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Books, any format is good

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The transition from printed books to digital formats has been one of the most significant changes in the way literature is shared in recent decades. The ease of access, lower production costs, and the ability to store thousands of texts on electronic devices have expanded opportunities for reading and knowledge. However, this shift has not been uniform or free of challenges, as deep-rooted reading habits and technological barriers continue to limit its expansion in certain contexts.

One of the main advantages of digital books is their ability to overcome logistical and economic obstacles. In countries where the publishing industry faces material difficulties—such as Cuba, where paper shortages are a persistent issue—electronic formats can be a viable alternative for distributing and preserving literary heritage. Additionally, digitalization allows authors and publishers to reach a broader audience without relying on large print runs or costly printing processes.

Nevertheless, many readers remain deeply attached to printed books,

valuing the sensory experience of flipping through pages, the design of physical editions, and the intimate connection with a tangible object. Beyond nostalgia, traditional books have proven their durability and technological independence, requiring no batteries or additional devices for access. In this sense, the coexistence of both formats is not only desirable but also necessary to ensure access to reading in various circumstances.

For Cuba, where the paper crisis has significantly affected the publishing industry, the challenge is not only adapting to digital formats but also developing the necessary infrastructure for their effective distribution and commercialization. Creating accessible platforms, educating readers, and reducing the cost of reading devices are crucial steps to ensure that this transition does not widen the gap between those who can access books and those who are left out.

Beyond the format, promoting reading as an everyday practice is what matters the most as a means of cultural and personal enrichment. It is not about imposing one format over another but rather fostering the habit of reading in any available medium. The key lies in ensuring a diversity of options and providing equitable access to literary content, regardless of the format in which it is presented.

The future of books should not be reduced to a debate between print and digital. Instead, the focus should be on finding solutions that bring readers and texts together. In times of crisis, creativity and adaptability are essential to keeping literature accessible and a driver of thought—no matter the medium through which it travels.

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