Max Weber's conception of Plebiscitary Democracy and Liberal Democracy

Dr. Mahir A. Aziz
College of Arts
University of Salahaddin

"One can say that three pre-eminent qualities are decisive for the politician: passion, a feeling of responsibility, and a sense of proportion" Max Weber, Politics as a Vocation

"The fate of our times is characterized by rationalization and intellectualization and, above all, by the 'disenchantment of the world'" Max Weber, Science as a Vocation

"In democracy the people elect a leader in whom they have confidence. Then the elected leader says:' Now shut up and obey me'. People and parties may no longer meddle in what he does" Max Weber, "A conversation with Ludendorff recorded by Marianne Weber"

Abstract

This study devoted to problematize the conception of "Plebiscitary Democracy" and its relation to "Liberal Democracy" in one of very prominent German sociologists' political writings, namely, Max Weber (1864 -1920). To do so, the study tries to answer the following questions: Was Weber gave an affirmative answer to the question of democracy? Is his conception of "plebiscitary democracy" restrictive one? To what extent can Weber's "plebiscitary democracy" contribute to the understanding of liberal democracy? Was he a liberal in the modern sense of liberty? Was he an advocate of representative democracy or direct democracy? Was his notion of plebiscitary democracy can be interpreted as promoting the greatest possible scope for individual leadership? Was he as some scholars claim "the godfather of Nazi dictatorship"? According to Reinhard Bendix, many German scholars and writers like the well-known historian Wolfgang Mommsen (1930-2004), Christian von Ferber, and others have tended to criticise Weber's intellectual status by linking his political opinion and his analytical participations in politics with the rise of the Fascism in Germany (R, Bendix, 1962: 471). This study however, divided into four sections and ends up with a conclusion. The first section in a very short manner devoted to review the literature on the subject matter. The second section is invented to elaborate Weber's political writings and Germany. The third section tries to conceptualize Weber's Plebiscitary Democracy. The fourth section offers the discussion on types of authority in which Weber gave a great attention. The fifth section discusses the concept of Charisma and democracy in Weber's political thought.

Key Words
Plebiscitary Democracy, Power, Domination, Charisma and Charismatic Leader, Liberal Democracy.

Introduction and Literature Review

It is obvious that the political order of our modern age has been the result of two major processes: bureaucratization and democratization. Political sociology is concerned with the transformations which bureaucracy has introduced in modern societies. Reflecting on history, democratization and bureaucratization go hand in hand. In England or France, for example, democratic developments have been interrelated with the expansion of bureaucracy. This is in fact not the case in Germany (J, Freund, 1968: 236; S, Breuer, 1998: 1).

Many scholars in Germany, France, the United Kingdom and the United States of America have studied the writings of Weber. In Germany, Karl Jaspers, Wolfgang Mommsen and recently many sociologists promoted their work on the political sociology of Weber; Stefan Breuer, Sven Eliaeson and Ralph Schroeder. In France Raymond Aron was the leading sociologist in this respect. The British scholars gave more attention to Weber through the studies of Anthony Giddens, Gordon Marshal and David Beetham. In the United States of America, Weber becomes well known through the writings and translations of Talcott Parsons and Lazansfeld & Oberschall respectively. This study however relies on the existing secondary literature. Weber's writings in politics belong to the intellectual heritage of European Liberalism. Therefore, it seeks to place Weber's work on the basis of the interpretation offered here in the context of the above named scholars and specifically; (W, Mommsen, 1974 & 1984), (D, Beetham, 1974) and (R, Schroeder, 1998).

Weber's political writings and Germany

Throughout his life, Weber was always interested in politics. The basis of his political writings was the "National Liberalism" of his father. However, he never committed himself to the "National Liberal Party", and in the 1880s as the result of political events in Germany under the Bismarck regime and of the party putting up with them, he moved away from "National Liberalism" and from his father's political position. Due to the influences from his mother's family and friends, Weber turned towards a more progressive "Social Liberalism" which acknowledged the responsibility and obligation of the powerful state to take care of the weaker and poorer strata of the society (R, Bendix, op,cit,: 7-10; G. Ritzer & D. J. Goodman, 2004: 30 - 31).

Historically speaking, Germany, German unification and Germany's place and role in Europe and the world always have been the major issues in which Weber gave a great attention in all his life. Weber and his generation had experienced "the first German catastrophe" and were confronted with the question of responsibility for the World War 1. German state entered the World War 1 in 1914 and consequently lost the war and had to make territorial concessions to France and to an independent Poland (Z. Krasnodebski, 1998: 132 -134).

Weber's political thought however was related to the historical situation in which he lived, the situation of Germany and Western society. He treats political matters in a purely classificatory manner, outlining his ideal-types of different forms of legitimacy (S, Eliaeson 1991: 318). His conception of 'Political leader and democracy' changed significantly over the course of his life. In his wartime writings (World War 1), particularly in 'Parliament and Government', Weber had looked for a political leader to emerge from within parliament itself. The Contemporary British political theory, with its emphasis on the Caesarist character of the Prime Minister had lead him to convince that a plebiscitary type of leadership was possible within a parliamentary system. At

this stage, as Weber says, "What Germany needed was Parliamentary democracy" (D, Beetham, 1974: 232).

The development of a strong parliamentary system appears to offer a liberal interpretation of democratic politics. Liberal Democracy as a modern political term used to describe the political system of the western world and it is known as representative democracy. The importance of parliamentary institutions in a mass democracy was to provide a training ground for political leaders. For Weber, Parliament was, simply an apparatus for manifesting consent. He thought that parliamentary comites should play an important role in the political life of the German society (W, Mommsen, 1974).

Weber revised this view during the period from 1917 to 1919, which marked for Germany itself by deep social and political transformations. Weber's treatment of a political leader was influenced at this stage by his demand of "German national unity" which could only be met by "divorcing the political leader from the parliament" and giving him a separate power base in a direct presidential election (D, Beetham, op,cit: 232). This issue as well as his evaluation of Germany's situation since Bismarck's resignation in 1890 became a central feature of Weber's political thinking. According to Weber, Bismarck left behind "a nation without any political education" and "without any political will of its own". Thus, he was mainly concerned with the domination of the professional politician, and he demanded the parliamentary government and plebiscitary selection of leaders in Germany (G, Roth & W, Schluchter, 1979: 98-102).

David Beetham Pointed out that "the purpose of parliamentary democracy in Weber's conception reduced itself essentially to two functions: the selection of politicians with the capacity for the leadership and the control of.... the administrative apparatus" (D, Beetham, op,cit: 113).

According to David Beetham The German historian Wolfgang Mommsen and many scholars after him, have "failed to explain" the reasons behind Weber's insistency on plebiscitarian type of leadership, which came after the point of Germany's defeat, when Weber himself recognised that a world-political role was no longer possible for his country. He clearly regarded a Parliamentary system as incapable of providing decisive leadership in these tensions (ibid: 237). However, Weber's Parliamentary government system attempted to find a balance between "elitist and liberal element" ,or as David Held puts it, "might and right, power and law, expert government and popular sovereignty" (D, Held, 1987: 144). According to Weber a directly elected leader or president on a plebiscitary basis is the only truly system of democracy. For Weber the people conceive only as a means for selecting Political leaders and not as a regime in which there is some kind of direct rule democracy.

As David Held argued, Weber stood squarely in the classic liberal democratic tradition, which has consistently sought to defend and limit the political rights of citizens. Weber "articulated a new highly restrictive model of democracy". More to the point, It is restrictive, because:

(A): Weber envisaged democracy as little more than providing a way of establishing qualified political leaders.

(B): the role of the electorate and possible avenues of extending political participation are treated highly sceptically.

(C): although Weber thought that the electoral system provides some semblance of protection for the electorate; he maintained that this protection was simply to be measured by the opportunity to dismiss the ineffective from office. Weber's arguments centre directly on the

impractical nature of direct democracy. He did not claim that direct democracy is impossible in all situations, rather indeed, among others, the following two characteristics to exist. The organisation must be local, thus limited in members and the social position of the members must be reasonably similar to each other. While these conditions are often present in a small organisation, when looking at a country, these conditions are impossible to meet. In a heterogeneous society, direct democracy would lead to ineffective administration, unwanted inefficiency, political instability and ultimately, a radical increase in the probability of oppressive minority rule (ibid: 149 -159).

According to Weber, the direct rule of the people is out of the question. It is replaced by representative democracy, and this means that the people cease to have any real control over "political decisions", which become the prerogative of a bureaucratic administration and of leaders of the political parties. For him, the value of representative democracy resides in the fact that it makes possible the selection of effective political leaders, and the only viable type of democracy is what he called a "Plebiscitarian democracy", in which charismatic leaders set goals which are then to be "sold" to the people at large by "party machines" and afterward implemented with the help of administrative bureaucracies (W, Mommsen, 1974: 79).

Weber's Plebiscitary Democracy

Plebiscitary as a form of democracy means, the masses choose a leader. Weber insists that the plebiscite is a form of legitimation and that it sanctions the leader as a ruler, but gives no power to the governed masses. Plebiscitary democracy - the most important kind of leader democracy - is a variant of charismatic authority, which hides behind a legitimacy that is formally derived from the will of the governed. Plebiscitary leadership is "the transformation of charisma in a democratic direction".   The state is a relation of men dominating men. Thus the legitimacy of modern state founded predominantly on "legal authority" (H, Gerth & C, wright. Mills, 1947: 78).

Weber portrays democracy as a testing ground for potential leaders. Democracy is like the "market place", an institutional mechanism to weed out the weakest and to establish those who are most competent in the competitive struggle for votes and power. Weber argued that under current circumstances, there is only the choice, he wrote, between "leadership democracy" with a (party) "machine" and "leaderless democracy", namely the rule of professional politicians without a calling (ibid:113). The development of the modern state has brought with it the growth of mass political parties, and the emergence of professional politicians (A, Giddens, op,cit: 167). It is essential to recognize that in most of his lecturers, Weber emphasized on power *"Macht"* and domination (or authority). In one of his famous later lectures, '*Politics as a Vocation'*, in 1918, Weber defined power as "the probability that an actor will be able to realize his own objectives even against opposition from others with whom he is in a social relationship". As Anthony Giddens pointed out, "this definition is very broad. The concept of 'domination' *"Herrschaft"*is more specific: it refers only to those cases of the exercise of power when an actor obeys a specific command issued by another". Furthermore, "A political organization becomes a 'state' where it is able successfully to exercise a legitimate monopoly over the organized use of force within a given territory" (ibid: 156).

Mommsen pointed out that Weber's conception of 'democratic rule' was almost as functionalist as his sociological theory of domination. In addition to that, he, regarded Weber as he was an advocate of democracy in a sense that, the classical democratic doctrine does not effect on him

and that he did not at all believe in the theory of the sovereignty of the people. Weber considered plebiscitarian democracy as a modern representative democracy and he defines it as an anti- authoritarian version of 'charismatic domination'. Weber however did not distinguish sufficiently clearly between 'charismatic leadership' and 'charismatic domination' (W, Mommsen, 1974: 93). It is a sort of charismatic rule concealed behind a legitimacy, which is formally derived from the will of the governed and dependent upon it for its existence (ibid: 78-90). Mommsen concluded that, "Weber's theory of charismatic leadership has contributed its part to making the German's willing to accept Hitler's position by acclamation" (W, Mommsen, 1984: 410).

Types of Authority

Weber distinguished three main types of authority as bases for the legitimate exercise of power: Charismatic, Traditional and legal-rational (A, Giddens, op,cit: 156).

1- Charismatic authority drives from the devotion felt by subordinates to leader who is believed to have exceptional qualities. These qualities are seen as supernatural, superhuman or at least exceptional compared to lesser mortals. Alexander the great and Napoleon provide historical examples.

The Charismatic leader is able to control his followers by direct emotional appeals, which excite devotion and strong loyalties. Reinhard Bendix argues that Weber's analysis of charismatic domination is easier to understand if domination as a result of charismatic leadership is distinguished from domination as a result of charismatic authority, even though Weber did not make this distinction explicit in his work (R, Bendix, op,cit: 298)

2- Traditional authority is rests upon a belief in the 'rightness' of established customs and traditions. Those in authority command obedience on the basis of their traditional status, which is usually inherited. Their subordinates are controlled by feelings of loyalty and obligation to long- established positions of power. The feudal system of medieval Europe provides an example of traditional authority: monarchs and nobles owed their position to inherited status and the personal loyalty of their subjects. In this kind of authority or "domination" as Giddens prefer to use, those who rule have no specialised administrative staff through which they exercise their authority (A, Giddens, op,cit: 156).

3- Rational -legal authority is based on the acceptance of a set of impersonal rules. Those who possess authority are able to issue commands and have them obeyed because others accept the legal framework, which supports their authority. The rules on which their authority is based are rational in the sense that they are consciously constructed for the attainment of a particular goal and they specify the means by which that goal is to be attained: Laws governing the legal system are designed to achieve the goal of 'justice', for instance. Charismatic authority, in fact, leaves no room for political representation; it is its whole self at every moment or, to use Weber's own term, its own "epiphany" (W, Mommsen, 1974: 73-80; A, Giddens, 1979: 156-160; J. Freund, 1968: 229). Having examined Weber's view of the plebiscitary democracy and the three types of authority, it would be correct to consider his view of the relation between charisma and democracy.

Charisma and Democracy

As is well known, Weber defined Charisma "as a certain quality of an individual personality by virtue of which he is considered extraordinary and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or exceptional power or qualities" (A, Schweitzer, 1974: 151).

As Arthur Schweitzer argues, Weber employed two different concept of democracy. One may be called the delegate or parliament- democracy; the other leader- democracy. In each case the people who possessed the ultimate power through their votes, selected their representative for either parliament or the presidency (A, Schweitzer, op, cit: 168).

The difference resides in the meaning of such representation. If the nomination of candidates lies in the hands of particular interest group, whether parties or business organization, elected candidates will tend to defend and promote the particular interests of their sponsors. According to Weber, the elected politicians are likely to act as delegates of party bureaucracy and interest groups, unable to pay sufficient attention to the public interest. As the dependence of the delegates increases, so does the tendency toward a "Leaderless democracy", or what he called "democracies without leadership" (ibid: 168). However, Weber's analysis of this issue leads to what he called "mass democracy" which provides the opportunity for a shift from a delegate to a leader democracy. As David Beetham points out,' the involvement of the mass in politics was not regarded by Weber as modifying the fact of oligarchy, but rather the methods by which the few were selected' (D. Beetham, op,cit:103).

The charismatic qualities of the leader have to be supported by the activists among the voters who work through an effective political organization. It is not the politically passive mass that produced the leader from its midst, but the political leader recruits his following and wins mass support through his "demagogy". The nature of his political regime depends on whether the leader uses his power for democratic or dictatorial goals and policies. A. Schweitzer pointed out, for mass democracy situations; Weber distinguishes four types of political leaders: firstly, Demagogic leader, who is not committed to any values, his lack of objectivity tempts him to strive for the clamorous semblance of power rather than the actual power. Secondly, the ideological leader who is bond to "the ethic of politics as a cause". His ideology tends to supply him with either the ethics of "ultimate ends" or an "ethics of responsibility" for his actions. He is becomes a leader in an ideological party. Motivated by the ideology, not by any superhuman powers, this ideologist fails to become a charismatic leader. Furthermore, Weber did not distinguish clearly the ideological from the charismatic leader, partly because ideological values and charismatic qualities can become intermingled in political life (A. Schweitzer, op, cit: 170).

Charismatic leader is the third type of party leader, which Weber concentrated on in very systematic way. His authority in a democracy is derived from two different sources. One consists of his technological competence as a party leader. The other source of authority resides in the leader's ability to gain and hold the confidence of the masses. These two sources of legitimacy lead to a fusion of parliamentary and charismatic leadership.

The fourth type is the Caesarist leader, whose charismatic quality may be recognized either by voters or by soldiers. It may tend to establish 'hybrid systems' that mix democratic and dictatorial features of political organization. He also prefers to avoid any specific commitment to controversial values (ibid: 169 -173).

These three type of charismatic leaders; party leader, civilian and military Caesarism, can be assigned to a definite place in the theory of democracy. Weber considered modern plebiscitarian democracy to be essentially different from the traditional type of democracy.

Conclusion

To sum up, one can argue that Weber's view of politics and democracy cannot be understood without the specific German background in mind. The history of twentieth-century Western Europe make it clear that sustaining or creating a democratic form of government not very easy task. Indeed, Weber did not anticipate a clear solution for the liberal democracy as a representative democracy, which based on the idea of government by popular consent. He has been called "a liberal in despair", and an "aristocratic liberal" (W, Mommsen, 1974: 95), or as Christoph Steding puts it "pessimistic liberal" (D, Beetham, 1974: 54), or "nostalgic liberal" (H. Gerth & C. Right Mills, 1974: 50; (S, Eliaeson, 1998: 47). For Ritzer & Goodman, "Weber was more of a liberal on some issues and a conservative on others" (G, Ritzer & D.J. Goodman, op, cit: 32-33). However, Sven Eliaeson rightly stated, "all his life Weber was a national liberal, even if he was more 'rightist' in the early years" (S, Eliaeson, 1998: 50). On the other hand, Weber's interpretation of charismatic leader under the condition of plebiscitary democracy as a result may be regarded as a political solution relevant to the German state rather than to Europe as a whole.

In his three type of legitimate authority, Weber did not consider people's democratic rule the impossibility of democratic 'decision-making', which is as he argued impossible in a heterogeneous societies. For him direct democracy only possible in small societies. For a country like Germany, the representative democracy should be a proper model, but Weber did not consider this people's democracy. Weber's conception of the plebiscitary democracy cannot be made to fit modern liberal democracy, because plebiscitary democracy does not represent people's interest. As a result, Charismatic authority is no longer relevant in modern democracies because it allows the concentration of power and the establishment of an unquestioned hierarchy within society. On the other hand, I would argue that although Weber may not have intended to justify a totalitarian order, his political writings may inevitably lead in that direction

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Dr. Mahir A. Aziz

پوخته ی توێژینه‌وه

ئه‌ م توێژینه‌وه‌یه هه‌ ولّی ئه وه ده دات که شیکردنه وه یه‌ک له كۆمه‌ لّناسه
هه ره به ناوبانگه كانی ئه لّمانیای سه ره تای سه ده ی بیسته مماكسۆهیبهر (1864 –
1920)   بخاته رِوو له رِوانگه ی كۆمه لّناسی سیاسی سه بارهت به هه ردووچه
مكیدیمۆكراسی رِاپرسی و دیمۆكراسیلیبراڵ. ئه وه ش به پێی میتۆدی شیکردنه‌وه‌یی
به‌رجه‌سته ده‌كرێت به خستنه رِووئاراسته كردنیچه ندپرسیارێک که ئه م توێژینه‌وه‌یه هه وڵ
ده دات وه لّامیان بۆ بدۆزیته وه : ئایاماكسۆ یبه ر چا ره‌ رێكی توكمه وپته وی بۆ كێشه
ی دیمۆكراسی هه بوو؟ ئایا له دیده نی ۆه یه رداچه مكی دیمۆكراسی رِاپرسی سنووردارە؟ تا
چ رِادەيكئه م چه مكه رِۆلّی له تێگه یشتنی دیمۆكراسی لیبراڵداهه یه؟ ئایا ۆه یبه ر
داكۆكیكردنی له دیمۆكراسی نوێنه رایه تی ده كرد یاخود دیمۆكراسی‌رِاسته وخۆ؟ ئا یا ئه و
بۆچوون و دیده نه ی ۆه یبه ر بۆ دیمۆكراسی رِاپرسی‌که شێوازیکه له دیمۆكراسی‌رِاسته
وخۆ، رێگا خۆشكه ربوو بۆ هاتنه كایه وه ی سه ركردایه تی تاكرِه و له ئه لّمانیا؟ وه ك هه ر
ندیک له توێژه ران ئاماژه ی بۆ ده كه ن، ئا یا ۆه یبه ر به بنیادنه ری سه ره كی بۆ هاتنه كایه
وه ی دیكتاتۆریه تی نازییه كان داده نرێت؟ به پێی بۆچوونی رِێنهارد بیندێكس، هه ندیک له
توێژەرە ئه‌لّمانه كان وه كو مێژوو نووس ولّفگانگ مۆمسن (1930 – 2004) و كریستیان
ۆۆن فیربه ر وئه وانی تر، هه ولّی رِه خنه گرتیان دا لهپایهیۆفیكری‌ماكس ۆه یبه ر، به وه ی‌نه
ك ته نیا له بۆچوونه سیاسییه كانیبهلّكو له به رِراو بۆچوون وشیكردنه كانیشی، به بیبانوی ئه
وه ی كه ئه و رِاو بۆچوونه سیاسییانه ی ۆه یبه ر رِیخۆشكه ربوون بۆ سه ره لّدانی فاشیزم
له ئه لّمانیا . ئه م توێژینه‌وه‌یه به سه رپێنج ته وه ر وپوخته ی توێژینه‌وه‌دا دابه ش ده بێت. ته
وه ری یه كه م باس له سه رچاوه سه ره كییه كانی ئه م توێژینه‌وه‌یه وتوێژینه‌وه كانی
پێشووسه‌بارەتبەم بابه ته ده كات. ته ری دووه م بۆ نووسینه سیاسییه سه ره كییه كانی
ماكس ۆه یبه ر و په یوه ندی به بارو دۆخی ئه لّمانیا ته رخان كراوه.ته وه ری سێیه م و زۆر
به ووردي شیكردنه وه ییكه بۆچه مكی دیمۆكراسی رِاپرسی. ته وه ری چواره م باس و
شیكردنه وه یه بۆ جۆره كانی ده سه لّات که ۆه یه ر له نوو سینه كانیدا گرنكییکی زۆری
پێداوه . ته وه ری پێنجه م شیكرنه وه یه كه بۆچه مكی كاریزما ودیمۆكراسی له نووسینه كانی
ماكس ۆه یبه ر دا.ئه م توێژینه‌وه‌هگه یشته ئه و ده رئه نجامه ی که ناكریت له بیرِوو بۆجوونی
سیاسی ماكس ۆه یبه ر بگهین بەبیّ زانینی بارودۆخی سیاسی ئه لّمانیا له كۆتایی سه دهی
نۆزده م وسه ره تای سه ده ی بیسته م . لهرِاستیدا ۆه یبه ر هیچ جۆره چا ره سه رێیکی بۆ
كێشه ی دیمۆكراسی لیبراڵدانه ناوه،   که شێیوازیکه له دیمۆكراسی نوێنه رایه تیی. وا دیاره
كه ماكس ۆه یبه ر   به درێژژایی ته مه نی لیبراڵ خوازیکی نه ته وه پەرست بووه. دیاره
بۆچوون ودیده نی ماكسۆه یبه ر بۆچه مكی دیمۆكراسی رِاپرسی له گه ل بارو دۆخی سیاسی
وشیرازه ی كۆمه لایه تی ئه‌لّما نیای ته وكات و ئیستاشناگونجیت وناشیت.

ملخص البحث

مفهوم ماكس فيبر للديمقراطية الأستفتائية والديمقراطية الليبرالية

تحاول هذه الدراسة أن تشرح وجهة نظر واحد من أهم و أشهر علماء الأجتماع الألمان في أوائل القرن العشرين، ألا وهو ماكس فيبر (1864 - 1920) عن مفهومه للديمقراطية الأستفتائية والديمقراطية الليبرالية. تنتهج الدراسة المنهج التحليلي لما كتبه ماكس فيبر عن الموضوع وفقاً لقواعد المنهج النظري في حقل علم الأجتماع السياسي. وعليه تحاول الدراسة الأجابة على الأسئلة التالية: هل عالج فيبر أشكالية الديمقراطية معالجة دقيقة؟ هل كانت فكرته ومفهومه للديمقراطية الأستفتائية مفهوماً محدوداً؟ الى أي مدى يمكن للديمقراطية الأستفتائية أن تساهم في فهم وأستيعاب الديمقراطية الليبرالية؟ هل كان ماكس فيبر ليبرالياً فعلاً حسب الفهم الحديث لليبرالية؟ هل كان فيبر مدافعاً للديمقراطية التمثيلية أم الديمقراطية المباشرة؟ هل أن مفهومه للديمقراطية الأستفتائية يمكن أن يفسر وكأنه بمثابة تمهيد لنشوء القيادة الفردية؟ هل كان فيبر كما يدعي بعض الدارسين بأنه يعد الأب الروحي لمجيء الدكتاتورية النازية؟ وحسب رأي رينهارد بندكس فأن بعض الدارسين الألمان أمثال المؤرخ ولفكانك موومسن (1930 — 2004) وكريستيان فون فيربر وأخرين اللذين حاولو أن ينتقدوا فيبر ويقللو من منزلته الفكرية، ليس فقط بربط أراءه السياسية بل وحتى مساهماته التحليلية وعلاقتها ببروز الفاشية في المانيا. تنقسم الدراسة الى خمسة مباحث وخلاصة. فالمبحث الأول يعرض وبأختصار شديد المصادر والدراسات السابقة عن الموضوع. في حين يتناول المبحث الثاني سرداً للكتابات السياسية لماكس فيبر وعلاقة ذلك ببلده المانيا. أما المبحث الثالث فيتناول بأسهاب مفهوم فيبر للديمقراطية الأستفتائية.أما المبحث الرابع فقد كرِس ليتناول أنواع السلطة والذي أعطاه فيبر اهتماماً كثيراً. والمبحث الخامس والأخير يتناول مفهوم الكاريزما والديمقراطية في كتابات فيبر السياسية. توصلت الدراسة الى أنه لا يمكن فهم أراء و أفكار ماكس فيبر السياسية وعلى وجه التحديد أرائه ووجهة نظره للديمقراطية الأستفتائية والديمقراطية الليبرالية دون الألمام بالأوضاع السياسية لألمانيا في أواخر القرن التاسع عشر وبداية القرن العشرين. كما وتوصلت الدراسة الى أن ماكس فيبر لم يعالج وبأي شكل أشكالية الديمقراطية الليبرالية وهي شكل من أشكال الديمقراطية التمثيلية وخصوصاً في ألمانيا. يبدو بأن ماكس فيبر في أغلب محطات حياته كان ليبرالياً قومياً. تبين من الدراسة بأن مفهوم ماكس فيبر للديمقراطية الأستفتائية لم يكن ينسجم مع الظروف السياسية والبناء الأجتماعي لألمانيا ذلك الوقت، ولا لألمانيا الوقت الحاضر. في بلد كألمانيا فأن الديمقراطية التمثيلية هي النموذج الأمثل وأن مفهوم الديمقراطية الأستفتائية لا يتلائم مع أسس ومبادىء ترسيخ الديمقراطية الليبرالية لأن الديمقراطية الأستفتائية لا تمثل مصالح الجماهيز أما فيما يخص معالجته للسلطة الكارزمية فهي الأخرى لا تنسجم مع الديمقراطية الحديثة لأنها تساعد على تركز القوة في يد القائد الكارزميز وأخيراً ينبغي أن نشير الى أنه على الرغم من أن ماكس فيبر لم يحاول أن يبرر للأنظمة الكلا نية التوتاليتارية، فأن كتاباته السياسية وبدون أن يكون متعمداً فيها تسير نحو هذا الأتجاه.