

THE POSITIVE ASPECT OF POWER:

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE



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Dr. Mayuri Barman, Assistant Professor (Selection Grade), Department of Philosophy, working in a Pandu College.

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1	Introduction.....	1-3
Chapter 2	Contemporary German Philosophy.....	4-5
Chapter 3	Nietzsche- The Iconoclast.....	6-7
Chapter 4	Feeling Of Power.....	8-15
Chapter 5	Will To Power.....	16-23
	References.....	24-25

Chapter 1

Introduction

Nietzsche: the life in Brief

Whatever one may think about Nietzsche's ideas, one cannot question his vast reputation and the power of his ideas to act like a potent wine in the minds of a good many people.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was born in Rocken, Germany, on 15th October, 1844, and was raised in an atmosphere of pious Lutheran Christianity. From 1854 to 1858 he studied at the local Gymnasium, and from 1858 to 1864, he attended the elite p-forta school where he received a first rate classical education. In 1864 at the University of Bonn he began to study theology, but a growing skepticism, abetted by his discovery of the writings of Schopenhauer, put an end to this. He switched to the study of classical philology first at Bonn, then at the University of Leipzig.

By the age of 23, he had gained so great a reputation that he was appointed professor of classical philology at the University of Basel, Switzerland, before having attained his doctorate, which was later awarded to him. In May 1869 he delivered his inaugural lecture on Homer and Classical Philology. On the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war Nietzsche joined the ambulance corps of the German army; but illness forced him to abandon this work, and after an insufficient period of convalescence he resumed his professional duties at Basel.

Nietzsche taught at Basel for ten years (1869-1879), but was never satisfied with the "mole-like activities" of University scholars and "their indifference to the urgent problems of life." Though named a full professor in 1870, Nietzsche already knew that the regime of the University was incompatible with the unfettered thinking he felt called to do.

In 'The Birth of Tragedy' from the spirit of Music which appeared in 1872, he first drew a contrast between Greek culture before and after Socrates, to the disadvantage of the latter, German culture bore a strong