

Karl Deutsch and J. David Singer, "Multipolar Power Systems and International Stability"

KD and JDS (believe that they) present a model which shows that multipolarity should be associated with a greater likelihood of peace than bipolarity. The key assumptions behind their results are: 1) states need to be able to sustain a high level of attention on the activities of their rivals if they are to find themselves in arms races; and 2) arms races lead directly to war. As the number of states in a given system increases, they argue, the amount of attention that any given state can assign to each of his rivals decreases and therefore the exponential process of arms escalation slows down significantly. Note that 1) and 2) are opposite of the assumptions that Waltz makes to explain why bipolar systems are more peaceful than multipolar ones: a) the introduction of more poles into the international system leads to greater uncertainty with respect to an opponent's resource capability; and b) uncertainty leads to miscalculation which in turn leads to war.