

July 28, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

It gives me great pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Maria João Frade. Having first met in 2015 while attending teachings with our teachers Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche and Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche, and having since spent the last four and a half years together in retreat, I feel that I have come to know her well enough to be in the position to write such a letter.

Among her many qualities, what struck me most upon first meeting her, and what continues to inspire me very greatly, is the purity and steadfastness of her devotion to our teachers. I know beyond all doubt that she cherishes them more than anything else in this world, and admire the joy she takes in serving them in whatever way she can, and her enthusiasm in doing all in her power to bring their wishes and aspirations into actuality.

She is also very committed to her practice, and I am confident that no matter whether she stays in retreat for the rest of her life, or returns to the world in order to contribute to our teachers' activities, her practice will remain the core aspect of her life, around which everything else will revolve. She takes the various commitments that she has received through empowerment very seriously, yet manages to maintain them with joy, even though they add some weight to our already heavy daily schedule.

It is also very encouraging to see the keen interest Maria João shows in her study of the teachings, as well as her earnest desire to receive all the transmissions and teachings held by our teachers, especially those that are more rare. She has gained a wide perspective of the teachings through her love of reading—one that encompasses all lineages in its breadth and has been thoroughly enriched by the inspiration of the life-stories of past masters. In this way she has nurtured a profound respect for all the teachings of the buddha, and a profound wish to embody them within herself through her practice.

Her calm and loving nature make her presence in this retreat very much appreciated by everyone, and the willingness she shows in helping those need in whatever way she can is quite remarkable. From offering her own things to those who are without, to helping others in resolving their various health issues (an area in which she is quite knowledgeable), to providing others with study materials, or offering her time to help those experiencing difficulties in managing their tasks and responsibilities, her kindness and generosity are unstinting.

Although the time we have here to dedicate to learning Tibetan and Sanskrit is quite limited, I know that she sincerely wishes to study these languages in order to access more of the teachings herself, and to be able to make the teachings more accessible for others through translation. When asked by Rinpoche to review a text that had been translated from English into Portuguese, she did an extremely thorough job and took the greatest joy in doing so. She is also quite a talented writer herself, and so I have no doubt that she would contribute greatly to the translation of dharma texts into Portuguese, whether from English or, eventually, Tibetan.

It is very plain to see that Maria João is benefitting immensely from being here in retreat under Tulku Rinpoche's guidance, and I believe that it is her wish, as well as Rinpoche's, that she continue this retreat to its end. I pray that through the Tsadra Foundation's Contemplative Scholarship this will be made possible.

Best wishes,

Sarah Noble