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BEAUTIFUL PLACES AND RECREATING HUMANITY IN SOUTH AFRICA

ABSTRACT

The article investigates the connection between beauty and justice, by exploring everyday aesthetics through ordinary life, specifically the very concrete reality of contemporary urban South Africa. On the one hand, it delves beneath the statement that apartheid is ugly, by exploring the ugly spaces apartheid created, the devastation of an aesthetic built on segregation, and the distortions of whiteness. It also seeks to explore a theological aesthetic that starts from the ordinary life lived in particular places, arguing that beauty in particular places must be interwoven with humanness in all places, and proposing a theological aesthetic that gives priority to the voices silenced in particular places. Through this, beauty and justice are intimately interwoven in the ongoing work of disruption and transformation of a white racist place.

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1. INTRODUCTION

I write from within a valley. Typically described as the inner city of Pretoria, it is part of the medium- to high-density residential area to the east of the Tshwane Central Business District (CBD). Reflecting on the hills just north and south from where I am writing, we at times proclaim liturgically:

> Liturgist (L): We lift up our eyes to the hills,
> to the high places in and around Pretoria;
> Where does our help come from?
> Does our help come from Meintjeskop,
> from the Union Buildings, centre of political power?
> Congregation (C): Our help comes from the LORD,
> who made heaven and earth
> ...
> L: Does our help come from the high buildings of Unisa or the
> University of Pretoria, centres of intellectual power?
> C: Our help comes from the LORD,
> who made heaven and earth (Kritzinger 2008:337).

This litany emerged from the Uniting Reformed Church of Southern Africa's Melodi ya Tshwane congregation, who worships close to Church Square in the Tshwane Central Business District. The Union Buildings are on the hill on the northern side of the valley being described, and Unisa on the southern hill. The University of Pretoria marks the eastern border of this area. I am situated towards the south of the valley, at an altitude of approximately 40 metres above the lowest point. Sunnyside. In many ways, Eskia Mphahlele's (2004:39-40, 78) words concerning Sunnyside in *Down Second Avenue* would probably not ring true nowadays. A colleague who has been in the inner-city congregation of the Dutch Reformed Church often jokingly comments that, when he arrived in 1989, this was the highest concentration of Afrikaners in the world. Currently, popular imagination often forgets that it used to be a white suburb. Instead, it has become a place symbolic of diversity in terms of language, nationality, and income. By the 2011 census, Sunnyside already reflected the racial demographics of South Africa (Frith 2011b).[1] On the other hand, while Sunnyside would hardly have any impact on the formation of Afrikaner identity at present, the voyeuristic architecture which Johann Rossouw (2007:42-46) describes continues to stand. These contrasts remind of the tensions I hesitantly

1 This can be visually noted in the maps created by Frith (2011a).

explore in this article. Both buildings and people, and more than buildings and people, contribute to the sense of a place in a particular locale, and both buildings and people inform the aesthetics of a place.

But this is too broad. Roughly five doors north of my own front door is a small corridor, measuring perhaps ten metres long and just over one metre wide, with three-story-high walls on either side. This little corridor opens onto a small courtyard with entrances to several units, and on the far side is a door to what I call home. My wife once said that I decided to move here before I entered the house, when I first passed through that corridor. I think she was right; I suspect I found it beautiful.

Anyone familiar with my past work would realise that I enter a conversation on beauty and justice from the side of justice. In this, I reflect a history of South African theologies of struggle against apartheid (De Gruchy 2001:2) in my own work, mostly focusing on extending that struggle into present issues of race and whiteness as it intersects with Christian theology.

That said, perhaps it is worth reiterating the fear that beauty can be profoundly unjust, as I will argue later, in that beauty is fenced in and made the privilege of a few; beauty is built on the backs of those oppressed, and the very meaning of what is considered beautiful is woven into past and present relations of power.

Without engaging in a debate on what would be considered "art", I must nonetheless note that my concern is not with art, *per se*. Should art be expanded beyond the visual arts, it would still not encompass my concern, although questions of architecture do overlap with my focus in this article.[2] While García-Rivera's (1999:99) point on "life as art" comes particularly close to my concern, the way in which this is primarily turned towards exceptional examples such as Mother Teresa would also not take me to the search for beauty in everyday life, with which I am concerned in this article.

I join the theme of this collection by reflecting on the relationship between beauty and justice. But I do this by paying attention explicitly to ordinary life. I argue that it is exactly when reflecting on the beauty of ordinary life that beauty and justice intertwine most closely. My interest is consciously not on those places we visit, those places we *go to* in our quest to think through issues of justice (or to escape the need to think through issues of justice), but on those places where we live our ordinary lives.

2 Gorringe's (2002:193-221) question on whether the built environment can be considered art, and the complexities around what that would mean, is of immediate relevance to my argument, yet the answer need not in any way impact on the argument at all.

The places where we work, but most specifically, the places where we live. In this, I am interested in the under-explored field of everyday aesthetics. But I want to push beyond the way in which this notion can easily get reduced to gardens and everyday architecture (see Scruton 2009:67-81). Important as these are, the question of everyday beauty in the places that inform our identity is about more than the angles of buildings, the selection of plants, and the decisions on windows or doors.

I should hasten to add that the places where we live may or may not be the places we call home. The very distinction between house and home continuing to be heard in South Africa nowadays is part of what needs to be probed (although I will refrain from engaging that discourse, in this instance). I have in mind the way in which "house" is used with reference to the (mostly) urban place of residence, situated to facilitate access to employment and income-generation, while "home" refers to a mostly rural place of family residence, ancestral land, and ritual meaning-making. If "home" is some place other than where I live my ordinary, day-to-day life, then it is not "home" that I have in mind in this article.

Puttick's (2020) recent photo of an elderly white couple walking down the streets of Hillbrow with their groceries captures the beauty reflected on in this instance. It should not have drawn the eye, but given the history and politics of the place, this normal, everyday activity draws his camera and becomes an image that captures our attention. Their story is not told, but the sense that they are at home in a place where they are not expected becomes a moment of introspection: Why is this not more common? What is it in how we think of and organise beauty that causes this image of an elderly white couple, walking with their groceries down the streets of Hillbrow, to be something that we find not only ethically, but also aesthetically, important? It is, in part, the image captured by a camera that draws our attention; not merely the reminder that there are, indeed, some white people who have lived in Hillbrow throughout the past decades. It is also the visibility of race (Alcoff 2006) – and age – that allows Puttick to capture this image and note its implications. It is the aesthetic of the elderly white couple in a street, where the photographer did not anticipate seeing them, that draws out the introspection.

Writing as a theologian, I am concerned about reflecting on life in praise of God; in this instance, specifically, not through liturgy or worship, whether formal or informal, but rather with a life that would point to the One Who is Beauty. A beautiful life together. I find the concern with keeping human life human (Gorringe 2002:22) to be wholly interrelated with what brings praise. My concern is with keeping human life human in the specific context of South Africa, brutally marred by the spatial politics

of colonialism, apartheid, and the ongoing brutality of economic inequality carving up our cities. My question is what beauty would be, and what the place of beauty would be, in the ongoing quest for justice in this context.

While the argument, in this instance, is not formally autoethnographic, I quite deliberately, as already illustrated in the introduction, draw on personal anecdotes and examples from my own concrete day-to-day life to illustrate various points. It is my own "everyday" from which I seek to think.

2. APARTHEID AS UGLY

De Gruchy (2001:1) opens *Christianity, art and transformation* by noting his own growing awareness that apartheid was not only unjust, but also ugly. I find this an important place to start in my own concerns with beauty and ordinary life in particular places. While apartheid was an attempt at all-encompassing social engineering in racial terms, in many ways its spatial dimensions made apartheid a global symbol – this originally Afrikaans word continues to be used internationally in reference to practices of extreme segregation. More specifically, the intersection of racial oppression and spatial segregation in the present continues to make apartheid a metaphor and analogy for present injustices – most visible in analyses of the occupation of Palestine. This spatial history continues to haunt South Africa in disturbing ways and remains at the heart of South African debates on race, whether it involves the realities of ongoing urban segregation, the need for land reform in agricultural areas, or the crisis of segregation and inequality in education. But, in this instance, my concern is specifically about questions of beauty in relation to place and race.

2.1 Apartheid created ugly places

Most concretely, we could argue that apartheid created ugly spaces. The townships and relocated settlements were places of injustice, but they were also ugly. In saying this, I do not wish to deny the ways in which black South Africans creatively reimagined these spaces into places of life; yet I do not romanticise the squalor and death-dealing places that the system of apartheid created either (see Gorringe 2002:89).

While place is constitutive of community (Gorringe 2002:253) and beauty is key in relating to a place in ways that guide us towards true humanity, at the heart of apartheid was the core conviction that black South Africans should, in fact, not put down roots in "white South Africa". Places of residence were imagined as something temporary, despite the obvious fact that there was little "temporary" about black communities in apartheid "white" South Africa.

On the concrete level, we must start a reflection on beauty and justice in the lived reality of South Africans, by noting that there was hardly any intent to nurture the beautiful among those who designated particular places as "non-white". The building of residential spaces for large labour reserves was never a quest for beauty.

But it's not only those spaces that are reflective of the utter dehumanisation of black people reminding of the ugliness of apartheid. As you drive down the R21 or N14 from Centurion into Pretoria, you are confronted with the block of concrete that forms the main campus of the University of South Africa (Unisa). Reminiscent of the 1960s and 1970s, it communicates an imposing power. Brink notes that the winds of architectural change were already blowing when the Unisa buildings were built. In contrast to a call for buildings that are accommodating and slightly "messy",

> the mind, heart and the soul of the NP [National Party] and AB [Afrikaner Broederbond] sought symbols of purism, power, progress, prosperity, virility, superiority, authority, and impenetrability with greater determination as the regime's political isolation grew (Brink 2012:20).

The main features of the former Theo van Wijk building are "intended to express progress, power and strength" (Brink 2010:19). Kirstner (2015:2) notes of the architect, Brian Sandrock, that his "architectural *oeuvre* provides the most comprehensive record of the architecture of apartheid modernity".

But again, it is the everyday that concerns me more. A senior colleague once pointed out that the disruption of community is fundamental to the very architecture inside this building. Long winding corridors, rows upon rows of doors, and no place for people to naturally gather around a cup of coffee and linger during a break. The cafeterias on campus are places you have to "go to", not where you would naturally "move through". Should you create a tea room, it would be one door along a row of corridors, not a natural gathering space; the explicit legacy of white nationalism found in the daily struggle to establish community.

2.2 On segregated beauty

Like many Afrikaans children who were avid readers, I devoured the children's literature shelf in the small rural library of my home town. The shelves were stacked with literature steeped in apartheid (even if implicitly): *Maasdorp*, *Keurboslaan*, *Saartjie*, *Die uile*, *Trompie*; the list could continue. The last of these is possibly the most famous. An infamous young boy from a fictional town outside Johannesburg, living an idyllic life of walking the

streets, swimming in the local dam, and negotiating the authority of the local *dominee*, headmaster, and a patriarchal father coming home from work. As expected, the only black characters that enter the story are those cleaning houses or tending gardens. *Trompie* recalls a white, perhaps particularly Afrikaner, vision of living in a beautiful community.

The ways in which beauty is walled off obviously did not end with apartheid. Pass laws were replaced by ever-higher physical walls. A steady stream of estate agents is marketing a life of serenity, tranquillity, and beauty. Motivated by discourses on the constant threats to safety, the possibility of bodily harm, and quite often a thinly veiled racial discourse on who needs to be kept out of everyday life. However, of particular concern, in this instance, is everyday beauty, which is walled off, guarded and policed with military vigilance. What parades as places of beauty are constructed in such a way that the reality of suffering can be kept out of sight. Yet, as García-Rivera (1999:60) points out, "harmonizing suffering away is an obscene not an aesthetic act".

But there is a particularly sinister side to the obvious injustice of access to beautiful places being associated with opulence versus the destitution accompanying poverty: the way in which the former relies on the latter for maintaining this vision of beauty. Black labour was drawn upon to create a particular, aesthetic experience, which is part of the injustice of apartheid. Moreover, it is often noted that the South African economy required vast amounts of cheap labour to keep mines and industry running, but it also provided even white families of fairly modest income levels with personal employees, largely focused on creating a particular aesthetic experience in private spaces: fantastically clean homes and well-tended gardens.

I, therefore, draw attention, on the one hand, to the ugliness of what apartheid created, both in its utter disregard for black life and in its attempt to establish symbols of white power. On the other hand, those places that were meant to be aesthetically pleasing to white South Africans were not only walled off – whether through systems of laws and bylaws or physical walls – but, in fact, relied on the labour of the very people it was excluding.

2.3 Getting to the heart of it: Whiteness and the distortion of beauty

But something more profound is at stake than the brutality behind apartheid's spatial design. The most important factor is that whiteness distorted our perception of beauty. Such an aesthetic distortion is far deeper than apartheid; it underpins the entire modern world. Steeped in a white aesthetic, it distorts our perception in ways that remain inadequately explored.

Jennings' (2017:17) reminder on the return to a focus on beauty (of which this publication is inevitably a part) must be taken to heart, in this instance:

> The recent return to beauty in philosophical, literary, and visual culture as well as in theological studies has yet to give an adequate account of the wider horizon of the racial aesthetic energized by the performances of whiteness.

The most important link between beauty and the quest for justice may be that our very reflection on beauty is happening within an aesthetic regime where whiteness is the norm.

As I was mulling over this chapter, in December 2019, my Facebook feed got taken over with ecstatic responses to the crowning of Zozibini Tunzi. I do not doubt that some form of national pride underpinned the responses, but far more was at stake. The way in which Tunzi disrupted a white aesthetic norm was the primary concern (see Mabhena 2019). While I do not wish to discount the need for an ongoing critical engagement with beauty pageants of any sort, the symbolism that called forth the overjoyed responses should not escape us. In many ways, whiteness continues its attempt to usurp beauty; yet, through her words, aesthetic representation, and conscious positioning, Tunzi called out and, even if only for a moment, disrupted this white aesthetic norm.

The link between whiteness and a distorted aesthetic is historically most explicit in the black consciousness and black power insistence that "black is beautiful". Again, without discounting a critical interrogation of how this insistence was commercialised, we must note its reminder that there is an aesthetic behind white racism – with whiteness equated with the beautiful and blackness with its opposite. This insistence that "black is beautiful" then extends the practice of claiming and giving positive meaning to blackness, by specifically insisting on the disruption of a white aesthetic.

In line with my argument thus far, I do not wish to reduce reflections on beauty to the human body. To start with, the racialisation of bodies and spaces are intimately intertwined. In the words of Sullivan (2006:146),

> [i]n a raced world, the race of bodies helps effect the race of spaces, which effects the race of bodies who inhabits those spaces, and so on.

What is considered beautiful places, communities, moments in life, or those objects of more explicit aesthetic reflection – art, music, architecture – also reflect a particularly racialised reading of the world.

At its heart, the question on the beauty or ugliness of apartheid must remind us that the modern world, born from a racial vision, has distorted our very sense of what is beautiful. This reflection on white aesthetics, going beyond the claim that apartheid was ugly, should colour the entire argument. Thus, without an adequate critique on how the modern history of race and colonialism deformed our very idea of the beautiful, any reflection on beauty risks subtly drawing all into the ideal of a white aesthetic.

3. TOWARDS BEAUTIFUL PLACES OF JUSTICE

I would not propose to undo the hideous scars of apartheid with what can be suggested in the remainder of this brief argument. Yet, I do want to hint towards elements of such a quest for creating beautiful places which, in time, breaks the evaluative control of whiteness determining beauty. Such a quest for beauty is thoroughly intertwined with our quest for justice but insists on justice beyond material care towards a search for true humanity – a life lived beautifully.

I want to respond to the white and apartheid aesthetic above by arguing for a reimagining of the beautiful from the ground up, in a truly egalitarian way that would imply foregrounding silenced voices. A specifically theological aesthetic, a pointing towards beauty that relates to the One Who is Beauty, should be nothing less than this, and in that very insistence, I propose that the quest for justice should be intimately intertwined with exploring beauty.

3.1 Reimagining beautiful places from the ground up

My wish is not to advocate for an ideal of pristine "nature" unspoiled by human hands as the norm to which we should return. Such advocacy likely underestimates the fundamental disruption of the very ground on which we live. Mofokeng's insistence that a call for a return to an original "good creation" underestimates the dehumanisation of the colonial project should be taken with utmost seriousness (Van Wyngaard 2019:171-176, 254-257). There is no going back. Both the human and the ground on which we live require a recreation.

This disruption is probed with even greater clarity in Jennings' *The Christian imagination*. I briefly noted the relation between community and place earlier. But the distortion that Jennings' work traces relates not only to the way in which bodies were theologically separated from a particular place, but also essentially to the way in which the colonial project changed the very place to which it came and remade it into something fundamentally different (Jennings 2010:25, 39, 72). Race creates a separation between

bodies and particular places – linking bodies together aesthetically, regardless of their location in, and in relation to particular places.[3]

Elsewhere I have argued that

> Jennings' reminder is that what race did was in part to effect a fundamental distortion of the very space in which we find ourselves, in terms of the environment, the economy, but also the social and theological imagination through which we think about identity. The task facing us is then not merely undoing such a theological imagination, but rather participating in the ongoing struggle for allowing a space which can inform and sustain a different theological imagination to emerge (Van Wyngaard 2019:256).

The conundrum we are facing is this: Beauty should be at the heart of recreating places, from which we can allow such a renewed theological imagination and vision of humanity to emerge. Yet, beauty is at the very centre of the distorted whiteness and racial vision created by the world. Race is, after all, at heart also an aesthetic project.

Our modern world is steeped in a white aesthetic – a racial reading of visible reality – and the bodies of people or the spaces, in which we move, should call forth a healthy scepticism towards our own sense of beauty. Merely stating that beauty is a matter of individual taste, somehow in the eye of the beholder, as if that would warrant our racial patterning of aesthetic sensibilities, underestimates the depth to which a racial imagination forms who we are.

Justice is then at the heart not of a mere longing for what we think to be beautiful, but of a search for seeing beauty in ways no longer determined by a white aesthetic. It is the slow practice of being formed into a community that can discern beauty in ways that point towards the beautiful. I would not claim that these modest words point to such a break with the "racial aesthetic energized by the performances of whiteness" (Jennings 2017:17). At most, I wish to hint to where I would look for the signs of such a crack[4] in this racial aesthetic.

This then turns the argument back to its roots. I started by noting the conviction that place is constitutive of community. Yet, as pointed out,

3 I have given a detailed overview of Jennings' argument elsewhere (Van Wyngaard 2019:44-52).

4 In the metaphor of the "crack" from Holloway (2010) via the joint discernment of the Anabaptist Network of South Africa (https://www.facebook.com/AnabaptistNetworkInSouthAfrica/). Holloway's metaphor of finding ways to "crack" a system as overpowering as capitalism has also found resonance in our local reflections on white racism. Constantly cracking that which seems overwhelming, until it collapses.

race fundamentally distorts such a community bound to place, drawing community up into bodily markers and genealogies. Place, as constitutive of community, then becomes more ideal than actual reality. Conscious of how our very understanding of what makes everyday life beautiful has been informed by the performance of whiteness, I propose that the quest for beauty, as found in concrete places of everyday life, should guide us. This is no panacea, but in search for beauty and justice, the way in which communities in particular places are imagining beauty should be the place to which we pay primary attention.

3.2 Beauty for all?

Scarry (1999:3) opens *On beauty and being just*, by noting that "beauty brings copies of itself into being". Confronted by that which is beautiful, we are drawn to copy it. We want to extend it. Either we follow it ourselves – like the birdwatcher or people-watcher following what is considered beautiful for a prolonged period of time – or, more often, we extend it across multiple perceivers, one after the other passing by that which is beautiful, inviting others along to share in the beautiful (Scarry 1999). But what are we then to make of the vulgar excess being sold as beauty? What do we make of spaces marked as the standards of beauty being actively controlled out of fear for multiple perceivers?

This is perhaps where the injustice of the beauty of everyday life becomes most clearly visible: not only is the beauty of everyday life in practice inaccessible to many, but contemporary ecological awareness constantly reminds us that many of our notions of what constitutes a life amidst beauty cannot be copied or extended; it is, per definition, not possible to extend such beauty to all. As pointed out in the earlier reflections on segregated beauty, everyday experiences of beauty find their meaning specifically in practices of active exclusion from what is considered beautiful.[5]

We need not discount the validity of experiences of beauty to note a problem, in this instance.[6] There is a beauty that deceives (García-Rivera

5 The gated community as promise of that which is simultaneously aesthetically pleasing and guarding against the general population is perhaps the most important symbol of this present conundrum.

6 García-Rivera (1999:145) uses a different example of a beauty informed by white supremacy: "The pageantry of one of Albert Speer's Nazi rallies may be aesthetically beautiful but it also corresponds to an aesthetic experience that takes us far, very far, from the Beauty that is God". Closer to the everyday, there are indeed many examples of places considered beautiful that, due to this beauty, are fundamentally tied to the formation of whiteness. This is a beauty very far from the Beauty that is God.

1999:145). For a theology of beauty, the question that must be raised is how what is experienced as beautiful relates to true Beauty; the "One Who is Beauty" (García-Rivera 1999:196). One such deception found on a grand scale is how much of everyday beauty depends on an inhumane life of others elsewhere. So, if we are to speak of beauty in a particular place, then the criteria should be its relation to humaneness in all places, questioning the construction of beautiful places that rely on squalor and inhumanity elsewhere.

3.3 Foregrounding silenced voices in places of community

While I may come to this conversation from a quest for justice, this very quest should draw us to a search for that which is beautiful. Beauty should be at the heart of the slow work of disrupting how the places, in which we move, repeatedly reinforce a racist imagination of who we are. Gorringe (2002:250) reminds that

> [i]f all human beings are made in the image of God Christian theology cannot, like liberal political theorists, dismiss the demands of egalitarianism as rhetoric. It has to seek to honour that image practically in housing as in wage and employment structures.

For Gorringe, this refers primarily to questions of opulence and poverty – of economic inequality and class. The challenge in contemporary South Africa is arguably far greater than what Gorringe describes for Britain. But as I have been touching on throughout, our search for beauty occurs within a world where beauty has been thoroughly distorted through the performance of whiteness.

My argument in the previous two subsections went in two directions. On the one hand, the emphasis on thinking through beauty from within particular places that form community, and the call for thinking about beauty in ways that will take account of a universal search for humaneness, on the other. But the argument thus far also assumed that there is no particular place untouched by the colonial project and the way in which whiteness disrupted the ground on which we hope to build community.

Van Steenwyk's (2012:68) mystical Christo-anarchist practices draw us to a particular place in the search for justice, which I would argue should also underpin our search for beauty: "We need to tell the stories of the places in which we live from the vantage point of the oppressed". In order for our search for beauty to refuse a beauty that deceives, we need to tell the long stories of the places in which we live; how these were conquered

and disrupted.[7] It would mean allowing the death underlying particular places to speak (Gorringe 2002:22, 23). As I have insisted throughout, it is not simply buildings and inanimate objects that make a place, but also bodies of people. Our honest telling of the stories of the places where we live is also impacted on by honestly relating how we live in these places and the relations we have with those who are marginalised (Van Steenwyk 2012:68-70).

García-Rivera (1999:181, 182) grounds theological aesthetics in the "lifting up the lowly" of Mary's song. He argues that this is above all an aesthetic norm. This is tied to an aesthetic norm of foregrounding "the lifting up of a piece of background and, then, giving it value" (García-Rivera 1999:35). Reimagining beauty from the ground up requires a conscious foregrounding of those elements missed by the powerful's perspectives of beauty. It is the beauty created by everyday life in particular places, even more, by the everyday lives often ignored.

4. CONCLUSION: EVERYDAY BEAUTY AS A QUEST FOR JUSTICE

As I exit my front door and walk south, passing through the little corridor mentioned in the introduction, I often find the younger kids from the community playing, or the teenagers simply hanging around. They carry in their bodies and their histories the complexity of this part of the world, but in this particular place, they also give new meaning to common humanity. They form the place and the place forms them. They add something beautiful to the aesthetic of the corridor that points to the One Who is Beauty.

I entered this conversation from the side of justice. But the lack of restoring beauty in everyday life in itself perpetuates the injustice of the past. The way in which beauty is both walled off for a segregated few and thoroughly distorted through a racial aesthetic – with the latter questioning what goes for beauty when walled off – should call forth a careful discernment on beauty pointing to the One Who is Beauty. Seeking beauty in everyday life in ways that affirm the humanity of all and seeking beauty in everyday life such that it *is* beauty in the everyday life of all, is in itself a quest for justice.

Without discounting the ongoing expansion of basic services after apartheid, and without ignoring the immense shortfall in basic services,

7 See, for example, the way in which Van Schalkwyk (2014) thinks from the ground up in working towards an ecofeminist urban theology in Gauteng.

the undoing of our history of racist formation will have to be about more than justly caring for the basic needs of all. Life lived beautifully could point to such a "more". More specifically, life lived beautifully in ways that call forth a sense of beauty no longer bound to a white racial aesthetic on either bodies or places would be essential to transforming this racist place.

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