

# **Exploring the Role of the Dutch East India Company in Making Taiwan a Center for the Sugar Trade From 1624 to 1662**

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*This article intends to explore the actual role of the Dutch East India Company during the Dutch colonial period from 1624 to 1662, when Taiwan became a sugar supply center and its trade status was upgraded from a trading relay station to a trading center for sugar trade with Eurasian markets. This article tests the established model and hypothesis through five dimensions. Except for the fourth dimension, the others all obtain support for the hypothesis. The research results found that whether it is from the improvement of Taiwan's sugar supply and sugar trade status, or the booming period of the Dutch East India Company's sugar trade and the two-stage rise in European sugar prices, in addition to marking changes in Taiwan's industrial transformation and trade status, all of this highlights that the Dutch East India Company indeed played a pivotal role in Taiwan during this process.*

*Keywords: Dutch East India Company, sugar trade, Taiwan, trade relay station, trade center*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Since the Age of Discovery in the 15th century, ships from the Iberian Peninsula, including Portugal and Spain, and the Netherlands, Britain, and other European countries, have sailed along the East Asian Maritime Silk Route. During the Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty, a Portuguese ship sailed through the Taiwan Strait, discovered Taiwan, and named it "Formosa Island", marking the beginning of Taiwan's historical era. At the beginning of the 17th century, Dutch merchant ships invaded Asia on a large scale and occupied the trading station established by Portugal in Taiwan. The Dutch East India Company (V.O.C) established in 1602 engaged in maritime trade, giving Taiwan the reputation of the "aircraft carrier of the century" on the sea. Sugar was one of the main commodities in the Dutch East India Company's foreign

trade and played an extremely important role in the development of international trade. From then on, the sugar trade not only became an important part of the Dutch East India Company's trade in Asia, but also gave the Netherlands a profound influence on the entire Europe. Therefore, the Dutch colonized Taiwan, built Taiwan as an Asian trade relay station, and finally built Taiwan into a Eurasian trade center. During this period of transformation of Taiwan's trade status, the Dutch East India Company's role is worthy of in-depth exploration and research.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The Dutch East India Company, also known as the United East India Company or the United Dutch East India Company, was a Dutch government-chartered company founded in 1602 with trade, political, and other rights. It was jointly established by more than a dozen companies and was authorized by the Dutch Parliament to have ocean-going trade, currency issuance, and military authority (Gaastra, 1997). Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to call VOC a company of commerce and state (Vermeulen and Lint, 2020). VOC was also the world's first Multinational Corporation, even in keeping with the Dutch Golden Age (Gerstell, 1991). Capitalism even developed in the early 17th century in The Netherlands which recognized the social and economic impact of its unique geography which produced a society characterized by a monetary economy, a long tradition of joint ownership, and a free market for assets and capital rights (Robertson and Funnell, 2012). The Dutch East India Company simultaneously came with authority to colonize and administer the new territory and established its headquarters in Batavia in 1619. In 1624, he established a stronghold in Taiwan to expand trade with mainland China and Japan. Therefore, though the Dutch had been the last of the European powers to arrive in the Far East, they had been spectacularly successful in the establishment of their control over the region of the East Indies.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, the VOC found itself as the most powerful military and political sovereignty in the Indies, as a corporation virtually independent of the government (Kroef, 1948). The end of the 16th century saw Dutch expansion in Asia, as The Dutch East India Company was fast becoming an Asian political and economic power. By 1669, the VOC was the richest private company the world had ever seen (Parthesius, 2012). However, in 1799, due to various problems, the Dutch East India Company finally resolved to dissolve and withdraw from the market. According to scholars, the reasons include 1. High salary cost, 2. Lazy and corrupt employees, 3. Increasingly backward monopolistic business model, 4. Unable to cope with the transformation of trade in the 18th century and 5. Poor finance and death blow by the fourth Anglo-Dutch war (Zheng, 2020).

The rise and fall of Dutch in Taiwan is presented in the light of a model of European expansion (Andrade, 2006). In 1624, the Dutch occupied Taiwan and used Da Yuan as a trading transit point, starting the history of Dutch colonization of Taiwan (Lin, 2015). Taking the trading activities centered on the port of Damuan during the southern monsoon season of 1637-1638 as an example, it outlines the planning and implementation of the Dutch East India Company's trade strategy based on "mutual funds". The practical aspect pointed out that regional thinking that connects trade, shipping and even commercial capital supports the actual operation of Taiwan's entrepot trade (Qiu, 2012). In other words, the Dutch East India Company had created an extensive intra-Asian trade and shipping networks in order to make a big profit during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, thereby positioning Taiwan's role in inter-Asian trade (Qiu, 2019). The Dutch East India Company began to use Taiwan as a base to expand trade with Europe and Japan (Quan, 1993).

For example, the Dutch occupied and colonized Taiwan and the Dutch East India Company set up a trading post at a fort built on a sandbank extending out from the west coast of Taiwan in 1624. As a new supplier in the Japanese market, the VOC attempted to import deerskins from Southeast Asian kingdoms. As to sugar production, Taiwan started producing sugar under the Dutch rule in the seventeenth century. Sugar led Taiwan into the world trade, earning profit for the Dutch Eastern Indian Company. During the Dutch's rule, sugar cane was also one of Taiwan's most representative tropic crops (Tseng, 2017). Taiwan, the first post-Dutch-colonial society in Asia, experienced an exponential growth of sugar production in the

six decades following the Siege of Fort Zeelandia (1661–1662) and emerged as a world-leading sugar producer in the 1720s (Xu, 2022).

VOC has established a good foundation for the production and trade of Taiwan's sugar industry. Even though the Treaty of Tianjin in the late Qing Dynasty opened Taiwan to the port, it did not make Taiwan's sugar industry turn around (Gu, 2022). However, the vigorous development of Taiwan's sugar industry during the Japanese occupation was a continuation of It is an indisputable fact that the Dutch East India Company promoted the development of sugar production in Taiwan (Huang, 2019).

Furthermore, Hyma (1942) has conducted a detailed analysis of the Dutch East India Company's trade in the Far East. He examined the formulation of Dutch trade policy, the struggle for naval dominance in the Far East, and the occupation of the Malay Peninsula and Taiwan. He uncovered the role of the Dutch East India Company in opening up the Asian market and monopolizing Asian trade. William (1961) touches the topic on the Dutch occupation of Indonesia and Taiwan, and the opening of markets in Arabia and Persia. In addition to studying the history of sugar trade, Ellis (1905) also discussed in detail the background of sugar in Europe from different angles, including types of sugar and its functions; sugar cultivation in Asia; the Mediterranean, America, and Iberia Sugar-related activities in the Peninsula; the development of the British sugar industry and the demand for and supply of sugar in Britain.

In addition, Professor Sucheta of Harvard University extensively analyzed the consumption, distribution and other related aspects of sugar in the Netherlands, Britain and other countries in the 17th century, and looked at the mainland sugar industry in the 18th century from the perspective of production and export (Sucheta, 1998). It contains detailed data on sugar exports and profit margins, facilitating research. Hall (1998) discussed the Dutch East India Company's first shipment of sugar from Java in 1637 and the involvement of the Governor of Batavia in encouraging sugar production in Java, touching on the Southeast Asian sugar trade. Glamann (1958) used a large amount of data to provide a rich analysis and explanation of Dutch trade in Asia in the 17th and 18th centuries, especially the sugar trade. When Furber (1976) mentioned the competition between European empires in Eastern trade from 1600 to 1800, sugar was the focus of trade competition.

Based on the above research and findings, this article attempts to explore from the perspective of the Dutch East India Company how Taiwan became the sugar supply center for the Dutch East India Company and the role Taiwan played in the development of the company's sugar trade. Therefore, an in-depth study of the overall situation of the Dutch East India Company's sugar trade in Asia and Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries has become an important basis for constructing the theoretical model of this article.

## **PROPOSED MODEL AND HYPOTHESES**

### **How the Dutch East India Company Turned Taiwan Into a Source of Sugar Supply**

The Dutch occupied Taiwan in 1624 and began a 38-year colonial rule, making Taiwan both an important Dutch colony in East Asia and the trading center of the Dutch East India Company in the region. During the Dutch occupation of Taiwan, the Dutch East India Company's sugar trade coincided with the rise. Therefore, the Dutch actively managed sugar cane production on the island to meet market demand. As Dutch ships transported large quantities of Taiwanese sugar to markets in Europe, Persia, Japan and other places, they effectively monopolized the sugar trade in these markets, making Taiwan the sugar supply center for the Dutch East India Company's trade. In addition, the main reason why the Dutch chose to develop sugar cane cultivation and sugar production in Taiwan was because they lost the supply of sugar cane from mainland China. Therefore, they need to find new locations to grow sugarcane and produce sugar to meet market demand. Taiwan's climate and soil are conducive to sugarcane cultivation, which allowed the Dutch East India Company to vigorously develop Taiwan into a major sugar-producing area. Therefore, the article establishes hypothesis 1 as follows:

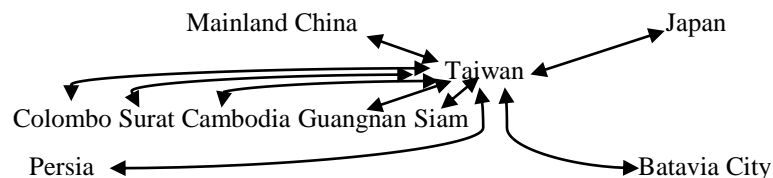
***H1:** The Dutch East India Company made Taiwan a source of sugar supply.*

## How the Dutch East India Company Made Taiwan as a Relay Station for Dutch Trade to Eurasian Markets

After the Dutch occupied Taiwan, in addition to colonizing Taiwan, they also used Taiwan as a major trading post and actively engaged in trade throughout Asia. Taiwan served as a relay station for Dutch trade in Asia, allowing Dutch merchants to consolidate goods in Taiwan and then distribute them to various markets. Using Taiwan as a base, the Dutch obtained goods from mainland China and shipped them to Taiwan, then shipped them to Batavia or Japan for sale. In turn, they also purchased goods from Batavia, Japan and other places, resold them back to mainland China or transferred them to other places via Taiwan. Taiwan became a transit point for Asian trade, bringing closer trade links with China, Batavia, Japan, Persia, and other parts of Asia. Research shows that in addition to setting up trading posts in Taiwan, Batavia, and Japan (Dejima), the Dutch East India Company also established trading posts in Cambodia, Ceylon, Banten, Colombo, Surat, Tokyo, Cochin China (Vietnam), Siam (Thailand) and other parts of Asia. How did the Dutch get through? As a relay station for Asian trade, Taiwan was able to connect such a large and complex commercial network, and the Dutch East India Company played a vital role. The transit situation is shown in Figure 1. Therefore, the article establishes hypothesis 2 as follows:

**H2:** *The Dutch East India Company used Taiwan as a relay station for Dutch trade to the Eurasian market.*

**FIGURE 1**  
**TAIWAN AS A TRANSITION IN DUTCH TRADE**



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Taiwan Sugar Supply Situation

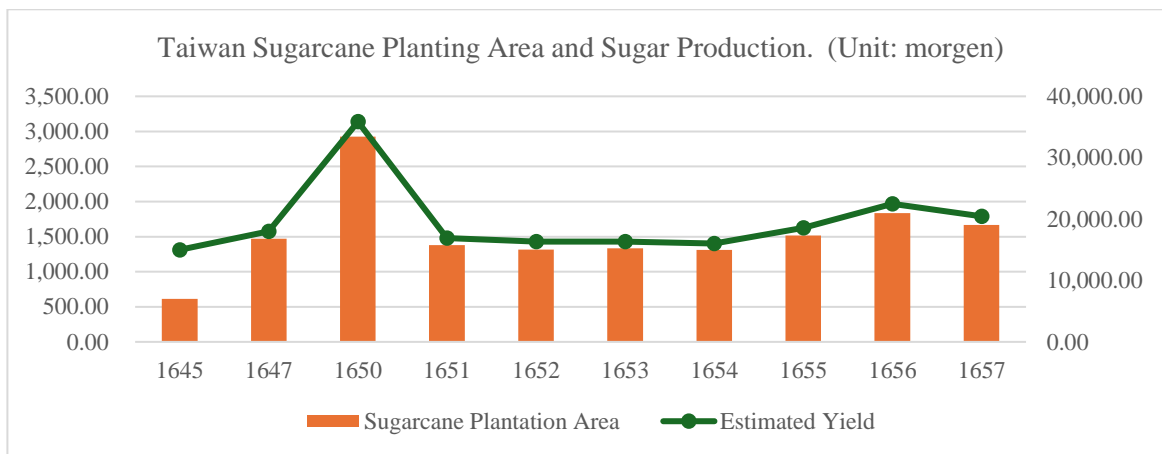
Because Taiwan has a pleasant climate, abundant rainfall, fertile soil, and sufficient sunshine, it is obviously a very suitable area for sugarcane cultivation. This also shows that the reason why Taiwan became the sugar supply center for the Dutch East India Company between 1624 and 1662 was closely related to Taiwan's own sugar production conditions.

In addition, during its occupation of Taiwan, the Dutch East India Company implemented many incentive policies and measures to encourage the Taiwanese people to plant sugar cane and produce sugar. During this period, the contribution of immigrants from mainland China to Taiwan was crucial in the sugarcane cultivation process. Because of the turbulent situation on the mainland in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, political instability, regime changes and other factors, many immigrants poured into Taiwan. The Dutch authorities even frequently send ships to the coastal areas of mainland China to transport immigrants to Taiwan for land reclamation. As the number of immigrants from the mainland continued to increase, the basic labor problems for sugar cane planting and sugar refining were solved, creating favorable conditions for the Dutch East India Company's sugar supply.

The following are examples of various support and incentive policies implemented by the Netherlands during its occupation of Taiwan. First, the planting and production of sugarcane through the implementation of tax-free policies were promoted. Second, hospitals and build roads were built. To encourage the development of Taiwan's sugarcane planting industry and facilitate sugarcane farmers' medical treatment, the Dutch authorities built a hospital in Chikan in 1634. The purpose was to provide convenient medical services to Taiwanese who often fell ill while planting sugarcane. The third was to provide loans to support sugarcane growers. To obtain more sugar, the Dutch East India Company offered to help farmers by providing funds and livestock.

Based on the above analysis, it can be seen that the Dutch East India Company did implement policies to promote sugar cane production to increase the sugar supply during its occupation of Taiwan. With the increase in sugarcane planting area, sugar production has also increased year by year. This provided sufficient sugar sources for the Dutch East India Company to engage in sugar trade, bringing considerable profits to the Dutch. During this period, the details of Taiwan's sugar production are shown in Figure 2 below. Apparently, H1 is supported.

**FIGURE 2**  
**TAIWAN SUGARCANE PLANTING AREA AND PRODUCTION**



### Taiwan's Sugar Trade Status

According to Tables 1 and 2, the Dutch first purchased raw silk, sugar, tea, etc. in mainland China, shipped them to Taiwan, and then transported them to Batavia. They also shipped spices purchased from Batavia and other Southeast Asian regions to mainland China. Sugar, deerskin, raw silk and other goods were shipped to Japan, and then silverware and brass brought back from Japan were shipped to Batavia, mainland China and other places. At this time, Taiwan was undoubtedly an extremely important transit hub for the Dutch East India Company in East Asian trade. Simultaneously, mainland China was the main sugar-producing area of the Dutch East India Company. The Dutch often sent ships to Zhangzhou and Xiamen to purchase sugar, then transported to other markets via Taiwan.

However, the situation in China's coastal areas was unstable and piracy was rampant. To stabilize the situation, the Ming government resumed the sea ban policy, which severely restricted the sugar trade of merchants in China's southeastern coastal areas and intensified the sugar trade loss of the Dutch East India Company. Meanwhile, the sugar trade between Europe and Asia continued to expand, but the Dutch East India Company encountered a shortage of sugar supplies along the coast of China. In order to continue to supply sugar to Japan, Persia, the Netherlands and other markets to obtain considerable profits, the Dutch turned their attention to Taiwan, encouraging the development of Taiwan's sugar industry and increasing sugar supply. Besides making Taiwan the most important sugar supplier to the Dutch East India Company, it also solved the problem of insufficient supply in the European sugar market. It established Taiwan's future status as a sugar trade center. Apparently, H2 is also supported.

**TABLE 1**  
**GOODS IMPORTED INTO TAIWAN BY VARIOUS COUNTRIES**

Mainland China	Taiwan	Raw silk, sugar, gold, sugar barrels, clothing, Tuckahoe
Japan	Taiwan	Silver, wax, timber, kapok, sulfur, rice, copper
Batavia City	Taiwan	Pepper, sandalwood, nutmeg, rice, red sandalwood, amber
Siam	Taiwan	Rice, lead, sandalwood, teakwood, bird's nests, coconut oil, lard
Tokyo	Taiwan	Raw silk, silk textiles
Guangnan	Taiwan	Raw silk · black sugar
Cambodia	Taiwan	Pepper, frankincense, musk, deer hide, feathers, and bird skin
Surat	Taiwan	None
Colombo	Taiwan	None
Persia	Taiwan	None

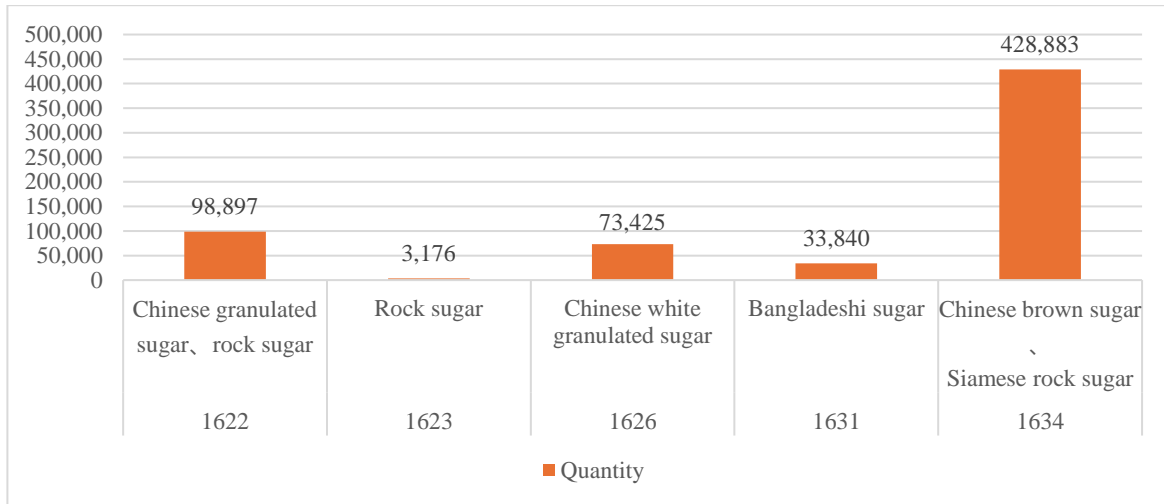
**TABLE 2**  
**GOODS EXPORTED TO VARIOUS COUNTRIES FROM TAIWAN**

Exporting Location	Importing Location	Commodity
Taiwan	Mainland China	Silver, pepper, sandalwood, cloves, sugar, rice, frankincense.
Taiwan	Japan	Raw silk, sugar, coral, pepper, deer hide, canvas, large deer hide.
Taiwan	Batavia City	Raw silk, silk, sugar, rock sugar, porcelain, Tuckahoe, brass.
Taiwan	Siam	Raw silk, silk textiles, porcelain, sugar, Tuckahoe, mercury.
Taiwan	Guangnan	Japanese copper coins, lead, porcelain, etc.
Taiwan	Cambodia	Sulfur
Taiwan	Surat	White wax, Tuckahoe, red dye, pepper, gold, silver, etc
Taiwan	Colombo	Raw silk, porcelain, tea, Tuckahoe, Ming gong, white wax, gold.
Taiwan	Persia	Sugar, raw silk, porcelain, white wax, alum, sulfur, tea, etc.

**The Early Development Stage of the Dutch East India Company's Sugar Trade (1624-1635)**

Between 1624 and 1635, the Dutch East India Company did encounter difficulties with the sugar trade. From the supply side, mainland China (especially Fujian Province and Guangdong Province) was the world's main sugar-producing region at that time. However, with the rise of pirates and private maritime forces, as well as the change of regimes in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, sugar, the main source of supply for the Dutch East India Company, was severely disrupted. From the demand side, the development of the Dutch East India Company's sugar trade was facing the difficulty of a narrow market. Although the sugar trading market of the Dutch East India Company expanded to Europe (mainly the Netherlands), Asian markets, such as Persia and Japan, as well as Makassar, Surat and other places, the markets of Makassar and Surat were developed in the 1670s and 1680s. The sugar trade in the Persian market also began to rise after 1638. Figure 3 shows the Dutch East India Company's sugar sales in the European market and the trend of increasing sugar demand. However, compared with the European market, coupled with tax issues and the Bintan incident, sugar trade in the Dutch domestic market encountered obvious difficulties. All this illustrates the difficulties that the Dutch East India Company encountered in the early stages of the sugar trade development and suffered from unfavorable factors on both the supply and demand sides. In the initial development stage of the Dutch East India Company's sugar trade, neither Taiwan's sugar production nor sugar trading status was as good as the performance in the prosperous development stage of the sugar trade. Therefore, H1 or H2 is rejected.

**FIGURE 3**  
**QUANTITY OF SUGAR SHIPPED BACK TO THE NETHERLANDS**



**The Prosperous Development Stage of the Dutch East India Company’s Sugar Trade (1635-1662)**

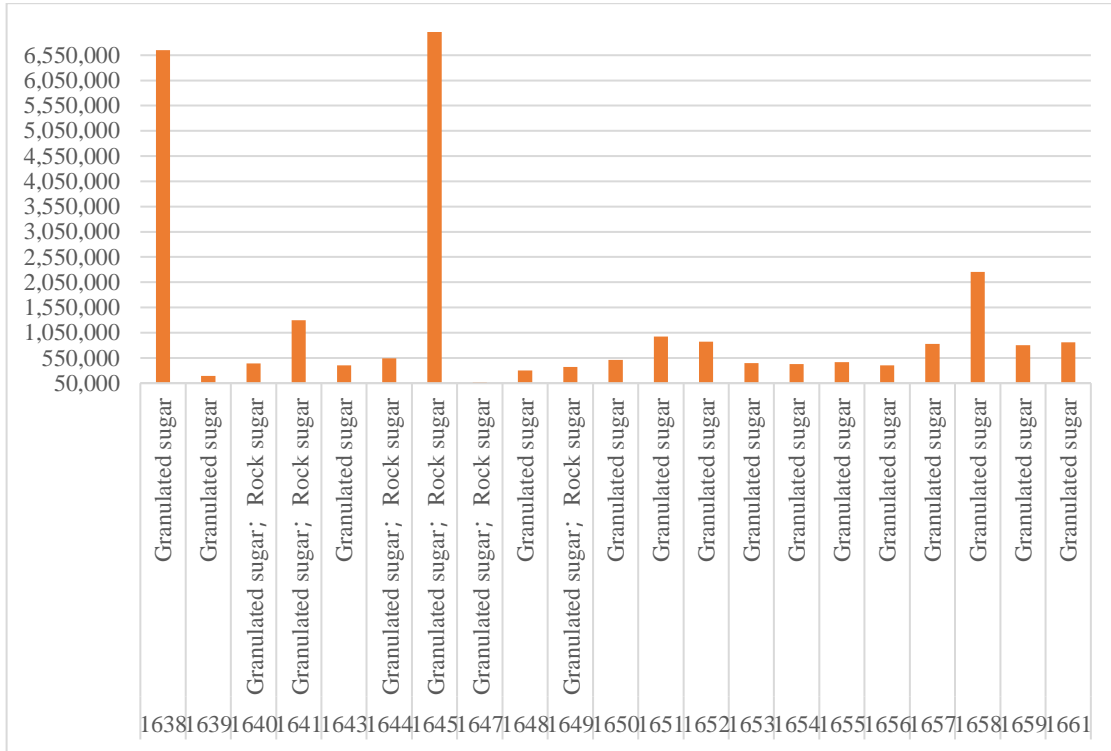
After 1635, the Dutch East India Company ushered in a period of vigorous development of sugar trade. Sufficient sugar sources met the continuous increase in demand for sugar in the Eurasian market, leading to the growth of the Dutch East India Company’s sugar trade. From the supply side, Taiwan’s fertile land, humid climate, and abundant sunshine provide favorable conditions for sugarcane production. Coupled with the active encouragement of the Dutch East India Company and many immigrants from the mainland, Taiwan had become the main area for sugar cane cultivation and production in the world at that time. In addition, with the elimination of pirate forces, the coastal areas had returned to their former peace, which also provided favorable conditions for the development of maritime trade.

Due to the growing demand for sugar and the growth of sugar demand in the European market from the demand side, the recovery of Dutch trade and the expansion into the Persian market were also factors in the prosperity of the Dutch East India Company’s sugar trade during this period. The introduction of new beverages such as tea, coffee, and chocolate in the 17th century was probably the main reason for the sharp increase in demand for sugar in Europe. The Dutch East India Company quickly seized this market opportunity and shipped large quantities of sugar back to the Netherlands to meet the needs of the European market.

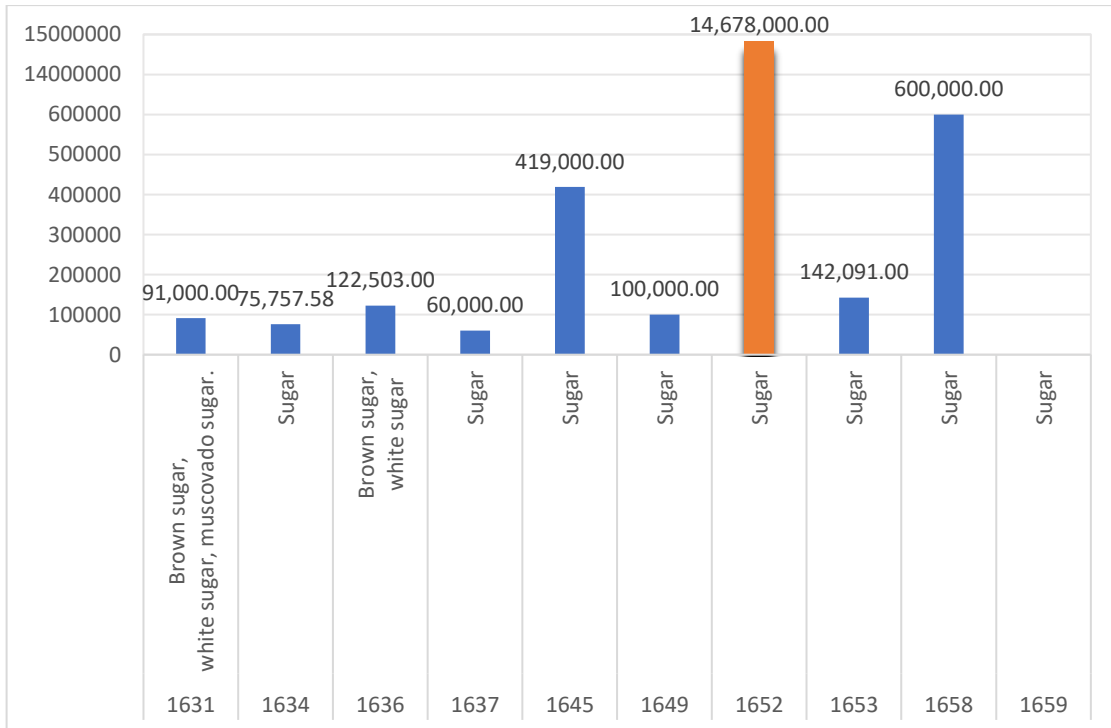
In addition to meeting the needs of the European market, the Dutch East India Company’s sugar trade also occupied an important position in the Asian market. As the demand for sugar in markets such as Persia and Japan continued to increase, the Dutch East India Company exported large amounts of sugar to these countries. Between 1638 and 1661, the Dutch East India Company shipped a large amount of Taiwanese sugar to the Persian market for sale, making Persia one of the main markets for the Dutch East India Company’s Far Eastern sugar trade (see Figure 4).

Japan was another important market for the Dutch East India Company’s sugar trade. Japan had not yet planted sugar cane or produced sugar during this period. It was not until the 18th century that the Japanese began to grow sugar cane and produce sugar domestically. Therefore, trade was inevitable to meet Japan’s domestic demand for sugar. However, Portuguese, British, Dutch, Chinese and Japanese merchants were all engaged in the sugar trade in Japan. By 1638, the Portuguese were finally expelled from the Japanese market due to missionary activities and other factors which eliminated the Dutch’s main competitor in the Japanese market and made the Netherlands the main importer and exporter of sugar trade in the Japanese market (see Figure 5). Due to Taiwan’s superior geographical location, the Dutch East India Company exported a large amount of Taiwanese sugar to Japan, which further enhanced Taiwan’s sugar supply or sugar trade status. Therefore, H1 and H2 are supported.

**FIGURE 4**  
**AMOUNT OF TAIWANESE SUGAR TRANSPORTED TO PERSIA BETWEEN 1938 AND 1661**



**FIGURE 5**  
**AMOUNT OF TAIWANESE SUGAR SHIPPED TO JAPAN FROM 1631 TO 1659**

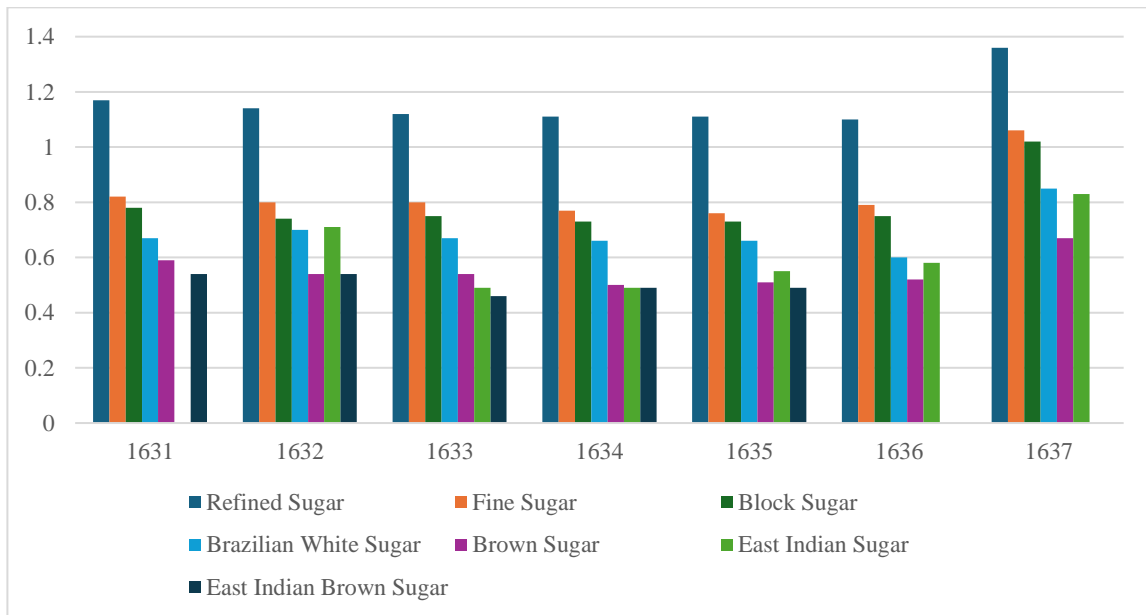




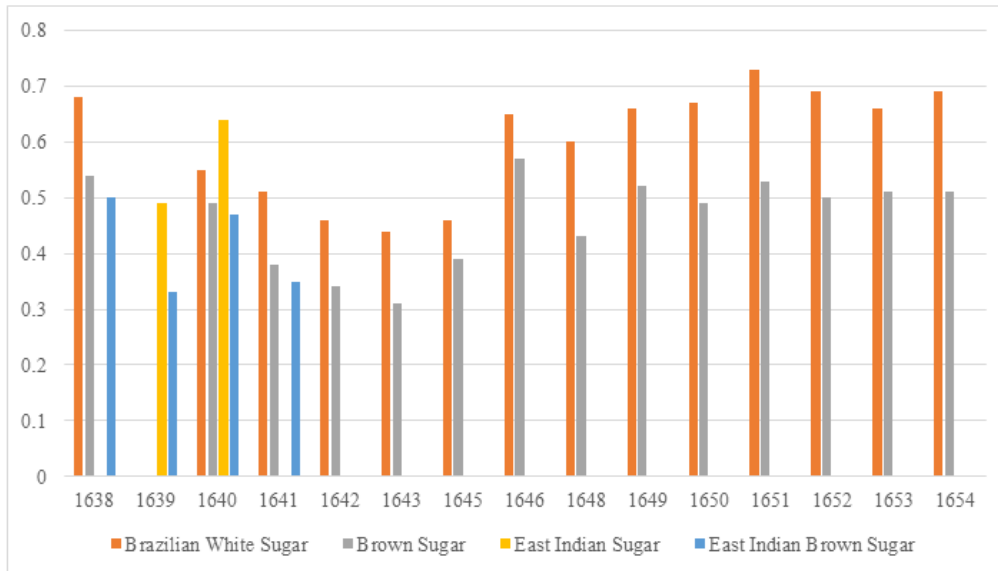
### European Market Sugar Prices

It can be seen from the previous discussion that after 1635, the sugar trade market created favorable conditions for development on both the supply and demand sides. As the Dutch occupied Taiwan, they gradually developed Taiwan into a major sugar supply center for the Dutch East India Company. A large amount of Taiwanese sugar was transported by the Dutch East India Company to the Eurasian market, making Taiwan a sugar trading center. What is the price of sugar in the European market during this period? Figure 6 shows that sugar prices began to rise sharply in the late 1620s and early 1630s. Prices rose to 0.59 florins per pound compared to 0.32 florins per pound in 1624. The upward trend in European sugar prices that began in the late 1620s and early 1630s continued into the 1640s. With the recovery of the Brazilian sugar industry, Brazilian sugar reappeared in large quantities in the European market in 1641, causing sugar prices to continue to decline. It was not until 1645 that sugar prices rose again (see Figure 7). The reason was the increased demand for sugar in Europe. A large amount of Taiwanese sugar was shipped to the Netherlands by the Dutch East India Company, and then further distributed to other parts of Europe through Amsterdam. The price of sugar in the European market continued to rise from 1637 to 1642 and from 1645 to 1655. Obviously, during the two periods of rising sugar prices, Taiwan's sugar supply and sugar trading status had undergone changes and improvements due to the Dutch East India Company. Therefore, H1 and H2 are supported, too.

**FIGURED 6**  
**THE SUGAR PRICE LISTED IN AMSTERDAM FROM 1631 TO 1637**



**FIGURE 7**  
**THE SUGAR PRICE LISTED IN AMSTERDAM FROM 1638 TO 1654**



### Summary

The article tests the two hypotheses established by the model from the above five dimensions. In the process of Taiwan's sugar supply and sugar trading status, there is no doubt that the Dutch East India Company played a pivotal role. In dimension 1, H1 is supported and in dimension 2, H2 is supported. However, in the early stages of development of the Dutch East India Company's sugar trade (1624-1635), due to Taiwan's insufficient sugar supply and low sugar trading status, it led to the ineffective role of the Dutch East India Company. Therefore, in dimension 3, H1 or H2 is rejected. By dimension 4, the booming development stage of the Dutch East India Company's sugar trade, and dimension 5, which was accompanied by two stages of rising sugar prices in Europe, have repeatedly shown that the Dutch East India Company's influence on Taiwan's industrial development and trade status. Therefore, both dimension 4 and dimension 5 get the same result. That is, H1 and H2 are supported.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusions

From the establishment of the Dutch East India Company in 1602 until the 18th century, sugarcane trade has been an important source of profit for the company's Far East trade. In 1622, the Dutch East India Company shipped sugar cane to Europe for the first time, marking the beginning of the Dutch sugar cane trade. In 1624, the Dutch occupied Taiwan and began a 38-year colonial rule. Initially, Taiwan was just a transit point for the trading activities of the Dutch East India Company. However, with the change of the Ming and Qing Dynasties and the rampant piracy activities, the supply of sugar cane from mainland China was interrupted, which severely impacted the sugar trade of the Dutch East India Company. Facing the impact, the Dutch used measures and incentives to further develop Taiwan from a trade relay station into a sugar supply center. Under the management of the Dutch East India Company, Taiwan became the company's most important trade transit hub and the main supply center for the Eurasian sugar trade. With the main source of sugar cane production from Taiwan, the Dutch East India Company started to spread sugar trade throughout Europe and Asia. All that illustrates the Dutch East India Company's important role in allowing Taiwan to play a key role in the global sugar trade supply chain.

Therefore, the article concluded that the two hypotheses are supported by four of five dimensions. Dimensions 1, 2, 4 and 5 were all supported in the hypothesis test and confirmed the important role of the

Dutch East India Company, which gave Taiwan a key position in the global sugar trade supply chain at that time. Even if the hypothesis 1 or 2 was rejected in dimension 4, this was in the early stages of the development of the sugar trade of the Dutch East India Company, which had insufficient sugar supplies in Taiwan and a low trading status. In other words, the rejection of H1 and H2 in the fourth direction would not further lower the influence of the Dutch East India Company on Taiwan's sugar trade status during its booming periods. Undoubtedly, the role of the Dutch East India Company in making Taiwan a center for the sugar trade was confirmed again, based on the conclusion of the article.

### Recommendations

Although the policies implemented by the Dutch have certain benefits for the development of Taiwan's agriculture, frankly speaking, the Dutch only regarded Taiwan's sugar as a tool to obtain trade profits. The Dutch initially viewed Taiwan as a colony, then as a trade relay, and finally as a goods supply base. In other words, the Dutch authorities did not actively develop and manage Taiwan at the beginning. With the expansion of trade in the Far East, the importance of sugar trade has become increasingly prominent. The Dutch East India Company, which originally relied on sugar from the mainland, faced supply disruptions due to changing regimes in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. Therefore, to solve the sugar supply problem, the Dutch turned their attention to developing and operating Taiwan and actively encouraged sugar cane cultivation and sugar production. Coupled with Taiwan's superior geographical conditions and the contribution of mainland immigrants, Taiwan has become one of the world's major sugar-producing regions and the sugar supply center for the Dutch East India Company. However, another historical fact cannot be ignored though the article concluded the role of the Dutch East India Company in Taiwan's sugar trade. Such historical facts require in-depth research and discussion in the future so that we can more fully grasp the true role of the Dutch East India Company in Taiwan's early economic development.

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