

The African National Congress and Traditional Leadership in a Democratic South Africa: Resurgence or Revival in the Era of Democratisation?¹

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ABSTRACT The role of traditional authorities, particularly traditional leadership in the democratic South Africa (1994-2013) seems to be a complex and multifaceted process. When the African National Congress (ANC) came into power in May 1994, the party was faced with a mammoth task of incorporating traditional leaders in the local sphere of government. The study examines the socio-political role of traditional leaders in South Africa in post-apartheid period. Furthermore, the study aims at examining the factors and challenges contributing to the leadership discourse between the traditional leaders and some structures of the ANC, for example, the councillors as elected leaders. The findings from this study pointed to challenges such as values and perceptions of leadership styles as espoused by the traditional leaders versus the democratic way of leadership from the ANC structures. The above propelled the researchers to engage in an analytical research study of determining the relationship that existed between the traditional leaders and the local government structures in South Africa. On the basis of the findings of this study, recommendations are made for the fostering of harmonious working relationships between the traditional authorities and the councillors representing the ANC.