Legendary Prague – The City and Its Mythology

The workshop shows Prague through the lens of its modern mythology – urban legends (contemporary legends), rumours and anecdotes. Our short commented walks will show the hidden face of the Czech capital revealed in local folk stories told by common people – both now and in the past. Prague of urban legends and rumours is a hidden narrative space of everyday life in the metropolis the mysteries of which we will try to decipher. We will also try to analyse whether this narrative space can be considered uniquely Czech or whether its themes are typical for wider Central Europe, the Slavic nations or even humanity as a whole. This analysis and discussion will be the subject of the final essay.

The workshop consists of two relaxed two-hour walks which can be also attended separately:

1 August 2019 Legendary Prague I – Legends of the 19th Century
13 August 2019 Legendary Prague II – Modern Legends

PhDr. Petr JANEČEK, Ph.D.

Petr Janeček graduated in Ethnology from the Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, and in Humanities from the Faculty of Humanities, Charles University in Prague. He works as Deputy Director at the Institute of Ethnology at the Faculty of Arts; before that, he used to work at the National Museum as the Head of its Ethnographic Department. His academic interests include prosaic folklore and the theory, methodology and history of folkloristics. Today he mainly focuses on contemporary (urban) legends, rumours and anecdotes. He has published five collections of commented Czech contemporary legends and a book on Czech verbal folklore from the Second World War.