

## **Abstract**

This thesis deals with the theme of the dark night in the work of St. John of the Cross and its influence on the formation of contemporary spiritual authors. Firstly, it focuses on the Spanish Carmelite mystic, John of the Cross social and biographical facts. These provide background to John's spiritual formation and without them the symbol of the dark night loses its historical context. This is followed by a list and brief description of the key works of John of the Cross. Of these texts, the dark night motif is dealt with in "Ascent of Mount Carmel" and "Dark Night," which constitute two aspects of a single journey leading to union with God. We encounter the dark night motive itself in the third chapter. First, we look at the dark night as described by John from the Cross. Then we focus on the symbolism of the dark night in the saint's work, its articulation and outcome. The last chapter introduces us to the view of contemporary spiritual authors, namely Thomas H. Greene, Thomas Halik, Iain Matthew, Gerald G. May, and Wilfrid Stinissen on the dark night theme.