

Excessive pride, a representative kind of tragic flaws in Aeschylus' characterization of Prometheus, can be seen as a heroic characteristic for two reasons. Firstly, the hero Prometheus usually dares to confront an established, tyrannical authority, either the godly or the monarchical. Second, his purpose is not to glorify or honor himself but benefit and help other people. Therefore, his actions are viewed as not only excessive pride to the god but also heroic feature to men.

On the one hand, we know that in ancient world, the hero out of pride usually tends to be against the superior tyrannical authority; his rebellion or even merely over-confidence leads to his downfall. In ~~the end~~ Prometheus is accordingly chained on Mt. Caucasus as punishment by Zeus, who in the play is molded into a hot-tempered tyrant. Zeus disciplines Prometheus' hubris due to his refusal to disclose the secret that one of Zeus' sons will dethrone his father one day and his disobedience of Zeus' order not to give mankind fire from sun. In terms of theocentric point of view, as a subordinate to the Father of the Gods, it is improper and unforgivable for Prometheus to defy Zeus. On the other hand, the objective of the hero's conduct—which is viewed as a proud deed—is not to benefit himself but others instead. In order to protect men as his favorite creature, Prometheus gives humans fire as a weapon, tells them the way to keep their meal by misleading Zeus into choosing the sacrifices with the bones in glistening fat, and teaches them the art of civilization. To human beings, contrarily what Prometheus does for them is great and courageous.

In a word, from the gods' perspective, Prometheus is a rebel against the superior's will, whereas from human beings' perspective, he is called "the savior of mankind" instead because of his great contribution to them. This extreme paradox Prometheus presents consequently is the reason why excessive pride can be conceived as one of the typical heroic characteristics in Greek tragedy.