The **Reconstruction era (1865–1877)** and the **beginning of the Jim Crow era** marked a critical period in American history, as the nation grappled with integrating formerly enslaved African Americans into society and rebuilding the Southern states after the Civil War. The outcomes of Reconstruction and the rise of Jim Crow laws reflected the tension between progress and entrenched racial discrimination.

**Reconstruction Era (1865–1877)**

1. **Goals of Reconstruction**:
   * **Reunify the Nation**: Reintegrate the Southern states into the Union.
   * **Rebuild the South**: Address the destruction caused by the Civil War and transition from a slave-based economy.
   * **Ensure Freedmen’s Rights**: Provide civil and political rights to formerly enslaved people.
2. **Key Developments**:
   * **Freedmen's Bureau**:
     + Established in 1865 to assist formerly enslaved people with housing, education, and employment.
     + Helped establish schools and promote literacy among African Americans.
   * **13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments**:
     + **13th Amendment (1865)**: Abolished slavery.
     + **14th Amendment (1868)**: Granted citizenship and equal protection under the law to all born or naturalized in the U.S.
     + **15th Amendment (1870)**: Prohibited racial discrimination in voting.
3. **Southern Resistance**:
   * Many white Southerners resisted Reconstruction policies, forming groups like the **Ku Klux Klan** to intimidate African Americans and their allies through violence and terror.
   * "Black Codes" were enacted to limit the freedom of African Americans, restricting their ability to own property, work certain jobs, or vote.
4. **Reconstruction Governments**:
   * Temporary governments in Southern states, backed by federal troops, included African Americans in the political process for the first time.
   * African Americans served in Congress, state legislatures, and local governments during this time.
5. **End of Reconstruction**:
   * The **Compromise of 1877** resolved the disputed 1876 presidential election, leading to the withdrawal of federal troops from the South.
   * This effectively ended Reconstruction and left African Americans vulnerable to white supremacist backlash.

**Beginning of the Jim Crow Era (Late 19th Century)**

1. **Rise of Jim Crow Laws**:
   * Southern states enacted **Jim Crow laws** to enforce racial segregation in public and private spaces.
   * These laws mandated separate facilities for whites and African Americans in schools, transportation, restaurants, and more, under the doctrine of **"separate but equal"**.
2. **Economic Discrimination**:
   * Sharecropping became widespread, trapping African American families in cycles of debt and poverty, effectively replacing slavery with economic servitude.
   * African Americans faced job discrimination, with most confined to low-wage labor.
3. **Disenfranchisement**:
   * Southern states systematically suppressed African American voting rights through measures like:
     + **Poll taxes**.
     + **Literacy tests**.
     + **Grandfather clauses**, which exempted whites from these requirements.
   * These tactics effectively nullified the 15th Amendment.
4. **Violence and Intimidation**:
   * Lynching became a widespread form of racial terror, targeting African Americans who resisted social norms or were accused of minor or fabricated offenses.
   * Groups like the **Ku Klux Klan** and other white supremacist organizations used violence to maintain racial hierarchies.
5. **Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)**:
   * This landmark Supreme Court decision upheld segregation, legitimizing the "separate but equal" doctrine.
   * It solidified Jim Crow laws for decades, ensuring systemic racial inequality.

**Impact on African Americans**

1. **Political Marginalization**:
   * African Americans were largely excluded from political power in the South after Reconstruction ended.
2. **Cultural Resilience**:
   * Despite oppression, African Americans built strong communities, churches, and educational institutions.
   * Activists like **Booker T. Washington** and **W.E.B. Du Bois** emerged to address racial injustice.
3. **Foreshadowing the Civil Rights Movement**:
   * The injustices of Jim Crow set the stage for the **Civil Rights Movement** of the mid-20th century, as African Americans organized to fight segregation and inequality.