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Abstract: The circulation of a historical entertainment - the reconstructions of the 'Old cities' - during the world Exhibitions at the end of the 19th century constitutes the heart of this project. Combining imperial, national and local scales, these 'Old cities' exploit several dynamics. First, these historic entertainments resulted from the restructuring of the Western and Central European empires. Indeed, the permanent injunction of national questions - here Czech and Hungarian - into the Austro-Hungarian empire and the expansion with a universalist aim of the French empire interfered within the construction of the 'Old cities' and their educational vocations. However, these imperial and global dimensions came into reaction with national and local scales due to the promotion of local products - architectural, commercial - serving the cause of the host nation. Thus, the various adaptations of 'Old city' recorded the materialization of collective memories fabricated to correspond to the challenges of the re-composition of empires and national agendas. These time capsules, fixing the past of the host city for one or several centuries, were like commercial attractions with educational purposes. Indeed, the proposed narration is the "old good days" illustrating the daily life of visitors' ancestors. The public, who has become a consumer of an urban heritage to be protected, bodily experiences the "old town" through a perambulation among 'locals' in period costume mimicking the ancient trades. The internationalization of exchanges also played a significant role in the circulation of different models of 'Old cities', of knowledge aggregated to these attractions and of people who created them. Therefore, it was not a coincidence that these historical entertainments were introduced within the world and national Exhibitions, a meeting place par excellence, an expression both of globalization and of hierarchies between countries.