

## ABSTRACT

How Sengoku daimyō, powerful feudal lords during the Warring-States Period in Japan from 1467 to 1567, rose to power and prevented Gekokujō, or the overthrowing or surpassing of superiors, was studied. The case study of this research is Mori clan who was the Sengoku Daimyo of great power and could prevent the rebellion from his own retainer, Inoue clan.

Results were that Mōri could attain power by inheriting clan leadership roles, fighting and heroism in battle, personal association with warriors from their class and superior classes, and the support, promotion, and respect of retainers as arbitrator for vassal groups.

Documents indicated that the Inoue, a samurai clan, served as Mōri vassals. This was proven by references to Inoue loyalty in exchange for gifts of land from the Mōri, the head of the Inoue joining other vassals in inferior positions to the Mōri, and accepting Mōri Motonari, a prominent daimyo, as clan head.

The Inoue were too powerful to be controlled among Mōri vassals. The Mōri criticized their unruly behavior, informed superior class warriors and sought approval for their subjugation, had other vassals sign as witnesses to the situation, and mentioned Gekokujō occurring in other clans, to suggest that the Inoue were like those who overthrew masters.

The Mōri were motivated to eliminate rivals for their power or anyone altering vassal obedience, thereby gaining absolute power over vassals. When retainers were controlled and united, their military resources helped consolidate Sengoku-daimyō power during the era of conflict.