

This special issue of Global Focus provides insights into various aspects of RenDanHeYi (RDHY), a management model devised by the Chinese multinational Haier Group. It is a model for the Internet of Things era where everything is connected with everything and where value creation happens in ecosystems. The world is transitioning into this new reality but, in many cases, still relies on the management models of the industrial age. We would like to raise awareness for this new RDHY philosophy that bets on the ingenuity of humans and ultimately aims at the maximisation of user value and hence, of human value.

Ruimin Zhang, Haier Group's Chairman Emeritus and father of RenDanHeYi, explains what he understands as necessary and sufficient conditions for creating an ecosystem economy in which all agents are aware that the creation of user value comes first, and the sharing of it second. Whilst Eric Cornuel would like to encourage management educators to prepare their students for a future where economic agents, be they individuals or institutions, must thrive on change and will have to manage in a clearly different world than the one we come from. He proposes four avenues for taking on this challenge.

Danah Zohar's work on quantum management coined the title of this special issue. She draws parallels between the transition from Newtonian physics to quantum physics and the one from Taylorism to what she calls quantum management. She differentiates between quantum self, quantum leadership, quantum organisation, and quantum society, and identifies Haier Group as the first quantum organisation. Santiago Iniguez annotated an interview that he did last year with Ruimin Zhang, to clarify the mindset behind the unique success story of Haier Group and the universality of the RenDanHeYi principles.

Joost Minnaar provides a brief history of RenDanHeYi and an insight into the 'workbench' i.e., the smart contracting capability (EMC contract) that enables Haier's internal ecosystems and that allows for the full empowerment of small teams to interact without middle management as a coordination mechanism.

Bill Fischer shares his experience in teaching RenDanHeYi, especially in executive education, and how managers are longing for opportunities to contribute to their organisations' success. And Martin Moehrle describes EFMD's RDHY certification scheme for organisational transformation, taking the perspective of the RDHY scorecard to assess the future readiness of an organisation in the IoT era.

Stuart Crainer introduces the age of ecosystems, which James Moore, Ke Rong, and Ruimin Zhang understand, if applied rigorously, as the only way out of the human crisis that we are experiencing.

This special issue concludes with three case studies: in the first one, Jin Chen explains COSMOPlat (comparable to Gaia-X in Europe) as an ecosystem enabling technology developed by Haier Group that marks its success in multiple applications in China; Annika Steiber traces in the second case the remarkable transformation of GE Appliances after having been acquired by Haier Group; and in the third case, Emanuele Quintarelli describes the deliberate transformation of the Italian creative agency Gummy Industries, after having learned about RenDanHeYi.

We wish you an interesting immersion into a new world of management.

Martin Moehrle



About the Author

Martin Moehrle is a Management Consultant and Director of Corporate Services at EFMD.