A cyclical model of the communist system was put forward by Myron Rush in his research on the USSR. Rush proposed that the political system of the USSR comprised a mix of dictatorship and “collective leadership,” or, between personal rule and oligarchy. I posit that that the communist state is a highly autonomous polity, that its constitutional change is triggered by external shocks and driven by elite struggle, that its succession reforms are intrinsically conservative, and that significant changes are nonetheless possible short of a revolution.

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