



## EAS Book Talk Series 2023-2024

# Collective Leadership and Succession Politics in Deng's China

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.

**Yang Su** is Professor of Sociology at UC Irvine. A scholar of social movements and revolution, his new book *Deadly Decision in Beijing: Succession Politics, Protest Repression and the 1989 Tiananmen Massacre* was released earlier this year. Previously he published *Collective Killings in Rural China during the Cultural Revolution*, which won the 2012 Barrington Moore Book Prize of the American Sociological Association.

