

Hountondji as a Global Thinker

The last part of this introduction to Hountondji's oeuvre will focus on the elements of critique that mark him as a social philosopher and public intellectual who is engaging with the challenges of his time, and whose approaches can be helpful for contemporary social analysis within and outside of Africa. As a first step, we explore the sociological and normative foundations of Hountondji's assessment of structural inequalities in knowledge production, by bringing him into conversation with contemporary debates on epistemic justice. As a second step, we will set out Hountondji's notion of "culture," as well as his concomitant critique of "culturalism" and identity politics. By way of conclusion, the chapter turns to Hountondji's pledge for a critical universalism, based on trans-cultural philosophising on a global scale.

This part does not review Hountondji's writing in chronological order, but revisits selected texts thematically, according to these recurrent elements of critique. The aim is to highlight how his philosophy continues to be highly relevant to contemporary social and political philosophy, as well as to disciplines such as African studies and the sociology of science.