

Chapter 2: Notes & References

Ajahn Amaro is the abbot of Amaravati Buddhist Monastery in the UK. For more information on the monastery and Ajahn Amaro, to order free books by him or to download his books and recorded talks see: www.amaravati.org

Stephen Batchelor's most recent book, published just after our walk together, *After Buddhism*, (Yale University Press, 2015) explores the *Pali* canon attempting to discern what the Buddha actually might have taught. Reading it leads one to reconsider a lot of the basic Buddhist teaching. Yes, there is also an aspect of spiritual practise that seems to be missing but when anyone points this out I always tell them the story of once watching the Football World Cup with Stephen. I was visiting them in Devon and wanted to see the semi-final between England and Argentina. He told me to come along to Christopher Titmus' house after their teacher's meeting for the Gaia House Meditation Centre. I walked there with Thomas, who organised Christopher's retreats in India. Arriving into Totnes we could hear the beginning of the game through the open summer windows of every house we passed. Inside Christopher's small town house, all the well-known meditation teachers associated then with Gaia House were sitting on a sofa, chairs and the floor, watching the game. That game proved to be the most emotionally traumatic England has ever played: the one in which David Beckham was sent off in extra time when felled by a tackle that he responded to by kicking the perpetrator from the ground, and England had to hold on with ten men, only to then lose on penalties. Everyone in the room was carried away with emotion, even Martine who is French and German Thomas. Christopher was so upset, he spent all of the extra time period and the penalties pacing up and down, and shouting, in the ensuite kitchen. The one exception was Stephen, who sat at one end of the sofa making wry comments throughout.

For information on Stephen Batchelor's teaching, teaching schedule, books, etc. see: www.stephenbatchelor.org