The Nahdlatul Ulama Party and the Killings of 1965-66 in East Java

The aim of the killings of 1965-66 was the 'crushing' or 'destruction' of the Indonesian Communist Party. In different provinces, the Indonesian army collaborated with different political opponents of the Communist Party to carry out the killings. In East Java, the main opponent of the Communist Party was the politico-religious Nahdlatul Ulama Party. Locations in which estimates reveal large one-time declines in population coincide with political strongholds of the Nahdlatul Ulama Party.

Patterns of One-Time Population Change

This map shows estimates of the one-time change in population in 1965-66 adjusting for normal year-to-year growth in population in 37 regencies and cities in East Java. These estimates were calculated by comparing an estimate of population prior to the violence with an estimate of population in the immediate aftermath of the killings. They include the combined effects of one-time changes in mortality, fertility, and migration.

Population Loss and the Nahdlatul Ulama Party

The chart below shows the relationship between support for the Nahdlatul Ulama Party and estimated one-time changes in population associated with the violence of 1965-66. Each point represents a regency (red diamond) or city (gold circle). In both cases, the greater was the support the Nahdlatul Ulama Party in an area, the greater was the one-time loss in population.

Nahdlatul Ulama Party Strongholds

This map shows political strongholds (red areas) of the Nahdlatul Ulama Party, measured by its share of seats in the 1957 local elections. These locations tend to overlap with the red shaded areas in the above map showing large one-time losses in population.