

# Working Class Neighbourhoods in Rourkela between Regular Employment and Precarious Labour

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The paper looks at working class neighbourhoods in a persistent centre of heavy industries, the steel town Rourkela in the eastern Indian union state Odisha. Based on data from long-term ethnographic research in Rourkela I will document the variety of working class neighbourhoods that co-exist in the steel town and I will discuss how these different neighbourhoods reflect and reconstitute divisions among the local working classes. I will focus in particular on how distinctions between stably employed steel workers and informal sector workers relate to distinctions between life in the company township on the one hand and in the interspersed slums and adjacent fringe settlements on the other. Emphasis will be laid on the historical contingency of the changing relationship between work and life spanning the period of Nehruvian socialism to contemporary neoliberalism as well as on their ramifications for the local politics of labour.