

## TWO UNLIKELY SISTERS: THE “CROSS” AND THE “CROSSES” IN BWV 12 AND 69A

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The cantatas BWV 12, *Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen*, and BWV 69a, *Lobe den Herrn, meine Seele*, could not be more different: one, a grievous cantata opened by an elegiac sinfonia for solo oboe and a highly chromatic motet setting, alluding to earlier strata of music history, and the other, a highly modern piece in concerto-style with drums and trumpets. And yet, there are connections between the cantata from the Weimar period and the piece from Bach’s first year in Leipzig.

It is known that the final chorale movement of BWV 69a, composed for 15 August 1723, was borrowed from BWV 12, which was performed for the first time in Weimar on 22 April 1714.<sup>1</sup> However, besides this obvious relationship between the cantatas, there are further connections between the two pieces that make them intriguing subjects for deeper comparison.

### I. THE TEXTS OF BWV 12 AND 69A

Samuel Franck’s libretto, which Bach used for BWV 12, is based on the gospel of the Third Sunday after Easter (Jubilate), reporting Jesus’ valedictory address in John 16:16–23. Franck maintains the progression from sorrow to joy that shapes the biblical text in his libretto. The initial movement “Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen”

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<sup>1</sup>See Alfred Dürr, *The Cantatas of J. S. Bach*, revised and translated by Richard D. P. Jones (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 504; and KB, NBA I/20, 120.

["Weeping, lamenting, grieving, trembling"] laments the tribulation of Christian life in the world, while the following movement, a recitative, gives the biblical framework for this trial: "Through much tribulation must we enter into the Kingdom of God" (Acts 12:22).