



*Edited by Fiamma Buranelli and Patrizia Gatti and Emanuela Quagliata
Claudia Artoni-Schlezingher, Denys Flynn, Debbie Hindle, Leonardo Luzzatto*

- *Why adopt? An integrated approach embracing psychoanalytical and juridical aspects of adoption.*
- *Children's Perspectives on Adoption: emotional and developmental Issues.*
- *The reconstruction and construction of family bonds through parallel parent-child therapies.*
- *Trauma, abuse and adoption.*
- *The adoptive father.*

Presentation

What does it mean to adopt? What does it mean for a child to be separated from their original family, to interrupt the links with their own history and in many cases with their country of birth? What difficulties can be met in the attempt to think and learn at school? What does it mean for a family or couple, to make room for a new child born to other parents, who bears inside, at a deep level, painful and often also traumatic experiences?

Nowadays adoption is spoken of increasingly frequently since the number of adopted children is constantly growing (about 4,000 in Italy in 2009 alone). This volume intends to deepen some questions about the meaning that such an experience has in the emotional experience of all those involved: children, parents and social workers. In the first chapters we describe the 'original world' of the adopted child and the steps which lead to this new experience both on an emotional and juridical level. Then we examine the delicate phase of the construction of a common story in the new family, through listening to the interior world of the child and in parallel with the difficulties of parents: special attention is given to the meaning and importance of the role of the adoptive father in favouring and supporting the development of the new family identity. Behind every adoption are concealed traumatic aspects, of abandon and loss, perhaps together with both physical and psychological abuse. A chapter will deal with these themes, which it is important to speak about with caution and deep respect, but also with courage, to be able to understand and, where possible, to repair them. One of the greatest sources of suffering of adopted children is linked to the interruption of continuity of experience and loss of basic trust indispensable for all development, both physical and mental.

This volume is not intended to be a manual, still less a specialist work; our intention is to deal with some of the more salient and relevant aspects that can emerge during the adoption process using simple and direct language in which everyone can recognise themselves.

The volume aims not only to underline the critical and difficult aspects that this journey brings with it, but also to open a window on the deep meaning and 'normality' of the adoptive experience, offering psychoanalytic observation and listening as instruments used to understand what happens during the process.