosin period, and the enactment of several Saṅgha Acts, the structure of Thai Saṅgha Administration in Ratanakosin Period is divided into such periods as: 1) from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> reign, 2) the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>nd</sup> reign, 3) from 5<sup>th</sup> reign to 8<sup>th</sup> reign, and 4) the 9<sup>th</sup> reign.

### **a. From The 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> Reign of Ratanakosin Period**

The event of moving the old capital city from the western bank to the eastern bank of the Chao Phraya river under the reign of Chakri dynasty was a large change in the history of Thailand. King Rama I<sup>27</sup> was a great person who decided to move his own capital city (Thonburi) to other new city which was named Bangkok.<sup>28</sup>

After his crown in the year of 1782 A.D, King Rama I had done many changes for the development of the country as well as for Thai Buddhism. The period of time which start from 1767 to 1782 A. D. was the period turbulent period in the story of Thai Buddhism with many hardships to the Saṅgha. Even during the Rama I's reign the change in pattern of government was slow, but the King decided to build his own country as a Buddhist country. An other hand, as the main root of building a Buddhist country, King Rama I forced himself had to be a good Buddhist follower and an example of the concept of emphasizing "Dhamma Raja" heavier than "Deva Raja" kingship.<sup>29</sup>

Rama I was well known great Buddhist King not only from his own realization or from the tradition of being a Buddhist king likes other previous dynasty's Kings. His frame in Buddhism started from his contributions in the development of Thai Buddhism which had reported and noted in many historical books, and even the stone inscriptions in many places in Thailand. Like other famous kings in the past time, by knowing that the Buddhist doctrine which may apply to help him in the task of creating a peaceful and developed country, King Rama I had paid

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<sup>27</sup>Davit K. Wyatt, **Op.cit.**, p. 128. The full title of King Rama I was Phra Phuttayotfa Chulalok.

<sup>28</sup>Kanai Lal Hazra, Thailand: **Political History and Buddhist Culture Influences Vol. 1, Op.cit.**, p. 48.

<sup>29</sup>Rev. Ratan Jyoti Barua, **Op.cit.**, p. 30.

his all attention in rebuild and develop Buddhism together with develop his kingdom. King Rama I took a very important role in the development of Tipiṭaka Studies among the Saṅgha.

In addition, for the purpose of purifying and controlling the conduct of monks to strictly follow the doctrine and discipline, the King enacted a law involving monastic orders. There were ten copies of the Saṅgha law in the first reign and it didn't have an article, chapter or section likes the present Thai Buddhist law.<sup>30</sup>

His contributions in process of development of Buddhism at under the first reign also manifested by the change in Buddhist education. By his kindness as a good Buddhist follower who always worried about losing Buddhist teachings which had been contained in Pāli Canon, the second Buddhist council of Thailand was held in 1788 A.D. by the support of the King Rama I. The Tipiṭaka and commentaries were collected, revise and established.<sup>31</sup>

In the aspect of building the Saṅgha administration, the King followed the same structure of Saṅgha's administration which had been appeared in the previous dynasties. There was also a position of supreme Patriarch (Saṅgharāja) who manage and guide all the monks among the kingdom. There were two famous Saṅgharāja- Saṅgharāja Sri and Saṅgharāja Suk who were the Buddhist leaders in the second Thai Buddhist council (Saṅghayāna).<sup>32</sup>

After death of Rama I in 1809 A.D. his son - King Rama II<sup>33</sup> also followed his father to develop Thai nation by applying Buddhist teachings and, on another hand, he also had done many contributions to continue keep Buddhism as a state religion in Thai. He introduced new methods of study and standardized examinations which are still in use with some modifications.<sup>34</sup> *Thus it was during this time that the course for studying Buddhism in Pāli language was divided into nine grades as*

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<sup>30</sup>Prof. Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, **Op.cit.**, p. 33.

<sup>31</sup>Rev. Ratan Jyoti Barua, **Op.cit.**, p. 34.

<sup>32</sup>**Ibid.**, pp. 34-35.

<sup>33</sup>Davit K. Wyatt, **Op.cit.**, p. 145. King Rama II was known with the full title as Phra Phutthaloetla Naphjalai.

<sup>34</sup>Craig James Reynold, **Op.cit.**, p. 56-57.

*such had once been done in Ayutthaya period*".<sup>35</sup> He had also established the close relationship between kingship and religion and with the patronization of the Saṅgha.

Hence, until the second reign of Ratanakosin, the structure of Thai Saṅgha administration was not much different from the Ayutthaya and Thonburi period. There was a chief monk who was appointed by the King for the position of Supreme Patriarch (Saṅgharāja), who will control all Thai Saṅgha activities and the monastic order's life. There were also three main section in the structure of the Saṅgha administration were known as: (1) Left Gāmvāsī section, (2) Right Gāmvāsī or Pakeaw Monastery section and (3) Pakeaw Monastery section. There are also three chief monks who will control and guide those three main sections. For the regional administration, all of the abbots in one province must follow the instruction and guiding from a provincial council which under the control of the noble teacher in provincial town.<sup>36</sup>

### **b. The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Reign of Ratanakosin Period**

Phra Nang Klao (Rama III), the third of the Chakri dynasty, succeeded his father (King Rama II) in B.E. 2367(1824). King Rama II also followed the all Thai tradition in building his dynasty by the same way of other previous Thai Kings. He acted as the protector of the Buddhist faith and the reformer of the Saṅgha.

In Buddhist education, for the purpose of propagating and practicing the Buddha's teachings, the King himself interrogated all the monks in his kingdom to examine their knowledge of Pāli language and Buddhist studies.

The King also established the council for translating Buddhist doctrine and commentaries from Pāli into Thai language.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Samsopheap Preap, **A comparative Study of Thai and Khmer Buddhism**, (A M. A Thesis: Mahachulalongkronrajavidyalaya University, Bangkok. 2005), p. 39.

<sup>36</sup>Suthorn Na-Rangsi, **Op.cit.**, p. 60.

<sup>37</sup>Samsopheap Preap, **Op.cit.**, p. 40.



With the birth of a new section which was named Dhammayuttika group of Bhikkhu, made many differences in the aspect of Buddhist study and practice from other dynasties. According to the explanation of the meaning of current two main sections in Thai Buddhism, the most Ven. Phra Dhammakosajarn described about the name of Dhammayuttika group of monk as followings:

*Dhammayuttika-Nikāya separated itself from the old order, so the old monastic order was named “Mahānikāya” which is translated as “plural group”. For the Dhammayutika-Nikāya is translated as “to have faith in Doctrines”, the general people like calling the monks of this mission as “Phradhammayut.”<sup>38</sup>*

The new school of Thai Buddhism-Dhammayuttika Nikāya- was founded by Phra Vajiranana Bhikkhu<sup>39</sup> who later was recognized as the Rama IV.<sup>40</sup>

The establishment of Dhammayuttika Nikāya also not influenced in Thai Buddhist practicing, it alsomade a change in the structure of Saṅgha administration at that time. In the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reign of Ratanakosin, there were there main sections as: (1) Left Gāmvāsī section, (2) Right

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<sup>38</sup>Prof. Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, **Op.cit.**, p. 38.

<sup>39</sup>**Ibid.**, pp. 38-40. While living in Mahadhatu monastery, Phra Vajiranana passed the examination of Pali grade 5, and later he believed in Disciplinary strictness as taught by the venerable senior monk, named “Chai Buddhawango” (while the Phraracha-gana with the title of Phrasumethamuni at Bonwon-mongkon monastery). He desired to follow the Vinaya-Discipline strictly according the tradition of Mon monks, so he moved from Mahadhatu monastery to live in Wat Samaurai monastery (Wat Rajadhiwat). In 1829 A.D., he entered to have the re-ordination under Phrasumethmuni (Phra Sumedhamuni) as his spiritual teacher, at the same time – studying and practicing Doctrine and Discipline from under Phrasumethmuni (Phra Sumedhamuni). He would then, propagate the teachings of the Buddha, as well as follow the Doctrine and Discipline of Mon tradition very strictly. When more people had more faith in him, Phra Vajiranana proclaimed to set up the new Dhammayutika-nikaya by cnsidering the Assembly Hall boundary set up at Samaurai Monastery in 1833 A.D. as the establishment of Dhammayut party.

<sup>40</sup>George B. Bacon, **Intineraria Asiatica: Siam-The Land of the White Elephant, as it was and is**, (Bangkok: Orchid Press, 2000), p. 105. King Rama IV’s name was Phrabat Somdetch Phra Paramendra Maha Mongkut Phra Chau Klau Chau Yu Hud.

Gālavāsī Section, and (3) Araññavāsī Section. When the new section of Dhammayuttika Nikaya was established, the name of the “Left Gālavāsī” was changed as “North Section” and the “Right Gālavāsī” also was changed to the “South Section”. “Central section” which was established by unifying the royal and some private monasteries in the Bangkok Metropolis together, also was a new change in the structure of Thai Saṅgha administration under the reign of King Rama III.<sup>41</sup> Hence, because of those changing, Thai Buddhism was divided into four main sections with some got the new names with the un-changed one, are described as: (1) Northern Section, (2) Southern Section, (3) Central Section, and (4) Araññavāsī section.

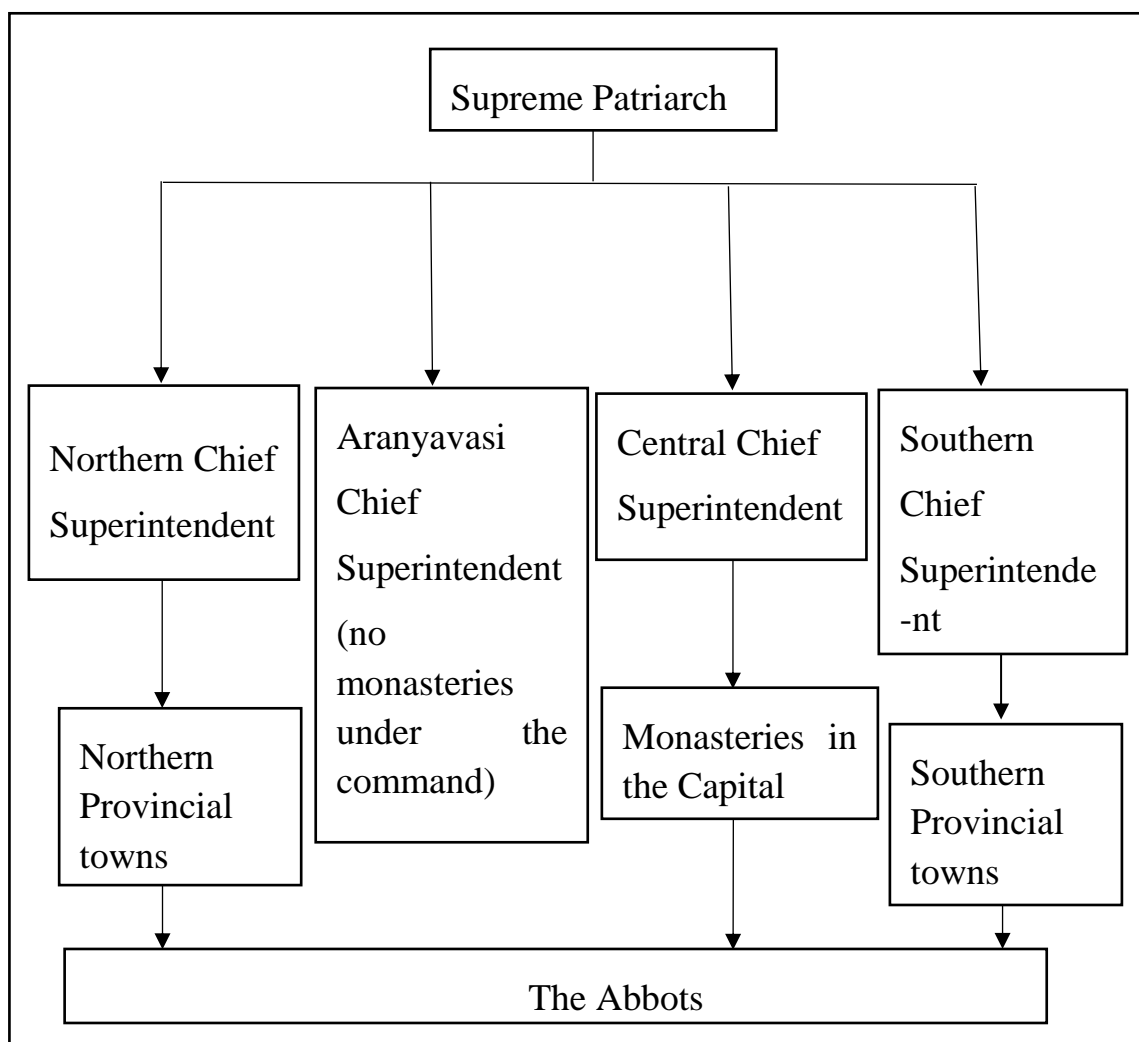
Other difference in the Saṅgha administration between the 3<sup>rd</sup> reign of Ratanakosin with the previous dynasties was the limitation and the cancel of Araññavāsī section. Therefore, for Araññavāsī section, there was left only the position of the Ecclesiastical Chief superintendent of this section, and there were not any monasteries under the command.

Until this period of time, the Saṅgha administrative somehow still similar to the previous structure, just appeared a new sect of Dhammayuttika-Nikāya. With the reason of dividing Thai Buddhist monastic community under the control of the Supreme Saṅgha Council. Therefore, Thai Buddhism was divided into 3 main regions or areas and they were controlled individually under the same regional section, likes the “south section” was in charge of the Saṅgha affairs in the southern provincial towns, and the rest are in the same way of task. The Dhammayuttika-Nikāya was just the new that created later than other sections and it was founded by the royal member (Phra Vajiranana or later on he was known as the King Rama IV), so it was under the rule of the Central Chief Superintendent.

Finally, based on those elements which have mentioned above, the Thai Saṅgha Administrative system somehow may like the following chart:

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<sup>41</sup>**Ibid.**, pp. 34-35.



**Table 3: Thai Saṅgha Administration in Ratanakosin Period Under the Reign of The 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Monarchs<sup>42</sup>**

After having passed almost 27 years as the third monarch of Chakri dynasty, King Rama III passed away in the year of 1851 A.D. Other's prince of the king Rama II, was his brother named prince Mongkut became the fourth monarch of Ratanakosin period. Prince Mongkut was known as venerable Phra Vajiranana Bhikkhu – the founder of Dhammayuttika Nikāya- who had spent 27 years to stay as a monkhood after his father (King Rama II) passed away in 1824 A.D.

<sup>42</sup>Prof. Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, **Op.cit.**, p. 36.

After disrobing for the purpose of becoming the next king of Chakri dynasty, prince Mongkut sat on throne as the 4<sup>th</sup> king named Rama IV.<sup>43</sup>

During his 27 years of monkhood, the king Rama IV had forced himself to study the Buddhist doctrine and emphasized the Buddhist Vinaya Pitaka which somehow followed the Mon tradition with the Pāli as the medium language. Furthermore, with the thought as a senior monk who had lived for a long period of time in the monastery, King Mongkut had done many convenient condition for the development of Buddhist education which concentrated on the original texts of Pāli language.<sup>44</sup>

Even the king Mongkut was the founder of the Dhammayuttika-Nikāya, but this new sect of Thai Buddhism was still under control of the Central section. In this reign of king Rama IV, Dhammayuttika-Nikāya still didn't separate from the central section to become a main section in the structure of Thai Saṅgha administrative system. The structure of the previous Saṅgha administration under the reign of King Rama III still remained to apply in this reign of Ratanakosin period.

*During the reign of King Rama III the royal and ordination Wats were reunited into the central Gana under the responsibility of Grom Muan Nucitchinorosa, the Saṅgha-Director General at Wat Phra Chetupon. He was then promoted to the rank of Grom Somdej Phra Paramanuchichinorosa in the reign of King Mongkut (King Rama IV). During this time, King Mongkut had appointed four chao Gana Yais (Main), one for each North, South, Central and Araññavāsī Ganas. There also happened to be the Dhammayuttika-Nikāya, (those who adhere to Dhamma) under the Central Gana.<sup>45</sup>*

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<sup>43</sup>D.C. Ahir, **The Great Buddhist Kings of Asia**, (Delhi: Buddhist World Press, 2011), pp. 58-59.

<sup>44</sup>Karuna Kusalasaya, **Op.cit.**, p. 25.

<sup>45</sup>Rev. Ratan Jyoti Barua, **Op.cit.**, p. 45.

### c. From 5<sup>th</sup> Reign to 8<sup>th</sup> Reign of Ratanakosin Period

King Rama IV passed away in the year of 1868 A.D., his son – prince Chulalongkorn succeeded him and continued the Ratanakosin with the fifth generation of monarch. King Rama V was well known king of the modernization of the country. He sat on throne for the long period of 42 years, his contributions in the task of modernization of Thailand was mentioned in many aspect of the development of his Kingdom from the social welfare, administration, economic, education, even in religion and tradition, etc.<sup>46</sup>

Following the long period of Thai tradition which it was built totally based on the Buddhist morality and Buddhist teachings, king Rama V also recognized himself as the Buddhist king likes other monarchs. Therefore, he had paid almost his intention for the purpose of development of Buddhism with the first step of promotion and purification the Buddhist Saṅgha. Hence, to gain those aim, the King decided to revise the Tipiṭaka and translate Pāli canon into Thai language and later they were published as books in order to propagate Buddha's teaching to everyone. "The King wanted the Chief Abbot of Wat Mahādhātu to take responsibility and task to enlarge and promote the Tri-pitaka Study and higher education not only to the monks and novices, but to the laity as well."<sup>47</sup>

The third Thai Buddhist Council was held under his reign in 1878 A.D. (B.E. 2431), where the Thai alphabet was used in making copies of the Tipiṭaka.<sup>48</sup>

Under this reign, education reforms began to bring modern education to the people. All Buddhists temples were tasked to become schools and monks were encouraged to become teachers for Thai

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<sup>46</sup>Somboon Suksamran, **Buddhism and Political Legitimacy**, (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University, 1993), pp. 51-52.

<sup>47</sup>**Working As One Buddhist Unity and Cooperation, Papers Presented on Theravada Buddhism**, (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkronrajavidyalaya University, 2004), p. 118.

<sup>48</sup>P.A. Payutto, **Op.cit.**, p. 28.

children. Therefore, monk and people began to receive greater education, benefiting the nation as a whole.<sup>49</sup>

In addition, he also paid his attempt in the Buddhist education with the establishment of the two Buddhist universities which still continued provide the education for both monk and lay not only for Thai people, but it is also for foreigners. The famous Thai Buddhist universities are known as: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University<sup>50</sup> and Mahamakut Buddhist University.<sup>51</sup>

Furthermore, the King also followed Thai tradition with the temporarily ordination in 1874 A.D. Under his long reign (1868-1910 A.D.), there were a great reform of the Saṅgha in order to unify the Saṅgha organization and to systematize its administration. Another new big change in this reign was the establishment of a Department of Religious Affairs on April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1889 A.D. under the auspices of the new Minister of education.<sup>52</sup> That are the reasons why there were a lot of changes in the management of the Saṅgha in the 5<sup>th</sup> reign.

*The Saṅgha administration reformation in the reign of Bangkok produced the Act of Saṅgha Administration Ratanakosin Era 121 (B.E. 2445). This is regarded as the first time in the history of Thai Saṅgha administration to have laws to systematically organize Saṅgha administration.*<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, **Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, A Buddhist University of the Thai Saṅgha, Thailand**, (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2007), p. 2.

<sup>50</sup>*Ibid.*, p 3. Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, was established by King Chulalongkorn, Rama V the Great, in B.E 2430 (C.E 1887) for the higher education of Buddhist monks, novices and laypeople, emphasizing Buddhist Studies.

<sup>51</sup>Mahamakut Buddhist University, **A Brief History of Mahamakut Buddhist University (MBU)**, (Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University, 2005), p. 37. Mahamakut Buddhist University (MBU) was founded by King Rama V (King Chulalongkorn) in commemoration of his Royal Father King Rama IV (King Mongkut) on 1 October 1893 (B.E. 2436), as an ecclesiastical academy for Buddhist monks and novices to study Dhamma (Lord Buddha's Teachings) and Pali language.

<sup>52</sup>Somboon Suksamran, **Op.cit.**, p. 51.

<sup>53</sup>Prof. Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, **Op.cit.**, p. 47.

According to the Act of Saṅgha Administration Ratanakosin Era 121, the Saṅgha administrative system was divided into two main sections which can be described as bellows:

*The Central Saṅgha Administration: this section was the administration and inspection of Saṅgha Affair all over the kingdom under the power and duty of the king and the Saṅgha Supreme Council according to 4 providing the 4 ranks of Chief Superintendent; i.e. the Chief Superintendent of North, South, Central. And the Chief Superintendents of Dhammayuttikaya-Nikāya – along with the 4 monks second to them, all of them were 8 as being in the Saṅgha Supreme Council.<sup>54</sup>*

Until this period of Chakri kingdom, Thai Saṅgha administration kept the three main section of North, South and Central, but the Araññavāsī section was replaced by the new section of Dhammayuttikaya-Nikāya section which before was under the control of Central section. Since this reign, the Dhammayuttika-Nikāya became a large section with the older three sections made four branches in the structure of Thai Saṅgha administration.

Another section was the Regional Saṅgha Administration was described as followings:

*In the Regional Saṅgha Administration, one important aspect of the Saṅgha Administration Act of the Ratanakosin Era 121 was the first regulation management of the Regional Saṅgha Administration; that is to say, Saṅgha Administration was divided into the Order-Monthons.<sup>55</sup>*

For the provincial administration, there were sub-lower stage of the structure which under the control of the Chief of the provincial council.

Before 1889 A. D., the provincial Saṅgha as well as the civil administration were divided into clusters of five or six provinces

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<sup>54</sup>**Ibid.**, p. 49.

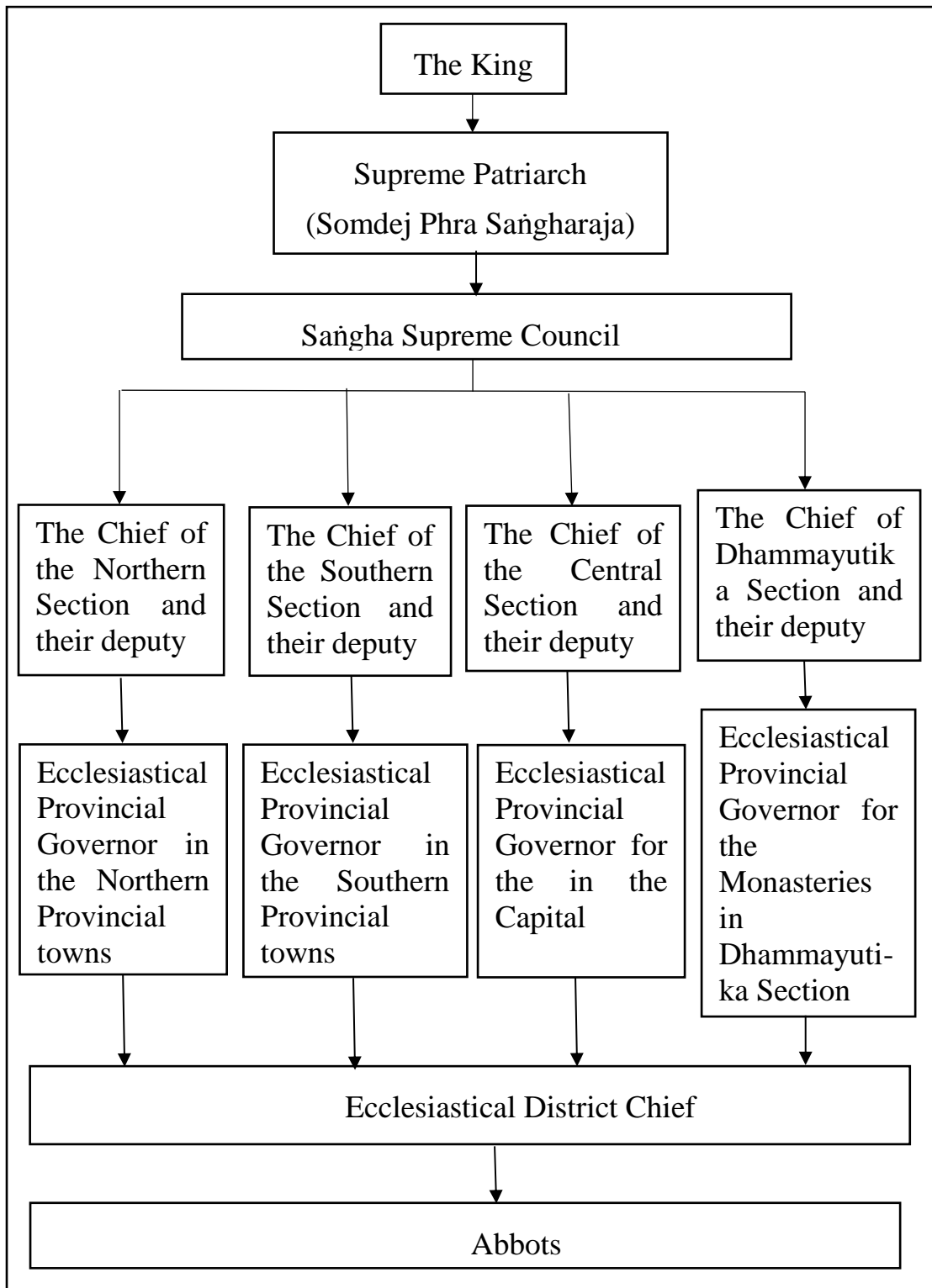
<sup>55</sup>**Ibid.**, pp. 50-51.

(monthon), subdivided into districts (amphoe), sub-districts (tambon), and communities (ban).<sup>56</sup>After the Act of Saṅgha Administration issued since the year of 1902 A.D., the provincial Order council followed as the same structure which had been created before that, but the ecclesiastical district chief directly ruled over abbots of the local monasteries. Based on all the describe about the Saṅgha Act of B.E 2445, the structure of Thai Saṅgha Administration at this reign could be arranged as the following chart:

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<sup>56</sup>Somboon Suksamran, **Op.cit.**, p. 27.





**Table 4: Thai Saṅgha Administration during the Fifth reign of Ratanakosin period.**

King Rama V died in 1910 A.D. and was succeeded by his son, King Wachirawut (Rama VI) who ruled the kingdom between 1910 A.D. and 1925 A.D. He developed a sense of nationhood composed of Nation (Jāti), Religion (Sāsana), and Monarchy (Phra Mahakasat). These three symbolic components constituted the pillars of the Thai nation; each depended on the other and had to be preserved if the Thai nation was to survive and progress.<sup>57</sup>

The King Rama VI also followed his father's way of entering in the monkhood and spent four months in 1917 A.D. and then after he left the monkhood, he still continued support the Saṅgha activities.<sup>58</sup> The King encouraged all the people to study the Dhamma, he paid attempt in development of National education system as well as Buddhist education system which had created by the late King Rama V.

For the Saṅgha administration, under this reign, Thailand still applied the previous Saṅgha Act of 1902 A.D. to manage the Saṅgha monasteries and Buddhist Orders. Therefore, there was no much change in the Saṅgha administrative system or the Saṅgha at this period have the same structure of the reign of King Rama V.

King Rama VI passed away in 1925 A.D. and his brother - King Prajadhipok continued the Chakri Dynasty with the seventh reign within 7 years long from 1925 A.D. to 1932 A.D. The new king also perpetuated the traditional legitimizing function of a Buddhist. The structure of Thai Saṅgha Administrative until this reign also arranged like what happened in the reign of Rama VI.

*In the 7th reign and in the earlier period of the 8th reign, the Saṅgha Administration followed this form – the Supreme Patriarch ordered the Saṅgha, alone by himself, and the Saṅgha Supreme Council had to function as the consultative committee until the Monastic Order Act of B.E. 2484.<sup>59</sup>*

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<sup>57</sup>Samsopheap Preap, **Op.cit.**, p. 45.

<sup>58</sup>Ruth-Inge Heinez, **The Role of TheSaṅgha in Modern Thailand**, (Taipei: The Chinese Association For Folklore, 1977), p. 31.

<sup>59</sup>Prof. Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, **Op.cit.**, p. 54.

Hence, the Thai Saṅgha in this reign of Ratanakosin also started with the Central Saṅgha Administration section was combined by the position of Supreme Patriarch and the Orders who were the members of the Supreme Saṅgha Council. The Regional Saṅgha administration was also similar with the previous structure which were residency by the Ecclesiastical Provincial Governor and the rest (lower positions) were the same.

His Majesty, King Anada Mahidol, who succeeded by the Rama VII, sat on the throne as the 8<sup>th</sup> King (Rama VIII) of Ratanakosin period in B.E. (1934. A.D.), and his reign also regraded as beginning for the public administrations started to change from absolute monarchy towards a system of democratic administration became more popular.

*On June 24, 1932, a group of western-educated military and civilian bureaucrats overthrew the absolute monarchy and replaced it with a constitutional monarchy. Political power changed hands from the king to the bureaucratic elites. The political arena shifted from the king's court to the military bureaucracy. King Prajadhipok (Rama VII) abdicated in March 1935. The new king was HRH Prince Ananda Mahidol, the 10 years old son of HRH Prince Mahidol of Songkhla, one of Chulalongkorn's son. In the beginning, the bureaucratic elites were powerful because the young king spent most his time studying in Switzerland.<sup>60</sup>*

The change of government systems made the management of the Saṅgha also changed, and the administrative system of Thai Saṅgha was during this time altered in compliance with that the state, so that there were influences of the Ecclesiastical minister and prime minister in the Saṅgha administration.

The result of the change of the civil government was the creation of the new Saṅgha Act in the year of 1941 A.D., which was under the

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<sup>60</sup>Evan M. Berman, **Public Administration in Southeast Asia: Thailand, Philippines, Malaysia, Hongkong, and Macao**, (USA: CRC Press Taylor and Fancis Group 2011), p. 35.

advice and consent of the Assembly of People Representative and received the royal seal and was promulgated later in order to replace the Act of Saṅgha Administration Ratanakosin Era 121.<sup>61</sup> The new idea was the government issued the Act of the Saṅgha publicly and the Saṅgha had to be proved and agreed upon by both the Saṅgha and the Assembly of People Presentative. Furthermore, we can say that the new Saṅgha Act followed to the mode of state government, within limits that not to be in contradiction to the Dhamma and Vinaya.

*This Saṅgha Act has been endorsed by the Saṅgha and has passed smoothly through Parliament. The importance of the Saṅgha following the nation's system of government as far as could be done without infringing on the Vinaya.*<sup>62</sup>

The limits in the Saṅgha administration under this reign is described as follows:

*Under the Act of B.E 2448, the organization of the Saṅgha was patterned after the parliamentary government adopted by the State. The Supreme Patriarch had very limited power. In accordance with the doctrine of the separation and the balance of power through the three organs of the Saṅgha, namely, the Saṅgha Sabha as the Legislature, the Gana Saṅghamontri as the Executive, and the Gana Vinayadhara as the Judiciary. The Gana Saṅghamontri, or the Council of Ecclesiastical Minsters, consisted of ten members headed by the Saṅgha Nayaka or the Ecclesiastical Prime Minister. Under the Saṅgha Nayaka were the four ecclesiastical ministers (Saṅghamontri) who directed all affairs of the Saṅgha through the four Board or Ministries, namely, the Board of Administration, the Board*

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<sup>61</sup>Here, Ratanakosin Era 121 means numbers of year (121 years) that was counted start from the establishment of Rantakosin period until the year of each reign.

<sup>62</sup>Chamluang Wuttichan, **“The Saṅgha Administration in Thailand”** **Buddhism in Northern Thailand**, (Chiangmai: The World Fellowship of Buddhists, 1980), p. 5.

*of Education, the Board of Propagation and the Board of Public Works.*<sup>63</sup>

According to the content of the Saṅgha Act B.E. 2484 (from Article 28- Article 37), the structure of the Saṅgha Administrative system was divided into three main section which are under the rank of the Saṅgharāja. The first section was Ecclesiastic Assembly (Gana SaṅghaSabha) was composed of not over 45 members, the second section was the Ecclesiastical Cabinet (Gana SaṅghaMontri) consisted of Ecclesiastical Prime Minister and other Ecclesiastical Ministers of not more than 9 monks, this section had 10 members in totally. There were our departments that under the control of the second section of Ecclesiastical Cabinet, four such department were:

- (1). Department of Administration.
- (2). Department of Education.
- (3). Department of Ecclesiastical Propagation.
- (4). Department of Ecclesiastical Public Affairs.<sup>64</sup>

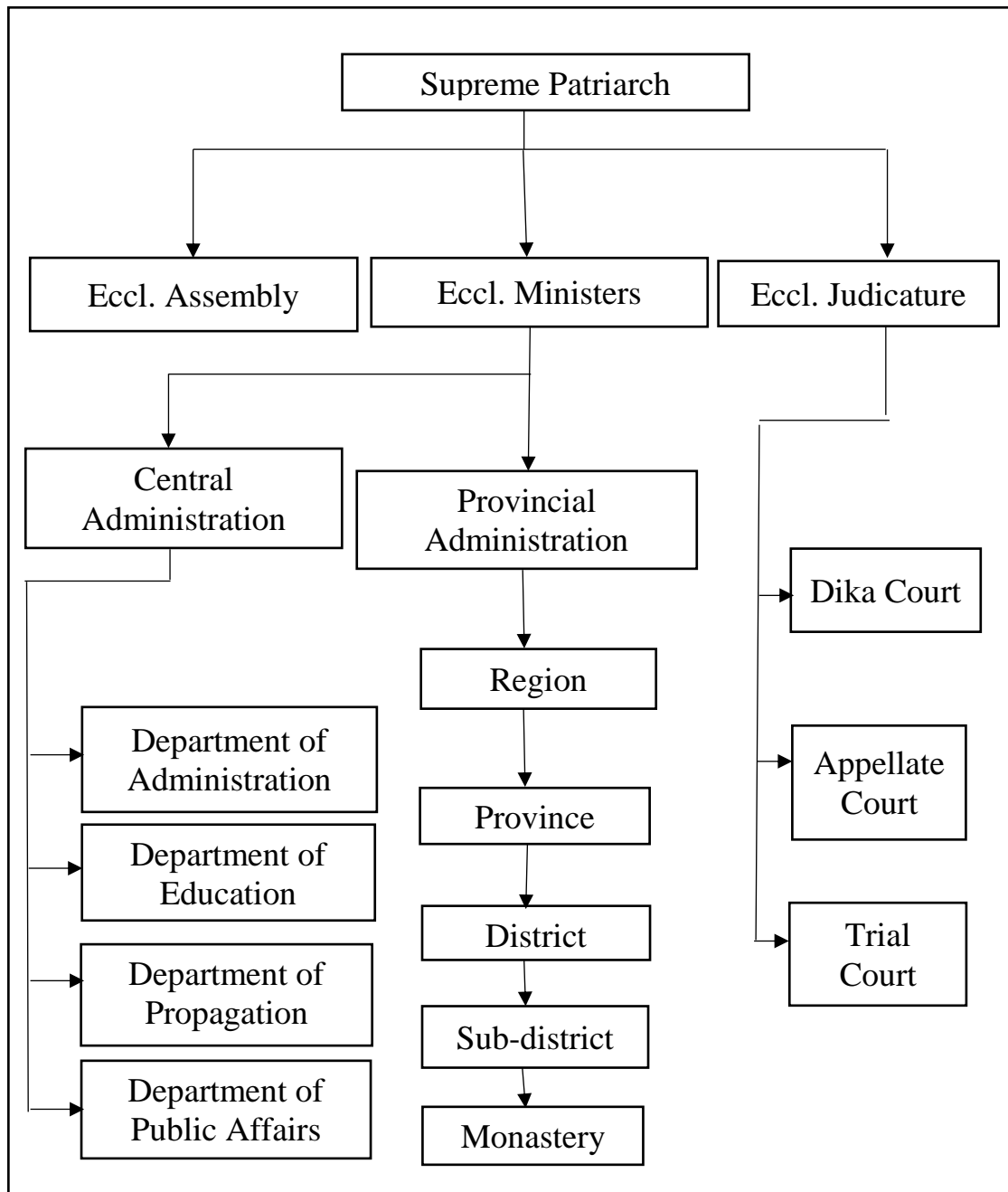
The last section was Ecclesiastical Judicature (Gana Vinayadhara) which was divided into three sub-Court: The Trial Court, the Appellate Court and the Dika Court. In this reign, the second section - Ecclesiastical Cabinet took the responsibilities for the provincial Saṅgha administration. In addition, the provincial administration also somehow was arranged as same as the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> reign of Chakri dynasty. In this reign the provincial administration was started with the rank of region and follow by the rest of province, district, sub-district and end the structure of the individual monastery organization.

The structure of Thai Saṅgha administration at this period can be described as the followings:

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<sup>63</sup>P.A. Payutto, **Op.cit.**, pp. 29-30.

<sup>64</sup>Mahamakuta Educational Council, **Acts on the Administration of the Buddhist Order of Sangha of Thailand-B.E. 2445, B.E. 2484, B.E. 2505**, (Thailand: Mahamakuta Buddhist University, 1989), pp. 26-28.



**Table 5: Thai Saṅgha administration in the 8<sup>th</sup> reign of Ratanakosin.<sup>65</sup>**

<sup>65</sup>Prof. Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, *Op.cit.*, p. 61.

#### **d. The 9<sup>th</sup> Reign of Ratanakosin Period**

His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej Succeeded his older brother King Ananda Mahidol to the throne on June 9, 1946, as the ninth ruler of the Chakri dynasty. He was known as the famous king who had done many great contributions for the development of both country and Theravada Buddhism in Thailand. Under his reign, Buddhist education was encouraged to develop for not only Thai nationality monks, it was developed to propagate over the world with the contributions of two famous Thai Buddhist Universities as: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya university and Mahamakut Buddhist University.

King Rama IX temporarily renounced the throne for the purpose of ordination as a monk in 1956 A.D., which was the great tradition of Thai royal Kingdom for the long period of time. After the short time as monkhood, King Rama IX applied the teachings of the Buddha to control the country and bring the happiness to everyone.

##### **1) The Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2505 (1962 A.D.)**

The Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2484 remained for 21 years, until the government enacted the Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2505 (1962 A.D.). According to this Saṅgha Act (from Article 7- Article 19), the Supreme Patriarch (Somdej Phra Saṅgharāja) who was appointed by the King himself, also was a head of all Orders in the Kingdom. The Patriarch was “ex-officio” President of the Council of the Elders (Mahātherasamakom). There were also eight members with the title of Phraraja Gana with on position of the Saṅgharāja in the Supreme Council. In addition, the Director – General of the Department of Religious Affairs was “ex-officio” Secretary-General of the Supreme and the office of this Department would be the office of the Supreme Council.<sup>66</sup>

Form the Article 20 to the Article 23, those 4 Articles contains about the structure of the Regional Saṅgha Administration and Provincial Saṅgha Administration. The Regional Saṅgha Administration in this reign also similar to the previous reign with sub ranks as: Regional Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Pak), Provincial Ecclesiastical

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<sup>66</sup>Mahamakuta Educational Council, **Op.cit.**, pp. 37-40.

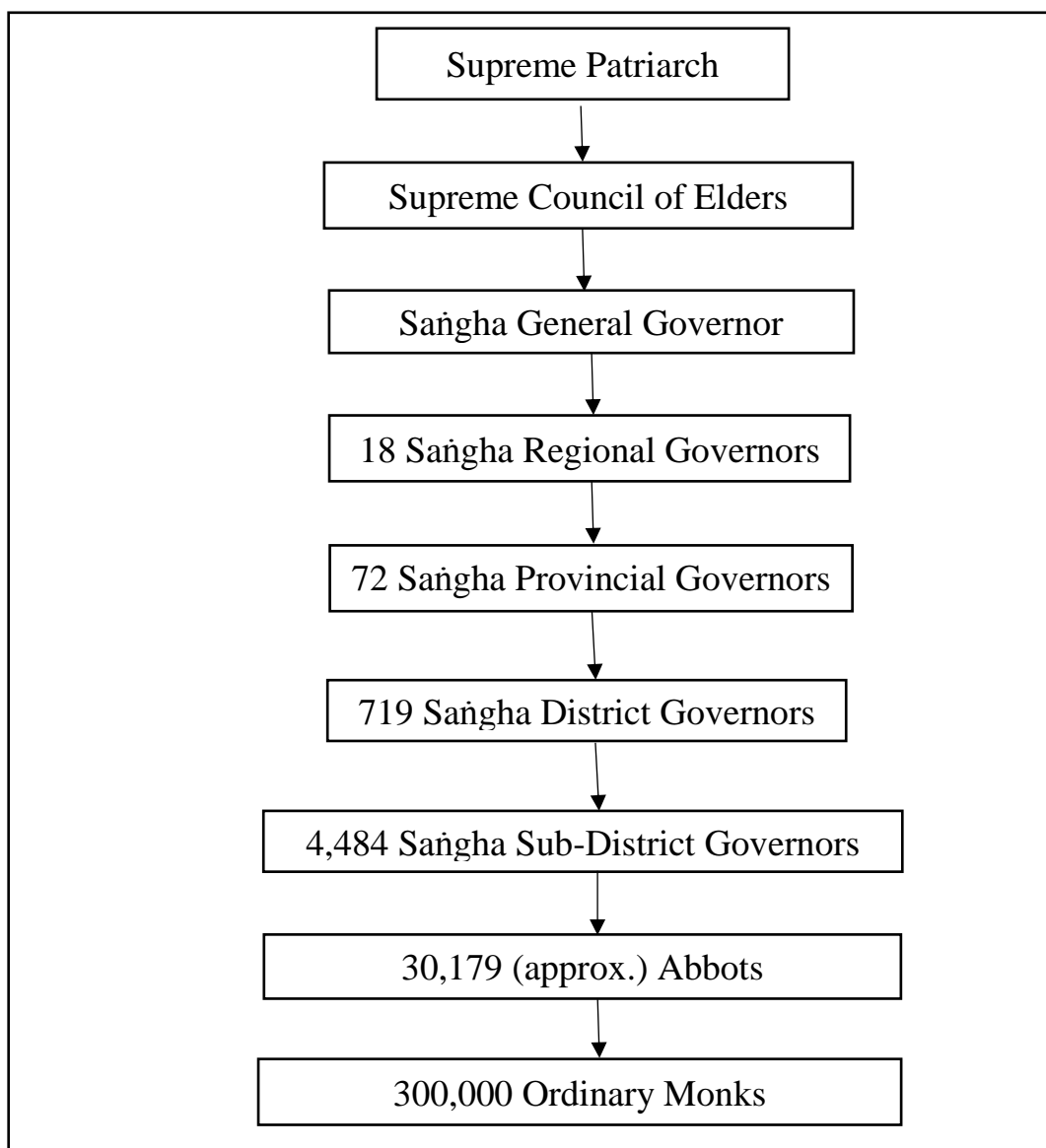
Governor (Chao Gana Changwat), District Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Amphoe), Sub-District Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Tambon). The lowest organization of whole structure of the Saṅgha administration was the monastic organization.<sup>67</sup>

The structure of Thai Saṅgha Administration which was followed the Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2505 (1962 A.D.) can be describes as the followed chart:

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<sup>67</sup>**Ibid.**, pp. 40-41.





**Table 6: Thai Saṅgha Administration according to the Saṅgha Act B.E 2505<sup>68</sup>**

## 2) The Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2535 (1992 A.D.)

The new Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2535 (1992 A.D.) for the purpose of repealing some old provisions, changing the provision in some Articles and adding some new provision in some Articles for its completeness. It can be said that an amendment of the Saṅgha Act of 1962 in 1992 A.D. Hence, when the Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2535 was enacted, we can say that Thai Saṅgha had two Saṅgha Acts being used together. By the way, when

<sup>68</sup>Somboon Suksamran, *Op.cit.*, p. 42.

two Saṅgha Act are included into one Saṅgha Act, it can be called as “The Saṅgha Act of 1962 amended by the Ecclesiastical Act (volume 2) of 1992”.<sup>69</sup>

According to the Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2535 (1992 A.D.), (from the Article 3 to the Article 9), there is also a rank of the Supreme Patriarch, and under his rank is also the Supreme Council of Elders which the members are also appointed by the Supreme Patriarch whether they come from Mahānikāya or Dhammayuttika-Nikāya.

*According to the Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2505, Mahānikāya and Dhammayuttika-Nikāya have got the joined highest administration organization that is the Saṅgha Supreme Council. One half of the committee monks of the Saṅgha Supreme council comes from Mahānikāya Section and other half of them comes from Dhammayuttika-Nikāya Section and they all together the committee of the Saṅgha Supreme Council having the authorities and the roles to govern the Saṅgha legally.*<sup>70</sup>

In the Central Saṅgha Administration, there are four ranks of Chief Superintendent of the Northern zone, Southern Zone, Central zone and the Dhammayuttika section which had created by the Act of the Saṅgha Administration of Ratanakosin Era 121 are still remained. In an other hand, all of them together with the new branch of the East zone, totally make five branches in the Central Saṅgha Administration.<sup>71</sup>

According to this Saṅgha Act with the Article 22 the arrangement of the regional Saṅgha administration followed the same structure under the Act of Saṅgha of B.E 2505. There are also the same ranks of: The Regional Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Pak), Provincial Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Changwat), District Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Amphoe), Sub-District Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Tambon) and the lowest is the monastic organization.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>69</sup>Rev. Ratan Jyoti Barua, **Op.cit.**, pp. 61-62.

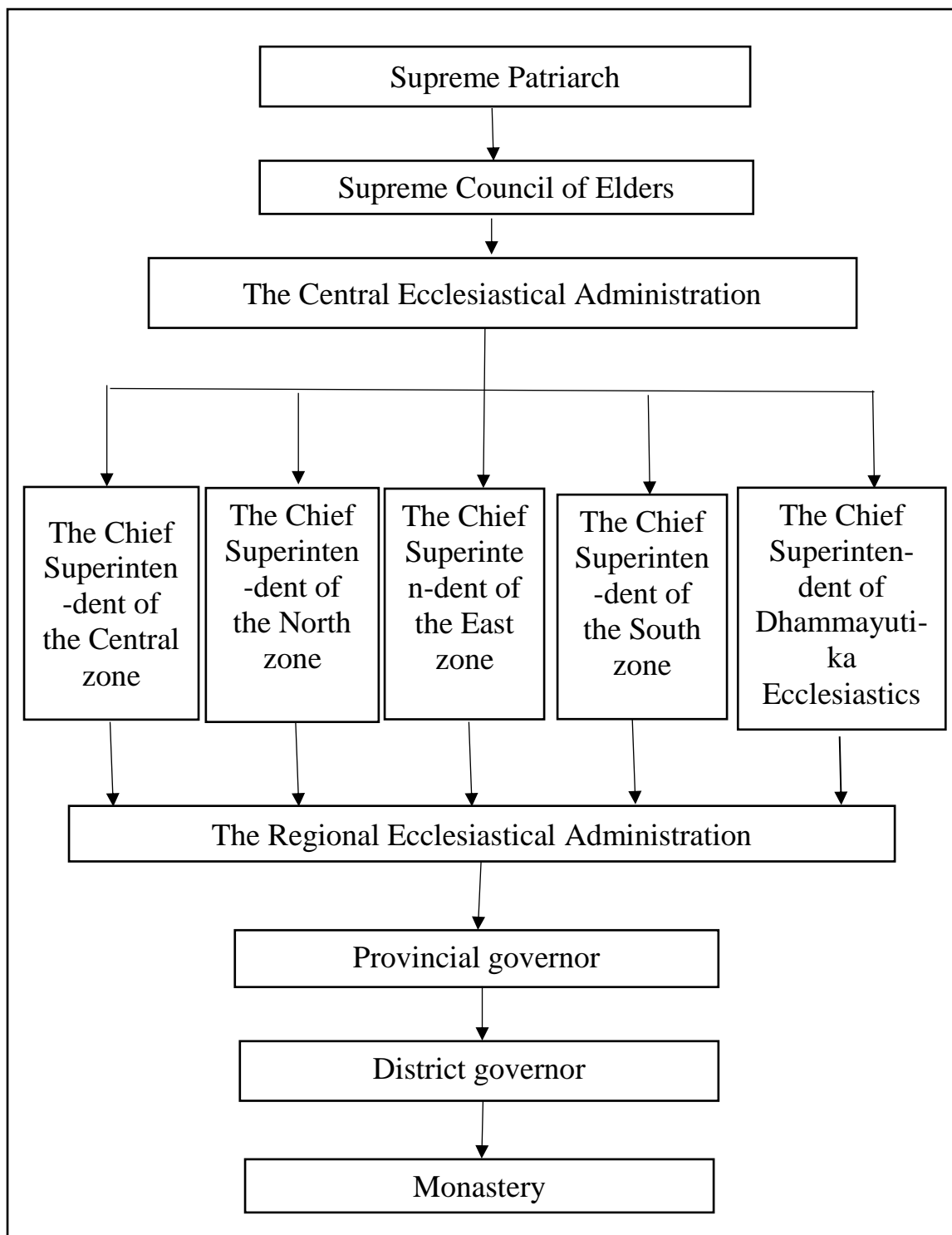
<sup>70</sup>Prof. Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, **Op.cit.**, p. 79.

<sup>71</sup>**Ibid.**, pp. 78-79.

<sup>72</sup>Mahamakuta Educational Council, **Op.cit.**, p. 41.

Therefore, Thai Saṅgha administrative system can be shown as the followings:





**Table 7: Thai Saṅgha administration during the 9<sup>th</sup> reign according to the Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2535 (1992 A.D.).**

## **2.2 Methods of Selecting Thai Buddhist Saṅgha Administration's Members**

The structure of Thai Buddhist Saṅgha administration is classified into three main sections, and each section has its own way of selection of the members. Therefore, the methods of selection the members of Thai Buddhist Saṅgha can be grouped as followings: selection of the Supreme Patriarch, selection of the Central Saṅgha administration and selection of the Regional Saṅgha administration.

### **2.2.1 The Method of Selecting Members of Thai Central Saṅgha Administration.**

There are two ranks in the central Saṅgha administration of Thai Saṅgha, therefore there are two different ways of selection, as followings: selection of Supreme Patriarch and selection of the Supreme Saṅgha Council

#### **a. Selection of Thai Supreme Patriarch (Saṅgharāja)**

The rank of Saṅgharāja-the Supreme Patriarch- the Head of Bhikkhus throughout the Kingdom, therefore the selection of this rank is very important. Since the beginning of the first Thai Saṅgha Administration which was in the Sukhothai period, the position of Supreme Patriarch had been appointed by the King himself. Until now, the method of choosing a new Supreme Patriarch would follow likes before with the appointment from the current monarchy rulers.

The article 4 of the Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2535, the rank of Supreme Patriarch also has to be appointed by the King himself. But in case that the event of the vacant of the Patriarch, Prime Minister will propose a name of Eldest Patriarch (Somdej Rajagana) who is eldest in the Ecclesiastical Council of the Supreme Council. Finally, if the name of that Somdej Rajagana is able, the King will appoint him as the new Supreme Patriarch.

Furthermore, according the Saṅgha Act B.E. 2505 (1962 A.D.), the Supreme Patriarch shall be relieved of his post when he has: (1) died, (2) left monkhood, (3) resigned, (4) been retired by the Royal command.<sup>73</sup>

### **b. Selection of Thai Supreme Saṅgha Council's Members (Mahātherasamakhom)**

According to the Article 7 – 12 of the Saṅgha Act of 1992 A.D. (2535), all the members of Supreme Saṅgha Council or Council of Elders are appointed by the Supreme Patriarch.

Furthermore, the number of member is also increased in this act. Therefore, at present, there are 21 Elders who are the members of Supreme Saṅgha Council in Thai. They are consisted of eight Somdej Phrarajaganas who are the committee ex officio and twelve committee monks who are appointed by Patriach.<sup>74</sup>

In addition, according to the Saṅgha Act of 1962 A.D. (B.E. 2505) with the article 15 which still applied at the present time, mentions that the Saṅgha Council committee member appointed by the Supreme Patriarch shall be retired when: (1) he has died, (2) he has left monkhood, (3) he has resigned, (4) he has been retied by the command of the Supreme Patriarch.

### **2.2.2 Selection of Thai Regional Saṅgha Administration's Members**

Because of the reason of enforcement, the Saṅgha Act of 1992 A.D. is to revise the provisions in some articles and adding some new provisions in some articles for its completeness. Therefore, the articles which concerned with the structure of the Regional Saṅgha Administration wasn't changed much. Acoording to the article 20 of the Saṅgha Act of 1992 A.D. Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendent (Chao Gana Yai) is described as: *“the appointment of the authority and roles of*

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<sup>73</sup>**Ibid.**, p. 38

<sup>74</sup>Prof. Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, **Op.cit.**, p. 71.

*Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendent shall be under the principle and the method prescribed in the order of the Saṅgha Supreme Council*". In an other hand, we can state that the selection of the Regional Saṅgha Administration's members still followed the Saṅgha Act of 1962 A.D.

According to the article 22 of the Saṅgha Act of 1962 A.D., the Deputy Ecclesiastical Regional Governor (Chao Gana Pak), the Deputy Ecclesiastical Provincial Governor (Chao Gana Changwat), the Deputy Ecclesiastical District Governor (Chao Gana Amphoe), the Deputy Ecclesiastical Sub-District Governor (Chao Gana Tambon) are appointed, under the consideration and decision of the Saṅgha Supreme Council.<sup>75</sup>

### **2.3 Duties of Thai Buddhist Saṅgha Administration's Members**

There are three ranks in the structure of Thai Saṅgha Administration. Hence, each section has their own function and their own duties which have been mentioned in the Saṅgha Act. The duties of the Supreme Patriarch, the Supreme Saṅgha Council are the duties of the Central Saṅgha administration's members and the Regional Saṅgha Administration are described as bellows.

#### **2.3.1 Duties of the Central Saṅgha Administration's Members**

Even though, the position of Supreme Patriarch is in the Supreme Saṅgha Council, but the Supreme Patriarch perform different from his council. Therefore, there are two groups of duties: the duties of Supreme Patriarch and the duties of the Suprem Saṅgha Council.

##### **a) Duties of Thai Supreme Patriarch (Somdej Saṅgharāja)**

Theravāda Buddhism is the state religion of Thai, so Somdej Saṅgharaj (Supreme Patriarch) is the highest rank in the structure of Thai Saṅgha Administrative system, who is respected by both Buddhist monks

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<sup>75</sup>Mahamakuta Educational Council, **Op.cit.**, p. 41.

and lay-people over the country. Saṅgharāja or Supreme Patriarch is regarded as the spiritual leader of all Thai Buddhist followers.

In general, the duties of the Supreme Patriarch since the Sukhothai Period until now somehow can be described with some main duties, according to those Saṅgha Acts had established, as follows:

1) Control all the Saṅgha administration and govern whole monk and direct all ecclesiastical affairs.

2) Taking responsibilities for all affairs of the Saṅgha.<sup>76</sup>

In addition, based on the real situation of each period, the numbers and their responsibilities are added more. For example, the King Ram Khamhaeng had invited an Elders from Nakhon Sri Thammarat to be the first Saṅgharāja and in order to propagate the Theravada Buddhism in over his new kingdom.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, the Supreme Patriarch at that time was also in task of propagating the Buddhism.

### **b) Duties of Thai Supreme Saṅgha Council's Members**

Since the Sukhothai Period to the 5<sup>th</sup> reign of Ratanakosin period, the central Saṅgha Administration was divided into some main sections in the structures which have mentioned in the part of “structure of the Saṅgha Administrative system”. Each Ecclesiastical Chief of Section would take responsibilities and governor all affairs of whole of their monasteries in their own section. In addition, their duties also is give advice about the Saṅgha administration and religious affairs to the king.

Like what happened in the reign of the King Mongkut, the Saṅgha administration still remained as the Ayutthaya period, and the new section-Damayutika-Nikāya section- had the freedom to manage their own affairs like other sections in the structures.<sup>78</sup>

From the Saṅgha Act of Saṅgha Administration Ratanakosin Era 121 to the present Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2535, Supreme Saṅgha Council

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<sup>76</sup>P.A. Payutto, **Op.cit.**, p. 30.

<sup>77</sup>Rev. Ratan Jyoti Barua, **Op.cit.**, p. 16.

<sup>78</sup>Prof. Dr. Phra Dhammakosajarn, **Op.cit.**, p. 37.



(Mahāthera Samagom) is the council of the central administration and their duties are described in accordance to those Act as follows:

- 1) To set up the regulation in the Saṅgha Administration.
- 2) To divided the zones for the Saṅgha Administration in the regional part.
- 3) To provide the rank of Saṅgha administrator in the regional part.
- 4) To appoint and dismiss the Saṅgha Administration.

In fact, with the establishment of various committees and sub-committees which are appointed by the Saṅgha Supreme Council. Therefore, by the time more duties are added for those who work as the members of the Saṅgha Supreme Council, such as: responsibility in both Buddhist and civil education, propagating Buddhist doctrines, controlling and punish monks and novice over the country, taking care for the public welfare.<sup>79</sup>

### **2.3.2 Duties of Thai Regional Saṅgha Administration**

Although, the Saṅgha Act had been changed for several times, but the structure of the Regional Saṅgha Administration which didn't changed too much. Finally, the regional administration is arranged from the big area that the governor has to take responsibilities for. It starts from the Section and Zone Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Yai), Regional Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Pak), Provincial Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Changwat), District Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Amphoe), Sub-district Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Tambon), to the lowest rank of an abbot.

#### **a) Duties of Thai Zone and Sect Governor (Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendent)**

According to the article 20 of the Saṅgha Act 1962 and Saṅgha Act 1992 A.D., for the sake of administration of the central and regional Saṅgha, there must be Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendent (Chao Gana

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<sup>79</sup>Ibid., pp. 74-76.

Yai) to perform the duty in the administration zone of the Saṅgha. Furthermore, all of 18 regions will be classified into five zone, and the Chief or Governor of each zone will take responsibilities for his zone. They are as followings:

1) Central Zone: The Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendent will perform the duty in the administrative zone of Mahanikaya Saṅgha in the regions 1, 2, 3, 13, 14, and 15.

2) Northern Zone: The Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendent will perform the duty in the administrative zone of Mahanikaya Saṅgha in the regions 4, 5, 6, and 7.

3) Southern Zone: The Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendent will perform the duty in the administrative zone of Mahanikaya Saṅgha in the regions 16, 17, and 18.

4) Eastern Zone: The Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendent will perform the duty in the administrative zone of Mahanikaya Saṅgha in the regions 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12.

5) Dhammayutika Nikaya Section: The Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendent will perform the duty in the administrative zone of Dhammayuttika Nikaya Saṅgha in every region.<sup>80</sup>

### **b) Duties of Thai Regional Administration**

The duties of those who are in task of governor whether in high or low rank in the Regional Administration are summarized as:

1) To carry on the Saṅgha administration in conformity with the Dhamma-Vinaya, law, the Supreme Council's rules and regulations, the Patriarch commands and the orders from the superior.

2) To control and perform all the activities of the Saṅgha in various aspects: The Buddhist education, the monastic welfare, propagation of the Buddhist doctrines, the Public works and the Public welfare, to the progress of their own sake.

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<sup>80</sup>Ibid., pp. 81-82.

3) To help the higher rank to perform the punishment for those who commit the Vinaya and other regulation.

4) To manage and help to solve the problem and difficulties of other monks and novices under their care.

5) To control and govern the Governors and the abbots under control and to inspect and supervise them that they perform effective duties.<sup>81</sup>

### **c) Duties of Thai Provincial Administration**

According to the Supreme Council Regulations Volume 4 (B.E 2506), the duties of the provincial head has the same duties as the Regional head in each region. But there are some duties that had been added for the provincial level as follows:

1) To carry out administration of the Saṅgha so that it is in accordance with Dhamma-Vinaya, law. Regulations of the Supreme Council and rulings or procedures of the Supreme Council, decrees from the Supreme Council and Commands of Supreme Patriarch. The provincial head carries out the administration of the Saṅgha according to the directives of his superior.

2) To control and see that order, virtues, religious study, educational welfare, propagation of Buddhist teachings, public services and public welfare are smoothly.

3) To examine the imposing of niggaha-kamma, and examine appeals, orders or judgments on the district head.

4) To rightly redress obstacles of the district head.

5) To control and command ecclesiastical heads, abbots and monks and novices with thing his jurisdiction or within his area of administration, and inspect and advise on performance of studies of those within his jurisdiction.

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<sup>81</sup>Rev. Ratan Jyoti Barua, **Op.cit.**, p. 60.

#### **d) Duties of Thai District Administration**

The duties of the District Administrative governor also have mentioned in the Regulation of the Supreme Council Vol. 4 (BE. 2506), as followings;

1) To carry out administration of the Saṅgha so that it is in accordance with Dhamma-Vinaya, law. Regulations of the Supreme Council and rulings or procedures of the Supreme Council, decrees from the Supreme Council and Commands of Supreme Patriarch. The provincial head carries out the administration of the Saṅgha according to the directives of his superior.

2) To control and see that order, virtues, religious study, educational welfare, propagation of Buddhist teachings, public services and public welfare are smoothly.

3) To examine the imposing of niggaha-kamma, and examine appeals, orders or judgments on the sub-district head.

4) To rightly redress obstacles of the sub-district head.

5) To control and command ecclesiastical heads, abbots and monks and novices with thing his jurisdiction or within his area of administration, and inspect and advise on performance of studies of those within his jurisdiction.

#### **e) Duties of Thai Sub-District Administration**

The Sub-District administration head also has the same duties with the upper ranks within the boundaries of his Sub-District. The duties are:

1) To carry out administration of the Saṅgha so that it is in accordance with Dhamma-Vinaya, law. Regulations of the Supreme Council and rulings or procedures of the Supreme Council, decrees from the Supreme Council and Commands of Supreme Patriarch. The provincial head carries out the administration of the Saṅgha according to the directives of his superior.

2) To control and see that order, virtues, religious study, educational welfare, propagation of Buddhist teachings, public services and public welfare are smoothly.

3) To examine the imposing of niggaha-kamma, and examine appeals, orders or judgments on the abbots.

4) To rightly redress obstacles of the abbots.

5) To control and command abbots and monks and novices within his jurisdiction or within his area of administration, and inspect and advise on performance of studies of those within his jurisdiction.

#### **f) Duties of A Thai Abbot**

According to the Article 37 of the Saṅgha Act 1962 A.D., the duties of an abbot are described as follows:

1) To maintain and develop his monastery, managing the affairs and looking after the property of the monastery as well as he can.

2) To see that monks, novices and laymen in his monastery conduct themselves in conformity with the Discipline of the Order or the rules and regulations of the Supreme Council, as the case may be.

3) To manage to educate the monks, novices and laymen in his monastery in the knowledge of Buddhism.

4) To provide proper facilities for merit-marking.

#### **2.4 Concluding Remarks**

Thai Saṅgha Administration was first built in the period of Sukhothai Kingdom. Even though, Thai political government had got many changes but Theravada Buddhism still was a state religion among generations of Thai Monarchs. Firstly, the structure of Thai Saṅgha Administration was built based on the concept of traditional practice separately. There were two sections of Gāmaṅgālī and Araṅgāṅgālī which are the two main branches in the structures. There was no Supreme Council of Orders under this kind of structure. Until the reign of the King

Rama V, there was a new change in the structure with the appearance of the Saṅgha Supreme Council as the Central Administration. Since the day that the first Supreme Patriarch (Saṅgharāja) was appointed until now, the rank of Saṅgharāja was the highest rank in the structure as the head of it. Even, there were a several enactments of the Saṅgha Act, but Thai Saṅgha Administration still remained as the same structure as for the long period of time until the present time. The structure is consisted of three main sections: The Supreme Patriarch, the Saṅgha Supreme Council as the Central Administration and the Regional Administration.

Because the position of the Supreme Patriarch is very important in the structure, who is the most respected one and the spiritual of all Thai people. Therefore, the Supreme Patriarch must be appointed and invited by the most powerful one-the King himself. The Saṅgha Supreme Council is consisted of the presentative (all of them are monks) of each tradition among the Buddhist schools in Thai, and all of the members are appointed by the Supreme Patriarch. All of the positions of the Regional Saṅgha Administration are decided by the Saṅgha Supreme Council. The method of selection is followed by the decision of the higher ranks for the members of the lowers ranks. The selections based on the agreement of the Thai Saṅgha itself, it doesn't receive or under any intervention from governement. The Government only confirm and supports the Saṅgha to perform thier lawful decisions.

The Supreme Patriarch and Supreme Saṅgha Council take the important role in controlling Thai Buddhist Saṅgha. They are the person who decide all the important activities of the Saṅgha. On an other hand, they take care all of the affairs of the Saṅgha, and they are the person who directly solve problems and difficulties that Thai Buddhism has faced. The Regional Saṅgha administration help to organize the monastic Orders in the systematical way from the region to the lowest rank of a single monastery.

## **Chapter III**

### **The Buddhist Saṅgha Administrative System in Vietnam**

The study of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system is to learn about three main aspects among the system as followings: 1) the structure of Vietnam Saṅgha administration, 2) the methods of selecting of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha administration's members and 3) the duties of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha administration's members.

#### **3.1 The Structure of Vietnamese Saṅgha Administration**

The historical development of Vietnamese Saṅgha administration is described based on some great events which were the movement in the development of Vietnamese Buddhism since the Buddhism became the state religion from previous dynasties to the real situation of Buddhism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Therefore, those changes also made the special changes in the structure of Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha administration along with the historical periods of movement of Vietnamese Buddhism. The study of structure of Vietnamese Saṅgha administration can be divided into two parts: 1) Vietnamese Saṅgha administration prior to the recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and 2) Vietnamese Saṅgha administration after the recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

##### **3.1.1 Vietnamese Saṅgha Administration prior to the Recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

Before the recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Buddhist used to be the state religion for many years under several monarchy governments. There are some dynasties that Buddhism was state religion but there are also some dynasties that Buddhism was

declined. Therefore, the structure of Vietnamese Saṅgha administration totally depends upon the development of Vietnamese Buddhism. Vietnamese Saṅgha administration before recovery, can be mentioned on three main period of time: under Tran Dynasty, after Tran dynasty to before Nguyen dynasty, under the recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism.

### **a. Vietnam Saṅgha Administration in Tran Dynasty**

Like Theravāda Buddhism in Thailand, Buddhism had been introduced into Vietnam for the long period of time. There are many arguments which mentioned about the introduction of Buddhism in ancient Vietnam, but the most valid and reliable one is the analysis of Nguyen Lang (Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh). According to him, Vietnamese Buddhism was first introduced into Viet Nam around the first up to the second century of C.E.<sup>82</sup> Even though, Buddhism appeared very early in Vietnam, but Buddhism existed as a system of faith or a kind magical religion which was the subject of people's pray for their happiness of life. Until the Ly dynasty (1009-1225 A.D.), Buddhism developed and became the state religion by the solid support from the Kings and their royal monarchy government.<sup>83</sup>

By the reason that some Vietnamese Kings had spent their childhood as novices and some were students of the famous senior monks, and because of Vietnamese Buddhist monks always helped the Royal Kings to protect and develop their Kingdom by the way of giving many suggestions to them. Therefore, several dynasties before Tran dynasty (1225-1400 A.D.) also followed Buddhism, the Kings of those kingdoms always appointed one respected senior monks for many honor and important in positions both nation and Vietnamese Buddhism as well.<sup>84</sup> The beginning of building the administrative structure of Vietnamese Saṅgha somehow may start with the first step of having some

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<sup>82</sup>Nguyen Lang, **Op.cit.**, pp. 15-16.

<sup>83</sup>Tran Quang Thuan, **Vietnamese Buddhism in the Modern Era, Facing with the Challenges of the Modern Civilization**, (Hanoi: Hong Duc Publishing House, 2014), pp. 725-732.

<sup>84</sup>Nguyen Cao Thanh, **Op.cit.**, pp. 149-157.



important ranks in the administration from this period, which had been noted as bellows:

*Kings of Dinh-Le dyanasties paid high respect to Buddhism and rewarded monks who contributed to the court affairs. After ascending the throne, Dinh Tien Hoang defined ranks for court officials, and in 971 A.D convened a council of eminent monks to define ranks for the clergy in categories like Quoc Su (Imperial Buddhist Preceptor), Tang Thong (Saṅgha President), Tang Luc, Tang Chinh and so on.*<sup>85</sup>

Since the early begining of Buddhism in Vietnam, even there were many sects and traditions was introduced in Vietnam (Tantranism, Pure-Land, and Meditation), but there was only one kind or main tradition—Meditation or Zen Buddhism- that had been developed strongly in Vietnam. Before Tran dynasty, there were three sub-schools of Zen existed in Vietnam they are: Vinitaruci school<sup>86</sup>, Vo Ngon Thong school<sup>87</sup> and Thao Duong school.<sup>88</sup> Under the dynasty of Tran, the union of all those three Zen Buddhist schools and others tradition was occurred. Finally, the result of unifying all of those school was an appearance of one new Vietnamese independent school named Truc Lam meditation school. That was only one school that existed and developed under the reign of Tran dynasty. Since the King Tran Nhan Tong (1278-1293 A.D.)

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<sup>85</sup>**Ibid.**, p. 136.

<sup>86</sup>Tai Thu Nguyen, **The History of Buddhism in Vietnam**, (Washington D.C: Library of Congress Cataloging in Pulication, 2006), p. 55. Some time around 580 A.D., The Indian Monks Vinitaruci came to Vietnam and lived in the Phap Van pagoda. There he taught the doctrine and esablished the first school of meditation in Vietname named Vinitaruci school.

<sup>87</sup>**Ibid.**, p. 65. In 820, about two centuries after Vinitaruci, a Chinese Buddhist monk known as Wu Yantong (Vo Ngon Thong in Vietnamese) came to live in the Kien So pagoda located in the village of Phu Dong, Bac Ninh province (present-day Ha Bac). He was to become the founder of the sencond Chan sect in Vietnam name Vo Ngon Thong School.

<sup>88</sup>Thich Thien An, **Thao Duong Zen School: The Zen-Pure Land Buddhism and Modern Vietnamese Buddhism**, ( USA: Dharma Publishing, 1975), p.2. Thao Duong, one of seventeen Dharma-successors to Tuyet Dau Minh Giac, advocated the unified practice of Zen and Pure Land methods for attaining enlightenment. He established the third Zen school in Vietnam named Thao Duong school under the Ly dynasty.

unified and played his great part in order to take it to completion, later Kings of Tran dynasty also played many contributions in to develop this national Buddhist school. Therefore, Truc Lam meditation school become a national Buddhist tradition school of Vietnam under this period of time. Because of those advantages, all of monks in the country were followed and practiced under this school. Even though, Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha at that time was known as the Vietnamese Truc Lam Buddhist Saṅgha which was founded to manage monks and Buddhism as a whole.<sup>89</sup> Hence, the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha administration at this dynasty also followed the organization of Truc Lam school, and all of the members of the administration were monks who from Truc Lam school.

Under the Dinh-Le dynasties, there was a policy to support Buddhism and although it was not officially declared the national religion, it was nevertheless recognized as the country's principal religion.<sup>90</sup> Until the Ly dynasty, even Buddhism became the national religion but and there were some ranks also had been appointed by the Kings but the management and administration of the Saṅgha hadn't been built completely yet.

Until Tran dynasty was the first time that the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha administration was built. Like other previous Kings, the several Kings of Tran dynasty also appointed the important ranks in Buddhism. Until the reign of King Tran Anh Tong (1293-1314 A.D.), the King not only appointed the Supreme Patriarch, he also appointed one senior monk to be the head of national Buddhist Saṅgha office. Ven Phap Loa (1284-1330 A.D.) was the first person who was appointed by King Tran Anh Tong in the year of 1313 A.D. for the position of the Head of National Saṅgha office, and the office of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha at that time was located at Vinh Nghiem temple (present-day in the Northern Vietnam).<sup>91</sup> This is also the first time that Vietnamese monk had a monk-hood certificate in ordered to recognized one as a real legal monk.

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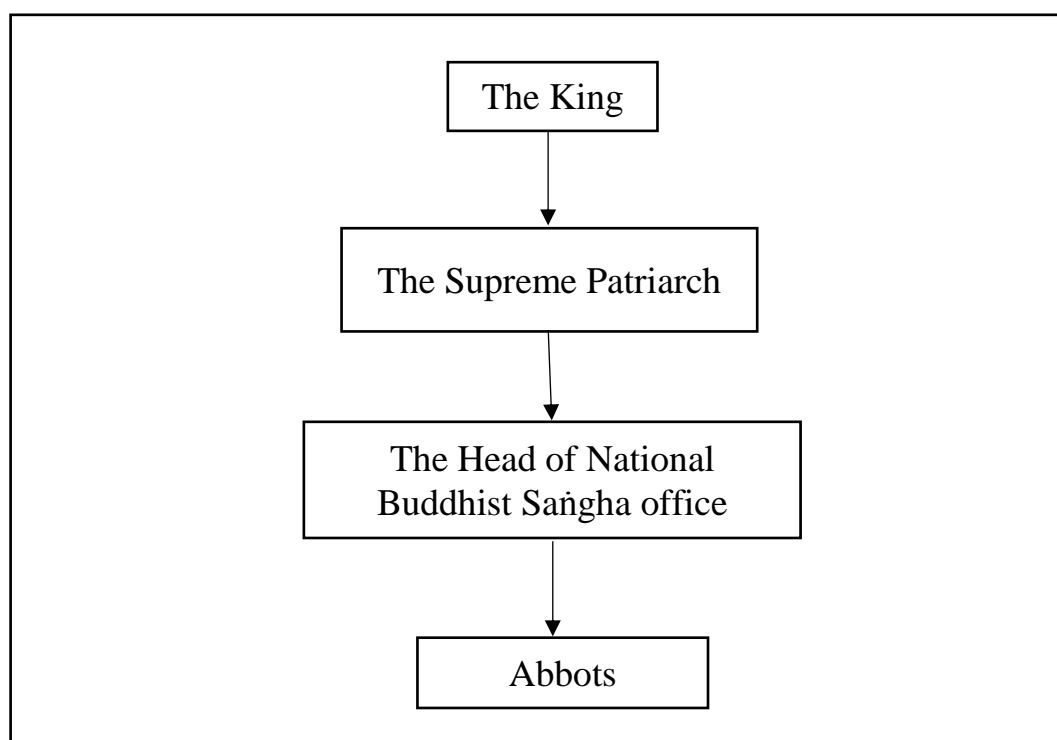
<sup>89</sup>Nguyen Lang, *Op.cit.*, p. 306.

<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>91</sup>Nguyen Lang, *Op.cit.*, p. 306.

The Supreme Patriarch and the Head of the National Buddhist Saṅgha office are under the management of Kings and his royal monarchy government. The Head of national Saṅgha office is the Central Saṅgha administration in the structure of Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha administration and the Head of National Buddhist Saṅgha office directly govern all of the temple and all of the Buddhist monks in the country.

The structure of Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha administration can be described as the following charts:



**Table 8: The Vietnamese Saṅgha Administration at Tran Dynasty.**

**b. After Tran Dynasty to prior to Nguyen Dynasty (17<sup>th</sup> Century)**

Tran dynasty had existed for almost 175 years with twelve kings who were very good Buddhist followers. In 1400 A.D., the Tran dynasty collapsed and was replaced by Ho dynasty until Vietnam became a

colony of the Minh dynasty of China.<sup>92</sup> After taking Vietnam under their control, the invaders carried out cruel and poisonous policies in order to destroy Vietnamese culture which is totally based on Buddhist culture. Moreover, they applied their own culture and their own religion of Confucianism in Vietnam for the purpose of making Vietnamese become Chinese.<sup>93</sup> In 1419 A.D., under the reign of Minh of Chinese, Buddhist books and temple was destroyed, the Buddhist monks have to follow the regulation from Chinese masters of Confucianism.<sup>94</sup> Therefore, Buddhism didn't have any change to develop, Buddhist monks and followers have to face with many difficulties in order to practice and propagate Buddhism in Vietnam at this period.<sup>95</sup>

Le Loi (1428-1433 A.D.) was a national hero who escaped Vietnam from the control of Chinese at that time (Minh dynasty), he sat on throne in 1428 A.D., and had started to restore both the nation and Buddhism as well.<sup>96</sup> Even though, traditional spiritual festivals and temple were continue building under the reign of Le dynasty, but the Kings and all people who no "right view" in Buddhism, they believed Buddhism in the wrong way and by their thought monks are the master of spiritual activities who just in task of performing the spiritual activities, praying for their happiness. The weakness of Vietnamese Buddhism somehow was mentioned in the book of the Author-Tran Quang Thuan, as followings:

*In 1429 A.D., King Le Thai To, opened one Buddhist contest for Buddhist monks, who fail in this contest must disrobe forever. In 1434 A.D., King Le Thai To invited the monks come to pray for raining because of there were no any rain for long period of time. In 1460 A.D., an Act was*

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<sup>92</sup>Tran Quang Thuan, **Op.cit**, pp. 747-749.

<sup>93</sup>Thich Tam Hai, **Basic Buddhism**, ed. The Central Board of Dhamma Propagation, (Ho Chi Minh city: The Religious Press, 2003), p. 32ff.

<sup>94</sup>Mat The, **The Outline of Vietnamese Buddhism's History**, (Hanoi: Religious Publishing House, 2004), pp.174-175.

<sup>95</sup>Tran Quang Thuan, **Op.cit**, pp. 749-750.

<sup>96</sup>Nguyen Khuong Dan, **The Recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**, M.A Thesis, (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2008), p. 31.

*enacted with the rule that monks should not have any contact with lay people around the kingdom, they only stay at the temple.*<sup>97</sup>

Under the reign of Le dynasty, the Confucianism became the national religion of Vietnam at that time. People started to learn and follow the doctrine of Confucianism. Although, Buddhism still existed but just very weak, the practice and all of the Buddhist activities just happened inside the temple and among Buddhist schools or lineages. Lay Buddhist people didn't want to learn Buddhism, time by time they "stay" far away from Buddhist temple and the Saṅgha. Because of those reasons which have been mentioned above, therefore the Buddhist organization just in the small scope of temples, sub-school, sects and lineages. The abbots were in task of governing their Saṅgha and remaining the Vietnamese Buddhism continuously. The King is the chief governor of the Saṅgha, and there was no any Saṅgha administrative system that had been mentioned at this period of time in the history of Vietnamese Buddhism. This is the big gap in the development of Vietnamese Buddhism.

### **c. From 17<sup>th</sup> Century to The Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.**

In 1527 A.D., Mac Dang Dung took the throne from Le dynasty and established a new dynasty named Mac in the northern part of Vietnam, and there was also a new dynasty at the southern part which was established by King Nguyen Kim.<sup>98</sup> Hence, there was a big internal conflict between those two dynasty (Northern part and Southern part) during 50 years (1543-1582. A.D.).

In 1788 A.D., Nguyen Hue became the King and unified those two government, he also established Tay Son dynasty. He was on throne just for four years and Tay Son dynasty was destroyed by Nguyen Anh in

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<sup>97</sup>Tran Quang Thuan, **Op.cit.**, p. 575.

<sup>98</sup>**Ibid.**, p. 758.

1802 A.D. King Nguyen Anh established the last monarchy government of Vietnam.<sup>99</sup>

Since the early 16<sup>th</sup> century to the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Buddhist Saṅgha administration mostly based on the lineage of the tradition or the sub-sects or sub-schools of Vietnamese Buddhism. Specially, the organization of Vietnamese Buddhism is administration of the monastery scope. The monarchy government and the Kings directly rule all of the activities of the Buddhist Saṅgha. The King established a department which might know as the Department of Buddhist Court (V. Tang Cuong Ty)<sup>100</sup> in ordered to control all the Buddhist monks in the country. The governors of this department were not Buddhist monks, they were the ministers of the King's government.

There were many Senior monks who contributed a lot for the development of Buddhism or in translation Buddhist scripture were appointed to be the Supreme Patriarch but just caused of the respect from the King and his royal family. Some of them were the abbots of the royal temples, in this case they also might be appointed for the position of Patriarch which is mostly happened during the period of the internal conflict of Southern and Northern dynasties.

The Southern dynasty was successes by the Nguyen dynasty, even though under Nguyen dynasty, Buddhism even was not a state religion, but most of the reigns of Nguyen dynasty, Buddhism got many supports from the Kings and monarchy government. In this period of time, the Kings continued appointed the position of Supreme Patriarch (V.Tang Thong) and other position like the Head of Buddhist Office (V. Tang Cang).<sup>101</sup> Even though, there were a position of Supreme Patriarch and the monk who was the head of Buddhist Office, but they are in task of organize the Saṅgha activities like Buddhist festivals, Chanting and Praying ceremony, ordination and so on. In fact, the administration of the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha totally under the care of the King who directly ruled all the monks.

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<sup>99</sup>Tai Thu Nguyen, **Op.cit.**, p. 223.

<sup>100</sup>Nguyen Lang, **Op.cit.**, p. 555.

<sup>101</sup>Nguyen Cao Thanh, **Op.cit.**, pp. 53-56.

### **3.1.2 Vietnamese Saṅgha Administration After the Recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism in The 20<sup>th</sup> Century.**

There was a recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism in the century which restored the Buddhism and formed a solid structure of Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha administration. Before the recovery, Vietnamese Buddhism had been destroyed by many reasons under the French colonialism, when the recovery happened the Vietnamese Buddhism was restored and after that it got a Saṅgha administrative system clearly.

#### **a. Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Administration under French Colonialism.**

In 1858 A.D., French and Spanish allied troops started to attack Vietnam, beginning the invasion of Vietnam by Western capitalism. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, there were a few bourgeois orientation national liberation movements. A significant event in Vietnamese history in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the birth of the Communist Party of Vietnam in 1930 A.D., which put a stop to the crisis in revolutionary policy lines and revolutionary leader in Vietnam. With the historical Dien Bien Phu campaign in 1954 A.D., the Northern part of Vietnam was escaped from the French government, the Southern part was under the American imperialists. This was the period that the Monarchy Government of Vietnam was declined, we got many troubles in all the aspects of society. In this period of time, Vietnamese people had to live difficultly during several wars.

Vietnamese Buddhism fell into decline since the Le dynasty and it continued as the same situation of the past time. Before 1945 A.D., under the control of France, Vietnamese Buddhism had fell into a terrible situation; Buddhist Saṅgha organization was forced to dissolve, monks were not allowed to perform any monastic activities, monks were compelled to disrobe and join into the French Army, etc.<sup>102</sup> Even Vietnamese Buddhism was not really as strong as before, but there were

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<sup>102</sup>Le Cung, *The Southern Vietnam Buddhism's movement in 1963*, (Hue: Thuan Hoa Publishing House, 2008), pp. 27-30.

many famous masters and Buddhist followers who again restore Vietnam Buddhism at that time.

From the early of 19<sup>th</sup> century, there was a revolution in Sri Lanka Buddhism which the establishment of many Buddhist organizations as: The Buddhist Theosophical Society in 1880 A.D., Mahabodhi Society in 1891 A.D., The Sri Lanka Buddhist Fellowship and so on.<sup>103</sup> The movement the spread to many countries in Asia with the mottoes “Revolution in the doctrine”; “Revolution in the rules”; and “Revolution in the Saṅgha”.<sup>104</sup>

Buddhism of Vietnam also was influenced by this revolution. The movement to ameliorate Vietnamese Buddhism began in Sai Gon city and some southern provinces in 1920 A.D., with the participation of several current famous masters such as the Most Venerable Khanh Hoa (V. Khánh Hòa) and the Most Venerable Thien Chieu (V. Thiện Chiếu). By the time, the movement from the south spread to the center and the north parts of Vietnam with many participants who contributed a lot for the new changes in Vietnamese Buddhism at that time such as Venerable To Lien (V. Tô Liên), Venerable Giac Tien (V. Giác Tiên), Buddhist laymen doctor Le Dinh Tham (V. Lê Đình Thám). The movement lasted until the middle of 1950 A.D., and made some important achievements.<sup>105</sup>

The result of this revolution in Vietnam is the establishment of many new organizations in Buddhism and there were many Buddhist school, Buddhist learning centers around the country, which are the main elements for the movement of Vietnamese Buddhism from the decline. There were six important Buddhist organizations:

Two associations in the South region: (1) Southern Buddhist Studies founded in 1930, and (2) South Vietnam Saṅgha was founded in June, 1951.

Two associations in the Central region: (3) An Nam association for Buddhist Studies was founded in 1932, and (4) Central Vietnam Saṅgha founded in 1949.

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<sup>103</sup>Tran Quang Thuan, **Op.cit.**, p. 794.

<sup>104</sup>Nguyen Cao Thanh, **Op.cit.**, p. 179.

<sup>105</sup>Nguyen Lang, **Op.cit.**, pp. 628-631.



Two associations in the North region: (5) Northern Buddhist association founded in 1934, and (6) North Vietnam Buddhist clergy Rectification Association was founded in 1949.<sup>106</sup>

Until this period of time, Vietnamese Buddhism still didn't have a structure of Saṅgha administration, but there were many Buddhist associations around the country which worked separately without unified administrative system. Among those six main Buddhist associations, each region had one Buddhist ascetical association and one of them was the association of lay Buddhist followers.

In 1951 A.D., the congregation of “the National Buddhist Saṅgha of Vietnam” was established by all the presentative from those six Buddhist associations which have mentioned above. A senior Order was appointed to be a chief of this congregation and Quan Su temple was the central office.<sup>107</sup>

### **b. Saṅgha Administration after the Recovery of Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha.**

On August 24<sup>th</sup> 1945 A.D., the Monarchy Government was end and after the year of 1954 A.D. Vietnam was divided into two parts which different kind of political government. The Northern part was the government of Democratic Republic party and the Southern Part was the government of Republic party.<sup>108</sup> Consequently, the developments and organizations of Buddhism in the two parts were not the same.

In March 1958 A.D., a new Buddhist association names Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Association was established as the main Buddhist Saṅgha organization of the Northern Vietnamese Buddhism.<sup>109</sup>

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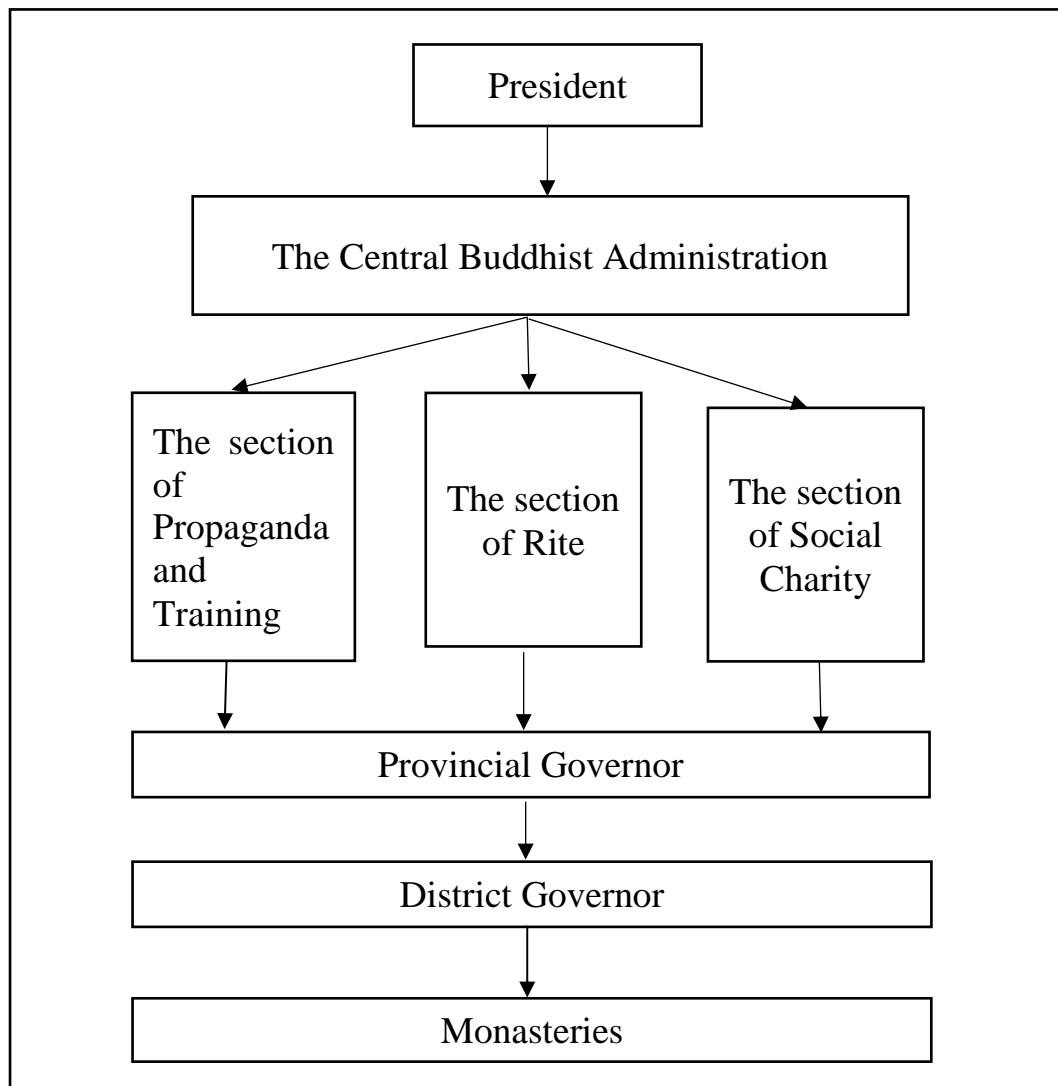
<sup>106</sup>Group of authors, **Review on the recovery of Vietnamese Buddhism in 1963.** (Ho Chi Minh city: Phuong Dong Publishing House, 2013), p. 11.

<sup>107</sup>Thich Thien Hoa, **50 years of Buddhist Revival. Vol I.** (Saigon: Vien Hoa Dao Press, 1970), p. 82.

<sup>108</sup>Nathallie Huynh Chau Nguyen, **New Perception of Vietnam War: Essay on the War, The South Vietnamese Experience, the Diaspora and the Continuing Impact.** USA: Mc Farland Company, Inc., Publisher, 2015, p. 3.

<sup>109</sup>Nguyen Cao Thanh, **Op.cit**, p. 185.

The North Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Association was established based on the support of the North Democratic Republic nation. By the side of administration, there was a position of president who govern all of the system, there were others vice-presidents, secretaries and members in the Central administrative level and the office was located at Quan Su temple, Hanoi. There three main sections: (1) the section of Propaganda and Training, (2) the section of Rites, and (3) the section of Social Charity. In the Regional and Provincial level, there was the position of the Provincial Buddhist Saṅgha Governor and the District Buddhist Saṅgha Governor.<sup>110</sup> The structure of North Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Association can be described as the following charts:



<sup>110</sup>Tran Quang Thuan, *Op.cit*, pp. 806-807.

### **Table 9: The Structure of North Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Association**

Since 1951 A.D., the Southern Buddhist Saṅgha was established in the south of Vietnam and existed until the Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation was established as the main Southern Buddhist Saṅgha organization by unifying other eleven Buddhist organizations in 1963 A.D. The Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation was occurred in task of leading all of the Vietnamese Buddhist followers around the country to continue the Buddhist movement since 1920 A.D. and the current Vietnamese Dhamma disaster in 1963 A.D.

In 1963 A.D., there was “Southern Buddhist movement” which was known as “Vietnamese Dhamma disaster”.<sup>111</sup> For the purpose of saving Buddhism from the destroy of Ngo Dinh Diem’s government (current Southern government), there were 30 cases of self-immolation and 57 cases were slaughtered from several monks, nuns and lay people at the Southern part.<sup>112</sup> Among those several monks and nun, the self-immolation of Most Venerable Thich Quang Duc that awoke Southern Government.<sup>113</sup>

Among those two main Buddhist Saṅgha organizations, the Southern Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation was more famous at that time. It was so popular not only in the South part, it was also influenced to the North part. By the time, this organization developed more and more, and it was seemed the main Buddhist Saṅgha administration of Vietnamese Buddhism before the recovery in 1981 A.D.

The participants were from all of the Buddhist monk, nun and lay people of all eleven Buddhist organizations existed in South Vietnam at that time, which are: Vietnam General Buddhist Association, Theravāda Saṅgha Congregation, Central Vietnam Saṅgha Congregation, Meditation

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<sup>111</sup>Thich Duc Nghiep, **Buddhism in Vietnam**. Ho Chi Minh city: Ho Chi Minh city Buddhist Saṅgha Council Press, 1995, p. 192.

<sup>112</sup>Thich Thien Hoa, **Op.cit**, p. 26ff.

<sup>113</sup>Thich Nhat Tu, Nguyen Kha, **The Buddhist Disaster in 1963- The causes, Its Potential and Its Process**. Ho Chi Minh city: Hong Duc Publishing House, p. 648.

Bodhimandala Congregation, Vietnamese Saṅgha Congregation, North Vietnam Saṅgha Congregation, Theravāda Monk's Congregation, Theravāda Buddhism Association, South Vietnam Buddhist studies Association, Central Vietnam Buddhism Association, and Vietnamese Buddhism Association.<sup>114</sup>

There was a position of Saṅgharaja who was the head of the Saṅgha in the structure of Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation. There are two main office of leading organizations, the Supreme Saṅgha Council and the Dhamma Council. The Supreme Saṅgha Council consist of eight members who are respected Senior Monk among the Saṅgha. The Saṅgha Council was consisted of nine departments; they were: (1) department of Saṅgha Affairs, (2) department of Education, (3) department of Buddhist Laity, (4) department of Propagation, (5) department of Teenager, (6) department of Culture, (7) department of Economy-Finance, (8) department Social Charity, (9) department of Development. Each department is controlled by one director and their members of department. Buddhist Saṅgha at the South part of Vietnam was divided into seven regions, each region was named by the name of the famous Vietnamese Buddhist master, but there wasn't any position of Regional governor.<sup>115</sup>

For the Provincial Saṅgha administration, it was controlled by the Provincial Governor, and the lower levels of the structure are the district and sub district system. Furthermore, the structure of Provincial and District administrations was similar with the structure of Central Saṅgha administration. It means there were nine sections which holding the same tasks of those departments of the Central Saṅgha Administration.

There were two separated office of the Saṅgha, An Quang monastery was the main office of Supreme Saṅgha Council while Viet Nam Quoc Tu monastery was the office of the Dhamma Council.<sup>116</sup>

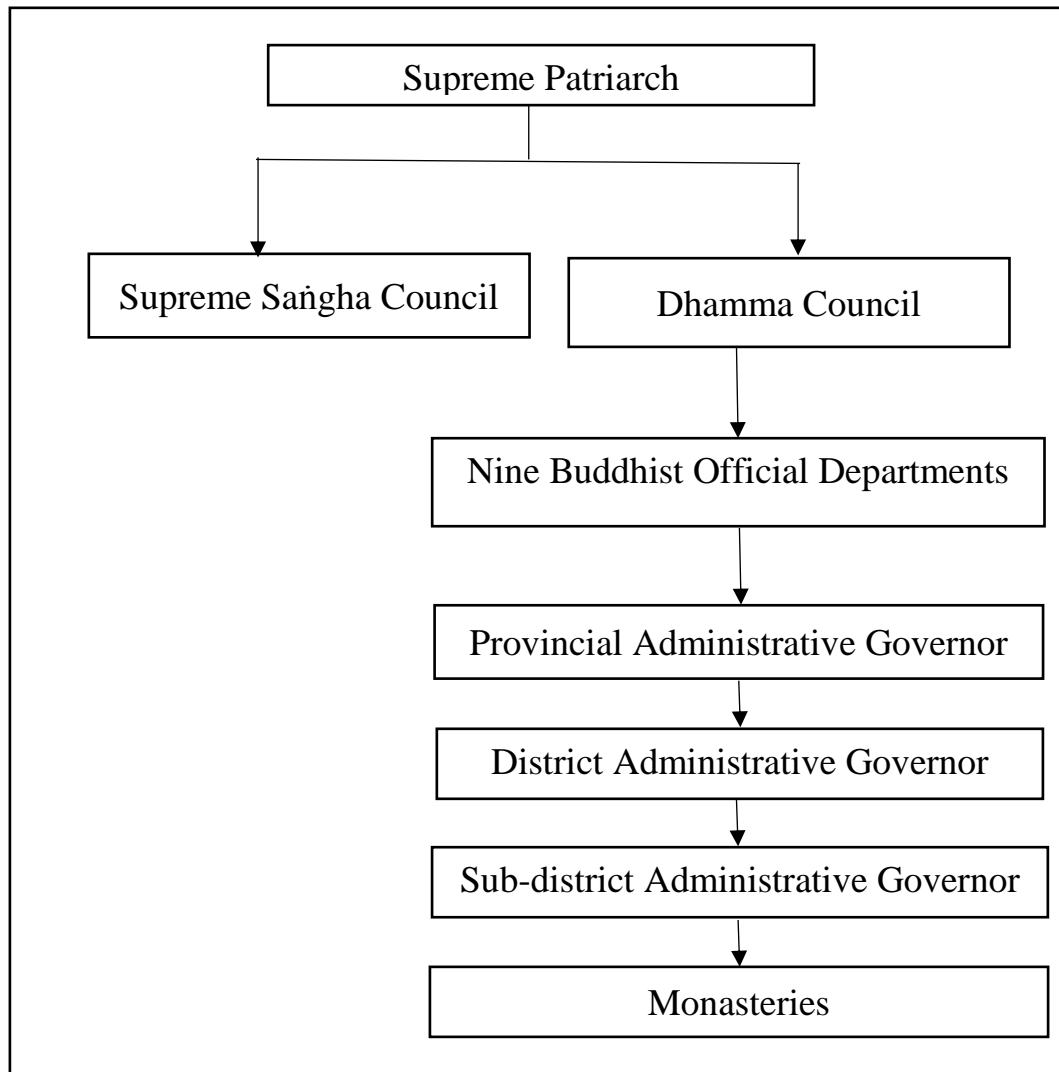
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<sup>114</sup>Nguyen Cao Thanh, *Op.cit.*, 186.

<sup>115</sup>**The Charter of Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation**, Online Lotus Library. Viewed on 08/03/2017. < <https://thuvienhoasen.org/a6827/giao-hoi-phat-giao-viet-nam-thong-nhat>>.

<sup>116</sup>Tran Quang Thuan, *Op.cit.*, pp. 923-924.

The structure of South Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation can be described as follows:



**Table 10 : The South Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation Administrative System.**

### c. Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Administration After 1975 A.D.

There was a “cold war” or “internal war” between North Government and South Government of Vietnam since 1955 A.D. to 1975 A.D. Finally, in 1975 A.D Vietnamese North Government totally achieved success and Vietnam from now on was a interdependent country.<sup>117</sup> The country was unified, there was only one country as known as “Social Republic of Vietnam” which follow the political view of Communism. Which the union and establishment of the new country of Vietnam, history of Vietnamese Buddhism turned into a new page with the new form of Buddhist Saṅgha.

After the unifying of the country, the new government realized that they need to unify Buddhism first before going to unify the people from both two side, South and North parts. For the purpose of develop Vietnamese Buddhism in the modern time since the Vietnam country was interdependent, the first thing is the way of building a new solid Saṅgha Administration system which is the “body” of the Buddhism. the importance of union of Vietnamese Buddhism is again underlined by the welcome speech of the vice–Supreme Patriarch Most Venerable Thich Tri Quang<sup>118</sup> at the seminar of “Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, 35 years of establishment and development” in 2016 A.D., as followings:

*In the developmental history of Vietnamese Buddhism in the modern Era, with the main concept “Buddhism accompany with the Nation”, such Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha organizations of before tried to unify to be one common organization for five times. Even thought, the unifications were happened by the regional scope or national scope, but they had the same purpose of setting up a way to promote and develop Vietnamese Buddhism.*

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<sup>117</sup>Tran Quang Thuan., **Op.cit**, pp. 821-823.

<sup>118</sup>Most Ven Thich Tri Quang: He is vice supreme patriarch, the director of Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute, Ho Chi Minh city Buddhist Saṅgha Governor, and the Dean of the central Foriegn Buddhist Affairs Department. He is a present Rector of Vietnam Buddhist University at Ho Chi Minh city.

By these main reasons, the unification all of the Buddhist associations around the country become the most necessary task of the current Vietnamese Buddhist leaders. After some years for preparing, the Conference of Presentative for Buddhist Unification was organized in Quan Su temple, Hanoi in 4<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> November 1981A.D. with the presentative members from nine different Buddhist denominations:

1) The Southern Unified Vietnamese Buddhist Congregation with 22 delegates.

2) The Northern United Vietnamese Buddhist Association with 23 delegates.

3) Vietnamese Traditional Buddhist Congregation with 12 delegates.

4) Ho Chi Minh city Buddhist Liaison Committee with 10 delegates.

5) The Vietnamese Theravāda Saṅgha Congregation with 7 delegates.

6) Western South Vietnam Association for Solidarity of Patriotic Monastic with 8 delegates.

7) The Vietnamese Mendicant Saṅgha Congregation with 6 delegates.

8) The T'ien-T'ai teaching and Meditation Sect with 5 delegates.

9) The Vietnamese Buddhist Studies Association with 6 delegates.<sup>119</sup>

The unification of Vietnam Buddhist associations was a very important event in the history of Vietnamese Buddhism. the Congregation unanimously agreed to established a National Buddhist Saṅgha administration with the name “Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha”. The report to the Congress emphasized the great importance of this event as follows:

*After more than a hundred years of being enslaved by feudalism, colonialism and imperialism, Vietnamese*

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<sup>119</sup>Nguyen Cao Thanh, **Op.cit**, pp. 191-192.



*Buddhism can raise the flag of interdependence and freedom in the Social Republic of Vietnam as our community. This is a heyday of Vietnamese Buddhism, which could be found in the course of history only under the Tran dynasty with the Trinity of the Truc Lam (Bamboo Forest) Sect. Now, the heyday has returned and it is in your hands as representatives of the nine Buddhist associations, congregations and denominations. From now on, there will be no differentiation between Buddhists of three regions. We now call ourselves by the most sacred and noblest term “Vietnamese Buddhists”.*<sup>120</sup>

The National Buddhist Congregation for unifying Buddhist followers around Vietnam was recognized as the first Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha’s Congregation. Furthermore, with the support of the current government, the Congregation also adopted a Charter and action plan with orientation “The Dhamma-The Nation and Socialism”.<sup>121</sup>

At this meeting, the Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha also agreed the way of building a new Saṅgha administrative system which replaced for all of the sub-Buddhist associations and Buddhist organizations which existed at that time. Moreover, Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha is the only Buddhist Saṅgha association which was recognized legally by the current Vietnamese government and it is a member of Vietnamese Fatherland Front.<sup>122</sup> This meeting also marked that this was the First Congress of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha. The number of delegates from nine denominations and congregation was 165 who are from all of four kinds of the Buddha’s disciple: Monk, Nun, laymen and lay women.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup>**The Report of the first Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Council**, (Hanoi: Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, 1981). p. 1.

<sup>121</sup>The Executive Council-Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, **The Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Charter**, (Hanoi: Religious publishing House, 2008), p. 4.

<sup>122</sup>**Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Ed. 2013, Chapter I, Article 9.** The Vietnamese Fatherland Front is a political alliance and a voluntary union of political organizations, socio-political organizations, social organizations and individuals representing their social classes and strata, ethnicities, religions, and overseas Vietnamese.

<sup>123</sup>Nguyen Cao Thanh, **Op.cit.**, p. 193.

In addition, the most important of this meeting is the establishment of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha's Charter 1981 A.D. and the current Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system has been formed since this meeting based on the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Charter which consists of 11 chapters and 46 articles. This Charter like Thai Saṅgha Act which mentioned about the structure, positions, title, authority, duties, number of members, etc.

According to the Article 9 of the charter, the administrative system of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha was divided into two main ranks: Central administration and Regional administration. The Central Saṅgha administration consists of two main departments: The Supreme Saṅgha Council and The Executive Committee. In addition, Regional administration consists of Provincial administration and District administration.

According to the article 12 to article 15, the Supreme Saṅgha Council was headed by a most senior Order which is called as "Supreme Patriarch" or "Saṅgharaja" (V. Phap Chu) and other vice-Supreme Patriarchs and Secretaries.<sup>124</sup> Totally, there was other 50 most senior Order as the members in the Supreme Saṅgha Council.

There were also fifty members in the Executive Committee- who are Thera, Mahāthera Bikkhu and Bikkhuni, lay Buddhist men and lay Buddhist women. Based on the article 25, the position president is the highest one, which is followed by three standing vice-presidents and other vice-presidents, deputy- secretary and two secretaries. There were also two members on the positions of treasurer and two members as the Saṅgha comptrollers.

However, according to the article no. 18, there were six main Buddhist departments of the Executive Council also known as the Central Departments which distinguish it from those department of the provincial level. The six departments were: (1) department of Saṅgha Affairs, (2) department of Education, (3) department of Buddhist Laity, (4) department of Propagation, (5) department of Culture, (6) department of

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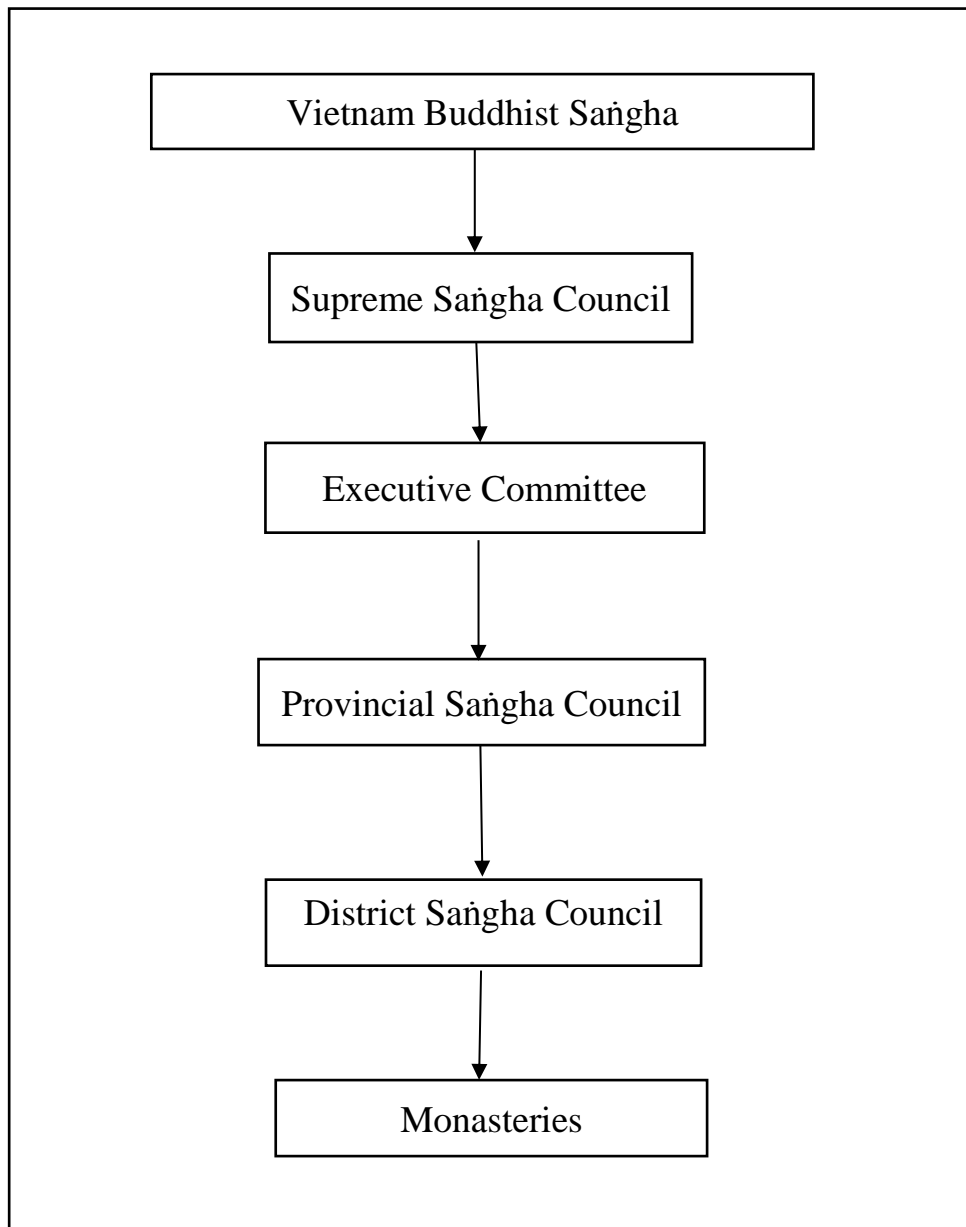
<sup>124</sup>The Executive Council-Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, **The Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Charter, Op.cit**, pp. 7-8.

Ritual. There was a deputy member of financial affair, and a deputy member of examine affair.

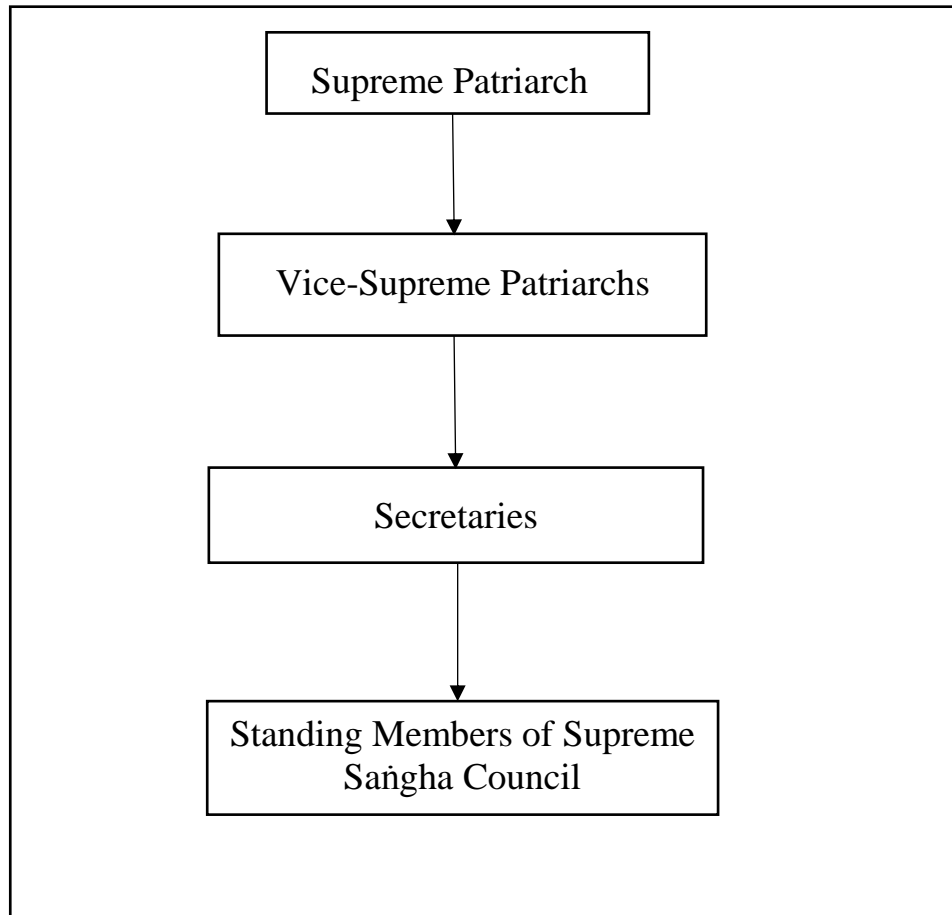
According to the article 33 of the chapter VI, the form of the provincial council somehow is organized like the structure of the Central Saṅgha administration. Generally, in the regional Saṅgha administration there is a position of provincial governor and one standing vice provincial governor, others provincial governor and deputy- secretary, secretaries. The departments which mentioned in the Central administration are also there in the regional administration in order to perform the Saṅgha's task at the local area.

The lowest administrative system is the District Saṅgha administration which has stipulated in the Chapter VII (article 38). However, even this is a lowest rank among the Saṅgha administrative system but the structure is similar to the upper ranks (Central and Provincial administration).

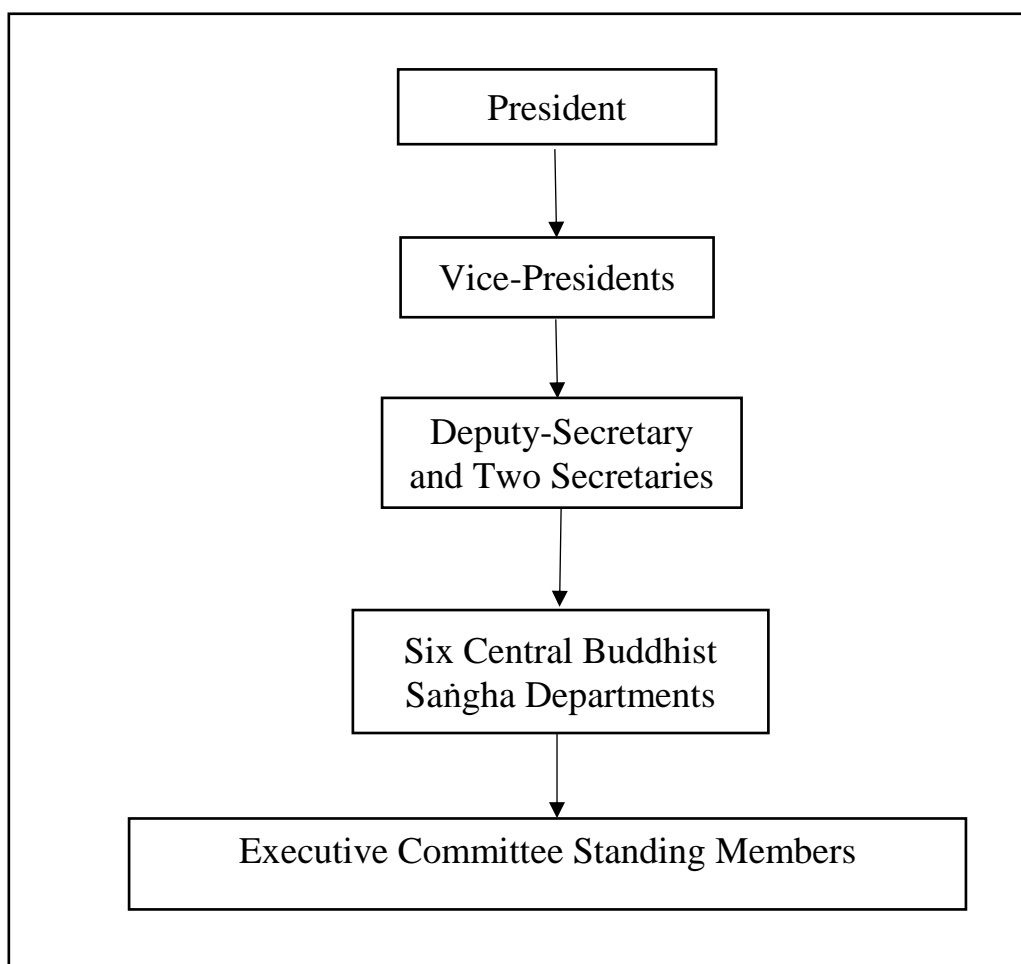
In generally, Vietnamese Saṅgha administrative system after the establishment of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha and in accordance with the Vietnamese Saṅgha Charter 1981 A.D, is showed as the following chart:



**Table 11: The general administrative system of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha according to the Charter 1981 A.D.**



**Table 12: The Structure of Vietnam Supreme Buddhist Saṅgha Council according to the Charter 1981 A.D.**



**Table 13: The Structure of the Executive Committee of Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha.**

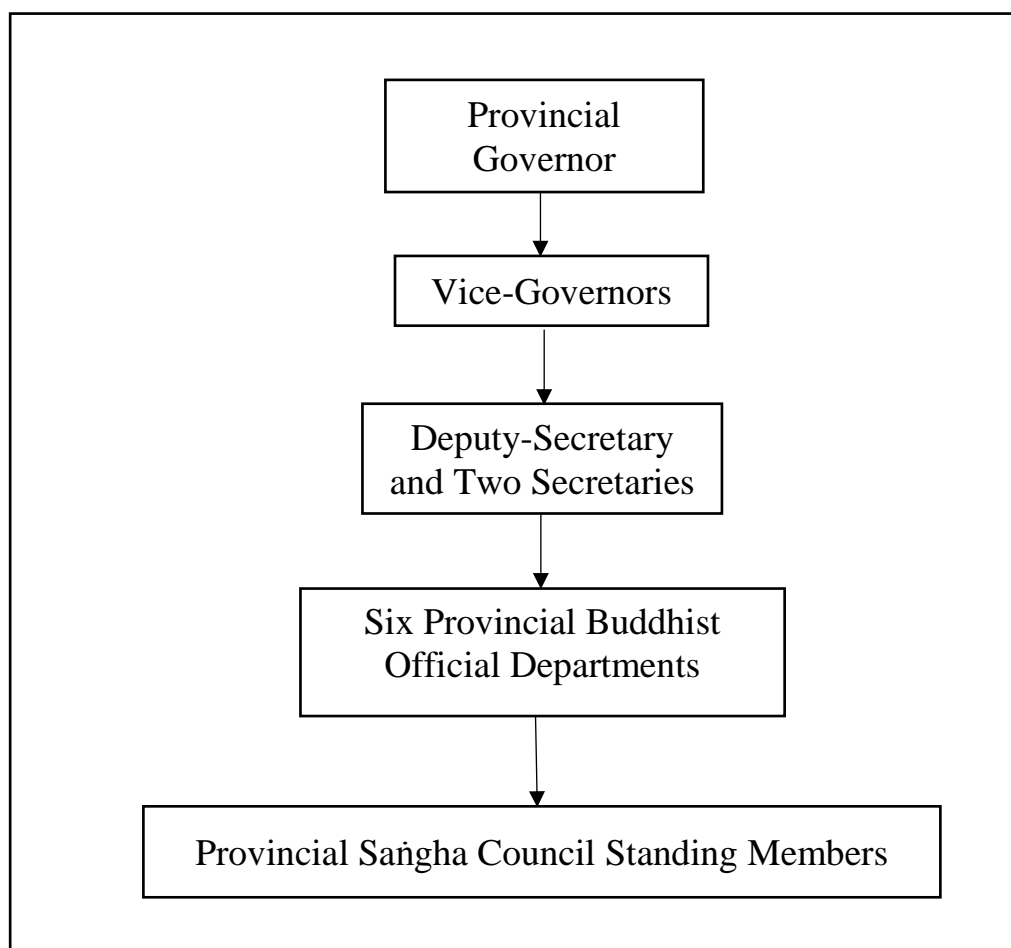
Generally, the way of organizing the Saṅgha Administration of all three levels (Central, Provincial and District) were built similarly, or we can say that the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Administrative system from Central to District were established by one form only. The difference here is only the name of each position in every ranks.

Therefore, according to Chapter VI from article 26 to article 28, the Vietnamese Provincial Saṅgha administration, the Provincial Council will be governed by a Provincial Governor and the rest positions are the same with the upper level and all of the members are not more than twenty-five people. The positions of the provincial council may be

summarized as followings: there were one Provincial Governor, other vice – governors, the members who on the task as the official header of the departments which are same to the Central administration, one deputy-secretary and one secretaries, one comptroller, one treasurer and one financial holder.

At the district administration, the article 26 mentioned that if the district had any monks, nuns and lay Buddhist people, the provincial council may appoint for the positions of one district governor and vice-governor, one secretary.

The structure of the Provincial Saṅgha administration may be described as the followings charts:



**Table 14: The Structure of Provincial Sangha Administrative System in Vietnam by the Charter 1981 A.D.**

The first Vietnamese Sangha Congress also marked the agreement of the Sangha in order to establish two Buddhist universities in the year of 1984 A.D. as we known nowadays as followings: Vietnam Buddhist University at Ho Chi Minh city in 1983 A.D.<sup>125</sup> and Vietnam Buddhist Academy at Hanoi in 1981A.D.<sup>126</sup>

<sup>125</sup>Vietnam Buddhist University at Hochiminh city, **The Regulation of Vietnam Buddhist University at Hochiminh city**, (Hochiminh city: Vietnam Buddhist University at Hochiminh city, 2009), p.1. Vietnam Buddhist University is an educational institute in undergraduate and research which belongs to Vietnam Buddhist Sangha. It was established by the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha based on the agreement of Hochiminh city People Committee on 17/10/1983.

<sup>126</sup>Vietnam Buddhist Academy at Hanoi city, **The Regulation of Vietnam Buddhist Academy at Hanoi City**, (Hanoi: Hanoi Buddhist Academy at Hanoi,



Since the year of 1981 A.D until now, there were 7 congresses and various yearly and three-monthly period meetings had been organized by the Vietnamese Saṅgha. By each five-year terms of office, the component of the official members and the structure had got many changes in order to complete and renew the Saṅgha Administrative system perfectly and effectively. Therefore, the Vietnamese Saṅgha Charter also had been changed and edited for several times through the changes of the Saṅgha.

In this case, the changes after each congress had been held was some new departments had been formed, the name of each governor stage also had been changed, the number of each stage and whole of the Saṅgha Administrative system also increased.

At the second Congress of the Saṅgha which was took place on 28<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> October 1987 A.D., the member of the Central Saṅgha Administration increased from the number of 50 to 60 and the Supreme Saṅgha Council had 37 members.<sup>127</sup> There were three more departments were established at this congress: (1) the Financial Department, (2) Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute and (3) the Social Charity Department. In addition, there were 29 provincial Buddhist administrations were established around the country.<sup>128</sup>

On 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> November 1992 A.D., the third congress of Vietnamese Saṅgha was organized and after this congress decided to establish the new department of the Foreign Buddhist Affair. The Supreme Saṅgha Council had 33 members and the Exexecutive Council had 70 members.<sup>129</sup> In addition, the third Vietnam Buddhist university which located at Hue province also was established under this congress. The number of Provincial Saṅgha administration increased to the number of 40 provincial administrations.

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1997), p.1. Vietnam Buddhist Academy at Hanoi city is a Buddhist University which belongs to the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, which had been established on 11/11/1981.

<sup>127</sup>Nguyen Cao Thanh, **Op.cit.**, p. 193.

<sup>128</sup>Minh Nga, **One Period Of Six Congresses**, [http://btgcp.gov.vn/Plus.aspx/vi/News/38/0/240/0/2986/Mot\\_chang\\_duong\\_qua\\_sau\\_ky\\_Dai\\_hoi](http://btgcp.gov.vn/Plus.aspx/vi/News/38/0/240/0/2986/Mot_chang_duong_qua_sau_ky_Dai_hoi). Retrieved on 10/November/2017.

<sup>129</sup>Nguyen Cao Thanh, **Op.cit.**, p. 194.

At the fourth Congress, which took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1997 A.D., according to the Saṅgha report, the number of the Supreme Saṅgha council's members is 67 and the Executive Council had 94 members. There were 49 provincial administrations were established around the country.<sup>130</sup>

At the fifth congress (from 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> December, 2002), the Vietnam Khmer University was established which is located at Can Tho city, and the number of provincial administrations was 52. There were 85 members of the Supreme Saṅgha Council and 95 members of the Executive Council.<sup>131</sup>

And this number of the Provincial Saṅgha Councils increased from 52 to 57 under the sixth Congress of the Saṅgha which was held on 11<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> December 2007. The Supreme Saṅgha Council was composed of 98 members and the Executive Council had 147 members.<sup>132</sup>

In like manner, the nearest Vietnamese Saṅgha Congress VII had been taken place on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 2012 in Hanoi with the presenting of more than one thousand delegates and observers from Vietnamese Saṅgha and other oversea Buddhist Saṅgha communities as well. Finally, after two official days working and discussing, the Congress was concluded successfully, with the agreement and unification of many important decisions of the national Saṅgha.<sup>133</sup>

Moreover, since that congress the nearest and newest Vietnamese Saṅgha Administrative system had been formed included many changes in every ranks of the whole system.

The Saṅgha charter was again edited which consisted of 13 chapters and 71 articles. The member at the Central Saṅgha administration was 288 members in total which is combined number of 89 members from Supreme Saṅgha Council and 199 from Executive

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<sup>130</sup> **Ibid.**, p. 194.

<sup>131</sup> **Ibid.**, p. 195.

<sup>132</sup> **Ibid.**, p. 195.

<sup>133</sup> The Seventh Congress of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha. <<https://giacngo.vn/PrintView.aspx?Language=vi&ID=3B5019>>, Retrieved on: 18 November 2017.

Council. In this five-years term, there were three new departments were established which replaced for the position of two members as the Saṅgha comptrollers. They were: The Department of Saṅgha Comptrollers, the Department of Legal Affair Department, and the Information and Communication. Finally, all of the sixty-three provinces had already established the provincial Saṅgha administrations after this congress and under these five-years office period of the Saṅgha.<sup>134</sup> However, the structure of the Supreme Saṅgha Council is remained as the same with the first Saṅgha Congress.<sup>135</sup>

Since after the organization of the seventh Saṅgha Congress and until 2017 A.D.-the final year of this five-years period (2012-2017 A.D.), the Vietnamese Saṅgha Administration still follow as the same structure from the first Congress. There were more official departments establishing at each ranks of the structure. There are 13 Buddhist official departments<sup>136</sup> were established through seven Saṅgha Congresses. Even though, the name and the number of each position in the Saṅgha had been changed by several times, but in fact according to their duties, the position and the name may be as the same with the first Congress. There are two offices of the Central Saṅgha Administration in Hanoi capital and Ho Chi Minh city.

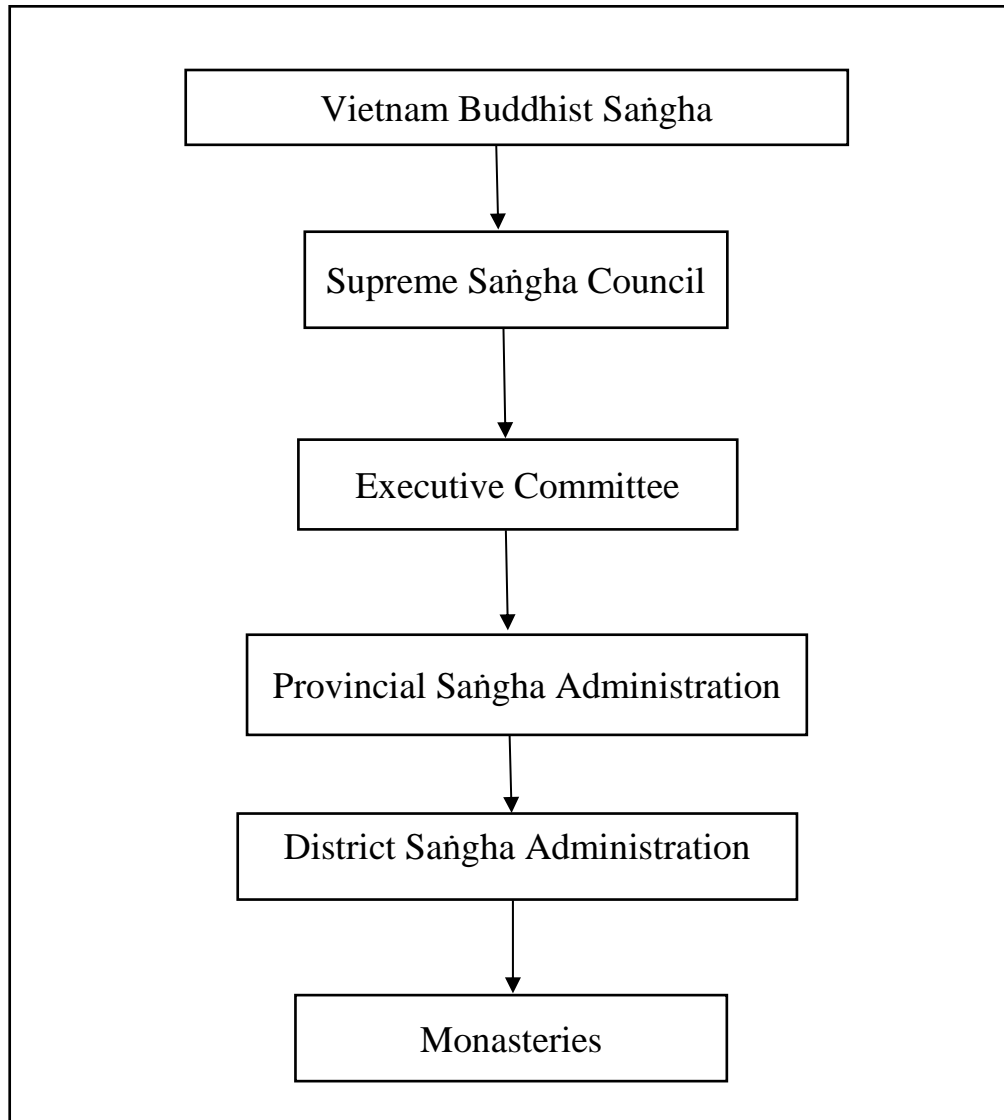
The present Vietnamese Saṅgha Administrative System can be described as the followings charts:

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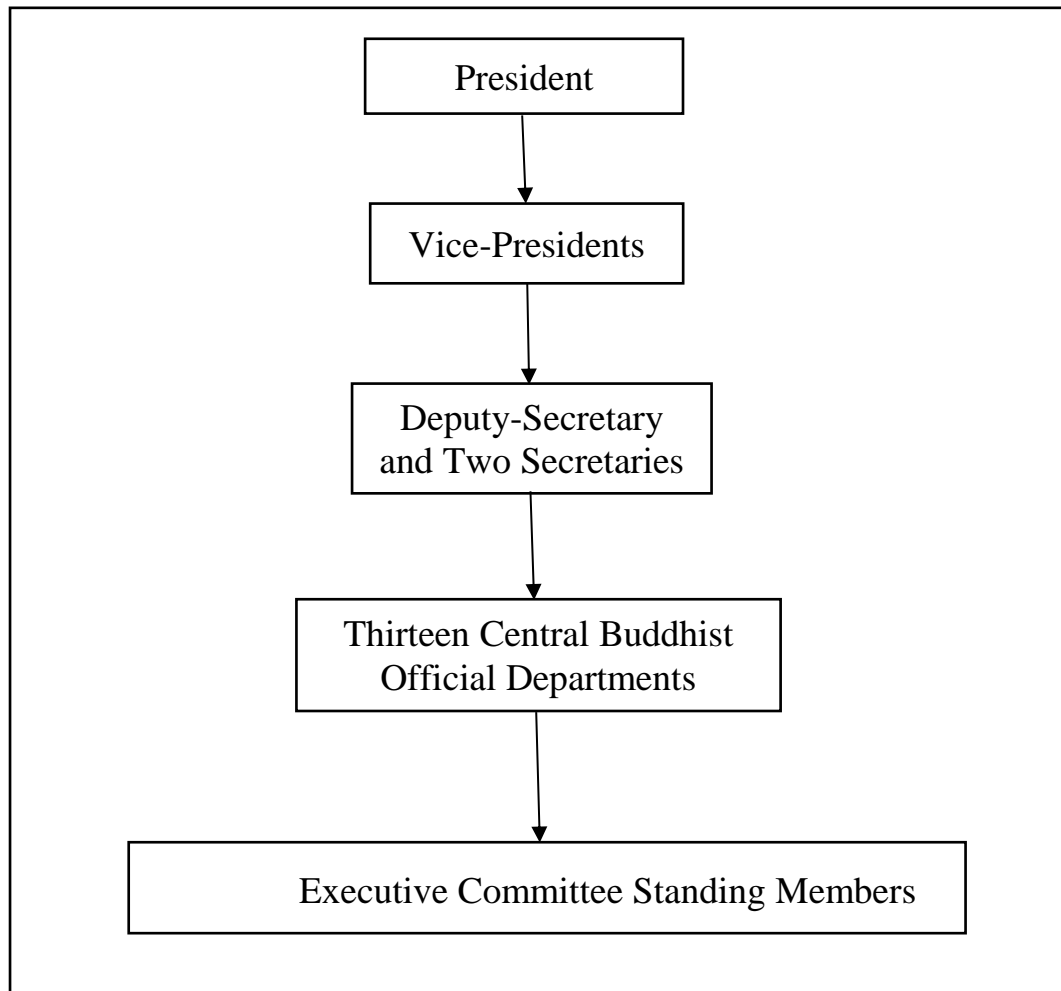
<sup>134</sup>Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha-Executive Council, **The Resolution of the 7<sup>th</sup> Congress of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha**, (Hanoi: Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, 2012).

<sup>135</sup>See the Table No. 12, page 91.

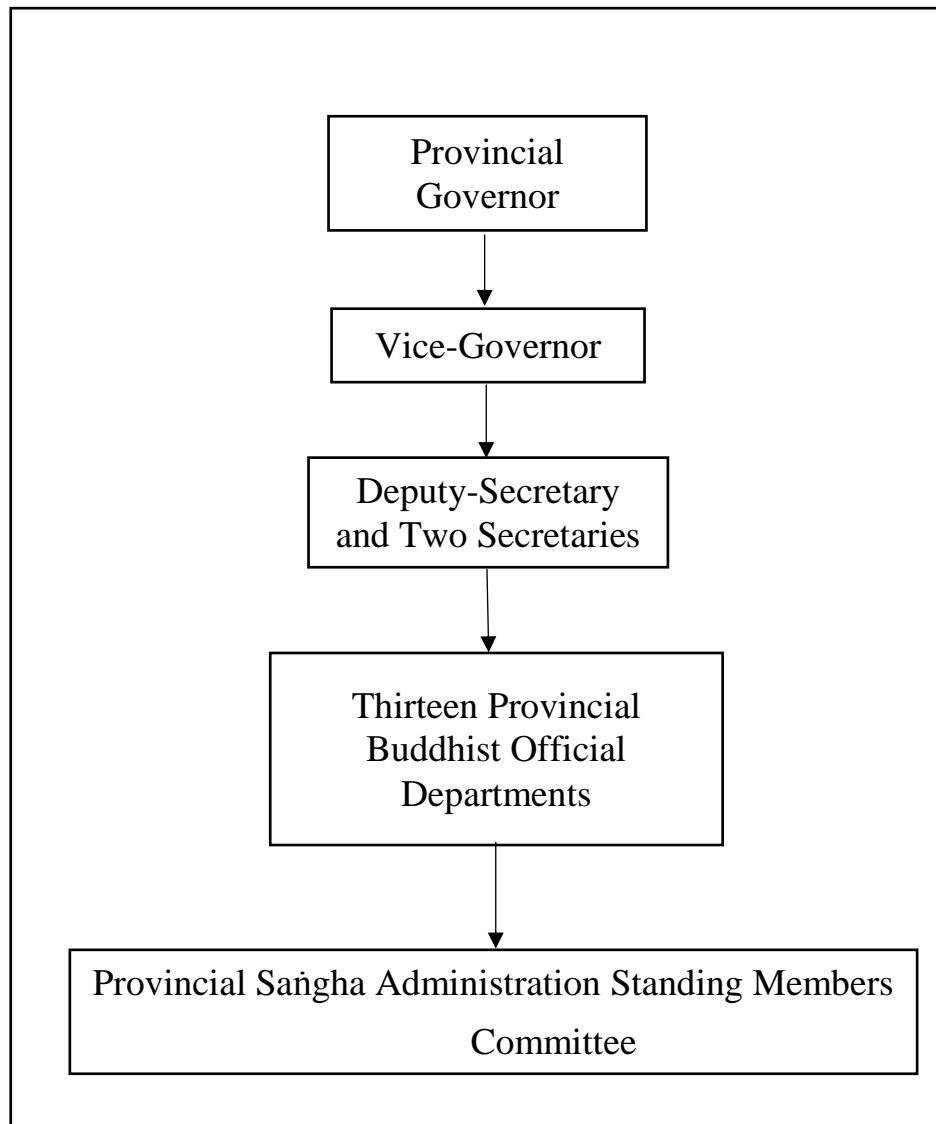
<sup>136</sup>13 Buddhist official departments which have mentioned above, summarized as: (1) Saṅgha Affair, (2) Buddhist Education, (3) Buddhist Laity, (4) Buddhism Propagation, (5) Buddhist Culture, (6) Ritual, (7) Economy-Financial, (8) Vietnam Buddhist Research Institute, (9) Social Charity, (10) Saṅgha Comptrollers, (11) Legal Affair, (12) Foreign Buddhist Affair, (13) Information and Communication.



**Table 15: The Present General Structure of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Administrative System.**



**Table 16: The Present Executive Committee of the Vietnamese Saṅgha Administration**



**Table 17: The Present Provincial Saṅgha Administrative System of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.**

The administrative system of the District Saṅgha Council at the present also formed similar to the Provincial Saṅgha Council, which is governed by the Saṅgha District Governor and vice-governors, and the Saṅgha official departments are the same with the upper ranks.

### **3.2 Methods of Selecting Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Administration's Members**

The structure of Vietnamese Saṅgha administration is divided into two main ranks of Central Saṅgha council and Regional administration and it operate and serve the Saṅgha by various official positions in the system. Even though, there are many position in the Saṅgha but the methods of choosing the Saṅgha members of each rank are the same way. The method members of each council or the members of each department is mentioned and regulated in the Saṅgha Charter.

The selection of the members of each council from Central to the District are performed at the new Saṅgha Congress of each level which marked the beginning of every five-year term.

#### **3.2.1 Selection of the Vietnam Central Saṅgha Administration's Members**

Generally, in the rank of Central Saṅgha Council, there are other two main councils. Therefore, the method of selection members of these two councils is different.

##### **a. Selection of Vietnam Supreme Saṅgha Council's Members**

According to the article 12 and article 13, of the Vietnamese Saṅgha Charter, the requirements of each member are: (1) holding the age of more than seventy-years old, (2) having more than fifty Vassa. The members including the position of Supreme Patriarch and the rest of the Supreme Saṅgha council will be introduced or appointed by the previous members of the Supreme Saṅgha Council only and they will be honored

by all of the Central Saṅgha administration at the new Saṅgha Congress.<sup>137</sup>

In addition, the membership of senior Order (monk only) in the supreme Saṅgha Council will be maintained all their monastic life. Moreover, whoever in the position of the member of Supreme Saṅgha Council is required not to be the member of the Executive Council, except who is specially required by the Executive Committee.<sup>138</sup>

### **b. Selection of Vietnam Executive Committee's Members**

According to the Chapter V, article 19, the members of the Executive Committee consist of the typical Buddhist monks, nuns and the lay Buddhist people who had many achievements in contributing to the development of Buddhism as well as for society. The number and the candidates as the members of Executive Committee are proposed by the previous standing members of the Executive Committee. The candidates are the representations of each Central Saṅgha department and the representations of every Provincial Saṅgha administration. The new name list of all position in the Executive Committee including the position of a new president will be appointed and agreed by all of the member of previous Executive Committee and they will be proved by the Supreme Saṅgha Council.<sup>139</sup>

In Addition, the members of the Executive Committee are not more than eighty years old and the president of the council must be a Buddhist monk. One person is not allowed to hold more than two different positions and he/she also not allowed to hold one position in the council for more than three Saṅgha congresses or more than three times of five-years official period. The name list of the Executive Committee's members must be examined by the previous council and current government.

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<sup>137</sup>Executive Council-Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, **The Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Charter**, Op.cit, p. 7.

<sup>138</sup>**Ibid**, p. 7.

<sup>139</sup>**Ibid**, p. 9.



If the new Saṅgha Congress isn't happened yet, but the position of president is missing, one of three standing vice-presidents would be appointed to govern the Saṅgha until the five-years official period ending and the new congress is organized.

Other positions in the council also follow the same way of replacing the missed-positions likes the position of Saṅgha president which has mentioned above.

### **3.2.2 Selection of Vietnam Regional Saṅgha Administration's Members**

There are two ranks inside the Regional Administration: the section of the Provincial Saṅgha administration's members and the selection of the District- Saṅgha administration's members.

#### **a. Selection of Vietnam Provincial Saṅgha Administration's Members**

The method of selection the Provincial governor and other members of the provincial council are mentioned in article 31, Chapter VI. The candidate for the governor and the vice governors must be the monks and the rest positions may from both monastic monks, nuns and lay Buddhist people. However, they must be the typical local Buddhist monks, nuns and laity. The name list of all the positions in the Provincial Saṅgha council is introduction and invited by the previous council at the new provincial Saṅgha administration congress. Later on, their positions would be proved by the Executive Committee and the State Government.<sup>140</sup>

Furthermore, the candidates of the provincial Saṅgha council come from all the Provincial Saṅgha official departments and form the members of lower Rank-District Saṅgha administration. In the case that if the previous Saṅgha administration of any province couldn't appoint the position of Provincial Saṅgha Governor, the Executive Committee will

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<sup>140</sup>**Ibid**, p. 13

appoint one of their standing members to be the new governor of that province.

### **b. Selection of Vietnam District Saṅgha Administration's Members**

By the same manner with the upper rank on the method of selection member of each council, the members of the district council also are introduced and appointed by the previous District Saṅgha administration at the new Saṅgha Congress which has been mentioned in the Chapter VII, article 37 and 38.

Like the provincial administration, the candidates also from the local district monks, nuns and lay people. Only a Buddhist monk would be appointed for the position of district Saṅgha administration. The provincial administration could appoint someone of provincial council to be the governor for any district where in case the district council couldn't appoint a district Saṅgha Governor. In the same way, the name list of the council's members will be proved by the Provincial Saṅgha administration and the political District Government.<sup>141</sup> Moreover, the governor of the Provincial and District Saṅgha have to be a monk from any sect or tradition in Vietnam Buddhism.

### **3.3 Duties of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Administration's Members**

As the structure which has mentioned above, there are two main levels ranks (Central and Regional Saṅgha administration) and other various councils and official departments among the Vietnamese Saṅgha Administrative system. Therefore, each level and each position in the Saṅgha will has different and separated duties which had mentioned in the Saṅgha Charter.

Generally, the Saṅgha Charter mentions about the duties of the Supreme Patriarch, the President, the Provincial Governor, District Governor and their own council's duties.

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<sup>141</sup>**Ibid**, p. 14.

### **3.3.1 Duties of Vietnam Central Saṅgha Administration's Members**

Two main councils in the central Saṅgha administration of Vietnamese Buddhist Saṅgha have their own duties, and they perform different duties to each other, or we can say each council will have its own special duties.

#### **a. Duties of Vietnam Supreme Saṅgha Council's Members**

Among the members of the Supreme Saṅgha Council the Supreme Patriarch is the header and the most respected representative of Supreme Council and the Vietnamese Saṅgha as well. The Supreme Patriarch will be the person who will be on behalf of the Supreme Council in every Saṅgha activity. In the Vietnamese Saṅgha Charter doesn't mention about the personal duties of the Supreme Patriarch himself. Otherwise, it mentions all of the duties of the Supreme Saṅgha Council's members generally.

According to the Article 16, the Supreme Saṅgha Council's duties classified into six main duties as followings:

- 1) To prove any National Saṅgha meetings or the Congresses of entire Vietnam Saṅgha Council.
- 2) To guide and observe all the Saṅgha activities and the Executive Council on the aspect of Buddha Dhamma and monastic Vinaya.
- 3) To prove the consecration to the higher rank of all monastic monks, nuns of whole the Saṅgha.
- 4) To approve the reward and punishment of any Saṅgha member whose name had been submitted by the Executive Committee.
- 5) To publish the message of the Vesak day and other important Buddhist and non-Buddhist festivals and ceremonies.
- 6) To introduce the members and establish the Supreme Saṅgha Council.

### **b. The Executive Committee**

The Executive is also headed by the president who will decide all of the decisions of the Saṅgha which had been proved and reported by the Executive committee. Therefore, there isn't personal duties of the president which mentioning in the Charter. On an other hand, the duties of all Executive council's members are mentioned at the Article 19, Chapter V generally.

There are fourteen main duties of the Executive committee are mentioned in the Saṅgha Charter as followings:

1) To elect the members of the new Executive committee in every Congress.

2) To set up the yearly Saṅgha activities programs in accordance to the resolution which had been issued by the Saṅgha Congress.

3) To organize, to perform, to remind and to examine the performance of all Saṅgha activities by five-years official period, the yearly plan, special Saṅgha activities program and the important events of the Saṅgha.

4) To guide, manage, administrate, control all aspects of the organization of the Saṅgha Administration from Central administration to District administration. Publishing the regulations, rules to concretize the Saṅgha activities in order to ensure that all of the Saṅgha activities will be performed effectively.

5) To arrange and select the candidates to be the members of every Provincial Saṅgha administration by the way of discussing with the State Government in the case that there are some positions missing in the provincial council.

6) To decide the position of abbot for the special monasteries which belongs to the Central administration or the Provincial administration.

7) To introduce the monastic monks, nuns in order to participate in every social, political organization or activities.

8) An only one office where is in task of whole Saṅgha communication.

9) To suggest and request the government in order to deal with any organization, person inside and outside the Saṅgha who have commit the rights and legal benefits of the monasteries and the members of the Saṅgha.

10) To examine, to deal with those who commit the monastic Vinaya, the Saṅgha Charter, regulations and other rules of the Vietnamese Saṅgha.

11) To prove the plan, the working program of any central department, central Saṅgha offices, the organizations and the members of the Central Saṅgha administration and the Provincial Saṅgha administration.

12) To request the Supreme Saṅgha Council to consecrate the higher ranks for the special personal Buddhist monk, nun in order to fulfill the missed positions of the Executive committee.

13) To collect and summarize the opinion and the idea of the Saṅgha's members in order to submit to the state administrative offices about the policies which are related to the Saṅgha activities.

14) Other duties which are requested by the Supreme Saṅgha Council and which had mentioned in other related documents.

### **3.3.2 Duties of Vietnam Regional Sangha Administration's Members**

According to the Regional Saṅgha administration, there are two ranks under the Regional level, therefore the duties of the members of Central level can be classified into: the duties of the Provincial Saṅgha administration's members and the District- Saṅgha administration's members.

### **a. Duties of Vietnam Provincial Saṅgha Administration's Members**

The provincial administration is required to perform such duties which had mentioned in the Chapter VI, Article 32 as bellow:

1) To perform the policy, directions, the activities' program of the local Buddhist Saṅgha by the guiding of the Central Saṅgha council.

2) To confirm the yearly activities' program in accordance to the conclusions which had been issued at the Provincial Saṅgha council congress.

3) To organize, perform and examine the performance of those local Saṅgha activities by five-years term, yearly period, special local Saṅgha activities program and the important events of the local Saṅgha council.

4) To organize, perform, guide, control and manage all the aspects of the activities of the provincial Saṅgha official departments, the District Saṅgha administration and the members among the Provincial Saṅgha administration.

5) To introduce the members of the new Provincial Saṅgha administration.

6) To administrate the numbers, the name and the positions of all Provincial Saṅgha administration which according to the Saṅgha charter and the regulations of the Provincial Saṅgha administration itself.

7) To prove the members of every Saṅgha official departments and the administrative system of the Buddhist education centers which are belonged to Provincial Saṅgha council.

8) To set up the regulations and working rules of the Provincial Saṅgha official departments and the provincial Buddhist education centers.

9) To introduce the Buddhist, lay Buddhist people in order to participate other local political and social organizations.

10) To arrange and select the candidates to be the members of every District Saṅgha council by the way of discussing with the local Government in the case that there are some positions missing in the provincial council.

11) To collect and summarize the opinion and the idea of the provincial Saṅgha's members in order to submit to the Central Saṅgha administration and state administrative offices about the policies which are related to the Saṅgha activities.

12) To decide the position of abbot for the monasteries which under the Provincial administration's care.

13) To prove the plan, the working program of any provincial Saṅgha official departments, District Saṅgha administrations, Buddhist education centers, the organizations and the members of the Central Saṅgha administration and the Provincial Saṅgha administration.

14) Other duties which are requested by the Executive Council and which had mentioned in other related documents.

#### **b. Duties of Vietnam District Saṅgha Administration's Members**

The District Saṅgha administration is the lowest ranks in the Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system, or this is the office where policy of the Saṅgha will be sent and performed directly by each monastic members or each monastery. Therefore, the duties of the mostly focus on the direct management of the monasteries, monastic members and the local Buddhist practicing organizations.

The duties of the District Saṅgha administration somehow are summarized in the Chapter VII, Article 40, as bellows:

1) To perform the policy, Saṅgha activities' program at the local area by the guiding of the upper ranks.

2) To confirm the yearly activities' program in accordance to the conclusions which had been issued at the District Saṅgha administration congress.

3) To organize, to perform, to remind and to examine the performance of all Saṅgha activities by five-years official period, the yearly plan, special Saṅgha activities program and the important events of the Saṅgha.

4) To organize, to perform, to remind and to examine the performance of all Saṅgha activities by five-years official period, the yearly plan, special Saṅgha activities program and the important events of the local Saṅgha council.

5) To prove the members of every Saṅgha official departments and the administrative system of the Buddhist education centers, Buddhist practicing centers, which are under the District Saṅgha council care.

6) To introduce the Buddhist, lay Buddhist people in order to participate other local political and social organizations.

7) To collect and summarize the opinion and the idea of the District Saṅgha's members in order to submit to the Provincial Saṅgha administration and state administrative offices about the policies which are related to the Saṅgha activities.

8) To introduce the position of abbot for the monasteries, temples, Buddhist practicing center, etc... and having report to the Provincial Saṅgha administration and other political governments in order to prove that positions.

9) Other duties which are requested by the upper councils and which had mentioned in other related documents.

### **c) Duties of a Vietnam Abbot**

According to Article 41, Chapter VII of the regulations of the Saṅgha Affairs Department, a Vietnamese Buddhist abbot has to perform such duties as the followings:

1) To perform the policy, Saṅgha activities' program at the local area by the guiding of the upper ranks.

2) To perform all of the Buddhist festivals and ceremonies at their all temple, and as well as to take care the local social welfare.



3) To organize and manage the education and practice of the Buddhist monks, nuns, novice and lay Buddhist people accordance with the Buddha teachings.

4) To take responsibilities for all of the political issues and the government policies which related to the organization of a monastery.

### **3.4 Concluding Remark**

Even though, Buddhism had been introduced into Vietnam for long time ago, but there wasn't any Saṅgha administration system for a long period of time. Tran Dynasty in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, the first Saṅgha administration had been built in Vietnam. From 15<sup>th</sup> century until 19<sup>th</sup> century, there is a difficult period of Vietnam Buddhism, therefore the King managed all the religions without building any administrative system for Buddhism. From the later 19<sup>th</sup> century until the years of 1981 A.D., especially after the recovery of Vietnam Buddhism in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, there were a lot of Buddhist Saṅgha organizations had been established around the country. In addition, among them, the Unified Vietnam Buddhist Congregation was an important Saṅgha Buddhist organization which laid the foundation of building the later Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha in 1981 A.D.

Finally, with the establishment of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha in 1981.A.D., from now on Vietnam Buddhism had a unified and legal Saṅgha administration system. The Vietnam Saṅgha administrative system had been found base on the Saṅgha Charter which was composed in 1981 A.D., which mentioned about all of the significations of all members of the system. By the period of five-year official term, Vietnam Saṅgha had organized the congress for eight times until now, which made a lot of changes in the Saṅgha administration system after each congress. The present Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha administration system is consisted of three main ranks: Central Saṅgha administration, the Regional Saṅgha administration which consists of Provincial Saṅgha administration, District Saṅgha administration and the monastery's abbot. The Central

Saṅgha administration was divided into two highest councils: Supreme Saṅgha Council and Executive Committee.

Although, whole of the Vietnam Saṅgha Administration system is divided into three main councils and several official departments but all of them get the same method of selection the members of their own councils and offices. The main method is the way of introduction the new members by the previous council's member or the department's members. Then, the members of the lowers ranks will be proved by the upper ranks such as: the members of District Saṅgha administrations are introduced by the previous members of this council and will be proved by the Provincial Saṅgha administration. Furthermore, the local governments also prove the name list of those councils' members.

However, only the senior Orders of Supreme Saṅgha Council introduce, appoint the members of this council by themselves and they will be honored by all of the Central Saṅgha administration at the new Saṅgha Congress.

Among the administration system, the Supreme Saṅgha Council is the highest ranks and its members are the most senior Orders of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha. Therefore, their duties also focus on the aspect of Vinaya and Buddhist practicing affairs. They are the models of the junior class of monks who will guide and observe all the Saṅgha activities and the Executive Committee on the aspect of Buddha Dhamma and monastic Vinaya. On an other hand, their duties are to prove the lowers Saṅgha members' list, to promulgate the message in order to grant the Saṅgha's activities, etc. in addition, other duties are similar to the lower councils.

Generally, all of other councils from the central level to the lowest level of district except the Supreme Saṅgha Council, they have some similar duties. As their all duties which had mentioned above, they may summarize in brief as followings: to introduce the new councils' members; to manage and help the lower councils; to perform Saṅgha's activities and important events; to introduce, appoint and prove all positions of the lowers levels; to guild the Saṅgha in the legal way.

## **Chapter IV**

### **The Comparison of the Saṅgha Administrative System Between Thailand and Vietnam in The Modern Time**

The comparative study of the Saṅgha Administrative System Between Thailand and Vietnam of this research focuses on the similarities and differences on three main aspects of the system: 1) the structure of Vietnam and Thai Buddhist Saṅgha administration, 2) the methods of selecting Buddhist Saṅgha administration's members in those two countries, and 3) the duties of Buddhist Saṅgha administration's members in Thailand and Vietnam.

#### **4.1 The Structure of Vietnam and Thai Buddhist Saṅgha administration**

There are many factors which make the similarities and differences about the structure of the Saṅgha administration between Vietnam and Thailand, there are some major factors which may summarized as: (1) the historical establishment and their evolution, (2) the classified ranks of the Buddhist Saṅgha administrations, and (3) the Saṅgha Act and regulations.

##### **4.1.1 Similarities**

There are some similarities on the structure of the Saṅgha administration, which are mostly focused on some main elements as followings: 1) Historical establishment and their evolution, 2) The classified ranks in the Saṅgha administration, 3) The Buddhist Saṅgha act and regulation.

### **a. Historical Establishment and Their Evolution**

They have the same things of at the beginning is two Saṅgha administrations were found under the monarchy government and at the time that Buddhism was a state religion in both two countries. The Saṅgha administrations totally received and depended on the support of the royal kingdom and the monarchy rulers at the first beginning.

### **b. The Classified Ranks in the Saṅgha Administration**

In general, the structure of both two Saṅgha administrations can be classified in the same way of having two main administrations: Central Saṅgha administrations and Regional Saṅgha administrations. According to the article 13, the chapter II of Thai Saṅgha Act 1962 A.D., the central office of Thai Supreme Saṅgha council is located at the Religious Affairs office.<sup>142</sup> Thai Saṅgha administrative system is under the control of the Ministry of Education, and Vietnam Saṅgha administrative system is under the control of Vietnamese Fatherland Front.

### **c. Buddhist Saṅgha Acts and Regulations**

In compare, the content of Thai Saṅgha act and Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Charter mention with the same general major items which are the required regulations to established and manage a whole Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system, its institutes and official departments. All of the regulations must be suitable and is built based on the Buddha's Dhamma the monastic discipline, and the current state law system as well. The contents of the Saṅgha Act and the Charter of the Buddhist Saṅgha of Vietnam stipulate the following main contents:

- 1) Specify the common name of Saṅgha and the regulations
- 2) Classifying the ranks in the system.
- 3) The charter of activities, appointment, responsibilities of each position from central to local administration.

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<sup>142</sup>Mahamakuta Educational Council, **Op.cit.**, p. 37.

4) Reward and punishment.

#### 4.1.2 Differences

Generally, there are many differences on the structure of Saṅgha administration which are also focused on three main aspects: 1) Historical establishment and their evolution, 2) The classified ranks in the Saṅgha administration, 3) The Buddhist Saṅgha act and regulation.

##### a. Historical Establishment and Their Evolution

In Thailand, by the historical evidence mentioned that King Ram Khamheang the great had built a monastery as a gift to the Mahathera Saṅgharaja, who is the wiser than any other monk in the Kingdom in 1291 A.D.<sup>143</sup>. It marks that the first Thai Saṅgha administration had been found under the reign of King Ram Khamheang of the Sukhothai Dynasty. The Thai Saṅgha administrative system had been continued since Sukhothai dynasty through other two later dynasties of Ayutthaya and Thonburi, until the present dynasty of Ratanakosin. Totally, it takes almost eight hundred years of development. There was only one Theravada Saṅgha administration as the main structure of Thai Saṅgha administration had been found and remained until now.

The first Vietnam Saṅgha administration had been found under the Tran dynasty by the event that King Tran Anh Tong who had appointed Venerable Phap Loa of the Mahāyāna Truc Lam Zen Saṅgha council for the position as the Header of the Vietnam Saṅgha at that time.<sup>144</sup> After the cessation Tran dynasty in 1400 A.D, there was a big black gap in the development of Vietnamese Buddhism when Buddhism had faced many problems and there wasn't any Saṅgha administrative system exist for that long period of time.<sup>145</sup> Until the establishment of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha in 1981 A.D, which is the former Vietnam

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<sup>143</sup>Yoneo Ishii, (tr). Peter Hawkes, **Saṅgha, Stage and Society: Thai Buddhism in History**, (Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press, 1986), p. 60.

<sup>144</sup>Nguyen Lang, **Op.cit.**, p. 306.

<sup>145</sup>Tran Quang Thuan, **Op.cit.**, pp. 740-745.

Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system, it was five hundred years that Vietnam Saṅgha didn't have a Saṅgha administrative system. During this long period of time, there were a lots Buddhist Saṅgha organizations had been found, but there wasn't a national Saṅgha administration system had been found.

Therefore, Thai Saṅgha administration was built (at 13<sup>th</sup> century) before the establishment of Vietnam Saṅgha administration. The Thai development of Thai Saṅgha administration was developed from first dynasty to the present dynasty continuously. The development of Vietnam Saṅgha administration was interrupted by many reasons. From the beginning, Thai Saṅgha administration is Theravadin Saṅgha administration, but Vietnam Saṅgha administration is a Mahayana Saṅgha administration.

#### **b. The Classified Ranks in the Saṅgha Administration**

Saṅgharaja is the header of Thai Saṅgha, he is also the highest position among the structure. The second rank is the Supreme Saṅgha Council which is the central Saṅgha administration. Under the Supreme Saṅgha Council, by the way of Buddhist Saṅgha management, there are four chief superintendents of main zones of Central, South, North, East and one chief superintendent of Dhammayutika Ecclesiastics. Lower than the Central Saṅgha administration is the Saṅgha administration of the Regions. In this sense, Thai Buddhism is divided into eight-teen regions, 77 Provincial, many District Saṅgha and Sub-District administrations are the two lowest ranks in Thai Saṅgha administration.

In the current Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, Supreme Saṅgha council is the highest rank which included the positions of Supreme Patriarch. There is another council is the Executive Council, both two councils are the Central Buddhist Saṅgha administration in Vietnam. Furthermore, the management of Saṅgha direct from the Central council to the province and district council, there is not any zone or regional Saṅgha administration. According to the article 4, chapter I of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Charter, the central office of Central Vietnam Buddhist

administration which consists of Supreme Saṅgha Council and Executive Committee is at Quan Su Temple-Ha Noi capital city as the main office and at Quang Duc zen monastery in Ho Chi Minh city as the southern standing office of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.<sup>146</sup>

### c. Buddhist Saṅgha Acts and Regulations

The term “legal text” here refers to the relative documents and the regulations which prove the regulation and the structure of the Saṅgha administration of each country. In addition, like the purpose of the national constitution of each country or each political organization, the Saṅgha Administrative Act or Saṅgha regulation is compiled in order to manage all the Saṅgha administrative structure.

In the historical development Thai Saṅgha administration, the Saṅgha Act is the important text in the role of building the Thai Saṅgha administration. Since the beginning of the first Saṅgha Act which had been enacted in the year of 1902.A.D which was enacted under the reign of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V. Later on, Thai Saṅgha Act had been re-edit again for several times, the first edit was happened in 2484 B.E. (1941.A.D)<sup>147</sup>. The characteristics of the Saṅgha Act was replaced again in 1962 A.D, which came into force on January 1, 1963 A.D<sup>148</sup> and the newest version of the Thai Saṅgha Act was enacted in 1992 A.D. The present Thai Saṅgha Act is the edited version of the Saṅgha Act 1962 A.D which consists of 8 chapters and 46 articles.

In Vietnam, the legal Saṅgha administrative rules and regulations are compiled as one Saṅgha Charter which was issued at the first Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Council. The Saṅgha Charter was compiled by the standing council of Executive Committee and counter-singed by the President of the Committee. In addition, it was approved by the Supreme Saṅgha Council and the Prime Minister. Since 1981 A.D. until 2012 A.D., the Vietnam Saṅgha charter has been edited for five times

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<sup>146</sup>Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, **Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Charter ed. V.** (Ho Chi Minh city: Religious Publishing House, 2012), p. 4.

<sup>147</sup>Sunthorn Na-rangsi, **Op.cit.**, p.7.

<sup>148</sup>Yoneo Ishii, (tr). Peter Hawkes, **Op.cit.**, pp. 115-116.

throughout seven Vietnam Saṅgha Congresses. The present Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha Charter consists of 13 chapters and 71 articles.

**Table 18: Similarities and Differences on the Structure of Saṅgha administrative system between Thailand and Vietnam.**

	<b>Thailand</b>	<b>Vietnam</b>
<p><b>Differences</b></p> <p>• <b>Historical Establishment and their Evolution.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thai Saṅgha administration had been found in 13<sup>th</sup> century and it developed for almost eight hundred years.</li> <li>• The administrative system had been developed continuously without any disruption.</li> <li>• Thai Saṅgha administration was found in a Theravadin Saṅgha administration form.</li> <li>• There were four ages of Thai Ecclesiastical Administration: Sukhothai (1257-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vietnam Saṅgha administration had been found in 14<sup>th</sup> century.</li> <li>• It was interrupted for almost five hundred years; it was found again in the year of 1981.</li> <li>• Vietnam Saṅgha administration was found in a Mahayana Saṅgha administration form.</li> <li>• There are two main ages of Vietnam Ecclesiastical Administration: Tran</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Classified Ranks in the Saṅgha Administration.</b></li> </ul>	<p>1378 A.D), Ayutthaya (1350-1767 A.D), Thonburi (1767-1782 A.D) and the present Ratanakosin (1902 A.D- now)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The present Saṅgha receives the support from royal kingdom and the government</li> <li>• The lineage of Saṅgharaja is the highest and most powerful rank. Who may decide prove all of Saṅgha activities.</li> <li>• The Supreme Saṅgha Council is the highest council. They decide all of Saṅgha activities.</li> <li>• The Central council divides into 4</li> </ul>	<p>dynasty (1225- 1400 A.D.), and the present administration (1981-now).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The present Saṅgha receives the support from only the government.</li> <li>• The Supreme Patriarch and the Supreme Saṅgha council just a highest respected rank in order to be a spiritual and monastic Vinaya leaders.</li> <li>• Executive Council decide all Saṅgha activities.</li> </ul>
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<p>• <b>Buddhist Saṅgha Administrative Legal Text.</b></p>	<p>zone and one chief superintendent of Dhammayutika Ecclesiastics. All of provinces again are managed by 18 Regional governors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One office only, which located inside the government Ministry of Education.</li> <li>• The Regional Saṅgha administration is divided into: Regional, Provincial, District, sub- District, and the lowest is Abbot of each monastery.</li> <li>• The first Saṅgha Act had been enacted very early in 1941 A.D.</li> <li>• The Saṅgha Act was enacted by the royal King with the assistance of the Order</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is not any zone or regional, but there are 13 Buddhist Saṅgha Official Departments in the Central administration.</li> <li>• One main office, and one standing office which are located at the Buddhist monasteries which separate from government organ.</li> <li>• The Regional Saṅgha administration is divided into only three main ranks: Provincial, District and the Abbot of each temple.</li> <li>• The Saṅgha Charter had been enacted late, in 1981 A.D.</li> </ul>
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	<p>Council and the Minister of Education.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Saṅgha Act is edited by the royal King when it is required.</li> <li>• 8 chapters and 46 articles.</li> <li>• Under-signed by the Prime Minister.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Saṅgha Charter was enacted by discussion of the representatives of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha's at the Saṅgha Congresses.</li> <li>• The Saṅgha Charter is edited every Saṅgha Congress after 5-year term. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 chapters and 71 articles (last edition in 2013)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Under-signed by the President of the Executive committee of the Saṅgha.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Similarities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Historical Establishment and their Evolution.</b></li> <li>• <b>The Classified Ranks in the Saṅgha Administration</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was found by a royal king under a monarchy government.</li> <li>• Central Buddhist Saṅgha administration</li> <li>• Regional Buddhist Saṅgha administration</li> <li>• One government organ or department as the</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Buddhist Saṅgha Administrative Legal Text.</b></li> </ul>	<p>government observer to supervise. (Thailand: Minister of Education, Vietnam: Fatherland Front).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both of them have the similar Major Issues.</li> <li>• They are built totally based on the Buddha's Dhamma and the discipline and are suitable to the monastic life.</li> </ul> <p>Under the control and examine of state law and institution of the government, they are protected by the government.</p>
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## **4.2 The Methods of Selecting the Saṅgha Administrative Members in Vietnam and Thai Buddhist Saṅgha administration**

The method of selecting the members of both countries have divided into two main groups of members which based on the classified ranks in the system. Two main groups are: (1) the selection of the members of the central administration and (2) the selection of the members of the regional administration. This classification is also the way to compare the method of selecting the Saṅgha administrative system's members.

### **4.2.1 The Differences on The Method of Selecting the Members of Central Saṅgha Administration Between Thailand and Vietnam**

In the central rank of Thai Saṅgha administrative system is classified into: (1) The Supreme Patriarch and (2) The Supreme Saṅgha council (Mahatherasamakom). According to the article 7 and article 10 of Thai Saṅgha Act 1962 A.D., the King appointed the most Senior or the most respected order among the Patriarchs in the Supreme Saṅgha

Council. In the absence of the Supreme Patriarch, the Bhikkhu with the title of Somdej grade who eldest by virtue of his Bhikkhuhood shall act as Supreme Patriarch.<sup>149</sup> From article 12 to article 15, the members of Thai Supreme Saṅgha Council is consisted of all of the monks who are in the grade of Patriarch (Somdej) and four to eight monks from the Royal grade (Rajagana) shall be appointed by the Supreme Patriarch.<sup>150</sup> There are four condition that makes the office of the Patriarch is vacated upon as followings: death, leaving the Bhikkhuhood, resignation and a Patriarchal Command. However, among those four conditions, the last condition is replaced by the Royal command for the position of Supreme Patriarch.

The central administration of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha consists of Supreme Saṅgha Council and the Executive council. Even though, there are two different councils, but they have the same method for all of the members of both councils. All of the new members of each council will be introduced by each previous council's members with the endorsement of all participants of the new Saṅgha congress. The members of the Supreme Saṅgha Council are the Bhikkhu who have to over than 70 years old and having 50 Vassa and the members of the Executive are not older than 80 years old for all Bhikkhu, Bhikkhuni and lay people. The members of the Supreme Saṅgha Council remain the status until death. However, the members of the have two be selected again and again by each congress.

#### **4.2.2 The Differences on the Method of Selecting the Members of Regional Saṅgha Administration Between Thailand and Vietnam**

In Thai Saṅgha administrative system, all of the regional members even the positions of abbot and assistant to the abbot are appointed and approved by the Supreme Saṅgha council. In the Saṅgha Act also doesn't mention about the limited age of the members.

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<sup>149</sup>Mahamakuta Educational Council, *Op.cit.*, p. 37.

<sup>150</sup>*Ibid*, p. 39.

The members of each rank of the regional level will be introduced by each previous Saṅgha administrative council at the same rank, the upper rank will approve the lower Saṅgha administrative council's members. For example: the members of District Saṅgha administrative council will be introduced by the previous district Saṅgha administrative council and they will be approved by the Provincial Saṅgha administrative council. The age of the members of Regional Saṅgha administrative system is not over than 80 years old.

**Table 19: Differences on The method of Selecting the Members of Buddhist Saṅgha Administration.**

	<b>Thailand</b>	<b>Vietnam</b>
<p><b>Differences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The method of selecting the members of central administration.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The rank of Supreme Patriarch (Saṅgharaja) and the Supreme Saṅgha Council.</li> <li>The Supreme Patriarch is appointed a Patriarch with the Somdej grade from the Supreme Saṅgha council by the royal King.</li> <li>The members of Thai Supreme Saṅgha Council consist of all of the monks who are in the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Supreme Saṅgha Council including the position of Supreme Patriarch and Executive Committee.</li> <li>Supreme Patriarch and is nominated by the Supreme Saṅgha Council and the Executive Council.</li> <li>The members of the Supreme Saṅgha Council are the monks who have to over than 70 years</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The method of selecting the members of regional administration.</b></li> </ul>	<p>grade of Patriarch (Somdej) and four to eight monks from the Royal grade (Rajagana) shall be appointed by the Supreme Patriarch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the status of the title until death, excepts four above conditions.</li> <li>• All members of the regional are appointed by the Supreme Saṅgha Council.</li> <li>• No limited age.</li> <li>• Only Theravāda monks.</li> </ul>	<p>old and having 50 Vassa and the members of the Executive are not older than 80 years old for all monks, nuns, and lay people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have to be selected and to be appointed after every 5 years term.</li> <li>• All members are introduced by the previous council and are approved by the higher rank.</li> <li>• Not over than 80 years old.</li> <li>• Consists Monks, nuns, lay Buddhist people, except the position of head governor at each rank must be a Monk from any sect and tradition.</li> </ul>
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### **4.3 The Duties of Saṅgha administrative system members in Thailand and Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.**

The comparison on the duties of the members of each rank in both two countries also follow the same way like the comparison of the method of selection members. There are some similarities and differences as well on the duties of the Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system members between Thailand and Vietnam.

#### **4.3.1 Similarities**

The research is going to prove the similarities points one by one position from the central administration to the regional administration.

##### **a. The Central Saṅgha Administration**

Like Thai Supreme Saṅgha council, the Executive Committee of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha also set up the regulation and the administrative system, they also decide the Saṅgha activities, penalty, reward and manage all of other ranks in the structure.

##### **b. The Regional Administration**

In compare, the Regional administration's members in both countries perform many similar main duties as:

1) To carry on the Saṅgha administration in conformity with the Dhamma-Vinaya, law, the Supreme Council's rules and regulations, the Patriarch commands and the orders from the superior.

2) To control and perform all the activities of the Saṅgha in various aspects.



- 3) To help the higher rank to perform the punishment for those who commit the Vinaya and other regulation.
- 4) To control and govern the local administrative system.

### **4.3.2 Differences**

The differences focus on the differences on the duties of Buddhist Saṅgha administrative system members by classified ranks which are: 1) The Central Saṅgha administration and 2) The Regional administration.

#### **a. The Central Saṅgha Administration**

Thai Supreme Saṅgharaja is the header of the Saṅgha, who is the most powerful one. The Saṅgharaja is not only a spiritual leader who is the leader in practicing the Buddha's Dhamma and discipline, he is also the leader of who the Saṅgha administrative system. The Supreme Patriarch and the Supreme Saṅgha Council is the highest rank among Thai Saṅgha administrative system and they will decide and manage all the Saṅgha activities. Furthermore, they appoint and dismiss the members for all of the other positions in the structure and set up the regulations for them.

In Vietnam Saṅgha administrative system, Supreme Patriarch is the highest spiritual only, he also guides and reminds all of the Saṅgha to focus on the Buddha's Dhamma and discipline. In real, the Supreme Patriarch and all the members of Supreme Saṅgha Council perform the same duties such as: to approve the important activities of the Saṅgha, introduce the new personnel for the new council, remind and observe the Buddhist practicing of Dhamma and discipline.

#### **b. The Regional Administration**

In Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha, the members of each regional administrative system's also can decide for their council's members, decide and manage their own local Saṅgha activities with the advice from the Central Saṅgha administration.



	<p>members by themselves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Under the management of the Central Saṅgha Council in every local Saṅgha activities.</li> </ul>	<p>administrative members by themselves.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design and manage the local Saṅgha activities by themselves with the advice from the Central Saṅgha administration.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Similarities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The duties of the Central Saṅgha Administration.</b></li> <li>• <b>The duties of the Regional Saṅgha Administration.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set up the regulation and set up the administrative system.</li> <li>• Decide the Saṅgha administrative members.</li> <li>• Perform and manage the important activities of the Saṅgha.</li> <li>• To carry on the Saṅgha administration in conformity with the Dhamma-Vinaya, law, the Supreme Council's rules and regulations, the Patriarch commands and the orders from the superior.</li> <li>• To control and perform all the activities of the Saṅgha in various aspects.</li> <li>• To help the higher rank to perform the punishment for those who commit the Vinaya and other regulation.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To control and govern the local administrative system.</li></ul>
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## **Chapter V**

### **Conclusion and Suggestion**

Finally, after analyzing and comparing about the Sangha administrative system between Vietnam Buddhist Sangha and Thai Buddhist Sangha, this chapter will conclude the research objectives and all the information which have been done from the previous chapters. Furthermore, researcher also provides some new ideas for the next research.

#### **5.1. Conclusion**

As we known, Buddhism continued to exist or not is totally based on the development of the Sangha in which the monks are the main factor that directly decide the cessation and development of the Sangha. In the modern Era, the Buddhist monks are not only requested to study and emphasize the discipline and the Dhamma deeply. Furthermore, they also need to be able to stand solidly and to solve the problems which occurring during their practice and the social troubles as well. In fact, in this modern era the Buddhist monks have many convenient conditions to develop their practice. Besides that, by the time the human life's facilities have been improved a lot, it also the cause which create the weakness and negative tendencies among the monastic community. To protect the Sangha members from the non-virtuous and negative factors which may influence

to the development of the Sangha and the future Buddhism, a solid Sangha administration is required to deal with this kind of real requirement.

In Thailand, by the realization of the important of having a Sangha administrative system in order to lead the Thai Order Community, in the 13<sup>th</sup> century the Sangha administrative system had been found under the dynasty of Sokhothai Kingdom. Since this Kingdom, Thai Sangha administrative system has continued until now without any interruption while Buddhism is always a state religion in Thailand. In case, the Theravada Buddhism in Thailand somehow has a solid relationship with the development of the civilizations. Therefore, the structure of Thai Saṅgha administrative system also depended on the support and control of the Thai ruler as kings and government minister. The history of the development of Thai Sangha administration can be classified into several periods which based on the emergence of several dynasties and the enactment of Thai Sangha Act in different period of time.

From the Thonburi Kingdom to the 4<sup>th</sup> Reign of Ratanakosin Period, the structure of Thai Saṅgha administration wasn't changed much and it was followed to the traditional administrative system of Ayutthaya Period. The three main sections which were grouped in Ayutthaya period was changed in several times. Finally, they were grouped again in this period of time, which was classified into: (1) Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendents of Central Zone, (2) Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendents of Northern Zone, (3) Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendents of Southern Zone, and (4) Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendents of Araññavāsī Section.

With the enactment of the Saṅgha Administration Act of Ratanakosin Era 121 which was recognized as the first complete Saṅgha Act of Thailand, there was a reformation of the Saṅgha administration in the 5<sup>th</sup> reign of Chakri dynasty. The Supreme Saṅgha Council was set up which the members as the preventative from all of four main sections which had created in the 4<sup>th</sup> reign. Since this reign, the Saṅgha provincial administration was established with the highest rank of provincial governor who command other sub-governor of district and sub-district

and the lowest organization of a monastery which a position of abbot as the governor.

In the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> reign of Ratanakosin, the structure of Thai Saṅgha Administration was also followed as the previous reign. A big change in since this period of time, was the absent of the position of Kings were in Absolute Monarchy System which was the center of Thai Saṅgha administration. It doesn't mean that the King left his influences in the Saṅgha Administration; Kings still appointed the Supreme Patriarch and gave their help in controlling the Saṅgha. From now on, the highest authority in the Saṅgha was the Supreme Patriarch who ruled the Saṅgha himself with the Saṅgha Supreme Council as his consultative committee.

The Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2484 was enacted in the reign of the Rama VIII while the public Administration was changed into Democratic system. The Central Saṅgha administration was compounded by three sections of: Ecclesiastic Assembly, Ecclesiastical Ministers and Ecclesiastical Judicature. In accordance the Saṅgha Act of B.E. 2484, the Central administration had four departments which perform the Saṅgha activities as: Dept. of Education, Dept. of Propagation, Dept. of Administration and Dept. of Public Affairs. Additionally, the provincial started with the governor of regional administration and the rest were same with the provincial administration at the two previous reigns.

The Saṅgha Act of 1962 A.D. and the Saṅgha Act of 1992 A.D. are still applied in order to arrange and control the Saṅgha Administration at the present.

According to the Saṅgha Act of 1992 A.D., the complete structure of Thai Saṅgha Administrative system which is the present Saṅgha administration is also started with the highest position of Supreme Patriarch. There are five Ecclesiastical Chief Superintendents of five main sections: Northern zone, Southern zone, East zone, Central zone and the section of Dhammayuttika-Nikāya. The provincial Administration has no much change with the same such ranks as: The Regional Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Pak), Provincial Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Changwat), District Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Amphoe), Sub-District Ecclesiastical Governor (Chao Gana Tambon) and the lowest

is the monastic organization. Finally, Thai Saṅgha Administration was developed through the long period of time which had been changed for several times under the Saṅgha Acts.

The method of selecting the members of each rank in the whole structure is similar, except the selection of the Sangharaja. The position of the Sangharaja has to be appointed by the royal King. All of other ranks from the members of the Supreme Sangha Council to the member of sub-district Sangha administrative members are appointed by the Supreme Sangha Council.

At the same time, around the later 13<sup>th</sup> century, the first Vietnam Sangha administrative system also had been found under Tran dynasty. In the first Vietnam Sangha Administrative system, the King himself was the highest position among every rank in the structure. There were some senior masters who were appointed by the King for the position of Sangha patriarchs. Furthermore, those Sangha patriarchs were the assistance for the King in the duties of suggesting him about both nation and Sangha issues. In the central Sangha administration, the Order who was the head of the Buddhist Sangha Office who directly govern all the monasteries and the monastic Orders. The development of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha administrative system had been interrupted for centuries since the cessation of Tran dynasty until the early beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The re-establishment of Vietnam Sangha administrative system was marked by the establishment of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha in 1981 A.D., and since that year a Sangha administrative system has been built in Vietnam and exist until now. The whole present Vietnam Buddhist Sangha is divided into two main levels: (1) the Central Sangha administration which is combined of the Supreme Sangha Council and the Executive Committee, and (2) the Regional Sangha administration which again classified into Provincial and District Sangha council.

At the first Vietnam Buddhist Sangha congress, there were 6 Buddhist Sangha official departments had been established, from the 7<sup>th</sup> congress, the number of the department has been increased up to 13 Buddhist Sangha official departments.



In compare, the method of selection the members of Sangha Administrative system in Vietnam is different from Thailand. In addition, the previous council's members will introduce the candidates for the new council in every rank even the Supreme Sangha Council and the position of Supreme Patriarch as well.

Because whole the structure is classified into different level from high to low, from the central to the local sub-district administration, therefore every rank and position will perform duties which are different from each other. The method of section and the duties of each position are mentioned clearly in the Thai Sangha Act and the Vietnam Buddhist Sangha Charter.

There are many differences between on Buddhist Sangha administrative system between Vietnam and Thailand. The differences may come from many minor or major factor and mostly focus on 3 main aspects of general structure, the method of members' selection and the duties of the members. However, there are also many similarities exist among those two kind of Sangha administrative system which have mentioned above.

## **5.2 Suggestion for the Further Research**

The Sangha administration is an important factor which influence in the development of the future Buddhism. however, when we mention about the Sangha administration that isn't those three elements which have mentioned in the research. There are other related factors which the Sangha administrative system which may be in the monastic side or may from the external factor of economic, political, etc... due to the time and lack of research material, data, therefore there are various areas and aspects of the Sangha administrative system which haven't covered yet in this research. Hence, researcher would to suggest the following topics for those who are going to do such research:

- 1). The influence of the government political policies in the development of the Sangha administration in Thailand and Vietnam.

2) The role of the royal Kings in the development of Thai and Vietnam Sangha administration.

3) The signification of monastic tradition in Sangha administrative system in Thailand and Vietnam.

## **Appendix**

## Appendix I: Thai Supreme Patriarchs



Figure 1: Thai Supreme Patriarch Somdet Phra Saṅgharāja Sakalamahāsaṅghapariṇāyaka (1913-2013). The 19<sup>th</sup> Supreme Patriarch of Thai Buddhist Saṅgha since 1989 A.D. until 2013 A.D., under the reign of King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX).<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>151</sup>**The Historical Background of The XIX Thai Supreme Patriarach.** Retrieved on 27<sup>th</sup>, November 2017, <https://spunno.wordpress.com/2013/10/02/tieu-su-duc-vua-sai/>.



Figure 2: Somdet Phra Saṅgharāja Sakalamahāsaṅghapariṇāyaka (1927-now). The 20<sup>th</sup> Supreme Patriarch of Thai Buddhist Saṅgha Since February, 2017, under the reign of King Raja Maha Vajiralongkorn (Rama X).<sup>152</sup>

## **Appendix II: Vietnam Supreme Patriarchs and Executive Committee Presidents.**

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<sup>152</sup>Somdet Phra Maha Muniwong. Retrieved on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017, <http://www.sabaiclub.com/?p=19837>.

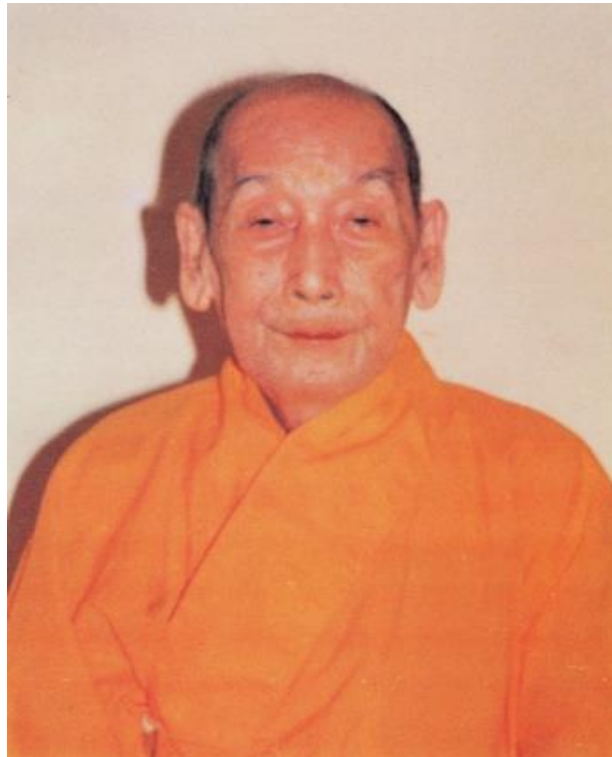


Figure 3: Most Ven. Thich Duc Nhuan (1897-1993). The First Vietnam Buddhist Supreme Patriarch of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha since 1981 A.D.-1993 A.D.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>153</sup>**The Philosophical Element in Speech and Writing of the Most Ven. Thich Duc Nhuan.** Retrived on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017, <https://thuvienhoasen.org/a27493/yeu-to-minh-triet-trong-van-phong-noi-va-viet-cua-dai-lao-hoa-thuong-thich-duc-nhuan>.

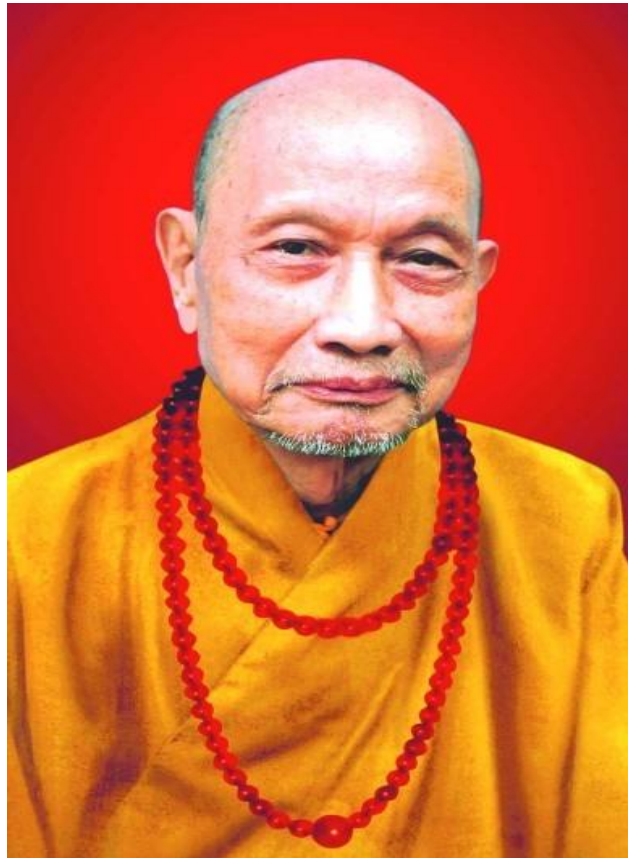


Figure 4: Most Ven. Thich Tam Tich (1915-2015). The Second Vietnam Buddhist Supreme Patriarch of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha since 1997 A.D.-2005 A.D.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>154</sup>**Historical Background of the Most Ven. Thich Tam Tich-The Supreme Patriarch of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha.** Retrieved on 27<sup>th</sup>, November, 2017, <http://nguoiphattu.com/phat-phap/nhan-vat/8492-tieu-su-dai-lao-hoa-thuong-thich-tam-tich-phap-chu-giao-hoi-phat-giao-viet-nam-1915-2005-.html>.



Figure 5: Most Ven. Thich Pho Tue (1917-now). The Third Vietnam Buddhist Supreme Patriarch of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha since 2007 A.D.-now. <sup>155</sup>

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<sup>155</sup>**Most Ven Thich Pho Tue the Farmed Monk in the Ancient Nguyen Van Thieng Temple.** Retrieved on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017, <https://thuvienhoasen.org/a14915/hoa-thuong-thich-pho-tue-lao-nong-tang-trong-ngoi-co-tu-nguyen-van-thieng>.





Figure 6: Most Ven. Thich Tri Thu (1909-1984). The First President of the Executive Committee of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha since 1981 A.D.-1984 A.D.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>156</sup>**The Most Ven Thich Tri Thu- The president of the Executive Committee of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha from 1981-1984 A.D.** Retrieved on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017, [http://phatgiaoluoi.com/news/Nhan-vat/Dai-lao-HT-Thich-Tri-Thu-Chu-tich-HDTS-GHPGVN-nhiem-ky-I-1981-1984-107/#.Wh\\_IEIgxXIU](http://phatgiaoluoi.com/news/Nhan-vat/Dai-lao-HT-Thich-Tri-Thu-Chu-tich-HDTS-GHPGVN-nhiem-ky-I-1981-1984-107/#.Wh_IEIgxXIU).

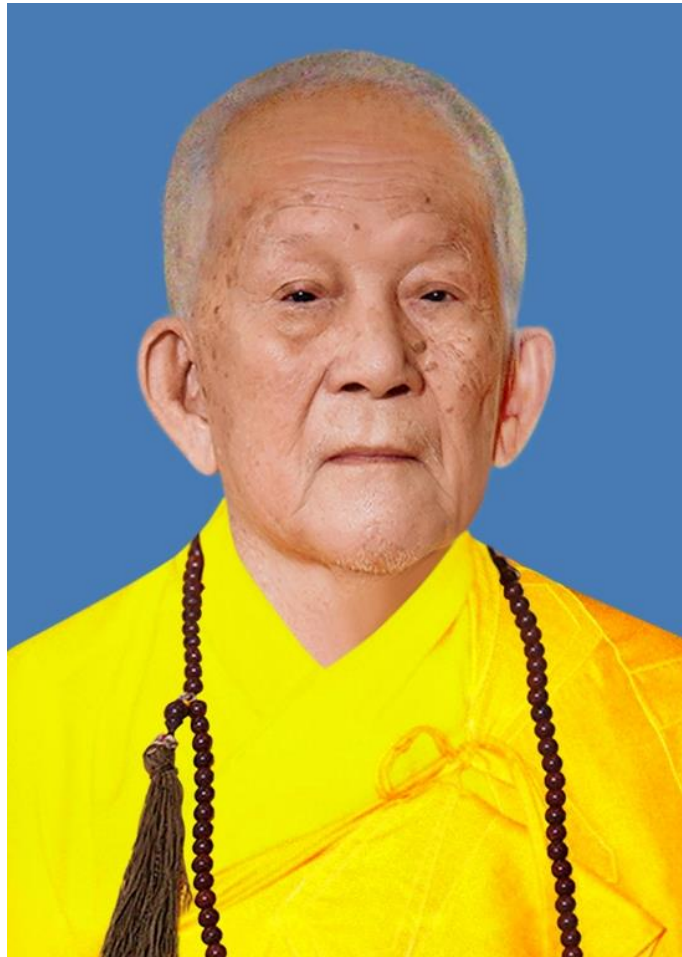


Figure 7: Most Ven. Thich Tri Tinh (1917-2014). The Second President of the Executive Committee of Vietnam Buddhist Saṅgha since 1984 A.D.-2014 A.D.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>157</sup>**The Historical Background of the Most Ven. Thich Tri Tinh.** Retrieved on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017, <http://m.phatgiao.org.vn/tu-lieu/201403/Tuyen-bach-Tieu-su-dai-lao-Hoa-thuong-Thich-Tri-Tinh-14002/>.



Figure 8: Most Ven. Thich Thien Nhon (1950-now). The Third President of the Executive Committee of Vietnam Buddhist Sangha since 2014 A.D.-now. <sup>158</sup>

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<sup>158</sup>**A Conversation with The Most Ven. Thich Thien Nhon.** Retrieved on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2017, <http://phatgiao.org.vn/doi-song/201307/Thua-chuyen-voi-Hoa-thuong-Thich-Thien-Nhon-11524>.

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