A casual listener would be forgiven for not knowing one kind of accordion music from another. But
where two cultures in particular are concerned, the similarity comes with a century-old backstory involving immigration and imitation.

On the 76th birthday of Flaco Jimenez — one of the instrument's most celebrated living players — Morning Edition asks how the accordion-heavy folk music of northern Mexico came to sound so much like the polkas and waltzes of Eastern Europe. Hear the conversation, featuring Felix Contreras of NPR's Alt.Latino and Chris Strachwitz of Arhoolie Records, at the audio link.