This chapter explores the role of civil society, interest groups, and populism in politics. It first considers the concept of ‘civil society’ and how it came to be associated with the protests that brought down communist regimes in Eastern Europe, along with its role in the Arab Spring. It then looks at interest groups as a major component of civil society, the rise of corporatism, and the notion of ‘infrapolitics’ or politics from below. It also discusses the growing phenomenon of populism as a way of enhancing the status and position of previously neglected groups in democracies as well as a challenge to liberal democracies. A case study on populism online involving Beppe Grillo and the Five star Movement is presented. The chapter suggests that populist politicians make use of the media to forge a direct relationship with their supporters.

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